



# TEMPORARY EVENTS - STARTER GUIDE

A guide to holding an event in Nova Scotia

Let us navigate you toward success! For personalized assistance contact a [Business Navigator at 1-844-628-7347](#)



## DEFINE YOUR EVENT

**First, plan your event! Here are a few questions to consider:**

- What is the purpose of your event?
- Where do you intend to host the event, and will it be indoors, outdoors or both?
- When do you plan to hold your event and for how long?
- What will be served/sold?
- Who will attend and will you charge admission?
- Will you bring in vendors?

Start your permitting process at least four months in advance.

Approval times vary based on the regulator.

### Defining an 'Event'

The definition of an event varies by regulator. Understanding each will help you determine which permits and licenses you need.

**A Temporary Event (food):** a booth or structure erected to provide a food service in conjunction with a single event that operates for a period of 14 days or less within a 60-day period per location. This may include exhibitions, fairs, community festivals etc.

**A Special Occasion (liquor):** a special occasion is a private or public event, or party, hosted by citizens (wedding or reunion etc.), a business, or non-profit, where liquor is served or sold temporarily.

**A Special Event:** Municipalities often use the term 'special event'. Permits are based on location and number of people attending. Permit requirements defer by town or city. Business Navigators can connect you with the right Municipal Official and provide some general information.



## CHOOSE YOUR LOCATION

- Next, contact your municipality to confirm your preferred location is zoned for your event. A Business Navigator can assist you with finding the correct contact.
- Contact Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel & Tobacco at 1-877-565-0556 to speak with a licensing officer on requirements for a Special Occasion License for your event.
- Want to use a Provincial Park? Contact Nova Scotia Parks at 1-888-544-3434
- Want to use a Federal Park? Contact Parks Canada at 1-888-773-8888



## CREATE YOUR SITE PLAN

A site plan is required by a number of different regulators. Depending on the regulator, the size of your event, and whether your event is indoors or outdoors, your plans could be required four months in advance. Talk to each governing body early in your process.

For outdoor events, the following should be included on the site plan (but are not limited to), site dimensions, tents/trailers, buildings, vehicles, perimeter fencing, entry and exit points, surrounding streets, stage, parking and driveways (traffic control), seating, licensed areas, VIP areas, food vendors, EHS/first aid, stage, fireworks plan, emergency access roads, washrooms/portables with hand washing stations and garbage (show location of solid waste, recycling, and compost containers). Ensure you have your menu or food vendors listed. Include where they will be located.



## APPLY FOR PERMITS

**Contact a Business Navigator** at 1-844-628-7347 to determine which permits and licenses you require and to connect with your inspectors.

### Food

- Use the [Temporary Events Guide](#) to get started. You will require a [Temporary Event Permit](#) which can be applied for through your [Department of Environment and Climate Change](#) local office. You must submit your application, along with your site plan, 60 days in advance. A pre-opening inspection will be required.
- Your vendors may also require a [Temporary Event Permit](#). Vendor applications must be submitted 14 days in advance.

### Liquor

- Review the [Special Occasions Overview](#) and apply for a [Special Occasion License](#). You'll require a site plan, security plan, and a Fire Official's approval. Contact Alcohol and Gaming at 1-877-565-0556 to obtain your license. A pre-opening inspection or staff instruction may be required.

### Municipal

- If your event is on municipal property, a special event permit may be required. Permits are based on location and size of your event. Several regulations and by-laws may apply (e.g., respecting noise, fireworks, insurance etc.). Contact your municipality or a Business Navigator to get started. For events in HRM, the Special Events Task Force can provide valuable information and assistance. Review their [website](#) or call 311 to get started.

### Fire Prevention

- Fire Officials often have their own requirements, especially if you're using tents or serving liquor. Contact your municipality or the Office of the Fire Marshall at 1-800-559-3473.

### Technical Safety

- If you intend to use natural gas, propane, furnaces, boilers or amusements (inflatables) contact the Technical Safety Division for requirements at 1-800-9LABOUR.

Contact a **Business Navigator** at 1-844-628-7347 or email [busnavigation@novascotia.ca](mailto:busnavigation@novascotia.ca) Business Navigation offers personalized and timely help with regulation and requirements, including registration, permits and licenses to save you valuable time.



### BE READY FOR INSPECTION

**Power:** Ensure sufficient electrical power supply for all food vendors.

**Keep Washrooms Clean and Properly Equipped:** Keep washrooms/portables clean at all times. Provide toilet paper in a dispenser, a garbage can, a sink with a constant supply of hot and cold running water, liquid soap and paper towel in dispensers

**Store and Remove Waste Correctly:** Remove waste on a daily basis, or more often if necessary. Waste receptacles must be leak-proof, have tight-fitting lids, and be pest-proof.

**Liquor License Inspection:** Review the [Liquor Licensing regulations](#) and speak to your Compliance Officer about your responsibilities. A Compliance Officer will typically walk the site the day of the event to ensure it is set up as it was approved. They will also arrange a 'Staff Instruction'. This will advise the licensee and staff of their responsibilities and answer any questions they may have before the event begins.

**Fire Safety Inspection:** Ensure your fire safety plan is ready and proper extinguishing devices are available.

#### Food Vendor Inspection:

- Food Handler Training: A minimum of one food handler, who is in charge, must have successfully completed a food hygiene training program recognized by the Department of Environment and Climate Change.
- Food Preparation: Potentially hazardous foods must be stored, transported, and maintained at proper temperatures
  - Keep cold foods cold - cold foods must be kept at 4°C (40°F) or colder
  - Keep hot foods hot - Hot foods must be kept at 60°C (140°F) or hotter
  - Reheat foods to 74°C (165°F) or hotter
  - Food probe thermometers must be available to monitor internal food temperatures and must be sanitized between uses.
- Protect Food from Contamination: Store food 15 cm/6 inches off the ground or floor and protected from sources of contamination.
- Hygiene: Practice good hygiene and remove waste regularly.
- Handwashing: Handwashing facilities are provided at their booth and liquid soap in a dispenser and paper towels are available. Wash hands thoroughly before and after handling food.
- Personal Hygiene: Wear clean outer garments and hair restraints.

**Unannounced inspections may occur at anytime during your event. Ensure vendors and staff remain compliant.**



### PREPARE FOR EXCELLENCE

Post all required **signs and permits** as outlined by inspectors.

For Occupational Health and Safety requirements such as **WHMIS Training, First Aid and Workplace Health and Safety** contact OHS at 1-800-952-2687.

Contact **Nova Scotia Power** regarding electricity connection at 1-800-428-6230.

Organizers are required to hire private companies for **garbage and recycling collection**. Contact your municipality to determine who in your area is an authorized collector.

**For road access** (closers to roads and driveways) and **highway signage** contact Public Works at 1-844-696-7737.

Will you hold a **lottery**? Alcohol and Gaming Division also administers a variety of other licenses that may be required for your event. Contact Alcohol and Gaming at 1-877-565-0556

Hosting your event outside? Your local RCMP or **Halifax Regional Police** may need to be notified. Contact the local non-emergency number. For HRP, call 902-490-5020.

Depending on the size of your event, you may want to contact **Tourism Nova Scotia** regarding where your participants will stay and what amenities are available to them.

For Employer/Employee obligations and rights including minimum wage, hours of work (etc.), contact the **Nova Scotia Labour Standards Division** at 1-888-315-0110.

Are you seeking **funding** options to support your event? Contact a Business Navigator for more information.