

# Operational Guidance for Managing Spontaneous Gatherings

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**Applies to:** Anyone involved in a spontaneous gathering in a public space on the capitol campus.

**Authorizing sources:**

Federal law – Constitution 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment

State rule – [Chapter 200-220 WAC](#)

**Information contact:** Public Space and Services Manager, Capitol Security and Visitor Services

**Effective date:** January 1, 2013

**Last update:** June 14, 2018

**Sunset review date:** June 14, 2019

**Approved by:** Joyce Turner, Director

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## Reason for Policy

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide for the safety and protection of facilities and people.

These guidelines are in addition to the rules and other requirements governing activities on the capitol buildings and grounds (Capitol Campus).

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## Policy Statement

Enterprise Services will ensure that the use of the public areas of the capitol buildings and grounds by spontaneous gatherings is balanced with the conduct of government business, public access and expression, and the stewardship of the historic capitol buildings and grounds.

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## Policy

**A. We do not require a permit for spontaneous gatherings.**

Although we do not require a permit for spontaneous gatherings, you must notify us at least two hours in advance of the start of the activity.

**B. Permitted events will have priority.**

Permitted events will have priority over spontaneous uses of the public areas of the Capitol Campus.

**C. Spontaneous gathering of a certain size may require action:**

Upon notification of a spontaneous gathering involving more than 25 people take place in the public areas of the capitol buildings or more than 75 people take place on the state capitol grounds we will monitor and take the following actions when necessary:

- Initiate contact with the individual or group requesting use of a designated public area. All contact will be professional in demeanor and neutral in word and actions.

- Notify Capitol Campus tenants of the unplanned activity.
- Be present at the event, arriving on the scene prior to its scheduled or anticipated starting time or as soon as practical after being informed of the event.
- Contact our Washington State Patrol (WSP) liaison and conduct preliminary discussions about the forthcoming event that is planned or anticipated.
- Observe events as they occur to ensure that individual rights are not being violated and that state property is not being damaged or destroyed. We will contact the WSP for appropriate action in cases of unlawful activities, including but not limited to disrupting the orderly flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic or the conduct of state business.

#### D. We may make an appropriate determination to disperse or relocate a spontaneous gathering.

When violations of law, our policy, or state regulations occur at the event, we will consult with our Executive Management and our WSP Liaison.

When we have made a determination that a group of individuals should be dispersed and/or relocated, the WSP will be informed and shall attempt to peacefully implement the decision.

If the group does not disperse and/or relocate and, if in the opinion of the WSP dispersal and/or relocation is necessary for the protection of life or property, or for the enforcement of laws, the WSP shall give dispersal notice to the assembled group. A second notice shall be given and appropriate action shall be taken by the WSP if the group fails to obey the instructions.

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## Related Information

The following is not policy content, but provided for additional context:

[RCW 43.19.125 Powers and duties – custody and control](#)

[RCW 46.08.150 Control of traffic on capitol grounds](#)

[Chapter 200-200 State capitol grounds traffic and parking regulations](#)

[Chapter 200-220 WAC Use of the public areas of the capitol buildings and grounds](#)

[Chapter 200-250 WAC Operating unmanned aircraft \(drones\) on the state capitol campus](#)

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## History

### Amended

June 27, 2018: transitioned to an accessible format

### Supersedes

Department of General Administration policy and related documents

### Original Effective Date

January 1, 2013

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Need a copy of a prior version of this policy? E-mail [jack.zeigler@des.wa.gov](mailto:jack.zeigler@des.wa.gov)