



## Considering an alternative venue?

Here are some things you should know...

Every city has its own rules and regulations, and these can vary significantly from place to place. You can't fight city hall, so make friends there instead. Specific approvals will vary depending on the nature of your event and the space you choose. Assume that you are going to need some kind of permit. It's best to have a friend on the inside to help guide you through the approvals process. Start early. Very early. Some permits and other factors include:

**Insurance** Check to be sure that your insurance covers works of art, even when they are not on your property. In many cases, you will need supplemental insurance to cover any damages or losses when you are using a temporary venue. You may also need liability insurance. Once you find a building that you would like to use, you can ask the property owner(s) if their existing liability coverage includes special events and temporary installations. It probably doesn't, but they may be willing to get a rider to their policy that will cover your project. Or, you can purchase special event insurance—there are a number of national agencies that provide event insurance. Most have websites where you can fill out an online application. Your insurer will need to know the details of what you are planning, how many people you expect, how much coverage you need, and whether you plan to serve alcohol. Liability rates are based on how many people you expect to attend. For example, a typical policy (\$2 million general aggregate, \$1 million per occurrence, \$1 million personal injury, \$300,000 damage to premises and \$5,000 medical) might cost \$500 for a small, short-term installation, \$1,500 or more for a larger event or a longer exhibition. Alcohol, live music, and other factors will increase the insurance premium. Use a high estimate for attendance figures because if more people turn up than you estimated, your insurance will be invalid. The property owner, the event organizer, major sponsors, and other partners may need to be listed as "additional insured" on your policy. Your insurer should issue certificates of insurance for each insured party.

**Security** Consider hiring off duty police officers to keep an eye on things, especially for openings when you expect to draw a crowd. The cost varies, but a typical rate is around \$30 per hour per officer.

**Temporary occupancy permit:** If a building is currently vacant, you may need a temporary occupancy permit. To apply for a permit, you will need a floor plan of the building and a site plan of the property, showing the extent of what you are planning to do. Building exits should be clearly marked on your floor plan. The site plan should show the location and extent of parking areas.

**Rooftops** are great locations for installations and events, but the logistics can be tricky. Make sure your roof has a parapet wall or a high railing around the perimeter. Open roof edges are dangerous and you will run into problems with the Building Department unless you can secure the edge in a code-conforming way. Your roof will need at least two means of egress (two ways to get up and down from the roof). Don't forget about accessibility—people with limited mobility may want to attend your event. Plan early, not at the last minute.

**Electricity:** If possible, choose a building that has electricity. Or if you are using a vacant building with no power, you may be able to get your power for sound equipment and lighting from nearby buildings. But don't go crazy with extension cords, because this is dangerous. You can rent a generator, although they are noisy and will typically require an electrical permit. In most cities, only a registered electrician can pull an electrical permit.

**Restrooms** If your building does not have working restrooms, you can rent portable facilities for about \$100 per unit per day. Rent at least two, even if you're expecting a small crowd, because you'll want to have a back-up if one malfunctions. Or see if you can find a nearby restaurant with a friendly owner. Offer to buy food from the restaurant in exchange for use of their restrooms.

**Water:** If your building does not have running water, you can always tap a fire hydrant. You usually need a permit to do this. If you need to use a lot of water over an extended period of time, the water department may decide to meter your usage and bill you. But in most cases, you can just estimate your anticipated water usage and pay in advance. To tap a fire hydrant, you need a big lug wrench. Righty-tighty, lefty loosey. If you plan to transport water some distance from the hydrant to your site, you will need a fire hose. A garden hose will not work. Many building contractors also have fire hoses, so see if someone will lend you one.

**Alcohol:** Selling alcohol requires a liquor permit, giving drinks away does not. However, your liability insurance premium will be higher if you serve alcohol.

**Have questions or need advice?** Call 216.357.3426 or e-mail [info@popupcleveland.com](mailto:info@popupcleveland.com)