

**GM FINANCIAL PARADE OF LIGHTS
POLICIES 2024**

(Revised June 27, 2024)

Parade scheduled LIVE, November 24, 2024

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. INDEMNIFICATION WAIVER

An indemnification waiver must be signed and submitted with payment. (See Addendum 1.)

B. FIRE MARSHAL REQUIREMENTS FOR FLOATS

All float participants must review fire marshal requirements for floats prior to submitting an application. (See Addendum 2.)

C. BANNERS AND ENTRY NUMBERS:

- Banners must include organization name and title of the entry. - One banner preceding each entry is mandatory.
 - Two additional banners can be placed on either side of the entry.
 - There is no size limit to banners.
 - Banners must be able to be read with minimal lighting for effective viewing.
 - You must provide your own **banner carriers** who must be capable of maintaining parade pace.
 - If the pace is impeding the parade progress, the entry will be removed.
- Parade management will provide a number sign large enough to be read by Announcers prior to entering the Announcement Stand areas. These will be carried by Volunteers and will be in front of all other entry elements.

D. COMMERCIAL ENTRANTS

- Businesses may apply as parade entrants and pay the appropriate commercial fee.
- Entries may be sponsored by an individual business or businesses in a mutual association.
- Logos or business names may be used on an entry.
 - The entry may not be used primarily for advertising purposes and must be in keeping with the holiday spirit of the parade.
 - Signs must be limited to two per entry.
 - Maximum size per sign may not exceed 24 inches by 36 inches.
- Floats in keeping with the overall theme of the parade are available for sponsorship, inclusive of marketing and advertising benefits. Contact festivalinfo@dfwi.org for more information.

E. ENTRY CONSTRUCTION OR PRODUCTION EXPENSE

- There is no maximum limit in terms of costs or expenses to be incurred by organizations to produce their entries. The use of ingenuity and creativity in the design and execution of an entry is encouraged and will be considered when the entry is judged.

F. HAND-OUTS OR GIVEAWAYS:

- No handouts or giveaways of any kind are permitted before, during or after the parade except by Parade Sponsors or Commercial Float entries.
- **Per Fort Worth City Ordinance, nothing is to be thrown from a parade entry, including candy or other promotional items. Violators could be issued a citation from the Fort Worth Police Department.**

G. PERFORMERS AND ENTERTAINERS:

- PARADE PERFORMANCES
 - a. Any performance along the route or in front of the judges or Announcement Stands must be a continual moving/marching routine.
- **Any entry that stops to perform shall be ineligible for an award and will be subject to removal from the parade.**

H. POLITICAL

- DFWII is a non-political organization.
- Only current public office holders are allowed to enter the parade and must contact us directly.
- Individuals or organizations who attempt to use the parade to further their own or others' campaigns will be removed from the parade.
- Under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, tax-exempt organizations are prohibited from participating in or intervening in political activities.

I. SUPPORT VEHICLES:

- Motorized entries (floats, cars, etc.) will **not** be permitted to have a support vehicle. A float and a tow vehicle comprise one unit.
- Marching units and walking entries are permitted to have one support vehicle. The support vehicle must be decorated and lighted.
- Entrants must describe the support vehicle on the supplement form to be eligible to have a support vehicle in the parade.
- The support vehicle must be lighted as per the specifications below (Section L).

J. SAFETY:

- No child under **eight** (8) years of age will be allowed to walk in the parade. Children under 8 may ride on floats, vehicles or bicycles under adult supervision.
- At no time shall anyone on the float attempt to step off the float while the float is in motion.
- Parade participants must keep pace with the line of march. All units must maintain forward motion during the parade. No counter marching or other maneuvers contrary to the forward progress of the parade are allowed. Gaps are not allowed to occur.

- Materials used in each entry must be fire-retardant and not of a dangerous nature.
 - If entrants choose to apply a flame retardant, the City of Fort Worth Fire Marshal will need a simple written document, signed by the participant, indicating:
 - the product applied,
 - the manufacturer's name, and
 - a statement that the flame retardant was applied in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
 - The manufacturer's technical documentation should be available to be provided upon request. This documentation is generally noted on the label or other instructions that came with the product.
 - Floats will be inspected for conformance to this requirement prior to the start of the parade. Non-compliance may be cause for exclusion from the parade at the Fire Marshal's discretion. ○ A letter from the City of Fort Worth Fire Marshal's office is attached to this policy as Addendum 2.
- An onboard fire extinguisher is highly recommended, and mandatory if portable generators are used.
- Bike riders and motorcycle operators must adhere to state and local laws regarding helmets.
- Hand holds must be provided for each float rider.
- Payment of the fee and appearance at the parade staging area(s) indicates an understanding of and acceptance of the above policies. Non-conformance may be cause from dismissal from the parade.
- Parade units must follow instructions from the Parade Committee and Police Officers. Failure to follow instructions will result in immediate removal from the parade line up.
- Any additions or changes made to parade units after being accepted must be approved by the Parade Committee. Parade units with changes that have not been approved will not be allowed in the line of march.
- The Parade Committee reserves the right to remove any unit from the line of march for any reason or cause without advance notice.
- The Parade will take place rain or shine unless prohibited by dangerous weather conditions.
- Entries will be required to provide direct contact information for on-location manager, supervisor or responsible party to be added to our emergency contact list. This list will be kept active and up to date, and will serve as the primary means of communication should there be a situation requiring immediate communications.

K. APPLICATIONS

- All applications must be postmarked by or turned in by the deadline posted on the parade application. Notifications of participation will be made by a posted date.
- No more than three applications may be submitted from an individual organization to enter a unit in the Parade; however, except for performing units, no more than two entries can be accepted if all applications consist of units with similar elements and characteristics. This is necessary to maintain a diverse parade. There can be no more than six elements within each entry. Additional

entries for a single organization will be subject to increased fees or may be placed on a waiting list. See Fees and Indemnification (Section N.)

- A separate application must be submitted for each entry in parade. Example: A school that enters baton twirlers, drum major, and color guard to be judged, must submit a separate application for each; however, in this example, if the entry is considered to be one, only one application is required.
- If a single organization has multiple entries, they should be listed at least once in the desired line-up order. Example: Schools with cheerleaders, drum majors, band, drill team and alumni groups.
- **Submission of application does not guarantee entry into the parade. Acceptance of entry is based on the entrant's ability to describe the illumination, musical programming, artistic merit, creativity, costuming and entertainment value.**
- All entry forms must include:
 - (1) an informative and complete written description
 - (2) a photo, sketch, or artist's rendering and
 - (3) a short one paragraph script: to be read at the Announce Stands.
- By completing an application to participate in the parade, entrants understand that not all applicants will be selected for participation.
- The Parade Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any parade unit application.
- The application serves as a waiver of release for the submitting organization. Application submission constitutes agreement to the terms therein.

L. **ENTRY AND LIGHTING REQUIREMENTS:**

- Each entry must be illuminated with light strands, flashlights, spotlights, florescent materials, or other resources and in accordance with the following minimum requirements:
 - Floats (decorated unit on a trailer pulled by a tow vehicle, self-propelled or flatbed):
 - Length =
 - 5 feet, 800 lights
 - 10 feet, 1,300 lights
 - 15 feet, 2,000 lights
 - 20 feet, 2,500 lights
 - 25 feet and over, 4,000 lights (no longer than 50') - Cars/Golf Carts/Tractors, 1,500 lights
 - Motorcycles and bicycles, 750 – 1,000 lights.
 - Tri-wheel motorcycles, motorcycles with sidecars, bicycles with pull-behind trams 1,000+ lights.
 - Carriages/Stagecoaches/Wagons, 1,500 lights
 - Trucks (tow vehicles are not included and should not be illuminated), 2,500 lights
 - Horses/Livestock (includes pull horse for horse-drawn vehicles) 75 lights each
- Walking units will be limited and are required to accompany a float or provide entertainment value such as performing a mobile routine, clowning, drill team, dance team, cheerleading or handling a giant balloon or inflatable or use of creative holiday costuming.
- All individuals in Walking Units must be illuminated with lighting of a minimum of 50 lights per individual.

- ALL parade participants including motorcycle, bicycle, float and horse riders, walking units and car drivers must be in costume or holiday wear indicated in the entry description.
 - Exceptions will be made for uniformed marching units, drill teams and/or cheerleaders; however, lights are required.
- Alcoholic beverages and other controlled substances are forbidden on and along the parade route. This includes all assembling and dispersal areas. Participants consuming said substances prior to or during the parade will not be allowed to participate and will be removed from the line of march. The Fort Worth Police Department will also be notified of any suspected intoxication or violation of this rule.
- **Parade participants are not allowed to distribute candy, pamphlets or other materials along the parade route.**
- The Downtown Fort Worth Initiatives, Inc. Santa Claus will ride the anchor float. **No other live or life-size likeness of Santa Claus is permitted, although replications of reindeer, sleighs, etc. are acceptable.**
- All entries are required to be ready to step-off at the appropriate time and any entry not prepared will forfeit their opportunity regardless of the reason.
- All floats shall have a skirt to cover the wheels within the bounds of safety.
- Baby strollers and children's wagons are not allowed in the line of march with units.
- All drivers must be at least 18 years of age and possess a valid driver's license. All vehicles must have valid insurance.
- All entries having music or sound amplifying systems shall maintain a volume that will not interfere with other entries, especially those with animals. If a unit is informed by a Parade official that the noise generated by their unit is too loud; they shall immediately turn the volume down.
- No sirens, horns or loud noises are permitted.
- Due to City Code:
 - no superstructure may exceed 14 feet from street level
 - all superstructures must be wired or otherwise secured
 - all superstructures must be able to go under utility wires along the parade route.

M. MUSIC:

Music is not required but it is highly encouraged and a consideration for judging criteria.

N. FEES AND INDEMNIFICATION:

- Applications accepted for participation will be required to pay an entry fee based on the following:
 - Commercial (businesses and for-profit companies) - \$1050
 - Non-Commercial - \$195
 - Non-Profit (must prove non-profit status and may not "sell" status to a for-profit organization) - \$85

- Fees are **not** refundable for entries that are removed from the parade for nonconformance with these policies.

O. ENTRY CATEGORIES

1. FLOATS – generally considered to be wheeled decks or trailers with decorations and lighting, needing propulsion
 - Towed;
 - Pushed; • Self-propelled.
2. VEHICLES:
 - Classic/Antique Car Clubs (25 years of age at the time of entry) - Clubs only! No more than 6 cars/units per entry, maximum of 2 entries per club;
 - Contemporary Car Club. No more than 6 cars/units per entry, maximum of 2 entries per club;
 - Antique vehicle (25 years of age at the time of entry) – This may be a truck (except firetrucks), car, bus, etc. Only one vehicle allowed per entry, and only two entries per organization;
 - Antique Firetruck (25 years of age at the time of entry) – Only one vehicle allowed per entry, and only one entry per organization;
 - Motorcycle - No more than 6 units per entry, maximum of two entries per club;
 - Golf cart, go-cart, mini-cart or other small ATV-type vehicle – No more than 6 carts/units per entry, maximum of two entries per club
 - At no time shall additional units join a club entry without having been registered in advance.
3. MARCHING BANDS
 - School or Professional Marching Bands with or without Drill and Flag Teams
 - Drum and Bugle Corps
4. MUSICAL GROUPS, DRUM CORPS (other than marching bands, with music produced by participants)
 - Pipe and Drum Corps;
 - Marching Musical Performance Groups not classified as a Marching Band or Drum/Bugle Corps
5. WALKING OR PEOPLE POWERED
 - Drill Teams or Dance Teams with recorded accompaniment;
 - Bicycle or Unicycle Units;
 - Walking or people-powered sculptural elements including masks, sculptures or inflatables
6. MOUNTED AND EQUESTRIAN UNITS
 - Pulled wagons, stagecoaches or any elements requiring stock to pull or push;
 - Horse clubs;
 - Single riders;
 - NOTE: Equestrian Units are limited to no more than 6 animals per entry, plus coach or wagon per entry, and no more than two entries per organization.
 - Animals and riders must have demonstrated parade participation credentials, i.e., they have had experience actually riding in a parade event.
7. UNIQUE:

- Any entry that does not fit in any other category. Divided into commercial and noncommercial entries with awards in each category.
8. **DIGNITARIES:** (Not for judging)
- This category includes elected officials, sponsors of the Parade, Grand Marshal, and invited dignitaries.

P. JUDGING CRITERIA

All Floats, Vehicles, Marching Units/Bands, Walking units, Equestrian Units and Unique Entries will be judged by a twelve member panel composed of civic, arts and theater industry leaders. The following criteria will be used with an average numbering system between 1 and 7, with 7 being the highest score possible for a single entry:

- Overall Lighting and Appearance (Outstanding display of showmanship and entertainment)
- Holiday Spirit
- Costumes
- Originality (artistic merit) - Music and Creativity
- Thematic Interpretation
- Dramatic Impact
- Car club entries with less than 3 vehicles will not be judged.

Q. AWARDS:

- **GRAND PRIZE WINNER:** Plaque awarded for the best overall entry, commercial or noncommercial. This entry must be of a holiday nature.
- **COWTOWN SPIRIT AWARD:** Equestrian entries
- **HOLIDAY SPIRIT AWARD:** Vehicles
- **FOUNDERS AWARD:** Commercial floats
- **FOUNDERS AWARD, Non-Commercial:** Non-commercial Floats.
- **CRAFTSMANSHIP AWARD:** Marching Units and Walkers (not Marching Bands).
- **MUSIC AWARD:** Bands and live musicians.
- **DIRECTOR'S CHOICE:** Overall award by Downtown Fort Worth Initiatives, Inc.
- **BEST OF CLASS AND HONORABLE MENTION:** May be chosen in each category. All winners will receive awards.
- Results will be posted on the parade website within 2 business day following the end of the parade.

Addendum 1

**Indemnification, Statement of Financial Responsibility and Waiver
Corporate/Organization/Participant
Downtown Fort Worth Initiatives, Inc., Parade of Lights**

(MUST BE SIGNED AND SUBMITTED BY THE POSTED DATE ON THE APPLICATION)

I, the undersigned, as an authorized person, officer, or director of the participant herein named, do hereby agree to release, hold harmless, and indemnify Downtown Fort Worth Initiatives, Inc., Downie Productions, Inc., and the City of Fort Worth, its participants, officers, directors, and each and every parade sponsor, from any and all liability or claim whatsoever for any damage or injury including death

DOWNTOWN FORT WORTH INITIATIVES, INC. – GM FINANCIAL PARADE OF LIGHTS POLICIES

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or any financial loss that may occur as a result of or relating to participation in the above named parade and event. I warrant that I am an authorized representative for:

Print Name of Entity, Organization or Person(s):

And, as such, further warrant that such entity, organization or person(s) possesses adequate financial responsibility so as to indemnify the above-named parties and assume all expenses that may arise from any third party claim. Further, as the authorized representative, I hereby waive any and all claims that the entity, organization or person(s) may have against the above-named parties as a result of or relating to the Parade of Lights and/or related events.

Print Address of Entity, Organization or Person(s):

I HEREBY WARRANT AND REPRESENT THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE RELEASE, INDEMNIFICATION, STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WAIVER, AND THAT I AM DULY AUTHORIZED TO BIND THE ABOVE STATE PARTICIPANT TO SUCH REPRESENTATIONS. (PLEASE INITIAL): _____

SPECIFIC RELATIONSHIP OF SIGNER OF THIS DOCUMENT TO THE PARTICIPANT IN THE PARADE OF LIGHTS

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____