

The District of Columbia Neighborhood Block Party Permit Guide

The mission of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is to develop and maintain a cohesive, sustainable transportation system that delivers safe, affordable, and convenient ways to move people and goods, while protecting and enhancing the natural, environmental, and cultural resources of the District.

The DDOT Public Space Regulation Division (PSRD) provides the highest level of customer service while issuing public space permits and enforcing the District laws and regulations governing occupancy of public space. The maintenance and occupancy of public safety and space is a top priority when reviewing “Neighborhood Block Party” Permit applications.

A “Neighborhood Block Party” is an activity of a recreational or civic nature *sponsored by the residents of a neighborhood*, for which the *residents seek to close a block of their street* and for which there is no admission or entrance fee. Other requests for street closure may be made via a Special Events Permit Application.

Submitting an Application

Please submit Neighborhood Block Party Permit applications via the Transportation Online Permitting System (TOPS) a minimum of 30 business days before a planned block party. Applications are subject to required review by several District agency stakeholders before final approval. Please apply at www.tops.ddot.dc.gov

Criteria

The following conditions govern street closures for Neighborhood Block Parties:

1. The applicant/sponsor must be an adult District resident (21 years or older) residing on the block to be closed.
2. The applicant/sponsor must provide government-issued identification with an address within the block listed on the application.
3. Businesses, churches, and organizations that have headquarters, offices, or a meeting place in the District, and have been in existence for more than sixty (60) days may submit an application. The application must be submitted by an authorized officer of the organization and 3 adult co-sponsors who satisfy the above residency requirement.
4. The applicant/sponsor must obtain the consent of 51 percent of households on the block.
5. The area is limited to one block and may not exceed two intersecting streets.
6. Block parties may not be held in front of an alley or in an alleyway.
7. The street must be reopened no later than 10 pm.
8. Accessibility for emergency equipment via an unobstructed 20-foot emergency access lane must be maintained during the block party.
9. Street closure/no parking signs must be posted no less than 72 hours prior to the block party date.
10. The block party may not include rental equipment, including, but not limited to dunking booths, moon bounces, stages, tents, etc.
11. Vending and vendors are prohibited, whether accepting payment or not.
12. No donations, fees, or sales shall be solicited or accepted at the event.
13. No sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages is permissible.

Required Documents

1. Online application submitted through TOPS. <https://tops.ddot.dc.gov>
2. Upload the following:
 - a. Copy of applicant/sponsor government-issued identification.
 - b. Copy of completed petition, signed, and dated by the applicant/sponsor.
 - c. Block Party Application Traffic Control Plan (TCP).

Frequently Asked Questions

Is DDOT the only Block Party Application approver?

No, Block Party Applications are subject to required review by several District stakeholder safety agencies. DDOT approves and issues Block Party Permits after approval from the stakeholder agencies. Any agency may object to the application.

May I use signatures by residents from surrounding blocks?

No, all signatures must be from residents of the block listed on the application.

What is a Traffic Control Plan?

A Traffic Control Plan (TCP) addresses traffic safety and control for any traffic obstruction in the District right of way. It shows modifications in the roadway that affect bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular traffic patterns and shows safe alternatives and efficient movement of traffic during street closures. Please request the DDOT Block Party Traffic Control Plan.

How many blocks may be included for a block party?

One block is the maximum permitted space for block party usage.

Who is responsible for closing roadway access of the block?

The applicant/sponsor is responsible for using personal vehicles to secure and safely close off the block party location.

Who should I contact with questions and application updates, and other concerns pertaining to block parties?

Please contact the DDOT's Public Space Regulation Division (PSRD), Customer Relations and Experience Branch at crb.services@dc.gov or call (202) 442-4670.

Block parties may be great fun and an excellent way to promote neighborliness. In planning block party activities, remember to make provisions to recycle all materials that are normally collected by the city. Therefore, when it is time to clean up, kindly remind participants and block party organizers to set aside recyclables and properly bagged trash until the next regularly scheduled recycling/trash collection day.

For general questions,

Please contact PSRD's Customer Relations and Experience Branch at (202) 442-4670 or visit the website at <https://ddot.dc.gov/page/neighborhood-block-parties>

Updated April 2023