



**Andrico Penick**  
**Director of Real Estate**



**From:** San Francisco City Hall Building Management and Media/Security Systems  
**Subject:** San Francisco City Hall Steps Use Permits

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Individuals and groups seeking to use the steps of City Hall for a rally, press conference, or other gathering of 10 or more people ("Event") are generally required to obtain a permit to do so first (permits are not required for individuals or small groups of less than 10 people). This is because groups of 10 or more people require advanced security planning to ensure public safety, to protect City property and to preserve access to City Hall. City Hall steps permits are for two-hour time increments inclusive of setup and breakdown. Attached is the application for a permit to use of the City Hall steps on Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place or Van Ness Avenue, along with the City Hall Steps Use Policy and Acknowledgment Form which outlines the requirements and policies regarding City Hall steps use and permits.

Additionally, for public safety and access reasons, City Hall only allows permits for groups up to 150 people. If an applicant expects more than 150 people to attend the Event, the applicant should contact the Recreation & Park Department at (415) 831-5500 to schedule use of Civic Center Plaza or an alternative venue.

Note that the use of amplified sound equipment on the steps of City Hall without an amplified sound permit is prohibited. Individuals seeking to use amplified sound equipment on the City Hall steps must obtain a one-time permit issued by the Entertainment Commission, and are subject to standard outdoor amplified sound regulations pursuant to Police Code Article 15.1. More information and permit applications may be obtained from the Entertainment Commission at <http://sfgov.org/entertainment>, or by visiting 49 S. Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1482 between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, or by calling (628) 652-6030 during business hours to make an appointment. Additionally, a permittee who has obtained a permit from the Entertainment Commission must submit to City Hall Media/Security Systems at (415) 554-7490 a request for the City to supply power to sound systems on the City Hall steps at least 24 hours in advance of the Event. Any requests to provide power for weekend use will incur a labor charge.

Please fully complete and sign the application form, and submit it to City Hall Building Management (CHBM) either by email to [sfcityhallsteps@sfgov.org](mailto:sfcityhallsteps@sfgov.org) or in person at City Hall Room 008 (on the basement floor). You must include your initials where indicated and provide your contact information on the application form. CHBM will use best efforts to respond to applications within two business days of receiving a completed form.

CHBM approves permits on a first come, first served basis, unless the steps are reserved due to (1) a previously-permitted Event at the same time; (2) City business, programs, and activities; (3) loading and unloading of City Hall events; and (4) special events authorizing the closure of the street on which the relevant steps are located. If the steps are not reserved and the application criteria are met, CHBM will approve a permit to any individual or group wishing to use the City Hall steps consistent with the attached policies. Permit denials are appealable to the Board of Appeals under Charter Section 4.106.

CHBM will return the approved permit to the applicant by email, though an applicant may also pick up a copy of the approved permit from City Hall room 008. The permit holder must possess the approved permit at the Event (and an amplified sound permit if using amplified sound equipment) and be prepared to present it to sheriff deputies or any City official upon request.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation. Please phone us at (415) 554-7490 or email us at [sfcityhallsteps@sfgov.org](mailto:sfcityhallsteps@sfgov.org) should you have any questions about City Hall steps permitting and/or applicable City Hall steps use policies and requirements.

Respectfully,  
San Francisco City Hall Building Management and Media/Security Systems

Attachments (2)



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**CITY HALL STEPS USE PERMIT: DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE AND VAN NESS AVENUE**

1. DATE OF EVENT	2. EVENT START TIME SETUP: START:	3. EVENT END TIME EVENT END: BREAKDOWN:	4. DATE OF REQUEST	5. CONTACT PERSON
6. CONTACT SIGNATURE		7. CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	8. ALTERNATIVE NUMBER	9. EMAIL ADDRESS
10. GROUP REQUESTING PERMIT				
11. EVENT DESCRIPTION				
12. AREAS OF ACCESS (Check Selection) <input type="checkbox"/> VAN NESS STEPS <input type="checkbox"/> GOODLETT STEPS				
13. AREAS OF ACCESS (IF DIFFERENT FROM #12 ABOVE)			14. NUMBER OF PEOPLE EXPECTED	
15. WILL THERE BE ANY TYPE OF AMPLIFIED SOUND. (NOTE: CITY HALL DOES NOT PROVIDE SOUND SYSTEM.) <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    If yes, explain:				
16. CITY HALL AUTHORIZATION   <p style="text-align: center;">CITY HALL BUILDING MANAGEMENT</p>				

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*\***

- You must **fully complete** this form (including your initials below) and sign and return it along with the attached policy with your signature before this application will be reviewed and approved.
- City Hall permits are for **2-hour** time increments inclusive of setup and breakdown. Authorization signature on this form confirms that CHBM has approved and scheduled the above event for the 2-hour time slot indicated. You must bring this approved application with you to the Event (along with a valid sound permit, if applicable) and be prepared to present it if/when asked by sheriff's deputies or other City officials.
- The City may cancel an approved permit if the City Hall steps are not available due to fire, casualty, acts of God, a condition requiring immediate maintenance, or where the City determines that cancellation is necessary to protect public safety or property. The City may also cancel or postpone an approved permit if the City requires use of the steps for City business that arose after the permit was issued and the City has no suitable alternate location to conduct that City business.** Initial here to indicate that you understand these terms:
- For public safety and access reasons, City Hall only allows permits for groups up to **150 people**. If an applicant expects more than 150 people to attend the Event, the applicant should contact the Recreation & Park Department at (415) 831-5500 to schedule use of Civic Center plaza or an alternative venue.
- Amplified Sound:** Applicants intending to use amplified sound equipment at the Event, including amplified musical instruments, must apply in advance for a permit from the Entertainment Commission. For more information, go to 49 S. Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1482 between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, or by calling (628) 652-6030 during business hours, or go to <http://sfgov.org/entertainment> (online payments are accepted). A permittee who has obtained a permit from the Entertainment Commission must submit a request for the City to supply power to sound systems on the City Hall steps to City Hall Media/Security Systems (415) 554-7490 at least 24 hours in advance of the Event. Any requests to provide power for weekend use will incur a labor charge. Permittees are required to bring their amplified sound permit with them to the Event. Initial here to confirm that you understand these terms and that this is not a permit for amplified sound:



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## **CITY HALL STEPS USE POLICY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**

**\*\*\*This form must be signed and included with the City Hall Steps Permit Application\*\*\***

- General Permitting Requirements:
  - Individuals and/or groups seeking to use the steps of City Hall for a rally, press conference, or other gathering of 10 people or more ("Event") are generally required to obtain a permit to do so first. This is because groups of 10 people or more require advanced security planning to ensure public safety, to protect City property, and to preserve access to City Hall.
  - More than 150 people: For public safety and access reasons, City Hall limits use of the steps to groups of 150 people or less. If more than 150 people are expected for your Event, contact the Recreation & Park department at (415) 831-5500 to schedule use of Civic Center plaza or reserve an alternative venue.
  - When a permit is not required: A permit is not required for individuals or small groups less than 10 people. Additionally, the City recognizes an exception to the permit requirement to allow spontaneous expression in response to news or affairs coming into public knowledge less than 48 hours prior to that expression. Such non-permitted events are allowed as long as they do not interfere with City Hall access or other permitted events, do not threaten the safety of people using City Hall or City property, and sufficient staffing is available to protect City Hall access, public safety, and public property. If the City Hall steps are already reserved, the non-permitted individual or group will not be able to use the steps, and instead will need to find an alternate venue. For these reasons, we recommend obtaining a permit whenever possible.
- Permit Reviews and Approvals:
  - City Hall permits are approved for **2-hour time** increments inclusive of setup and breakdown.
  - City Hall Building Management (CHBM) will use its best efforts to respond to permit applications within 2 business days after receiving a completed application. Applications will not be accepted for review and approval unless the requestor submits a fully completed application, with this signed policy acknowledgement form attached.
  - CHBM will approve a permit to any individual or group wishing to use the City Hall steps as long as the steps are not reserved, application criteria are met, and the proposed use is consistent with these policies.
  - Permits from the public are generally approved on a first come, first served basis unless the steps are reserved for: a previously-permitted Event at the same time; City business, programs, and activities; loading and unloading of City Hall events; or a special event authorizing the closure of the street on which the relevant steps are located. Additionally, City Hall does not permit any use of building steps on Election Day, except to access City Hall; or on most Tuesdays from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
  - To ensure equal access to the City Hall steps, a public group or entity may not reserve the City Hall steps more than once a week. Each event must be separately permitted. A single application may not request multiple and/or recurring permits.
- Cancellation of an Approved Permit: The City may cancel an approved permit if the City Hall steps are not available due to fire, casualty, acts of God, a condition requiring immediate maintenance, or where the City determines that cancellation is necessary to protect public safety or property. The City may also cancel or postpone an approved permit if the City requires use of the steps for City business that arose after the permit was issued and the City has no suitable alternate location to conduct that City business.
- Amplified Sound and Use of Amplified Sound Equipment:
  - A person may not use amplified sound/amplified sound equipment on the steps of City Hall without a one-time outdoor amplified sound permit or one-time outdoor entertainment event permit from the Entertainment Commission. The use of outdoor amplified sound will only be allowed with a valid permit from the Entertainment Commission issued pursuant to Police Code Article 15.1 Section 1060, and is subject to standard outdoor amplified sound regulations pursuant to Police Code Article 15.1 Section 1060.16.
  - Permit holders seeking to use amplified sound, other than City-sponsored events, must provide their own sound equipment.



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- All permit holders using amplified sound must provide a diagram of where such equipment will be located. Pursuant to Police Code Article 15.1 Section 1060.16, the volume of outdoor sound shall be controlled so that it will not be audible for a distance in excess of 250 feet from the City Hall steps. Amplified sound, measured from the amplified sound equipment on the City Hall steps, may not exceed 80dBA/86dBC.
- Additionally, a permittee who has obtained a sound permit must submit a request for the City to supply power to sound systems on the City Hall steps to City Hall Media/Security Systems (415) 554-7490 at least 24 hours in advance of the Event. Any requests to provide power for weekend use will incur a labor charge.
- **Additional Restrictions and Limitations:** To ensure public safety, to protect City property, and to preserve access to City Hall, the Sheriff's Department will strictly enforce these restrictions.
  - The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Fire Code prohibit blocking any doors, handrails and paths of travel for persons with disabilities.
  - No article, substance, or structure may be placed on the steps that may obstruct access to the steps or City Hall
  - Consistent with amplified sound regulations, noise levels may not exceed 80dBA/86dBC.
  - Taping or hanging of signs or banners to the building or trees on the City Hall grounds is not permitted.
  - Writing on or applying any liquid, including but not limited to oil or paint, on the City Hall steps or on the building is not permitted.
  - Any cables that are utilized must be taped with gaffers tape or covered with mats. Duct tape is not allowed.
  - For candlelight vigils, all candles must be enclosed in a container to catch wax drippings.
- **Questions:** Please contact CHBM by phone at (415) 554-4933 or email at [sfcityhallsteps@sfgov.org](mailto:sfcityhallsteps@sfgov.org).

By signing below I understand and agree to the terms outlined in this policy regarding the use of the City Hall steps and amplified sound equipment. I also understand that I am required to possess an approved permit at the Event (and an amplified sound permit if using amplified sound equipment) and be prepared to present it to sheriff deputies or any City official upon request.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature