



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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Allegan County Parks and Recreation Special Events Permit Policy

PURPOSE:

To describe the process for permitting Special Events on Allegan County Park property and to ensure consistent and appropriate standards of review and conditions of use for Special Events that are beyond the scope of a picnic shelter reservation or typical park use.

BACKGROUND:

Allegan County Parks are recognized as valuable assets in which the community has invested a significant amount of resources and during the season are used and enjoyed by residents and non-residents alike. These valuable assets are also in high demand by public, private, and non-profit groups for Special Events, such as weddings, fundraisers, fishing tournaments, and large-scale company picnics.

Because most Special Events involve large groups of people and/or the use of special equipment, such as portable stages, dunk tanks, booths, or large tents, they have greater-than-normal impacts on park facilities, which can include additional trash in the park, parking lot and boat launch congestion, need for additional park maintenance, and damage to turfgrass. These impacts can also affect visitor enjoyment and safety. This policy was developed to help control the impact that Special Events have on park property and visitors.

POLICY:

All persons or groups wishing to conduct activities on Allegan County Park property that meet the definition of “Special Event” must secure a Special Event Permit from the Allegan County Parks & Recreation Department.

DEFINITIONS:

“Special Event” – Any activity that meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Any activity which requires the use of Special Equipment*
- Animals on display, for show or for rides
- Weddings that involve Special Equipment
- Fee collection on park property (admissions, concession, or merchandise sales)
- The general public is invited or notified by the media
- Live musical entertainment
- Any organized and/or sponsored event, such as fishing tournaments, festivals, charity events, sporting events, etc.

***Special Equipment** – Equipment brought on to park property that requires advance set-up (i.e. portable stages, sound equipment, portable climbing walls, amusement equipment such as bounce houses or dunk tanks, booths, large BBQ grills used for pig roasts, tents/canopies 20’ x 20’ or larger, tables, and chairs).

Exemptions: Equipment intended for personal use, such as coolers, folding chairs, small folding tables, and personal BBQ grills; and tents and canopies that are smaller than 20'x 20' will not be considered "Special Equipment".

PROCEDURE:

1. Any person, group, or organization wishing to acquire a Special Event Permit must submit their request **IN WRITING** at least 14 calendar days prior to the scheduled event. Written requests must include the following:
 - Special Event type (wedding, fishing tournament, charity event, etc.)
 - Date, time (start and end, including set-up and take down), and location of special event
 - Sponsoring organization, if applicable
 - List of all Special Equipment and activities that will be associated with the special event
 - Expected number of guests (for fishing tournaments, the expected number of boats)
 - Name, address, and phone number, and e-mail address (if applicable) for special event contact person
2. Written requests for Special Event Permits will not be accepted by the Allegan County Parks & Recreation Department prior to the first business day during the calendar year in which the event will take place.
 - **Exception:** Organized special events that are to take place at county owned and managed campgrounds that will require the advanced reservation of campsites. See "PROCEDURE FOR CAMPGROUNDS" section for specific details.
3. All properly submitted Special Event Permit requests will be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Director for approval. A Special Event Permit request that asks for the waiver of any established park fee will also need the approval of the Allegan County Parks Commission.
4. The considerations of approval for a Special Event Permit request are as follows:
 - Impact on normal park activities
 - Impact on planned maintenance or construction activities
 - The potential for Special Event to cause injury to visitors
 - The potential for Special Event to cause damage to park property
 - Impact to park neighbors and surrounding property owners
5. All Special Event Permits will require a non-refundable permit fee in the amount of \$25.00.
6. All Special Event Permits will require a certificate of liability insurance naming Allegan County as an additional insured.
 - **Exceptions:** Any Special Event that does not require the use of Special Equipment.
7. Once the Special Event Permit request has been approved by Allegan County Parks a draft copy of the permit will be sent to the Special Event contact person for signature. The contact person will have 10 business days to return the signed permit, along with permit fee and certificate of liability insurance (if applicable) for final permit execution. A fully executed copy of the Special Event Permit will then be sent to the contact person.

PROCEDURE FOR CAMPGROUNDS

1. Written requests for Special Events at County owned or managed campgrounds that require advance campsite registration will be accepted from November 1st to November 30th of the calendar year

preceding the event. In addition to the items listed under “PROCEDURE, #1” above, these written requests must also include the following:

- Campsites requested for advance registration specified by campsite number. **(Note: The total number of sites requested shall not exceed 10.)**
 - The name, address, phone number and e-mail address (if applicable) for the person that will be camping at each reserved campsite.
 - Dates for which each campsite will be reserved. **(Note: There is a two night minimum stay required for each campsite reserved in advance.)**
2. If approved, the signed Special Event form and all other required information (proof of liability insurance listing Allegan County Parks as an additional insured, permit fee and all campsite reservation fees) must be returned to the Parks Office NO LATER than December 15th of the year preceding the event. If this information is not received by the Parks Office by this date advance campsite registration for the event will not be permitted.
 3. All campsite and reservation fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.

OTHER SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT PROVISIONS

- No more than one Special Event Permit will be issued per park on a daily basis.
- The issuance of a Special Event Permit does not grant exclusive use of the park facility.
- Parking spaces and picnic areas (other than picnic shelters) cannot be reserved. They are available on a first come, first served basis.
- Set-up locations for Special Equipment brought into the park are at the discretion of Parks Staff.
- All Special Event participants are subject to County Ordinance #1010 (Parks Rules and Regulations).