

Applying for a Public Event License and/or a Special Alcohol License

Submitting a Public Event and/or Special Alcohol license application:

- “Reserves” the time, date, and location you request.
- Prevents conflicts with other nearby events.
- Enables appropriate city assistance to enhance your event’s success and safety.

EVENTS REQUIRING A PUBLIC EVENT LICENSE:

- Events that close a public sidewalk, square, park, school playground, or other area.
- Events that physically occupy a public sidewalk, square, park, school playground, or other area with one or more tables, stages, displays, tents, or other stationery equipment.
- Events that travel through public spaces, including parades, road races, walks, or other processions.
- Events that significantly affect nearby residents or public spaces.

These events don’t require a Public Event license:

- Gatherings of people in a public sidewalk, square, park, or other area with no stationery equipment. The City requests that you apply for a license if the size of the gathering will affect pedestrian or vehicular traffic, or if you would like city assistance with the event.
- Sporting events in a public park (Contact the Recreation Department for a license).
- Private events in a public park (Contact the Recreation Department for a license).
- Events inside a school building (Contact the School Department for a license).
- Soliciting money or conducting canning/boot drives (Contact the Police Department for a license).

EVENTS REQUIRING A SPECIAL ALCOHOL LICENSE:

- Events in which alcohol is served inside a facility that doesn’t have an alcohol license.
- Events in which alcohol is served outside (licensed outdoor patios excepted).

These events don’t require a Special Alcohol license:

- Events in which alcohol is not served.
- Events in which alcohol is served on an outdoor patio that is licensed for alcohol service.
- Events at which alcohol is served by an ABCC-licensed “12C Caterer.” You can find 12C caterers using the instructions at <https://www.mass.gov/media/2301/download>. If you don’t have time to apply for a Special Alcohol license, a 12C Caterer can be a useful alternative.

TIMELINE AND TERM:

- Plan on 4-6 weeks for processing, especially for first-time events, road races, or complex events.
- A complete Public Event license application must be submitted at least 13 days before the next City Council meeting. The City will not begin processing an application until all questions are answered and all requested documents are uploaded. Depending on your event, the City cannot guarantee that the application will be ready for the City Council if submitted 12 days or less in advance.
- A complete Special Alcohol license application must be submitted at least 17 days before the next Licensing Commission meeting. The City will not begin processing an application until all questions are answered and all required documents are uploaded. Depending on your event, the City cannot guarantee that the application will be ready for the Licensing Commission if submitted 16 days or less in advance.

APPLICATION CONDITIONS:

- You must apply online.
- The license is valid only at the approved location and on the approved date(s), time(s), and rain date(s). Be sure to include any necessary rain date(s) in your application.

- The license is not modifiable. Any changes require approval through the submission of a new application.
- The license is not transferable.
- Incorporated organizations may apply for a Special Alcohol license to serve wine and malt beverages only.
- Nonprofit organizations may apply for a Special Alcohol license to serve wine and malt beverages or all forms of alcohol.
- Individuals may apply for a Special Alcohol license to serve wine and malt beverages. They may apply to serve all forms of alcohol only if their event has a defined group of invited guests, is not advertised to the public, and will not generate revenues in excess of expenses.

FEES:

- There is no charge for a Public Event license.
- There is a \$100 charge per day for a Special Alcohol license, payable when the license is approved.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED:

The City requires that you upload the following documents as part of your application:

- Maps, flyers, brochures, or other explanatory material.
- A detailed street route or map for any road race, walk, or other event that travels through public spaces.
- If some or all of your event is on private property, evidence that you have the approval of the property owner, such as a lease or a letter of support.
- If you are a corporation or nonprofit organization applying for a Special Alcohol License, a Workers' Compensation Insurance Affidavit (downloadable when you apply) or proof of WC Insurance.
- If you are a nonprofit organization applying for a Special Alcohol License, proof of your tax-exempt status.

HOW TO APPLY:

Go to <http://www.somervillema.gov/citizenserve>.

- Click the **citizenserve** logo.
- Click "MY ACCOUNT."
- Log in, or, if this is your first online application, click "REGISTER NOW" to create an account.
- Scroll down and click "APPLY FOR A LICENSE."
- At Application Type, select "PUBLIC EVENT/SPECIAL ALCOHOL LICENSE."
- At Business Name, enter the name of your group and/or event.
- At "IS THIS APPLICATION FOR A NEW OR EXISTING BUSINESS LOCATION?":
 - Select "A NEW BUSINESS LOCATION" if this is your first application. Then enter your home or business address, and click on "FIND ADDRESS. If CitizenServe doesn't identify your address, select "USE THIS ADDRESS."
 - OR
 - Select "AN ADDITIONAL LICENSE FOR AN EXISTING BUSINESS" if you've already been licensed before. At "LICENSE #" select a license you've received before.
- Answer the remaining questions and upload the required documents.
- Review the terms and conditions. Don't proceed until you are ready to accept all of the terms and conditions.
- Before you click "SUBMIT", note that once you submit the form, you may not be able to re-open it to edit it. If you're not ready to submit the form, click "SAVE FOR LATER", so you can come back to finish it.
- If you're ready, "SUBMIT" the form.

LICENSE CONDITIONS:

Conditions for All Licenses

1. Any fees charged by the city are your responsibility and must be paid in full prior to the event.
2. This license is valid only for the listed location and time, and is subject to all of the license's terms, conditions, and limitations, as well as the Somerville Code of Ordinances, Federal and State law, and the City Council for

public events and/or the Licensing Commission and the ABCC for special alcohol events. Failure to adhere to all conditions may result in revocation of the license and cancellation of the event.

3. You and your officers, employees, agents, and representatives hereby agree to release, discharge, indemnify and hold harmless, the City of Somerville and its officers, employees, agents and servants from all actions, causes of action, claims, demands, damages, costs, loss of services, expenses and compensation associated with this event or your conduct arising from the event, for any damages to the City's personal and real property resulting from the use, and any expenses the City incurs in restoring the property to its condition prior to the use.
4. This license is subject to additional conditions and/or modifications whenever city officials determine that such conditions and/or modifications are required to advance public purposes.
5. If you find more attendees signing up for or attending your event than you indicated on the application, notify the Police Department immediately.

Block Parties

6. Notify ALL residents at least one week prior to the event and provide them with someone to contact if they have questions. Make sure that any resident can get to or from their home by car if necessary.
7. Keep a fire extinguisher available near any grille in use.
8. Don't consume or carry alcohol on any public street or sidewalk.
9. Adhere to the conditions in the STREET CLOSURES section.

Street Closures

10. Your event must not obstruct or inhibit the flow of vehicles or pedestrians except for any street/sidewalk closures or detours described in this application or conditions.
 - a. All street closures or detours must be created with devices supplied by the DPW, or specified by the Parking Department.
 - b. Vehicles must not be used to block streets.
 - c. Anything placed on any street must leave at least 12 feet of clearance on the street, so a fire truck, ambulance, or car can get by when necessary.
11. If any streets on an MBTA bus route are closed, you must contact the MBTA so they can review and adjust the bus route(s) as needed. Contact the city's Parking Department if you need MBTA contact information.
12. Provide at least one week's written notice to each resident and business that abuts the area, on both sides of the street, to notify them of the date and time of the event and provide them with a way to contact the event organizer(s) in case they have questions.
13. Unless your license specifically allows it, do not make permanent markings on a public street or sidewalk using paint or other indelible materials, or you will be held liable for the cost of removing those markings. You may use chalk for street or sidewalk markings.

Raindates

14. If you request a rain date, you may use it only if you notify the City no later than 12 Noon on the day before the event. Notify the City by emailing raindate@somervillema.gov or by calling 311. If you do NOT notify the city by 12 Noon on the day before the event, the rain date will be canceled, and you will have to submit a new application for City Council and/or Licensing Commission review and approval to reschedule the event.

Alcohol

15. You must purchase any alcohol that is sold or consumed at the event from a supplier that is licensed by the Mass. ABCC (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/authorized-sources-of-alcohol-for-1-day-licenses/download>).
EXCEPTION: Registered nonprofit organizations (NOT individuals) are permitted to use donated alcohol. If you are not a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, you can't use alcohol purchased from a package store or restaurant, or donated by anyone.
16. The Manager you have designated must be on-site at all times.

QUESTIONS?

- If you have questions about your public event application, contact the City Clerk at cityclerk@somervillema.gov.
- If you have questions about your Special Alcohol application, contact the Licensing Commission Secretary at licensing@somervillema.gov.