

SPECIAL EVENTS ON MARYLAND STATE ROADWAYS

Permit Process and Instructions

**** New permit process and forms as of September 2023. Repeat event organizers should update their permit request forms. ****

I. INTRODUCTION

The Maryland State Highway Administration (MDSHA) recognizes the need to use the state transportation system for special events because of its accessibility, proximity to popular destinations and its ease of use. A positive and safe event experience is important for event participants as well as others who may be affected by the event, including property owners, businesses, places of worship, spectators, and road users. MDSHA has a responsibility to provide a safe and efficient transportation system for all users. To that purpose, any event affecting State roads must be approved and permitted by the MDSHA.

A. What is a special event?

A special event is any activity that may affect the safe and normal movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic along the State Highway system, or which may require the assistance of local, county or state police, or the MDSHA. Special events may include marches and parades, filming, organized bicycle or pedestrian races and events, local festivals or other types of activities that may impact highway operations. A Maryland State Highway Administration Special Event Permit is required for any event that will impact an Interstate, U.S. Route or State numbered highway.

If part of the event is to occur on a roadway within another jurisdiction (i.e., county or city roads), the event organizer must request a permit from the local agency(s).

B. When is police assistance needed?

Police assistance is required whenever event participants will be passing through a signalized intersection in violation of traffic signals. Police assistance may also be needed when participants pass through an intersection in violation of STOP signs or will be otherwise violating posted traffic regulations. This most commonly occurs in races so that participants are not delayed at intersections. State law allows uniformed police officers to override traffic regulations to safely manage the flow of traffic. There may also be other instances when police assistance could be needed to help maintain the safe and orderly flow of vehicles and/or pedestrians. The Traffic Control Plan developed for an Event should clearly indicate the location(s) where police assistance will be used, and the specific temporary traffic restrictions being implemented. Their potential impact on overall traffic flow will be considered by MDSHA during the application approval process.

If it is determined that police assistance is required, it is the event organizer's responsibility to determine which police agency has jurisdiction (State police, county police and/or municipal police) and to make the appropriate arrangements with them to provide the necessary level of support, consistent with the traffic control plan submitted to MDSHA. If the police agency requires reimbursement for their services, it is the event organizer's responsibility to make arrangements for reimbursement. If law enforcement personnel are not available for your event, riders/participants must obey all traffic signs, signals, etc.

II. PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Submit Permit Application to MDSHA

Once you have determined that your event will require the use of a State highway(s), consider scheduling a meeting with or contacting the appropriate MDSHA District Office to discuss the proposed event, route, temporary traffic control and permit application requirements. Conflicts with other activities/events can be avoided with advance planning. For events with very large anticipated attendance that are likely to significantly impact traffic flow on State roadways or for new events, the applicant is strongly encouraged to schedule a meeting, or series of meetings, with the appropriate District Office(s). This coordination should occur anywhere from a minimum of six (6) months prior to the event for larger events (e.g., all multi-district events, foot or bicycle races over 5km (3 mi), events with more than 300 participants, parades over one mile, etc.) to ninety (90) days prior to the event for smaller events (e.g., foot or bicycles races of 5km (3 mi) or less, events with less than 300 participants, parades under one mile, etc.).

The Special Event Permit Application Forms can be obtained from the MDSHA website or the appropriate MDSHA District Office. A completed application (including the Special Event Permit “Data Form”, signed “Signature Sheet”, and required attachments) should be submitted to the appropriate District Office as soon as possible, but no less than sixty (60) days prior to the event. The completed form may be submitted via mail, email, or messenger. If you have questions about filling out the forms, contact the appropriate District Office.

In addition to the completed forms, the following documents shall be submitted at the time of application:

- Route Map
- Traffic Control Plan (TCP)
- Other event information, as required by the District Office

Data Sheet. The Data Sheet is used to provide basic event information, including the event type, location, date(s), start and end times; event organizer contact information; impacts to State highways; planned use of law enforcement personnel, etc.

Signature Sheet. The event organizer is responsible for coordinating with all local government agencies that will be impacted by the event. This includes, but is not limited to, the public works or transportation department, city manager, mayor, etc. of any incorporated municipality that the event passes through; municipal, county and/or State Police; County Engineer/Roads Department representatives; State or Federal park service representatives; and, county school system representatives.

The event organizer ***must obtain approval signatures*** on the Signature Sheet from an authorized representative of all applicable local government and police agencies **PRIOR TO SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION TO MDSHA.** The event organizer should first obtain local government agency approvals, followed by local police approval, then Maryland State Police (MDSP) approval. Only after all local agency and police approvals, as indicated by their signatures on the Signature Sheet, are obtained should the completed application be submitted to the appropriate MDSHA District Office for final approval.

Route Map. Attach a suitably scaled map showing all the roadways that will be affected by the event to the application. Include a route narrative explaining the direction of travel, lane/road closures, rest stops, etc.

Traffic Control Plan (TCP). It is the responsibility of the event organizer to prepare the Traffic Control Plan to be submitted with the application. Firms or qualified individuals with temporary traffic control design experience can prepare plans for you if assistance is needed. The TCP should specifically address:

- How the event organizer will alter normal traffic flow,
- How the event organizer will provide for the safety and needs of event participants, and
- How uniformed police officers will be used, including an estimate of the number of officers needed.

The TCP shall indicate how traffic will be maintained, where the police control points are, and show what lanes, shoulders and total road closures are proposed. The TCP shall also provide detail on how affected intersections will be controlled and show all traffic control devices that will be used. The plan shall show signs for detours and/or informational purposes, including portable changeable message signs (PCMS), which will be used during and in advance of the event. For racing events, uniformed police officers or acceptable traffic control barricades are required at each signalized or STOP controlled intersection.

Other Event Information. Depending on the size and nature of your event, some Districts may require additional information to be submitted along with the Permit Application. Refer to the Special Event Permit Checklist for a list of information that you may be required to provide to MDSHA. Contact the appropriate District Office for details on what will be required for your event. If required, this information shall be submitted to MDSHA with the completed application forms; therefore, it is extremely important that you coordinate with the District prior to the sixty (60) day permit application submission deadline.

Multi-District Events. For events involving more than one District or neighboring states, contact the District Office where most of the event takes place. Approval signatures may be required from the other MDSHA Districts, as well as local government/law enforcement representatives or the Maryland State Police in the secondary Districts. ***For events traveling through the state***, contact the Traffic Development and Support Division in the Office of Traffic and Safety at the address shown in Section I

B. Agency Review

A representative from the MDSHA District Office will review the information that has been submitted. The representative will:

- Examine the proposed route and gather information about any construction or maintenance projects that may create specific challenges or conflicts
- Analyze the impact the event may have on roadway operations
- Review the Traffic Control Plans for compliance with State and Federal standards

During this review, the MDSHA Special Events representative may contact you for additional information. If the original route you have selected or TCP are not acceptable, the event organizer will be informed of the reason(s) and given the opportunity to redraft route and/or the TCP. In these situations, MDSHA will work with you to lay out a route that will provide the best and safest conditions for both your participants and the general traveling public. If the route is changed from the original submission, the event organizer must send MDSHA a revised Data Sheet, Signature Sheet (with local government and law enforcement agency signatures), route map, and traffic control plan.

Once the application package is acceptable, the authorized MDSHA representative will sign the Signature Sheet. Assuming the application and all required documentation was submitted at least sixty (60) days in advance and was acceptable on the first submittal, the original, signed Special Event Permit will be returned to the event organizer at least one (1) month prior to the date of the event. MDSHA will provide either hard copies or electronic copies of the approved permit to the affected local jurisdictions and police agencies. The permit, signed by all affected agencies and MDSHA, authorizes you to hold your event in accordance with the terms and conditions of the approved application package.

C. Notifications

The event organizer is responsible for advising the general public and local emergency services of pertinent details (road closures, detours, times and duration, etc.), including the following notifications:

- All appropriate local and state law enforcement agencies shall be notified of the event prior to submitting the Special Event Permit to MDSHA.
- All local jurisdictions (city, county, etc.) affected by the event shall be notified of the event prior to submitting the Special Event Permit to MDSHA.
- Local emergency units (fire, rescue, etc.), local post offices, schools, regularly scheduled buses, and affected residents and businesses shall be notified upon approval of the permit or at least two (2) weeks before the event, as needed.
- As needed, the organizer shall distribute a press release to all local media outlets (radio stations, television stations and newspapers) that will announce the event and advise residents of potential travel delays. The press release shall include dates, times, and roads that will be affected as well as an estimate of the length of delay.
- For events requiring lane closures on State roadways, the event organizer shall notify the Maryland State Highway Administration Statewide Operations Center (SOC) of any lane closures prior to the day of the event. On the day of the event, the organizer shall notify the SOC thirty (30) minutes prior to the actual closure of lanes by telephone at 1-800-543-2515 with confirmation of the start time, estimated time of re-opening, and to verify the location and lanes affected. Once the lane closures are about to be reopened, the event organizer shall notify the SOC to advise them of the opening.

It is not advised to advertise detailed event information prior to gaining MDSHA event approval.

D. MDSHA Services

MDSHA provides the following services and support for your event at no cost:

- Help determining the appropriate routes for the event and need for traffic control
- Review and approval of formal Traffic Control Plans (Note: The event organizer is responsible for developing the Traffic Control Plan)
- Providing information on current highway construction and maintenance projects
- Facilitating the use of highway advisory radio and other public information efforts as appropriate
- If appropriate, providing written explanation to event organizer why application has been rejected.

E. Reimbursement Requirements

- Currently, there is no charge for submitting a Special Event Permit Application.
- If an organizer chooses to use the services of a traffic control company to prepare or revise the traffic control plan, he/she is responsible for any charges incurred.
- The event organizer will be required to pay for traffic control services.
- Police Services: It is the event organizer's responsibility to determine which agency has jurisdiction (state police and/or municipal police) and make the appropriate arrangements with them to provide the necessary level of support. It is the event organizer's responsibility to reimburse the police agency for their services, if required.
- MDSHA Services: MDSHA will not provide employees or equipment for special events in most cases. In the rare event that MDSHA does provide employees or equipment to help with your event, a cost sharing agreement, which includes a written estimate of costs, will be developed prior to the event. This agreement must be signed by the event organizer and MDSHA.

III. APPLICATION TIMELINE

6+ MONTHS TO 90 DAYS PRIOR TO EVENT

- Preliminary request to MDSHA to initially verify event route and discuss permit requirements
- Coordinate with affected local jurisdictions and obtain their approval on the Special Events Permit Signature Sheet
- Coordinate with appropriate law enforcement agencies and obtain their approval on the Special Events Permit Signature Sheet

60 DAYS PRIOR TO EVENT

- Completed Special Event Permit Application (Data Sheet and Signature Sheet) submitted to MDSHA
 - Preliminary map showing event route and law enforcement placement
 - Traffic Control Plan
 - Other event details, as required.

30 DAYS PRIOR TO EVENT

- MDSHA issues approved permit

14 DAYS PRIOR TO EVENT

- Event organizer notifies affected persons, agencies, etc.

IV. MDSHA SPECIAL EVENTS STAFF CONTACTS

A. District 1 – Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties

Mr. Mark Gillis

Maryland State Highway Administration
660 West Road
Salisbury, MD 21802

Telephone: 410-677-4042

Toll Free: 1-800-543-2515

Email: MGillis@mdot.maryland.gov

Mr. Gary Hastings

Maryland State Highway Administration
660 West Road
Salisbury, MD 21802

Telephone: 410-677-4000

Toll Free: 1-800-543-2515

Email: GHastings1@mdot.maryland.gov

B. District 2 – Caroline, Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne’s and Talbot Counties

Mr. Stanley Lake

Maryland State Highway Administration
615 Morgnec Road
Chestertown, MD 21620

Telephone: 410-778-3061

Toll Free: 1-800-543-2515

Email: SLake@mdot.maryland.gov

Mr. Richard Baker

Maryland State Highway Administration
615 Morgnec Road
Chestertown, MD 21620

Telephone: 410-810-3200

Toll Free: 1-800-543-2515

Email: RBaker@mdot.maryland.gov

C. District 3 – Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties

Ms. Ingrid Briggs

Maryland State Highway Administration
9300 Kenilworth Avenue Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770

Telephone: 410-841-1092

Toll Free: 1-800-543-2515

Email: IBriggs@mdot.maryland.gov

D. District 4 – Baltimore and Harford Counties

Mr. John Vananzo

Maryland State Highway Administration
320 West Warren Road
Hunt Valley, MD 21030

Telephone: 410-229-2341

Toll Free: 1-800-543-2515

Email: JVananzo@mdot.maryland.gov

E. District 5 – Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary’s Counties

Mr. McSendy Pierre
Maryland State Highway
Administration 138 Defense Highway
Annapolis, MD 21401
Telephone: 410-841-1026
Toll Free: 1-800-543-2515
Email: MPierre@mdot.maryland.gov

F. District 6 – Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties

Ms. Linda Puffenbarger
Maryland State Highway Administration
1251 Vocke Road
La Vale, MD 21502
Telephone: 301-729-8444
Toll Free: 1-800-543-2515
Email: LZerbee@mdot.maryland.gov

Ms. Kimberly Harbeson
Maryland State Highway Administration
1251 Vocke Road
La Vale, MD 21502
Telephone: 301-729-8400
Toll Free: 1-800-543-2515
Email: KHarbeson@mdot.maryland.gov

G. District 7 – Carroll, Frederick, and Howard Counties

Ms. Mary Nusbaum
Maryland State Highway Administration
5111 Buckeystown Pike
Frederick, MD 21704
Telephone: 301-624-8142
Toll Free: 1-800-543-2515
Email: MNusbaum@mdot.maryland.gov

H. For Events Involving More Than One District

For Events Involving More than one District or Involving Neighboring States or the District of Columbia

Contact the District Office in which most of the event takes place.

Approval signatures may be required from other MDSHA Districts, local government/law enforcement representatives, or the Maryland State Police.

I. For Events Traveling through the State of Maryland

Mr. Achyut Neupane, Team leader

Multi-Modal Team

Maryland State Highway Administration

7491 Connelley Drive Hanover, MD 21076

Telephone: 410-787-4056

Toll Free: 1-888-963-0307

Email: ANeupane@mdot.maryland.gov