



**INFORMATION & APPLICATION  
FOR  
STREET ENTERTAINMENT  
ON CITY PROPERTY**

**For additional information call 3-1-1 (outside of Vancouver 604-873-7000)**

# Street Entertainment - General Information

Street Entertainment adds vibrancy to the City and can be a positive addition to city streetscapes. Rated as one of the top liveable cities in the world, Vancouver has a high mixed-use residential/commercial component. Buskers need to be respectful while performing in consideration of their captive audience. Content may vary greatly by performance. Currently we have performers from every walk of life, novice to professional that include an extensive range of instruments, vocal, dance, mime, jugglers, balloon sculpting and caricature artists. We encourage a wide variety of street entertainment and provide permits according to performance type and content on a case by case basis.

Loud and /or repetitive performances are disruptive to people living and working in the area. Please respect the wishes of nearby residents and businesses. In order to ensure your performance remains a pleasant experience for everyone, the following guidelines must be followed:

1. Street entertainment (busking) permits can be issued to artists of age 16 or older with valid photo identification. Artists of 13 to 15 years of age can have their name on a permit issued under a parent's name - a parent has to accompany the artist at all time during performances. Children of age 12 and under will not be issued a permit.
2. Everyone performing on City streets must have a valid Street Entertainment permit.
3. Street entertainment is not intended for stage like performances. Groups are limited to 3 members. Permit holders are responsible for ensuring that doorways, display windows etc. are not blocked by your set-up or your audience. Groups must limit their footprint to ensure adequate space for pedestrian traffic.
4. Do not begin your performance in a block face where 2 others are already performing. The exception to this is Robson Street, west of Burrard Street, where a maximum of 4 performers per block face is acceptable.
5. Your permit is valid between the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. 7 days a week. You are limited to 60 minutes at any one location. After 60 minutes you must move to a new location at least one full block away.
6. You must comply with all City of Vancouver By-laws including the Noise By-law. Sound level is limited to a maximum of 70 db.
7. You do not own a specific busking location. If a favourite busking spot is occupied wait 60 minutes for the busker to move on.
8. The use of sharp or dangerous objects is prohibited (for example juggling knives, chain saws or flaming objects is not permitted).
9. Musicians are permitted to sell recordings of their original work during their performance without a Street Vending Permit. No other sales are permitted. Monies for artwork or other performances is by donation only
10. Permits must be displayed at all times during performances.
11. Portrait artists may use 1 easel, 2 small folding chairs, display up to but no more than 3 pieces of their art including the working drawing. The sale of pre-drawn work or photocopies is prohibited. Portrait artists can be at one location for up to 2 hours.
12. Permits are not valid within 10 Metres of the Gastown Steam Clock located at the corner of Water St. and Cambie St.

## AMPLIFICATION

We understand the interest in amplifying a variety of instruments and providing accompaniment to enhance performances. However, the City experiences a high number of complaints related to excessive noise.

The density of the city has changed significantly. The high mix of residential and commercial properties makes Vancouver unique and buskers must temper and balance their activities to respect people who cannot move away from the performance (people who live and work nearby). Repetitive and excessive noise related complaints are taxing on enforcement staff (civil and Police) and disruptive to captive audiences.

Buskers must observe the simple amplification guidelines below to ensure a successful and vibrant street entertainment environment.

**ONLY BATTERY POWERED AMPLIFICATION MAY BE PERMITTED AND WHEN ALLOWED, IS RESTRICTED BY THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- Amplification can only be used for instruments which require amplification to be heard (you will be asked to describe the type of instrument or accessory to be amplified at the time you apply for your permit). For example, an acoustic guitar does not require amplification to be heard therefore, amplification will not be granted for this instrument.
- Amplification will only be valid for the instrument identified on the permit.
- VOICE AMPLIFICATION IS NOT AUTHORISED. Consideration will be given to rap music on an individual basis.
- Sound level must be reasonable, within limits set in the City By-laws and intended for an audience within 10 Metres.
- If neighbouring businesses or residents complain about your amplification level you must lower the sound volume and it is important to move to a different location so you don't generate a complaint (see enforcement below).
- City of Vancouver Officials or Police can prohibit the further use of any instruments emitting excessive sound.
- City of Vancouver Officials or Police may revoke a permit after two excessive sound related warnings.

## ENFORCEMENT

We understand the adrenaline generated when performing to an immediate audience. However, be aware of your captive audience and ensure that they are not aggravated. If an excessively loud performance generates a complaint, Street Use Inspectors or Police Officers will give you a warning, ask you to lower your sound level and/or ask you to move on.

If you receive a second warning, your permit may be suspended or revoked.

On a third complaint, you will lose the privilege to perform on City streets for 6 months.

Suspended or revoked Street Entertainment Permits are not refunded.

## Fees - 2023

4 Month Permit = \$45.64 + GST

Annual Permit = \$135.44 + GST

Payment by Cash, Debit Card, Visa, MasterCard, or Amex (We do not accept cheques)

If you wish to make application for a Street Entertainment Permit please return a completed application form to [Street.Activities@vancouver.ca](mailto:Street.Activities@vancouver.ca). Once received and reviewed you will be contacted to make an appointment to come to the Engineering Services Office to provide valid photo ID and submit permit fees. We do not accept walk ins at this time.

## Entertainment locations where the purchase of a Permit is not required (however all street entertainment guidelines still apply):

- Sidewalk in the 300 Block of W Georgia St. (adjacent Library Square)
- Sidewalk in the 700 Block of Homer St. (adjacent Library Square)
- Sidewalk on the West side of Quebec St. (adjacent Science World)
- East & North side of False Creek - Seawall From Science World to the Cambie Bridge
- 800 Block of Robson St. (adjacent the Art Gallery)
- 200 Block of W Georgia - Sidewalk adjacent Q.E. Theatre
- 600 Block of Hamilton - Sidewalk adjacent Q.E. Theatre
- 700 and 800 Blocks of Beatty Street - Sidewalk adjacent Terry Fox Plaza
- Sidewalks adjacent to rapid transit station entrances:

## Important Contact Phone Numbers

### City of Vancouver, Streets Activities

Phone: 3-1-1 (604.873.7000 from outside Vancouver)

### Translink (Train Stations) Auditions

Phone: 604.453.4660

Web: <http://www.translink.ca/en/About-Us/Doing-Business-with-TransLink/Busker-Program.aspx>

### Granville Island Busking

Phone : 604.683.0846

Email : [www.giculturalalsociety.org/](http://www.giculturalalsociety.org/)

### Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation

Phone: 3-1-1 (604.873.7000 from outside Vancouver)

Email: [www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/parks](http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/parks)



## STREET ENTERTAINMENT PERMIT APPLICATION

\*For all inquiries regarding the Street Entertainment Permit, please contact [street.activities@vancouver.ca](mailto:street.activities@vancouver.ca) or phone 3-1-1 (604-873-7000).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number and Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Identification Provided (Staff Initial) \_\_\_\_\_

**Privacy Disclaimer:**

Your personal information is collected under the authority of section 26(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and the Vancouver Charter. Questions about the collection and use of this information may be directed to the Director, Access to Information and Privacy, 453 W 12th Avenue, City of Vancouver, Tel: 604.873.7999.

**Description of entertainment:**

\_\_\_\_\_

A Street Entertainment Permit is required for anyone performing on City streets. Groups are limited to 3 and each individual performer must have a valid Street Entertainment Permit while performing.

Are you requesting to use battery operated amplification?     Yes     No

Instrument to be amplified: \_\_\_\_\_ (Voice amplification not permitted)

4 Month Permit = \$45.64 + GST

Annual Permit = \$135.44 + GST

When would you like your Street Entertainment Permit to begin? \_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

Payment accepted by Cash, Debit, Card, Visa, MasterCard, Amex, or Money order (No cheques)

If a Street Entertainment Permit is granted, the applicant agrees it will indemnify and save harmless the City of Vancouver and its officials, officers, employees, servants and agents from all costs, losses, damages, compensation and expenses (including Counsel fees) of any nature whatsoever suffered or incurred by the City and sustained or caused by the occupation or possession of the permit location, and from all claims, demands, suits and judgments against the City and its officials, officers, employees, servants and agents, or either of them, on account of or in respect of the Premises or of the occupation or possession or use thereof by the Licensee, its servants, agents, contractors, licensees or permit holder. I also understand that this permit may be suspended or cancelled without a refund at the discretion of the City of Vancouver Police, or the City of Vancouver Engineering Department if I am in violation of the Street Entertainment By-Laws and/or guidelines.

APPLICATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this application to [Street.Activities@vancouver.ca](mailto:Street.Activities@vancouver.ca). Once received and reviewed you will be contacted to make an appointment to come to the Engineering Services Office to provide valid photo ID and submit permit fees.