

Seattle Permits

—part of a multi-departmental series on City services & permitting

Public Safety Plans and Crowd Managers

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The Seattle Fire Code contains a provision that requires a “Public Safety Plan” for outdoor assembly events when the projected attendance exceeds 6,000 persons and for indoor or outdoor assembly events, when the fire code official believes the event may have an adverse impact on public safety through diminished access to buildings, structures, fire hydrants and fire apparatus access roads or may adversely affect public safety services of any kind.

An “Outdoor Assembly Event” is a private or public event, conducted outdoors, that meets or exceeds certain projected attendance levels. Typical outdoor assembly events include beer gardens and mazes. To be considered an “Outdoor Assembly Event”, the event must generally have a projected attendance of 500 or more people. However, events with 100 or more attendees where permanent or temporary barricades or fencing confine attendees, are also considered “Outdoor Assembly Events”. Events held in private residences or on their grounds are generally not considered “Outdoor Assembly Events” and are therefore generally exempt from requirements for a public safety plan, unless admission is charged.

The Public Safety Plan shall include an assessment of all of the following conditions and related safety measures:

- Nature of the events and the participants and attendees.
- Access and egress movement, including crowd density problems.
- Medical emergencies.
- Fire hazards and/or fire protection equipment provided.
- Permanent and temporary structural systems.

- Severe weather conditions.
- Earthquakes.
- Civil or other disturbances.
- Hazardous materials incidents within and near the facility.
- Acts of terrorism within and near the facility.
- Relationships among facility management, event participants, emergency response agencies, and others having a role in the assembly events.

“Public Safety Plan” templates are available at www.seattle.gov/fire/safety-and-community/workplace-fire-safety

Crowd Managers

The Seattle Fire Code requires that trained crowd managers be provided for facilities or events where more than 1,000 persons gather or as required by the fire code official. The minimum number of crowd managers shall be established at a ratio of one crowd manager to every 250 persons or as determined by the fire code official.

Individual persons or job/staff positions designated as crowd managers should be identified in the written emergency procedures portion of the approved public safety plan, where required and/or the fire safety and emergency plan. It is recommended that alternate crowd managers also be designated and be trained as required.

Crowd Manager Training

Designated crowd managers shall be familiar with the approved public safety plan and/or the fire safety and emergency plan, and be properly trained in the emergency procedures described in the plan.

Crowd Manager Duties

Designated crowd managers shall appropriately implement the emergency procedures described in the

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approved public safety plan and/or the fire safety and emergency plan. In addition, crowd managers shall also act as fire watch personnel and keep diligent watch for fires, obstructions to means of egress, and other hazards during the time such place is open to the public or such activity is being conducted and take prompt measures for remediation of hazards, extinguishment of fires that occur, and assist in the evacuation of the public from the event areas (i.e., structures, premises).

Crowd Management Plan

The crowd management plan is part of the public safety plan, and should clearly identify all crowd manager positions and duties including those persons responsible for calling 911 and meeting emergency responders. Crowd manager stations and location assignments, where provided, shall be illustrated on the site layout plan.

Fire Watch Personnel

When Required

If the fire code official decides it is essential for public safety in a place of assembly or any other place where people congregate, the owner, agent or lessee of the space shall provide one or more fire watch personnel. The fire code official may require fire watch personnel for a variety of reasons, including the number of people anticipated to congregate, or the nature of the performance, exhibition, display, contest or activity.

The final determination related to the actual number and special duties of the designated fire watch personnel may be identified during an inspection by Seattle Fire Department personnel.

General Duties

Fire Watch personnel shall maintain a constant fire watch, which involves keeping a diligent watch for smoke and fire, obstructions to means of egress and emergency vehicle routes, and other hazards during the event. They should take prompt measures for remediation of hazards, calling 911 when required, and assisting with the evacuation of impacted areas in accordance with the written emergency plan.

Related Information

More information regarding crowd managers as well as several online training opportunities are available at the following websites:

<http://public.eopsslearning.com/login/index.php>

<http://www.firemarshals.org/Crowd-Manager-Training>

<https://mdsp.maryland.gov/firemarshal/Pages/CrowdManagerTraining.aspx>

<http://www.crowdmanagers.com/>

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/dfs/crowd-manager-regulations-and-training-prog-.html>

<https://www.iafc.org/topics-and-tools/resources/resource/crowd-manager-training>