

# Outdoor Tent GUIDELINES

This document is to aid in determining capacity and does not include all requirements. Inspectors will address site specific requirements.



DEPARTMENT OF  
**NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES**

**Which of the following most closely resembles the space you are requesting to use?**

## EXISTING ASSEMBLY SPACE

(restaurant, tavern, banquet hall)

**You are already established as an assembly space and require no other action if nothing is to change. Use the existing capacities based on Health Department guidelines.**

- If you did not previously serve food and beverage, a recalculation for bathrooms will be required, along with a temporary occupancy permit.

**Temporary occupancy only required if making changes.**

## OUTDOORS

(NOT in tent)

MCO 261-97

**Your space is outdoors and NOT contained in a tent.**

- One person per 6 sq. feet of ground area used or intended to be used.
- Outdoor areas shall have direct access to a public way (street, alley, sidewalk).
- If serving food and beverage, toilet facilities will need to be supplied at a ratio of one toilet per 40 people.
- If no food and beverage, toilet facilities will need to be supplied at a ratio of one toilet per 90 people.

**Temporary occupancy required.**

## EVENT TENT

MCO 261-42

**Your space is outdoors and contained within a tent.**

- Tents or other air supported structures that cover areas over 600 sq. feet or serve an occupant load of over 50 require a tent permit from the Permit & Dev. Center.
- The capacity of any tent shall not exceed one person for each 6 sq. feet of tent area.
- Occupants must be able to exit the tent without reentering or going through a building or structure on the site.
- If serving food and beverage, toilet facilities will need to be supplied at a ratio of one toilet per 40 people.
- If no food and beverage, toilet facilities will need to be supplied at a ratio of one toilet per 90 people.

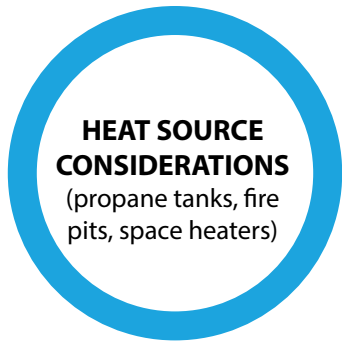
**Temporary occupancy required.**

## INDOOR Non-Traditional Assembly Space

(NOT on ground floor level)

**If event space is located on a floor level other than the ground floor level, a design professional (registered architect or P.E.) will be required to evaluate your space according to IBC and IEBC requirements.**

**Temporary occupancy required.**



**HEAT SOURCE CONSIDERATIONS**  
(propane tanks, fire pits, space heaters)

**Relevant Code Sections for Additional Info:**

1. MCO 214-9
2. MCO 265-01
3. MCO 264-01
4. MCO 214-3
5. IFC-2006, Chapter 24
6. MCO 236-01

**Please review the advice and code considerations below when determining safe options for heating an outdoor space.**

- **IFC 2404.7.** Open flame or other devices emitting flame, fire or heat or any flammable or *combustible liquids*, gas, charcoal or other cooking device or any other unapproved devices shall not be permitted inside or located within 20 feet (6096 mm) of the tent or membrane structures while open to the public.
- **MCO 214-9.** Open burning shall be conducted only in an approved and listed container or a substantial burner built of metal, concrete or brick, well covered or screened to prevent the escape of sparking and burning embers.
- **MCO 214-9.** Open burning shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished. A minimum of one portable fire extinguisher with a minimum 4- A rating or other approved on-site fire extinguishing equipment such as dirt, sand, water barrel, garden hose or water truck shall be available for immediate utilization.
- **IFC 2404.19 Separation of generators.** Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be separated from tents or membrane structures by not less than 20 feet (6096 mm) and shall be isolated from contact with the public by fencing, enclosure or other approved means.
- **IFC 2404.15.2 Venting.** Gas, liquid and solid fuel-burning equipment designed to be vented shall be vented to the outside air as specified in the International Fuel Gas Code and the International Mechanical Code. Where vents or flues are used, all portions of the tent or membrane structure shall be not less than 12 inches (305 mm) from the flue or vent.

**To begin an application for temporary occupancy, please visit: [milwaukee.gov/lms](http://milwaukee.gov/lms)**

**Permit & Development Center**  
**809 N. Broadway**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53202**

(414) 286-8210  
[milwaukee.gov/permits](http://milwaukee.gov/permits)  
[DevelopmentCenterInfo@milwaukee.gov](mailto:DevelopmentCenterInfo@milwaukee.gov)

Any temporary occupancy will bring inspectors to your site. At that time, it can be evaluated for any site specific conditions that may need to be corrected. Inspectors will review egress paths and possibly require additional and/or emergency lighting to be put in place to ensure that persons with disabilities are being accommodated, essentially ensuring that your space is safe.

There may be additional COVID-19 safety measures required by the Milwaukee Health Department.

**Other helpful information:**

**For COVID-19 Information:**  
Health Department  
[milwaukee.gov/coronavirus](http://milwaukee.gov/coronavirus)  
(414) 286-3674

**For permitting in the right of way:**  
Department of Public Works  
[milwaukee.gov/DPW](http://milwaukee.gov/DPW)  
(414) 286-3329

**For temporary public entertainment premise:**  
License Division  
[milwaukee.gov/license](http://milwaukee.gov/license)  
(414) 286-2238

**For serving of food and beverage:**  
License Division  
[milwaukee.gov/license](http://milwaukee.gov/license)  
(414) 286-2238

Health Department  
[milwaukee.gov/health](http://milwaukee.gov/health)  
(414) 286-3674

- Generators may require an electrical permit (DNS)
- Tents require a permit (Permit & Development Center)
- Tents or anything occupying the right of way require a special events permit (DPW)