

STAMFORD DOWNTOWN PARADE SPECTACULAR PARADE APPLICATION ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA & PARADE PARTICIPANT RULES

The Stamford Downtown Special Services District (Stamford Downtown) appreciates the support from our many participants over the years. Our goal is to present a Parade with the highest entertainment value and highest standards of quality, performance, and conduct. Adherence to all rules and guidelines listed below will ensure such an event.

The Parade Committee reserves the right to determine which units will be accepted and asks that you please read the following participation regulations carefully. Participation in the Parade Spectacular is by invitation only (approval after submission of formal parade application). Unauthorized units will not be permitted in the parade. Unless your unit is approved by the Committee to participate, your unit will be prohibited from parade participation.

1. All groups wishing to appear in the Stamford Downtown Parade Spectacular must fill out a parade application with full backup* and submit it prior to the deadline posted.
*Parade applications must include a completed talent application, color photograph(s) of the entire group/unit in costume, video link of the group performing the proposed parade routine, a description of your group, costume description, and also consider including group resume, director's biography and links to other live performances and an press or promotional materials. Once approved, failure to adhere to performance content of that of the audition video shall cause removal from the parade.
2. No organized or ad hoc groups are allowed to "just march" in the parade. No "WALKING" entries are allowed in the parade except marching bands and color guards.

Acceptance Standards

- 25 to 300 performers
 - Creative costuming
 - Interesting, well-rehearsed choreography or routine
 - Use of music/sound
 - Use of special feature
3. Entries sponsored by or depicting a political organization or controversial issue are not permitted.
 4. All groups must be contained on a float or have some entertainment value (dance troupe, marching bands, performance troupes).
 5. Any group wishing to submit a float design must follow the float specifications dictated by Stamford Downtown or have the Stamford Downtown Float designer build the float at the group's expense. Any group wishing to have a float must sponsor or find a company to pay for the sponsorship of that float. All float designs will be reviewed and decided on by a jury. Float specifications are available from Stamford Downtown upon request.
 6. Any group wishing to fly a helium balloon must sponsor or find a company to pay for the sponsorship of that balloon.
 7. No one under the age of 16 is allowed to fly a balloon.
 8. Only those holding a string on the balloon are allowed to walk with the balloon.
 9. All participants must sign waivers of liability and photo releases or provide a one million dollar certificate of general liability insurance naming the Stamford Downtown Special Services District and The City of Stamford as additional insured.
 10. All participants must be uniformed, costumed or appropriately attired.
 11. All Entries, (including Marching Bands), must be willing & sufficiently physically fit to walk the parade route and maintain the parade pace. Entries unable or refusing to maintain parade walking pace and/or spacing (as Parade Officials direct) will be removed from the parade route.
 12. No Strollers
 13. No skateboards or bicycles except with prior approval from Stamford Downtown.
 14. No animals of any kind are allowed on the parade route, except those with prior approval by parade organizers.
 15. Absolutely NO items may be thrown, tossed or launched to parade spectators from any vehicle, conveyance or float.
 16. With prior approval, sponsors are permitted on the parade route 30 minutes prior to parade step off to visit with the crowd and hand out pre-approved marketing materials.

Evaluation of your entry's ABILITY TO ENTERTAIN CHILDREN IS CRUCIAL to its acceptance into the Parade. All entries are evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Entertainment value** - the idea is fun and/or clever and is easily understood by children.
2. **Design concept** - the unit is well-designed and has a clearly understood central theme or idea.
3. **Use of sound** - the unit effectively incorporates chants, music, instruments or other audio. The sound system must be of professional quality and be able to project sound the audience will be able to hear clearly and understand in an outdoor environment.
4. **Choreography** - perform an entertaining, unusual and exciting routine. Choreography must include continual forward movement, without stopping, to prevent gaps between entries.
5. **Costuming/props** - the costumes are original in nature, unusual and/or well designed. Props should be inventive and large enough to be visible to the audience.
6. **Number/age of participants** - there is a maximum of 200 people within each unit (parade organizers may consider larger units). Due to the physical challenge of performing in the mile long Parade route, individuals under 10 years old may not participate in an entry without written permission of the Parade. All participants must be able to perform without rest throughout the Parade route.
7. **Timeliness** - application must be thorough and complete. Packets with supporting documentation must be received by Stamford Downtown by the posted deadline.

The Parade Spectacular is a non-partisan, non-sectarian organization. The Parade is designed for family friendly entertainment and is not an open public forum; therefore themes, props and hand-outs may not be based on controversial, social, political or religious themes. Themes, props and handouts must be approved by Stamford Downtown.

It is illegal to use a copyrighted source without permission. Stamford Downtown reserves the right to refuse or remove any design based on copyrighted material that doesn't have appropriate approvals. When incorporating copyrighted material, proof of permission must accompany application.

All entries and participants participate in the Parade Spectacular at their own risk. Stamford Downtown, the City of Stamford and any and all sponsors will not be held responsible for any personal injury or property damage due to any cause.

Stamford Downtown reserves the right to reject the application of, or prohibit participation by any exhibit, vendor, entertainer, volunteer and/or parade entry, in whole or in part, including, but not limited to, any person, organization, article, conduct, printed matter, catalogue, or souvenir, that in its sole and absolute opinion, is not suitable to and in keeping with the character of the Parade Spectacular.

No contingent is allowed to participate as one or as part of another contingent without pre-parade registration with Stamford Downtown. Any contingent "crashing" the parade will be removed immediately. Groups desiring to march with other groups must make this known on their application when submitted. No parade entry may be reassigned to a third party without express written approval of Stamford Downtown.

Stamford Downtown reserves the right to remove any individual, group or parade contingent from the staging, parade or dispersal area, for any of the following reasons: participant is a hindrance to the safety or progress of the parade and is placing participants or spectators in physical danger; participant has a motor vehicle with safety violations, participant is operating a motor vehicle which has a safety violation or which is dangerously unsafe or participant is engaging in illegal conduct related to drugs or alcohol.

Stamford Downtown reserves the right to accept or reject any application without explanation.