



National Cherry Festival Parades Rules and Regulations



"Preserving and Celebrating our Communities Traditions."

Official Rules for Parade Entries

1. Strict safety precautions and the adherence of these Rules must be observed by all entries. Failure to abide by these may result in an entry to be removed from participating in the event. Violations during a parade will attempt to be addressed first to promote the safety and welfare of the public, and then to the fair treatment of all participants by a Parade Official. Prohibited materials or items may result in the reasonable confiscation of those items for the safety of the public.
2. The Mission of the National Cherry Festival is to celebrate and promote cherries, community involvement, and the Grand Traverse region. The National Cherry Festival reserves at its sole discretion to prohibit any entries it feels is in conflict with its Mission.
3. ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN June 1st at 5:00 PM, NO EXCEPTIONS. All applications must be made electronically to the designated Parade Director or their designee. Additions after this date will be Invitation only at the discretion of the Parade Director. Entries in all parades must adhere to line-up times. This information will be sent no later than one week prior to the parade.
4. Only those with approved applications or invitations will be allowed to participate in the parade. Under no circumstance will bystanders be allowed to join the parade along its route.
5. Any entries sponsored by advocating for or depicting any political, social, economic, or other controversial groups or issues are NOT permitted. This includes any social welfare organizations involved in political or other lobbying, either directly or indirectly. This is subject to the sole and exclusive review of the Parade Director. The goal and purpose of our parades are specific as listed in the application.
6. Any entries depicting violence, discrimination, or deemed to not be aligned with the values of the Festival Foundations core principles will be asked to not participate by the Parade Director or their designee.
7. Only seated official governmental representatives are permitted in the parade and are by invitation only, these entries are limited to six (6) personnel of which no more than two (2) will be allowed to ride in the provided vehicle. NO CAMPAIGNING OR EXTRA SIGNAGE IS ALLOWED. Special accommodation will be discussed and organized with the Parade Director or their designee prior to parades.



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8. The National Cherry Festival Parades do not accept applications from Pageants (i.e. Miss America, Miss's, Mrs.'s or the like). We accept all applications from other festivals and chambers. Any exception to this rule is only by invitation of the Parade Director or their designee.
9. NO CHASE/ SUPPORT VEHICLES ARE ALLOWED BY ANY ENTRY. There are several emergency vehicles posted along the parade route and are there for the purpose of assisting any parade participants. Exceptions are at the discretion of the Parade Director or their designee.
10. Handouts (hand-to-hand contact) from units will be permitted for entertainment purposes only. *All handouts MUST be included in the application to be approved by the Director of Parades prior to June 1. Items must be entertaining to the crowd – No CANDY, no throwables (such as recreational balls or frisbees) ,no solicitation, and no political or election material allowed. Handouts are to be handed into the crowd not thrown from entries. A single incident of this will result in confiscation of the item or removal of the entry from the route.
11. ALL PYROTECHNICS ARE PROHIBITED ON THE PARADE ROUTE, IN PARADE STAGING OR IN DESTAGING AREAS.
12. NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE ALLOWED ALONG THE PARADE ROUTE, IN PARADE STAGING OR IN DESTAGING AREAS.
13. Absolutely no water will be sprayed, splashed, or thrown into the crowd. A single incident of this may result in confiscation of the item or removal of the entry from the route.
14. Any activities encouraging spectators to shake hands or otherwise participate in the parade, thereby impacting parade timelines and flow of parade, are not allowed.
15. All entries having music or sound amplifying systems shall maintain a volume that will not interfere with other entries, especially those with animals. If a unit is informed by a Parade Official that the noise generated by their unit is too loud, they shall immediately turn the volume down. Music or noise shall be included in parade applications. (this is used in line up to ensure that marching bands have the opportunity for a “clean” performance environment).



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16. Units are responsible for providing water, ice and sun protection for the participants on their entry. Units are responsible for the health and well-being of their participants including pets.
17. One walker will be in communication with the driver to signal a STOP situation for the safety of the entry's riders and or bystanders who find themselves in a dangerous position in relation to the entry.
18. Large entries may be asked to arrive with additional spotters (people) walking on all four sides of the entry monitoring for the safety of participants and spectators alike.
19. Motorized entries must be equipped with a Class ABC fire extinguisher. All units will be checked for this item at line-up time.
20. Groups of more than 20 must be approved by the Parade Director or their designee prior to walking.
21. All units are required to submit a media description not to exceed 250 words.
22. Walkers are permitted to walk in front or behind an entry, not alongside it, and may be used to hand out handouts.
23. No maneuvers are allowed that slow the forward movement of the parade, without prior approval from the Parade Director or their designee.
24. No entry may exceed 13.5 feet in height due to traffic lights and power lines on Front and Union Streets. In addition, entries may not exceed 21 feet in width. Please measure the total entry length, including the vehicle, tow bar, and float, to ensure sufficient spacing for the staging area.



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Unit Types

FLOATS- A parade float is an elaborately decorated three-dimensional figure or scene, mounted on a wheeled chassis that participates in a procession as part of a specific celebration. Most parade floats are self-propelled, although they may also be towed by another vehicle or pulled by animals. To qualify as a float, the unit must be skirted and must be in good taste for a family event. Drivers must always stay with the vehicle or leave a cell phone number with the personnel at the Parade Check In. No float may exceed 13.5 feet in height due to traffic lights and power lines on Front and Union Streets. In addition, floats may not exceed 21 feet in width. Please measure the total entry length, including the vehicle, tow bar, and float, to ensure sufficient spacing for the staging area. All float sponsors must be contained in a 3 feet x 3 feet single area. Units will be inspected for unapproved advertising, sponsor mentions, etc. All unauthorized advertising will be removed. Floats must be equipped with a Class ABC fire extinguisher. All units will be checked for this item at line up time.

VEHICLE- Motor Vehicle that operates under its own power and or is self-propelled. Motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, or other motorized vehicles not licensed for road use are deemed unacceptable unless approved by the National Cherry Festival. Include vehicle information in applications so appropriate spacing is allocated for line ups. All Drivers of motorized vehicles must be at least 18 years old and hold a valid driver's license. Please stay with the vehicle at all times or leave your cell phone number with the personnel at the Parade Check In. Large vehicles will be asked to arrive with additional spotters (people) walking on all four sides of the entry monitoring for the safety of participants and spectators alike. Motorized units must be equipped with a Class ABC fire extinguisher. All units will be checked for this item at line-up time.

ANIMAL UNITS- Units with animals participating on display. (non Pets) Each unit is required to have their own CLEAN-UP CREW. Failure to provide a clean-up crew or equivalent will result in removal from the parade. Parade dress for horse riders is desired. Acrobatic maneuvers must be approved by the National Cherry Festival. Failure to do so will result in removal from the parade. Animals must be controlled by means of a harness, halter, or leash if not otherwise contained.

MARCHING UNIT- Any entry that will participate in a uniform or cadence driven manner. (i.e. marching bands and honor guards)

No maneuvers are allowed that slow the forward movement of the parade, without prior approval from the Parade Director. Musical units, precision drill teams, and baton units must consist of at least 15 members unless approved by the National Cherry Festival.

SPECIAL UNIT- Any entry that is not able to be categorized into the above entries.

All rules and guidelines apply to special units, including any special or extra considerations/ rules approved by the Parade Director or their designee.