



Event Planning Guide

2026 - 2027

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Introduction

Riverfront Spokane is the region's premier 64-acre urban park located in the heart of downtown Spokane. Recently named "One of America's Most Beautiful Urban Parks" by National Geographic, Riverfront Spokane hosts a wide range of events—from small private gatherings to large community festivals.

This guide outlines event types, requirements, and the reservation process to help you plan a successful event.

Event Types

Private Events

Private events are invitation-only gatherings such as birthday parties, family reunions, corporate meetings, school activities, and weddings. Riverfront Spokane offers a variety of indoor and outdoor venues to accommodate these occasions.

Public Events

Public events are open to the general public and may be free or ticketed.

- Events with 200+ attendees require a City of Spokane special event permit.
- Events with 1,000+ attendees may require one (1) trained crowd manager per 250 attendees, as determined by the Spokane Fire Department during the permitting process.

Freedom of Speech Gathering

Freedom of Speech gatherings typically do not require a park reservation or fee. However, a reservation is required if the event includes:

- Tents or canopies
- Heavy equipment
- Onsite vendors
- Vehicle access
- Use of electricity

Submitting an event inquiry for Freedom of Speech gatherings is strongly encouraged to confirm availability and avoid scheduling conflicts.

Booking Your Event

Reservation Process Overview

To reserve space at Riverfront Spokane, all event organizers must follow the steps below. A reservation is not confirmed until a signed rental agreement and deposit are received.

1. Submit an Event Inquiry

Begin by completing the online [event inquiry form](#) at riverfrontspokane.org.

2. Initial Review & Availability Check

A Riverfront event manager will review your event inquiry form request, confirm venue availability, and respond within 72 hours.

3. City of Spokane Special Event Permit (if applicable)

For public events with 200 or more guests, a City of Spokane [special event permit](#) is also required. This process may include review by police and fire departments and could involve additional permits or inspections. The special event permit application should be submitted after you have a confirmed event reservation at Riverfront Park.

- Crowd management may be required for events with 1,000+ attendees
- Requirement: 1 trained crowd manager per 250 attendees (if applicable)
- Final requirements are determined by the Spokane Fire Department during permitting
- Ask your event manager about Riverfront's free crowd manager training program

4. Site Visit

Conduct a site visit with your Riverfront event manager to review logistics and venue details.

5. Insurance Review

Review insurance requirements for your event (see pages 10–12). Insurance is required for events involving:

- Third-party vendors
- Onsite vehicles or equipment
- Events with alcohol service

6. Rental Agreement

Sign and return the rental agreement, which outlines:

- Reserved spaces
- Event details
- Fees
- Terms of use

Booking Your Event

7. Deposit Requirement

Submit a 25% deposit to secure your reservation.

Your event is not confirmed until both the signed contract and deposit are received.

8. Pay Remaining Balance

Payment must be received in full by the day of your event; otherwise, the event cannot proceed.

9. Vendor Registration

If you plan to use third-party vendors, they will be required to complete an event-specific vendor registration form, which will be provided by your event manager. This process ensures all vendors are familiar with park procedures and safety protocols.

Vendors must complete the registration form if they answer “yes” to any of the following:

- Drive into the park
- Set up a tent
- Sell goods or services on-site

Support & Resources

Event Planning Support

The Riverfront Spokane event team is available to assist with planning, logistics, and navigating requirements to ensure a successful event.

Riverfront also offers a free Crowd Manager Training program, available upon request, for events that require certified crowd management personnel as determined by the Spokane Fire Department.

Event Contacts

- Amy Lindsey, Programming & Marketing Manager | alindsey@spokanecity.org | 509-625-6372
- Dawn Frey, Wedding Event Manager | dlfrey@spokanecity.org | 509-904-6115
- Lori Maher, Event and Group Rental Manager | lmaher@spokanecity.org | 509-625-6623
- Matt Russell, Event and Group Rental Manager, Gesa Pavilion | mrussell@spokanecity.org | 509-625-6661
- Roni Wenz, Community Engagement Manager | rwenz@spokanecity.org | 509-625-6612
- Sarah Kitchings, Event Specialist | skitchings@spokanecity.org | 509-625-6632
- Meghan McCausland, Event Specialist | mmccausland@spokanecity.org | 509-625-6641
- Regan Farmer, Marketing Coordinator | rfarmer@spokanecity.org | 509-625-6631

Event Planning Timeline

The following timeline is provided as a planning guide to ensure a smooth, seamless event experience.

90 Days Prior to the Event:

1. Submit event site map to your Riverfront event manager that includes the following elements:
 - Vendor and activity locations, fencing location/perimeters, guest entrance/exit points, table and chair configurations, 20' clearance for emergency vehicle access, waste management receptacle locations. Review waste management requirements on pg. 9.
2. Confirm equipment rentals from Riverfront Spokane (e.g., fencing, tables/chairs, AV equipment, spider boxes, etc.) with you Riverfront event manager.
3. Provide an event timeline. See Attachment C for a sample event timeline.
4. Provide equipment delivery details to include delivery dates/times and pick-up plans.
5. Provide an event security plan.
6. Place catering order with park concessionaire, if applicable.
7. Provide initial list of participating onsite vendors, if applicable.
 - Vendors include food, merchandise, and any other third-party contractor (e.g. portlets, tents, stages, etc.) All vendors must complete the vendor registration form.

60 Days Prior to the Event:

1. Submit an updated site map, if applicable.
2. Provide an updated event timeline, if necessary.
3. Provide equipment delivery details that include delivery dates/times and pick-up plans.
4. Place food and beverage/Coca-Cola orders.

30 Days Prior to the Event:

1. A member of Riverfront's event team will reach out to confirm your event details.
2. Conduct a final site walk through with your Riverfront event manager.
3. Submit final site map.
4. Submit final vendor list.
5. Provide an updated event timeline, if necessary.

One Week Prior to the Event:

1. Inform your Riverfront event manager if any element of your event has changed.

Post Event:

1. Debrief with the Riverfront event team to discuss the execution of your event.
2. Reserve your event dates for next year!

Event Planning Guidelines

Event organizers are required to adhere to the following event guidelines:

Food and Beverage

Levy Premium Foodservice is the exclusive foodservice provider at the Gesa Pavilion, Looff Carrousel, Numerica Skate Ribbon and SkyRide. For events held at Riverfront's other venues, event organizers may select their own food and beverage providers. For private catered events in non-exclusive areas, a 10% commission on food and beverage sales applies. Vendors must have a current contract with Riverfront Spokane, hold a City of Spokane business license, carry appropriate insurance, and obtain all required health permits. Additionally, event organizers and vendors must follow the City's processes for procuring and selling products from the City's exclusive beverage partner, Swire Coca-Cola. Product exceptions include juice made from freshly squeezed fruit and fresh drip coffee and tea. All beverages—including water—must be purchased through Riverfront Spokane. Orders can be placed at riverfrontspokane.org.

Ticketed Events

If your event is ticketed and will be held at the Gesa Pavilion, you are required to use Riverfront Spokane's exclusive ticketing provider, AXS. Ticket service fees may apply and will be outlined accordingly in your event rental agreement. A Riverfront event manager will be in contact with you to set-up your event ticketing.

Cancellation Policy

A refund of venue rental fees shall be made only if written notice of cancellation is received by Riverfront Park a minimum of (60) days prior to the date of the event. Events booked within 60 days are not eligible for refunds. For outdoor events, upon written request, Riverfront Park will allow cancellations and a full refund if the air quality index is in the Unhealthy - Hazardous (151 - 500) range.

Parking

Downtown Spokane offers a variety of parking options, from meters and surface lots to long-term garages. Visit riverfrontspokane.org to view a map of downtown Spokane parking options.

Riverfront has three paid parking lots with a total of approximately 240 parking spaces.

- Washington Lot: 149 Spaces
- Lincoln Lot: 50 Spaces
- Cataldo Lot: 45 Spaces

An accessible-only parking lot is located at Post Street near the Numerica Skate Ribbon and SkyRide.

Shipping, Delivery & Pick-up

Event deliveries may be sent to Spokane City Hall at 808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd. Spokane, WA 99201. Please include "Attn: Riverfront Park + EVENT NAME" on the shipping label and alert your designated Riverfront event manager.

Alcohol Policy

Please note insurance requirements for events with alcohol on pg. 11.

Indoor Events

Riverfront Spokane has an exclusive alcoholic beverage service provider. Please work with your event and catering manager to coordinate alcohol service for your event.

Outdoor Events

The consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in Riverfront Park outdoor spaces without prior approval of the park and unless the licensee is granted a proper permit through the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (WSLCB) or hires a caterer with valid permits from the WSLCB. Riverfront Park does not issue liquor licenses. Licenses include:

- Special Occasion License (Public or Private Event) - A special occasion license allows a registered nonprofit organization to sell spirits, beer and wine by the individual serving for on-premises consumption at a specified date, time and place (i.e., fundraising dinner, gala event, auction, wine tasting). Any alcohol that is consumed at a special occasion event must be sold by the special occasion licensee. Alcohol cannot be given away. Outdoor events must be enclosed. More information and application available at the WSLCB website. Application and fees due at least 45 days before event.
- Banquet Permit (Private Event) - A banquet permit is a permit you apply for that allows the service and consumption of liquor at a private, invitation-only banquet or gathering held in a public place or business. Examples include weddings, company banquets, retirement parties, and club events. This Does Not Authorize the Sale of Alcohol. More information and application available at the WSLCB website.

When hiring a caterer, servers must be Mandatory Alcohol Server Training (MAST) certified and have proof of certification with them while serving. Anyone who serves an alcoholic beverage to an intoxicated person or minor can be held personally liable under state tort law for the acts of an intoxicated individual.

Once the licensee gets a WSLCB permit, the licensee must work with park staff to assure a safe event.

Waste Management Policy

Post-event Cleanup

For larger park events, organizers will be required to provide a waste management plan during the contracting process. It is the responsibility of event organizer to restore the park or venue back to its original condition following the conclusion of the event. Additionally, event organizers are responsible for maintaining trash if waste management resources exceed normal park operations. All trash must be cleared regularly, bagged and tied, and receptacles properly relined before, during, and after the event.

Waste Mitigation and Removal

Waste and recycling receptacles may be included in your rental agreement for an additional charge or coordinated directly with the city's solid waste department.

Below are recommended guidelines by number of event attendance.

- 3-yard dumpster = 300-600 attendees
- 6-yard dumpster = 601-1500 attendees
- 20 or 30-yard dumpster = 1,600+ attendees

Wastewater Regulations

City of Spokane wastewater laws ([SMC 13](#)) and the Department of Ecology Regulations ([WAC 246-273](#)) are designed to protect our local water resources, including groundwater and surface waters. All wastewater at Riverfront Park must be properly disposed of into the sanitary sewer in accordance with all state and City of Spokane regulations.

It is unlawful for any person to discharge, or cause to be discharged, directly or indirectly any pollutants into surface water, storm water, groundwater or directly or indirectly into street (storm) drains.

- Do not allow wash water to run into a street, gutter, or storm drain.
- Wastewater must be collected and treated prior to discharge.
- Store chemicals and wastes where they will not be exposed to rainwater.
- Never dispose of any liquids on the ground, in a storm drain, or in a dry well.

All industrial users of the sanitary sewer must comply with Prohibited Discharge Standards. In addition to explosive, oily or greasy, toxic, foamy, and smelly discharges, Prohibited Discharge Standards include wastewater with high or low pH, high temperatures, and viscous or solid content.

- Filter or settle solids from wastewater prior to discharge.
- Cool wastewater to less than 130o Fahrenheit (54o Celsius) before discharge.
- Check pH of wastewater and adjust before discharge. Businesses served by the City of Spokane must adjust pH to between 5.0 and 12.0.

FAQs

Will there be additional fees and charges for my event?

In addition to a venue rental fee, there may be additional fees and charges including the following:

- Surcharges for services and/or rental items not accounted for in the original contract. These may be determined after the execution of the event contract. Note that the fees for additional services or rental items are subject to change.
- Riverfront reserves the right to apply additional charges if the actual number of guests exceeds the event organizer's original estimate and impacts park support services.

What if my event plans change?

If the event venue(s), dates(s), setup time, or another aspect of your event change prior to your event day, work with your Riverfront event manager to execute an amendment to the event contract.

What happens after my event?

Riverfront Spokane will verify that you have removed event-related equipment in accordance with the schedule outlined in the contract and will confirm that park grounds have been left in the same condition as prior to your event. Taking into consideration any additional fees and other reasons to retain all or part of the security deposit, Riverfront Spokane will determine the amount of the security deposit to be refunded to the event organizer. In some cases, the event organizers may owe more than the security deposit due to the following reasons:

- To pay for additional services rentals used during the event.
- Failure to pay for any property of Riverfront Spokane and any portion of the park that may have been damaged during the event.
- Funding additional security services (e.g., Spokane police or other security staffing organizations).
- If the event organizer(s) or associated vendors operate vehicles within the park without a vehicle access permit.
- Failure to reduce sound (music) levels as required by Riverfront Spokane and in accordance with city ordinance (Chapter 10.08D Noise Control).
- Failure to vacate the park in accordance with the schedule described in the event contract.
- Failure to remove event decorations, equipment, and/or signs as outlined in the event contract.
- To pay for costs resulting from incomplete or unusual cleanup.
- For unanticipated use of park staff or equipment during setup or breakdown due to inadequate preparation for the event.
- For violating provisions outlined in the event contract.

Insurance Requirements

EVENT TYPE	DESCRIPTION	INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS
Private Event Rental (without alcohol)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private event (not open to the public) • Private citizen • No vehicles in the park • No alcohol 	No insurance requirements
Private Event Rental (with alcohol)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private event (not open to the public) • Private citizen • No vehicles in the park • Alcohol will be served 	Outdoor Venue without a caterer: Event Insurance w/\$1,000,000 General Liability coverage or; Caterer's insurance coverage: General Liability Insurance on an occurrence basis with a combined single limit of not less than \$1,000,000 each occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate.
Private Event Rental with vehicle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private event (not open to the public) • Private citizen • No alcohol • Vehicle load-in required 	Private Automobile Liability Insurance coverage that meets state minimums.

Insurance Requirements

CONTRACT TYPE	DESCRIPTION	INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS
Public or Private Event Rental Under 200 attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private event (not open to the public) • Vendor participation (outside catering, food trucks, retail) • Vehicle load-in required 	<p>A. Worker's Compensation Insurance in compliance with RCW 51.12.020, which requires subject employers to provide workers' compensation coverage for all their subject workers.</p> <p>B. General Liability Insurance on an occurrence basis with a combined single limit of not less than \$1,000,000 each occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate for Bodily Injury and Property Damage.</p> <p>C. Automobile Liability Insurance with a combined single limit, or the equivalent of not less than \$1,000,000 each accident.</p>

Insurance Requirements

CONTRACT TYPE	DESCRIPTION	INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS
<p>Public or Private Use Agreement 200+ attendees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used for public/private event rentals with 200+ attendees 	<p>A. Worker's Compensation Insurance in compliance with RCW 51.12.020, which requires subject employers to provide workers' compensation coverage for all their subject workers.</p> <p>B. General Liability Insurance on an occurrence basis with a combined single limit of not less than \$1,000,000 each occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate for Bodily Injury and Property Damage.</p> <p>C. Automobile Liability Insurance with a combined single limit, or the equivalent of not less than \$1,000,000 each accident.</p>

Event Organizer Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure a smooth and seamless event experience.

Booking Your Event

- Submit an event inquiry and special event permit application as soon as you know your event date(s) and venue(s).
- Schedule a site visit with your Riverfront event manager.
- Review event requirements with your Riverfront event manager.
- Sign and return the contract; submit venue deposit.
- Apply for additional permits (alcohol, health, fire, etc.). Please note that many permits have a holding period of 21 business days; therefore the sooner you submit your permit, the more likely you are to receive it prior to your event.

60 Days Prior

- Provide equipment delivery details that include delivery dates/times and pick-up plans.
- Place food and beverage/Coca-Cola orders.

30 Days Prior

- Review the proposed site plan with your Riverfront event manager.
- Communicate event information with event vendors.
- Submit Certificate of Insurance.

21 Days Prior

- Final site map due, including:
 - Location and size of tents
 - Location of fences
 - Timeline for move-in/out
 - Vendor staging
 - Electrical plan
 - Waste management plan
 - Traffic control plan
 - Security plan
 - Rentals or services from RFS
 - A final list of vendors participating in the event
 - Place food and beverage/ Pepsi order

7 Days Prior

- Final walk through

Post Event

- Debrief with the Riverfront event team to discuss the execution of your event.
- Reserve your event dates for next year!