

CHAPTER 125

SPECIAL EVENTS

AN ORDINANCE TO ADD CHAPTER 125 (SPECIAL EVENTS) TO TITLE IX (POLICE REGULATIONS) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR

The City of Ann Arbor Ordains:

Section 1. That Chapter 125 be added to Title IX of the City's Municipal Code of Ordinances which shall be entitled "SPECIAL EVENTS"

Section 2. That Sections 9:901 through 9:904 be added to Chapter 125 of Title IX to read as follows.

9:901. – Findings.

The City Council finds that Special Events, whether on private or public property, have long existed and provided benefits and enjoyment to residents and visitors alike. Because of the multiple ordinances in the City Code of Ann Arbor that may apply to hosting a Special Event, including those related to zoning, parking, noise, building codes, blight, nuisance, fire prevention, sidewalks, and streets, a single ordinance related to Special Events is needed. Such an ordinance will result in a greater understanding by the public, better inform Special Event hosts of the requirements needed, and provide a uniform and streamlined application process.

9:902 – Definitions.

The following definitions shall be applicable in the interpretation of this chapter:

- (1) "Block Party" A residential party on City streets and sidewalks hosted by a neighborhood after receiving the approval of at least 70% of the affected households, review by the Police, Fire, and Transportation Departments, and issuance of a Block Party Permit by the City Clerk.
- (2) "Host" For the purposes of this Chapter, means organizing, hosting, allowing, or promoting a Special Event.
- ~~(2)~~(3) "Normal Use of the Property" means the customary, routine, and permitted activities for which the property is regularly used, including its typical occupancy, operating hours, and functional purpose. A deviation from normal use occurs when it introduces entertainment, commercial, or recreational programming not routinely offered at the site; requires temporary infrastructure such as stages, portable generators, amplified sound, fencing and crowd-control measures, portable restrooms, or vendor booths and involves marketing, advertising, or ticket sales; alters typical occupancy patterns or traffic circulation; or is intended to attract attendance from the general public beyond the property's usual occupants.

~~(3)~~(4) “Occupant” Any Person occupying a parcel on which a Special Event on Private Property is held, or planned to be held, whether pursuant to a lease or who otherwise occupies the property.

~~(4)~~(5) “Person” An individual or entity, including a non-profit, that Hosts or intends to Host a Special Event.

~~(5)~~(6) “Property Owner” The owner of private property, or the agent of residential rental property located in the City of Ann Arbor.

~~(6)~~(7) “Special Event” ~~A temporary organized activity held on public or private property that deviates from the normal usage of the property intended to attract over 100 people. Examples include parades, festivals, competitive events, concerts, marches, sporting contests, rallies, and receptions. It does not include events held on property owned or controlled by the University of Michigan, Washtenaw County, or the State of Michigan~~ temporary, organized activity held on public or private property that is marketed, promoted, or otherwise open to the general public, whether free or ticketed, and that deviates from the Normal Use of the Property and is intended to attract more than 250 people. Special Events do not include private gatherings; First Amendment expressive activities; or events held on property owned or controlled by the University of Michigan, Washtenaw County, or the State of Michigan.

~~(7)~~(8) “Special Event on Private Property” A Special Event held entirely on private property that does not involve the temporary closing of Sidewalks, Streets, or the Right of Way.

~~(8)~~(9) “Special Event on Public Property” A Special Event held entirely or in part on City Sidewalks, Streets, Right-of-Way, or other property owned by the City of Ann Arbor. It does not include a Block Party, funeral procession, gathering, or a group demonstration or other expression of free speech without the use of a stage, portable generator, auxiliary lighting, or fencing.

Section 9:903 – Special Event Requirements.

- (1) **Special Event Permit Required.** A Person, Property Owner, or Occupant shall not Host a Special Event in the City of Ann Arbor without a Special Event permit.
- (2) **Timeliness of Application.** ~~An application for a Special Event shall be submitted at least 60 days in advance of the event, unless waived by the City Administrator due to extenuating circumstances. Prior to the issuance of a Special Event Permit, the application shall be reviewed by all relevant City departments including Fire, Police, Building, Zoning, and other departments appropriate to the event. An application for a Special Event Permit should be submitted at least 60 days in advance of the proposed event. Applications submitted fewer than 60 days but at least 30 days before the event may not provide sufficient time for the City to review the application, coordinate operational needs, and adjust plans to ensure public safety for approval of the event. The City Administrator or their designee may permit the review and~~

[processing of a Special Event application despite the submission date when compelling circumstances justify consideration of the application.](#)

- (3) **Compliance with City Ordinances.** A Special Event shall comply with relevant Sections of the City Code of Ann Arbor, including Parks (Chapter 39), Streets (Chapter 47), Sidewalks (Chapter 49), Unified Development Code (Chapter 55), Medical Marijuana Facilities and Marijuana Establishments (Chapter 96), Fire Prevention (Chapter 111), Construction Code (Chapter 100), Noise Control (Chapter 119), Traffic and Parking (Chapter 126), Nuisances and Trash (Chapter 106) and other ordinances regulating the health, safety, and welfare of the public.
- (4) **Special Event Applications.** Applications for a Special Event permit shall be made on forms prescribed by the City Administrator and include the event's title, location, date, time, host, medical facilities, safety equipment, anticipated crowd, and such other information as the Administrator may need to determine whether a permit should be issued.
- (5) **Compliance with State Law.** A Special Event shall comply with State laws regarding the use, possession, sale, or distribution of alcoholic beverages, marijuana, and other controlled substances.
- (6) **Additional Requirements.** The granting of a Special Event permit may be conditioned upon proof of insurance protecting the City, agreements to indemnify the City, liability waivers, and payment of costs for services provided by Police, Fire, Building, or other City departments.
- (7) **Basis for Approval.** A Special Event permit shall be granted or refused based on the health, safety and welfare of the participants, the public, and the degree of interference with the use of Sidewalks and Streets for public travel. No permit for a Special Event shall be refused because of the political or religious beliefs of the participants.
- (8) **Administrator Review.** The City Administrator or their designee shall review all applications for Special Event permits. The City Administrator [or their designee](#) shall have the discretion to seek additional review of a Special Event application by the City Council, who shall then deny or approve, with or without additional conditions, the application.

Section: 9:904 – Enforcement.

- (1) **Authority to Enforce.** Violations of Chapter 125 may be enforced by representatives of the Building Department, Fire Department, Police Department, Community Standards, and Zoning Department.
- (2) **Simultaneous Enforcement.** Enforcement actions may be simultaneously taken against the Person, Property Owner, or Occupant hosting a Special Event.
- (3) **Civil Infraction Enforcement.** A violation of Chapter 125 shall constitute a civil infraction, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000.

- (4) **Misdemeanor Enforcement.** A violation of Chapter 125 in contravention of an order by the Building, Fire, or Police Department based on a Section of the City Code of Ann Arbor shall constitute a misdemeanor, punishable up to 90 days in jail and/or a fine up to \$10,000.
- (5) **Additional Enforcement of Other Ordinances.** In addition to issuing infractions for violations of Chapter 125, the City may issue infractions for violations of other Chapters of the City Code of Ann Arbor as appropriate.
- (6) **Injunctive Relief.** The City may seek an injunction in the Circuit Court to prohibit a Special Event from occurring to prevent injury to the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Section 3. That Section 10:152 of Chapter 126 (Traffic) be repealed.

Section 4: The addition of Chapter 125, the amendment to Section 1:17, and repealing Section 10:152 shall take effect 10 days after publication.