

What is a Special Event?

The Charleston County *Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR)* defines a Special Event as: “Any activity that involves public assembly for which one or more of the following apply: (1) there is an admission fee or leasing fee; (2) there is controlled or ticketed entry; and/or (3) goods and/or services (e.g., food and drink) are available for purchase. Special Events include, but are not limited to, events held on private properties and properties owned by membership-based organizations and businesses. This definition does not include private parties or private functions, including neighborhood gatherings, that do not meet the above stated criteria; however, community-wide events organized by non-profit or for-profit businesses or organizations, individuals, or groups are considered Special Events.”

Indoor Special Events

Zoning permits are not required for indoor special events in legally established businesses in commercial and industrial zoning districts and public facilities or civic facilities such as: hotels/motels, convention centers; social lodges; assembly halls; religious facilities; fairgrounds; federal, state, and county parks, and similar facilities legally established and authorized to hold special events.

To Apply for a Special Event

To apply, complete the following checklist and submit completed paperwork either in-person to the Zoning and Planning Office or submit online at https://eplweb.charlestoncounty.org/energov_prod/selfservice#/home

The following information is required to be submitted with applications for Temporary Special Events Permits (in addition to the required fee):

- A detailed Letter of Intent describing the purpose of the event indicating date(s) and time(s), anticipated number of participants, and whether alcohol will be served and if amplified sound (music or other amplified noise) will be utilized;
- A legible site plan drawn to scale indicating vehicular traffic areas (parking, driveways, circulation etc.), gathering areas, restroom and vendor locations, and locations of existing and planned structures to be used as part of the event;
- Letters of Coordination from Fire, Police, and Emergency Medical Services and Building Inspection Services if applicable;
- Documentation of Charleston County Business License issuance for the host and participating vendors and copy of valid Department of Revenue license if alcohol will be sold;
- Documentation from pertinent service providers for restroom facilities and garbage collection; and
- Other pertinent information as deemed necessary by the Zoning and Planning Director.

Temporary Special Events

*Charleston County
Zoning and Planning*

Contact Us

Phone: 843-202-7200

Email:

zoningpermits@charlestoncounty.org

Web:

<https://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/zoning-planning/index.php>



**CHARLESTON COUNTY
ZONING AND PLANNING
DEPARTMENT**

4045 Bridge View Drive
North Charleston, SC 29405

Special Event Permits

If an applicant wishes to host a special event, a zoning permit is required prior to the start of the special event and must be maintained for the duration of the event. Site plan review and/or special exception approval may be required prior to issuance of zoning permits for special events. It is recommended that the permit process be started **at least** 45 days in advance of your event, and further in advance if site plan review and/or special exception approval is required. Following zoning permit approval, a valid Charleston County Business License is required. Building permits may also be required. The Temporary Special Events application can be found online at the Zoning and Planning Department's website.

Limitations for Temporary Special Events

Temporary special event permits may be issued only if the activity complies with all applicable requirements of the *ZLDR*, including, but not limited to, provision of adequate parking and sanitary facilities. Temporary special events permits shall not be issued for periods in excess of 10 consecutive days, and no more than five such permits may be issued per lot, per calendar year, except as otherwise allowed pursuant to the *ZLDR*. Any temporary special event utilizing 25 acres of land or more shall require special exception approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals. Additional requirements for temporary special events in agricultural and residential zoning districts apply.

Temporary Special Events on properties in the Agricultural & Residential Zoning Districts

The following requirements apply to temporary special events in the agricultural and residential zoning districts in addition to all other applicable requirements:

- A maximum of five (5) Temporary Special Events permits may be issued per lot, per calendar year.
- Each permit shall be valid for a maximum of three consecutive days and is only valid for a single event. Multiple events within the same three-day period require separate permits.
- Daily attendance in the AG-15, AGR, RR, S-3, R-4, UR, MHS, and MHP zoning districts is limited to 500.
- Daily attendance in the RM, AG-10, and AG-8 zoning districts is limited to 2,000.
- The maximum number of temporary special event permits allowed per calendar year and/or maximum daily attendance may only be increased if the requirements listed in *ZLDR Sec. 6.7.3.E*, as well as all other applicable requirements of the *ZLDR*, are met and the request is approved in accordance with the special exception procedures contained in the *ZLDR*. If approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals, the approval is only valid for one calendar year from the date of zoning permit issuance.

Outdoor Special Events

With the exception of special events at federal, state, and county parks and legally established fairgrounds, outdoor special events must comply with *ZLDR Sec. 6.7.3, Temporary Special Events*, and a zoning permit is required. All outdoor special event activities are subject to the County's livability and noise ordinances. Any outdoor special event activity, as defined by the *ZLDR*, whether an accessory to an existing business, or on vacant undeveloped property, which is located within 500 feet of the property line of a residentially developed parcel, shall cease all music and all loud noise that is above 70db(A) no later than 11:00 p.m.; otherwise, special exception approval is required.

Special Events in Commercial & Industrial Districts

Special Events in commercial and industrial zoning districts shall comply with all requirements of *ZLDR Sec. 6.7.5, Outdoor Special Events*. The establishment of a new special events principal use in the CN, CT, CC, or I zoning district requires compliance with the site plan review process followed by issuance of all required permits.

For more information regarding special events permits, please contact us at 843-202-7200 or email us at:

zoningpermits@charlestoncounty.org.