

Arts & Culture Event Licence

Information Guide

An Arts and Culture Event Licence makes it easy to host “pop up” performances in studios, warehouses, factories, shops, offices and other unconventional venue spaces.

vancouver.ca/doing-business/arts-event-licence.aspx

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Applying for a Licence

It's one application, one licence, and one reduced fee!

STEP 1

Create an event site management plan.

Use the event site management plan kit to prepare one.

STEP 2

Fill out the application form and submit it to the City of Vancouver.

Both the kit and the application form are available at vancouver.ca/doing-business/arts-event-licence.aspx

OTHER REGULATORY AGENCIES

Serving food or alcohol? Get separate permits.

- Apply for a Temporary Food Service Permit (Vancouver Coastal Health) at: www.vch.ca/en/service/temporary-events-markets-permits
- Apply for a Special Event Permit (BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch) at: www.gov.bc.ca/special-event-liquor-permit

Submission contact

Phone: 604-873-7954 or 3-1-1

arts.event.licence@vancouver.ca

Application processing time

Two weeks minimum. For complex applications, please allow for more time.

Licence fee

| Guests and staff | Licence fee 2023 |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1 - 30 | n/a* |
| 31 - 60 | \$35 |
| 61 - 150 | \$150 |
| 151 - 250 | \$200 |
| 251 or more | \$250 |

For event series, one licence can cover up to six event days in a 30-day period.

** Events with 30 people or less do not need an Arts Event Licence but should still have an event site management plan posted on site and follow exiting and fire safety standards.*

Requirements

Typically, events can only take place in spaces designed for assembly use. Under this program, events can take place in studio, retail, factory, office, wholesale, warehouse spaces and adjoining outdoor spaces that meet the requirements (listed below) without compromising safety.

Eligible spaces

- Artist studios
- Production and rehearsal studios
- Retail, including galleries and cafes
- Factories, wholesale and warehouses
- Office
- Adjoining outdoor spaces (i.e. parking lot, patio, or garden)

Spaces should be:

- on the ground floor, or in the basement with a fire sprinkler system.
- on a concrete floor supported by solid ground, or a floor that is professionally certified to be structurally safe.
- Outdoor space needs to be adjoining the property

Locations

- Downtown/Downtown Eastside/False Creek
- Any industrial or historical area
- Commercial areas (except C-1 zone)

Recurrence

- Up to six days, per month, per building

Note: BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch allows a maximum of 24 Special Event Permits per year.

Guests and staff

Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services will determine the specific maximum occupant load (site capacity).

Capacity

Events that have a proposed capacity of 251 or more persons will require a one-time Special Event Plan application per layout/configuration and are required to comply with the number of exits and washroom requirements as per the Vancouver Building By-law (VBBL). The Special Event Plan Check will be subject to a fee of \$150.00 per hour plus GST.

Fire Safety

Prepare and post the **Safety and Security Plan** and **Emergency Evacuation Procedures**. (The event site management plan kit will help you prepare one: vancouver.ca/doing-business/arts-event-licence.aspx).

You must designate Fire Safety Supervisory Staff that will monitor entries and exits at all times, and carry out the **Safety and Security Plan and Emergency Evacuation Procedures**.

Note: The building cannot have industrial amounts of hazardous materials.

Floor Area Safety Measures

All spaces require:

- Emergency lighting leading outside
 - In single toilet washrooms, emergency lighting can be immediately outside the washroom door and visible underneath the door.
- Exit signs directing occupants towards exits

Requirements Continued

Exiting

| | Number of Guests | Exiting Requirements |
|-------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 1 to 3 Days | Up to 60 people | At least one exit with a clear path |
| | 61 to 250 people | At least two exits with clear paths |
| | 251 people or more | Must meet A2 assembly occupancy requirements per the VBBL.* |
| | All events from 4 to 6 Days | Must meet A2 assembly occupancy requirements per the VBBL.* |

*Number of exits confirmed during VFRS review

Note: At least one Designated Fire Safety Staff member is required per designated exit

Accessibility

The Arts Event is required to have at least one accessible entrance.

Washrooms

| Frequency | Washroom Requirements |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1-3 days - less than 250 people | Not Regulated |
| 4 - 6 days - less than 250 people | Number of washrooms must comply with the VBBL* |
| 1 - 6 days - more than 251 people | Number of washrooms must comply with the VBBL* |

*Number of washrooms required confirmed during VFRS review

Note: portable and/or temporary washrooms facilities are considered to meet the VBBL washroom requirements

For further information on the washroom requirement, please visit:

free.bcpublications.ca/civix/document/id/public/vbbl2019/2082748897

Life Safety

| Frequency | 1 - 3 Days | 4 - 6 Days |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Fire Separation | Not Required | Smoke separation required |
| Combustibility | Not Required | Combustibility material review |
| Fire Event Notification | Fire alarm system or staff stationed at all egress routes | Permanent or temporary fire alarm |

Designated Fire Safety Supervisory Staff

Designated Fire Safety Supervisory Staff are required:

- To be present at all egress/exits at all times
- To ensure the event does not exceed the maximum capacity outlined on the approved Occupant Load Permit, Safety Event Plan Check or Licence

If liquor is served, additional staff are required to perform the role of Liquor Service Supervisory staff.

Liquor Service

If you plan to serve liquor, you need a Special Event Permit (SEP) regulated by the BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch. Visit:

www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/liquor-regulation-licensing/liquor-licence-permits/sep-resources-information

| Number of Guests | Required Liquor Service Supervisory Staff |
|------------------|---|
| Under 100 | 2 |
| 101 - 150 | 3 |
| 151 - 200 | 4 |
| 201 - 250 | 5 |
| 251 or more | No less than 5 in accordance with the fire permit |

Liquor Service Supervisory Staff are required to ensure:

- Alcohol consumption is restricted to the licensed area.
- No minors are served liquor or allowed in designated liquor service areas.

Here is some general information to keep in mind.

Types of SEPs

Private Special Event Permit

- The event is only open to members or invited guests.
- Tickets are not sold at the door.

Public Special Event Permit

- The event is open to public.

Note: The Vancouver Police Department may review applications before SEPs are issued.

Key SEP requirements

- Ensure all organizers, employees, and Liquor Service Supervisory Staff wear visible name tags.
- Post “No liquor beyond this point” signs at all exits from the licensed area.
- Ensure servers hold a Serving It Right Certificate, are present at all times, and are on alert for minors and intoxicated guests.
- Have “last call” 30 minutes before liquor service ends, as defined on your Special Event Permit.
- Purchase all liquor through a government liquor store or another source approved by the BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch.
- Keep liquor receipts and any exemption approval onsite.

Minimizing Impact on Neighbours

Responsibilities of an event organizer include minimizing event impact on surrounding neighbours. Be especially considerate of neighbours if there are residents above or adjacent to the event space, or if the premise is not soundproof. Here are some general considerations that may apply to your event. Your licence may specify conditions as well.

Noise

All events must comply with the [City of Vancouver Noise Control By-law 6555](#).

- Notify neighbours of the event with an on-site contact phone number.
- Ensure all activities take place inside the building or adjoining outdoor space unless specified on your licence.
- Monitor noise levels and impacts outside the venue and consider ways to reduce impacts. See Glossary for details.
- Consider setting up multiple speakers throughout the venue instead of louder speakers on one end of the venue.
- Direct speakers away from doors and windows.
- Minimize sound amplification.
- Live or loud amplified music may go past midnight if specified in your licence.
- Ensure all guests are clear of the venue within 30 minutes of the event end time.

Doors

- Use doors that have direct access to the street.
- All doors and windows should be kept closed by

11 pm except for the purpose of entering or exiting.

- Do not allow guests in and out privileges after

11 pm if the event site is adjacent to residential spaces.

- Under Health Bylaw 9535, smoking is prohibited within six metres of openings into the building (such as doors, windows, air intakes).

Parking and line-ups

- Let guests know about the parking situation ahead of the event.
- Park legally to avoid getting a ticket.
- Suggest alternatives to driving, such as walking, cycling, and public transit.
- Ensure line-ups outside do not obstruct traffic or cause

negative impacts to the neighbourhood.

Other Precautions

Below are some additional safety precautions and considerations that are part of the responsibilities of the event organizer.

Note: This is not a comprehensive list.

Safety precautions

- Arts and Culture Events shall include portable fire extinguishers installed in accordance with the [Vancouver Fire By-law](#)
- Use flame-resistant decorative materials.
- Get required approvals from Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services for pyrotechnics. Learn more at: vancouver.ca/fire
- Be certain that electrical equipment does not exceed the building's electrical capacity.
- If cooking will produce grease-laden vapour, use commercial cooking and ventilation equipment as required in the Building By-law.
- Ensure food handlers have a FoodSafe certificate.
- Place food trucks at least three metres away from any structure or building.
- If the approved occupancy is above 250 persons, only reheating of food is permitted.

Important! Insurance

Contact your insurance company to obtain sufficient insurance coverage for your event to protect your attendees, yourself and your organization.

Green your event!

Here are some considerations to help you rethink the amount of waste, energy and materials consumed during your event planning and activities. Let your staff, volunteers, and attendees know what you are doing to green your event and how they can help!

Transportation considerations

- Choose event locations that are accessible by foot, bicycle, and public transportation. Communicate greenway, cycling and transit route information to performers, staff, volunteers and attendees.
- Provide sufficient secure bicycle parking where possible.

Purchasing and waste considerations

- Work with your venue and/or waste hauler to determine what services they offer for recycling or composting.
- Provide clear instructions or signage to encourage guests to recycle.
- Go paperless and choose electronic notices. Alternatively, talk to your printer about sustainable options.
- Select reusable or recyclable decorative materials.
- Choose green energy, like hydro-electricity or solar power, to meet your power needs wherever possible.

Food service considerations

- Choose reusable service ware, or as a second choice, products made from recyclable materials.
- Reduce the amount of single-use and waste-generating items such as paper cups.
- Choose caterers that offer a minimum number of sustainable options such as ingredients that are vegan, vegetarian, local or sustainably raised or harvested.
- Make tap water available to guests.
- Work with a local charity and Vancouver Coastal Health to donate of excess food.

Contact Information

City of Vancouver

Arts Event Licence Coordinator, Licence Office

Phone: 604-873-7954 or 3-1-1

Email: arts.event.licence@vancouver.ca

Other City of Vancouver enquires,
Phone 3-1-1

This includes Business Licence Office, Fire and Rescue Services, Vancouver Police Department, Property Use Inspection, Liquor Licence Review as well as Cultural Services

Workplace Health and Safety

Actsafe

Phone: 604-733-4682

Website: actsafe.ca

Unit 140 - 4259 Canada Way, Burnaby, BC V5G 1H1

Actsafe is dedicated to the promotion of workplace health and safety in the motion picture and performing arts industries in British Columbia.

Liquor Service

BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB - Victoria)

1-866-209-2111

For more information:

www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/liquor-regulation-licensing

BC Liquor Branch

To locate a BC Liquor store, visit:

Bliquorstores.com/store/locator

Food Service

Vancouver Coastal Health

604-675-3800

1200 - 601 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4C2

For more information:

www.vch.ca/en/health-topics/health-protection-permits-licensing

Food Safe

Foodsafe.ca

Glossary of Terms

Designated Fire Safety Supervisory Staff

A supervisory staff person designated to: monitor the event and the egress/exit door(s) to keep clear in case of emergency, carry out the approved Emergency Evacuation Procedures, and to ensure the allowable number of persons for the event is not exceeded. The Designated Fire Safety Supervisory Staff are responsible for the health and safety of the people attending, working and volunteering in the event.

Egress/exit door

A doorway to provide evacuation from the floor area to an open public thoroughfare, or an exterior open space protected from fire exposure from the building and having access to an open public thoroughfare.

First storey

This refers to the uppermost storey with a floor level not more than two metres above grade.

Fit out

Fit out is the setup of the building in which the event is taking place, which includes bringing and setting up of equipment, supplies and/or decorations.

FoodSafe certificate

The FoodSafe Program is a comprehensive food safety training program designed for the food service industry. FoodSafe courses are available face-to-face, online, and by correspondence, and are recognized throughout BC and across Canada as meeting the requirements for food safety training for food service industry workers. Website: foodsafety.ca

High hazard industrial occupancy

This means an industrial occupancy containing sufficient quantities of high combustible and flammable or explosive material which, because of their inherent characteristics, constitute a special fire hazard such as spray painting, paint manufacturing, mattress factory, flammable material storage, paper recycling plants, tire storage, high alcohol content distilleries, dry cleaning plants using flammable cleaning solvents, etc.

Move out

This refers to the tearing down and vacating of the event, which includes taking down of equipment, supplies and/or decorations.

Occupant load

This is calculated based on the floor area and the width of the exits. This defines the maximum number of people allowed at the event in any given time which is stated in the issued licence.

Permitted use

A space which has the appropriate permits; e.g. City of Vancouver permit stating "retail use" is allowed.

Serving It Right

This is a mandatory self-study course that educates licensees, managers and servers about their legal responsibilities when serving alcohol, and provides effective techniques to prevent problems related to over-service. Website: www.responsible-servicebc.gov.bc.ca

Slab on grade

This refers to the floor of a building that is constructed of concrete supported by solid ground without suspended slab.

Sound level

| Condition | Sound measurement location (measured 1.2 m above ground) | Allowable sound level (3 minutes Leq) |
|--|--|--|
| There is a lane or street between the event site and affected neighbour | Outside the property line of the affected neighbour | Day time: 70 dBC Night time: 65 dBC |
| There is no lane or street between the event site and affected neighbour | Outside the property line of the event site. | Anytime: 3 dBA above ambient sound |

Day time is from 7 am to 10 pm on any weekday or Saturday, and from 10 am to 10 pm on any Sunday or holiday.

Nighttime is any time outside of day time hours.

Anytime is inclusive of day and night time.

dBA is a weighting system which approximates human perception to sounds of moderate intensity.

dBC is a C-weighting system used for lower sounds such as bass sounds.

Leq is an average sound level reading taken over a period of time.

Special Event Permit (SEP)

A Special Event Permit allows you to serve, sell and consume alcohol at your event, celebration or community festival. Licences are regulated by the Liquor Cannabis and Regulation Branch and issued by the Liquor Distribution Branch. A complete copy of the laws that govern this licence can be found at the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch online.

Website: www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/liquor-regulation-licensing

Liquor Service Supervisory Staff

A person who is responsible for checking attendees identification, and ensuring that no minors are served liquor or allowed in designated liquor service areas, alcohol consumption is restricted to the licensed area, and the event does not exceed maximum capacity. Supervisory staff is required when there is liquor service at an event. The number of required Liquor Service Supervisory Staff is based on the number of guests, and Liquor Service Supervisory Staff are permitted to play a dual role as Designated Fire Safety Supervisory Staff, as long as all means of egress exits remain staffed at all time.