



Board of Commissioners

Ann Coleman – Chair

William Finley Jr., Commissioner

Timothy M. McGonigle, Commissioner

Roni Shilling, Senior Chief Clerk

724-662-3800 x2512

COUNTY OF MERCER

USE OF COUNTY GROUNDS

Use of the County Grounds for public gatherings must comply with the policy as stated below. This Policy has been adopted by the Board of Commissioners and is meant to provide equal access, to protect sensitive areas, and to respect the nature of the Courthouse and its grounds. (Adopted _____?)

POLICY

1. Applications and accompanying documentations must be submitted to the Chief Clerk and approved by the Commissioners prior to use of the grounds for gatherings/functions.
2. Applications are processed on a first come, first serve basis.
3. If an activity is not in compliance with these rules, the County reserves the right to terminate or prevent the use.
4. Applicants are responsible for restoring the site and grounds to its condition before use and for cleaning the premises after use. Applicants must make appropriate provisions for trash removal.
5. If Mercer County staff time is spent on restoration of the site and grounds, the applicant will be billed for the staff time and costs incurred. The applicant will be denied further usage until the bill is paid in full and may prohibit applicant from future use of Courthouse grounds.
6. No activity shall impede Courthouse business or proceedings.
7. Use of the Courthouse (internally and externally, excluding sidewalks within the street rights-of-way), and all other County facilities are subject to the authority of the Commissioners.
8. No fees will be charged to use the grounds.
9. Firearms, candles, fireworks, alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs, and the use of vehicles on County properties is prohibited.
10. No activity or event shall impede Courthouse business or proceedings.
11. The use of poles, stakes, tents, and digging or excavation is prohibited.
12. The use of electricity through outlets on County property and buildings is prohibited. Use of electricity at the Courthouse Bandstand is subject to approval and is controlled by the Mercer County maintenance department.
13. Nothing, including displays, banners, signs, lighting, equipment etc., shall be affixed to poles, fences, signs, buildings, trees, or any other structure.
14. Gambling, raffles, games of chance and sporting activities (including football, frisbee etc.) are prohibited.
15. Benches or other equipment on County properties shall not be moved.
16. The outside walkways on County property shall be used for pedestrian traffic only.
17. The user must make every effort to protect the trees, grass, or other vegetation.



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GATHERINGS

1. All gatherings must follow the policies stated above.
2. Use of the grounds for gatherings (without an application) is limited to 10 or fewer people for an hour or less. Gatherings of more than 10 people require an advanced submitted application.
3. The application for a gathering should indicate the area(s) to be used for the gathering. The County reserves the right to restrict the specific locations of gatherings.
4. No bathrooms located inside the Courthouse will be available to anyone using the grounds.
5. The applicant is responsible for naming the County of Mercer as additional insured on any required insurance policy. The minimum amount of liability insurance is not to be less than One Million Dollars.
6. Rain dates for events will not be permitted – a separate application will be required for new date chosen.

Revision adopted _____ 2024

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Approved _____

Declined _____

Date: _____



USE OF COUNTY GROUNDS – WAIVER OF LIABILITY INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Notwithstanding, anything hereinbefore or hereinafter set forth, either expressed or implied, is an exemption from the liability insurance requirement as a precondition to the issuance of a permit for assembly on County property, shall not be waived with respect to any application submitted by or on behalf of any group or organization intending on inviting the attendance or participation by the general public, or of persons not on the date of application submittal member of the applicant group or organization to participate or attend the event for which a permit is sought.

An exemption from the liability insurance requirements as a precondition to the issuance of a permit for assembly on County property will be waived if:

- A. The total attendance at the permitted event is reasonably estimated by the permit application to be within the number of 25 or less attendees; **AND**
 1. The applicant supplies accurate verified information regarding the applicant's inability to obtain insurance (**as itemized on Exhibit "A" BELOW**); **AND**
 2. The applicant group or organization (or in the case of an applicant being a single individual) will not be soliciting attendance by persons not members of its group or organization as of the date of its application submittal; **AND**
 3. The applicant, in all notices and/or publications concerning the event, will clearly and unequivocally advise potential attendees to the event that the applicant group or organization has not provided liability insurance coverage for the protection of the attendees.

EXHIBIT "A"

- I. Please draft a notarized statement that addresses the questions listed below:
- II. Have statement notarized that you are an authorized representative of the group and that the facts presented are true and accurate to the best of your knowledge.
 1. REGISTRATION
 - a. Is your group registered under any state or federal law?
 - b. If so, which law or regulation?
 - c. What is the date of registration and docket number, if any?
 2. Who are the principals of your group? List all the names and residential addresses.
 3. INSURANCE:
 - a. Have you attempted to buy liability insurance for your proposed activity?
 - b. Was it rejected?
 - c. If so, by whom and for what reason?

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EXHIBIT A (con't)

4. Are you intending on advertising the event to the general public?
5. Is your intent that the event is limited to members of your own organization?
6. How many members are in your organization?
7. Do your members pay dues?
8. Banking. This information is required in case of property damage.
 - a. Do you have any bank account(s)?
 - b. List the name of bank and current balance(s).

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MERCER COUNTY GROUNDS APPLICATION OF USE

Guidelines and Information

- Application must be submitted in advance of event date and comply with policy for use of grounds.
- If approved, permission will be granted during scheduled public meetings.
- This form is not a permit.
- Completion of this application does not guarantee approval.
- Applications are processed in the order in which they are received.
- A Commercial Liability Insurance Certificate is required in the amount of \$1 million dollars.
- No grounds disturbance of any kind, including signs or tent stakes is permitted.

STEP 1 – EVENT INFORMATION

Name of Event: _____

Sponsoring Organization: _____

Event date(s): _____

Specific Location / Area of Grounds Requested (**please describe in detail**): _____

Setup Start Time: _____

Event Start Time: _____

Event End Time: _____

Breakdown Time: _____

Estimated Attendance/Number of Participants: _____

Will this event be advertised? ____ Yes ____ No

Are you requesting use of the bandstand? ____ Yes ____ No

Are you requesting usage of the Courthouse steps? ____ Yes ____ No

Will you use amplified sound equipment? ____ Yes ____ No ***THIS IS SUBJECT TO LOCAL NOISE ORDINANCE.**

Are you requesting to erect tents/canopies of any kind? ____ Yes ____ No

Are you requesting the use of County electricity? ____ Yes ____ No

Will you be using a generator or portable electricity source? ____ Yes ____ No (**Describe equipment if yes**)



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STEP 2 – ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Name of Sponsoring Organization or Individual: _____

Is this a Non-Profit Organization? ____ Yes ____ No ***If yes, provide verification of 501C(3) Status**

Organization's/Individual's Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name of Event Coordinator: _____ (needs to be the DAY OF contact person as well)

Best Contact Number for Coordinator: _____ Email: _____

STEP 3 – READ AND SIGN

- **THE SALE AND CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL IS PROHIBITED.**
- **CANCELLATION MUST BE MADE IN WRITING AT LEAST 48 HOURS PRIOR TO EVENT DATE.**

A Certificate of General Liability Insurance with a **\$1 Million LIMIT OF LIABILITY** naming Mercer County, (125 S. Diamond Street, Suite 103, Mercer, PA 16137) its Officers, Agents, and Employees as additionally insured, is required for any event taking place on County Property and for any event that requires County Equipment and/or Services.

* Should the cost of obtaining insurance prove to be an undue financial burden the sponsoring organization may submit an insurance waiver affidavit in lieu of an insurance certificate for consideration. **See Exhibit A of Policy.**

By Signing and Submitting this Permit Application, the Applicant and Sponsoring Organization agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless, Mercer County, its Officers, Agents, and Employees from and against any and all losses, costs (including but not limited to, litigation, settlement costs and counsel fees), claims, suits, actions, damages, liability and expenses occasioned wholly, or in part, by event applicants and/or event sponsors acts, omission, negligence or fault, or the acts, omissions, negligence or fault of event applicant's and/or event sponsor's agents, subcontractors, suppliers, employees or servants in connection with the permit.

NAME OF APPLICANT/ORGANIZATION (printed)

APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE (if applicable)

CHIEF CLERK'S SIGNATURE

DATE