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Street Entertainment/Busking

Street performances are a unique and lively form of entertainment that can enhance the vibrancy of a hospitality zone. People of all ages enjoy the dynamic and interactive nature of street entertainers. Meanwhile, festivals like the Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival and The Street Performers Festival bring the world's most talented performers to Edmonton and recognize street performance as a cherished mixture of theatre and art.

Definitions of busking include:

- Acting
- Reciting
- Singing
- Pantomime
- Clowning
- Ballooning
- Juggling
- Magic
- Comedy acts
- Dancing
- Playing instruments, radios or other machines or devices for producing or reproducing of sound.

Among the ideal locations for street performances are the sidewalks of hospitality zones. However, their heavy pedestrian traffic and close proximity to office buildings, businesses and residential areas often lead to concerns about quality of life and public safety.

Responsibility of the street performer

Street performers share in the responsibility for ensuring that street entertainment is contributing to the vibrancy of an entertainment zone. Performers are encouraged to be aware of busking best practices and to actively minimize any negative impact their activities may have. Download RHE's [Good Neighbour Guidelines For Street Entertainment](#) (<http://www.responsiblehospitalityedmonton.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Busking-in-Edmonton-brochure.pdf>) for a detailed guide to busking in Edmonton.

There is no permit required to busk on public property in the City of Edmonton. However, permission from ETS is required to busk on ETS property. Call 780-496-1622 or go to the [Customer Service Office](#) (http://www.edmonton.ca/transportation/ets/about_ets/customer-service.aspx) for more information about busking at a transit station.

Location

Buskers are responsible for ensuring that doorways, phone booths, bus stops, postal boxes, fire hydrants, licensed areas (such as patios and extended lobbies) and pedestrians are not blocked by their performance or audience. Busking on a street corner is discouraged, as it often results in the unsafe displacement of pedestrians into an intersection. A Peace Officer may ask a busker to relocate if their presence is forcing pedestrians to unsafely divert around a performance.

Specific restrictions on busking may be imposed during planned special events, such as the Fringe Theatre Festival. Busking at a special event should be coordinated through the event organizer.

Performance

Buskers must recognize that not everyone will appreciate a particular performance. In order to respect the universal right to enjoyment of our public places, a busker may be asked by a Peace Officer, after a period of time in one location, to move to a new location. A request to move may be made in instances of very loud or repetitive performances.

Noise

Buskers must adhere to the noise regulations outlined in the Community Standards Bylaw. Amplification is permitted but should be kept at moderate levels. Noise complaints by local businesses and residents will be investigated. Buskers may be asked to reduce sound levels by a Peace Officer. Buskers are encouraged to consider their surroundings when choosing a busking location. Buskers should expect to be informed of 'closing time' in an entertainment zone by the Edmonton Police Service, and respect any request to cease busking for the night.



Donations and Vending

Buskers are allowed to solicit donations from the public, but should not accost or otherwise interfere in any way with pedestrians. Buskers who choose to sell recordings of their music, or request a specific donation amount on any form of signage, require a business license and vending permit from the City of Edmonton.

Public Risk or Danger

No aspect of a street performance can pose any danger or risk to the public. No equipment or props should be left unattended at any time. It is a busker's responsibility to ensure that no City or private property is damaged as the result of a performance.

Bylaws applicable to busking

When busking in any location, there are several City of Edmonton bylaws that are enforced to ensure that busking remains a positive part of our vibrant, multi-use sidewalks.

- A person shall not stand or be in any other position on a highway so as to obstruct the entrance to a building or to obstruct pedestrians or vehicles using the highway – s. 60(1) of Bylaw 5590, the Traffic Bylaw
- A person shall not crowd, jostle or harass any pedestrian on a highway – s. 61 of Bylaw 5590, the Traffic Bylaw
- A person shall not climb or interfere with any: (a) traffic control device; or (b) item of street furniture – s. 63 of Bylaw 5590, the Traffic Bylaw
- A person shall not cause or permit any noise that disturbs the peace of another individual – s. 14(1) of Bylaw 14600, the Community Standards Bylaw
- A person shall not leave any garbage, litter or other refuse in a public place except in a receptacle designed and intended for such use – s. 4 of Bylaw 14614, the Public Places Bylaw
- A person shall not panhandle in an aggressive manner in any public place – s. 4.1(1) of Bylaw 14614, the Public Places Bylaw
- A person shall not throw or propel an object, or act in any other way, in a public place that is reasonably likely to cause injury to another person or damage to property – s. 6 of Bylaw 14614, the Public Places Bylaw

To learn more about City of Edmonton bylaws visit www.edmonton.ca/bylaws/ (<http://www.edmonton.ca/bylaws/>)

For a complete guide to busking in Edmonton download RHE's [Good Neighbour Guidelines For Street Entertainment](http://www.responsiblehospitalityedmonton.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Busking-in-Edmonton-brochure.pdf) (<http://www.responsiblehospitalityedmonton.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Busking-in-Edmonton-brochure.pdf>)

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