

# Temporary Stages and Platforms – Submission and Inspection Guidelines

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## Overview

The Temporary Stages and Platforms – Submission and Inspection Guidelines is a companion document that provides the information for obtaining the permit and inspections related to installing a temporary stage or platform within a temporary event. When a building permit is required, a submittal package shall be submitted at least 4 weeks prior to the event. The submittal shall follow the guidelines stated in this publication and the project shall go through the full plan review process.

## VUSBC Definitions

**PLATFORM** – A raised area within a building used for worship, the presentation of music, plays or other entertainment; the head table for special guests; the raised area for lecturers and speakers; boxing and wrestling rings; theater-in-the-round stages; and similar purposes wherein, other than horizontal sliding curtains, there are no overhead hanging curtains, drops, scenery or stage effects other than lighting and sound. A temporary platform is one installed for not more than 30 days.

**STAGE** – A space within a building utilized for entertainment or presentations, which includes overhead hanging curtains, drops, scenery or stage effects other than lighting and sound.

**TEMPORARY STRUCTURES** – Structures erected for a period of less than 180 days.

## General Requirements

A Prince William County building permit and inspections are required if any of the following conditions apply:

- All temporary stages and platforms larger than 120 square feet in area, including connecting areas or spaces with a common means of egress.
- All temporary stages and platforms intended to be used for the gathering of 10 or more persons.
- All temporary stages and platforms more than 16-1/2 inches above grade.

Before issuing a permit, all temporary stages and platforms require an architectural and structural plan review to ensure that the stages and platforms meet the minimum requirements of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC).

The use of portable trailers and mobile units for temporary stages or platforms, in general, does not require a building permit, but the condition should be verified by the Permits staff. The stage or platform shall be fixed to the wheels of the portable trailer or mobile unit with a valid vehicle license plate. Guardrails and/or stairs with handrails meeting the minimum requirements of the VUSBC are required as applicable.

While there can be multiple temporary stages and platforms per building permit, applicable permit fees will be charged for each stage and platform.

When the temporary stage or platform is to be installed under a temporary tent, one building permit will be issued for both the tent and the stage or platform. In addition, a stage/platform permit fee for each temporary stage and platform shall be added to the tent permit fee to create a combined permit fee. All submission requirements and all inspection requirements noted in this document shall still apply.

## Submission Requirements

### GENERAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

To obtain permits from the Building Development Division for the construction, assembly, and inspection of temporary platforms/stages, please submit a Prince William County Building Permit Application; a Prince William County Contact Information Form; Prince William County Trade Permit(s) Applications, as applicable; and copy of each of the following items for review and approval:

- Temporary Stage/Platform Plan – See requirements listed below.
- Temporary Site/Building Layout Plan – See requirements listed below.

All building plans are required to be submitted via Prince William County's [ePortal](#) system. Consult the [customer electronic plan review \(ePlans\) guide](#) for information on how to prepare and submit documents for electronic plan review and the [electronic plan review guide](#) for building ePlan submission guidelines.

Trade Permit(s) – Electrical Permit, Mechanical Permit, Plumbing Permit or Gas Permit, shall be applied for and obtained as applicable. Trade permits may be issued to a contractor in the specific discipline based on the complexity of the work.

### TEMPORARY STAGE/PLATFORM PLAN REQUIREMENTS

1. Temporary platforms are permitted to be constructed of any material permitted by code. The space between the ground or floor and the platform above shall only be used for plumbing and electrical wiring to platform equipment. Temporary stages shall be constructed of materials in accordance with VUSBC Section 410.
2. Provide a short narrative statement describing the proposed use of the temporary stage or platform area. List the name of the event, address, date(s) and duration (time of day and/or night).
3. Provide a complete layout of the temporary stage or platform area, including seating/viewing areas for the stage. Identify the exit locations, aisles, tables, chairs, seating, equipment, tents, and bleachers. See the PWC [Temporary Tent Submission and Inspection Guidelines](#) for more information.
4. For pre-manufactured temporary stages and platforms that are to be installed/erected, provide the manufacturer's installation instructions and design specifications. As an alternative, provide either an International Code Council Evaluation Report (ICC-ES), or similar report, or signed and sealed construction documents (signed and sealed structural drawings with calculations) listing the design loads (live load of 125 psf minimum) and demonstrating anchorage, as applicable.
5. For temporary stages and platforms that are to be fabricated and constructed on site, architectural and structural drawings with calculations that list design loads (live load of 125 psf minimum), and detail anchorage, as applicable, are required. Per [PWC Policy 1.11 Registered Design Professional Sealing of Plans](#) and Code of Virginia Section 54.1-402, the construction documents for structures used for assembly shall be sealed, signed, and dated by a designer licensed in the State of Virginia.
6. If the temporary stages and platforms are to be accessed by the public, ramps or lifts are required.



7. Temporary stages and platforms greater than 16-1/2 inches above grade at their access point are required to have stairs with handrails on both sides. Handrails should be not less than 34 inches and not more than 36 inches in height above stair tread nosing.
8. Temporary stages and platforms greater than 30 inches above grade are required to have guardrails on all sides except those facing the audience. Guardrails should be 42 inches in height with openings less than a 4-inch diameter sphere.
9. Handrails and guardrails provided are adequate to resist a linear load of 50 pounds per linear foot and a single concentrate load of 200 pounds applied in any direction at any point.
10. On the layout plan, state the calculated occupant load and the actual number of occupants intended for the temporary stage or platform with related areas including seating, viewing areas, etc. For example; to calculate the occupant load, divide the area of standing space by 5; the area of chairs only by 7; and the area of both tables and chairs by 15. Then add these values to obtain the number of occupants.
11. The layout plan shall demonstrate paths of egress and provide dimensioned aisle widths. The minimum aisle width is 44 inches. The minimum width of aisle at back-to-back chairs is 12 inches.

#### **TEMPORARY STAGE/PLATFORM SITE LAYOUT PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

1. Provide a site layout (a marked print from Google Earth is acceptable) indicating the location of proposed stage/platform and the location of the restroom facilities. Provide distances in relation to other tents, permanent structures, fences, parking lots, property/lot lines, portable generators, etc.
2. On the site layout plan, identify the electrical power source that will be used. Show the location for any permanent power and state the location and distance to power equipment. If portable generators are planned, show the location and type of wiring to be used for the conductors.

#### **BUILDING LAYOUT REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to a Stage/Platform Plan, for temporary stages and platforms inside a structure, provide a Building Floor Layout Plan with the following information:

- Structure address.
- Floor plan of the level with the temporary stage or platform with all rooms identified.
- Location of temporary stage or platform noted in the floor plan.
- Egress plans from the temporary stage or platform.
- Demonstrate that the calculated occupant load for the temporary stage or platform plus the occupant load in the related areas, including seating, viewing areas, etc. does not exceed the occupant load permitted for the room or the building
- Occupant loads and egress widths at all points along the egress path.
- Statement of accessibility.

## Inspection Guidelines

1. Required Inspection Types:
  - Building Permit Inspections: Code #1500 (Building Final Inspection).
  - Trade Permit Inspections, as applicable.
  - All inspections shall be scheduled at the time the building permit is issued. If possible, inspections shall be scheduled during normal business hours – Monday through Friday, 8am – 2pm. Overtime inspections shall comply with Prince William County policy.
2. The approved submittal package and manufacturer documentation shall be on site and presented to the inspector.
3. All temporary stages and platforms areas shall be inspected before the event is commenced.
4. The final inspection report will serve as the temporary stage or platform's Temporary Occupancy Permit.

## COMMON DEFICIENCIES

(Does not encompass all potential violations)

### FOUND BY PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY BUILDING INSPECTORS:

1. Guardrails and handrails are not installed or secured properly.
2. Risers on stairs exceed 7" in height and/or are not closed risers.
3. Plans or manufacturer's installation instructions are not on site or are out of date.

### FOUND BY PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS:

1. Cables and cords are not rated for damp/wet location.
2. Cables and cords are not properly supported.
3. Cables and cords do not have proper physical protection where subject to damage.
4. Conductor splices are not made within an approved enclosure.
5. GFCI protection is not provided for receptacles.
6. In-use covers are not installed on receptacles.
7. Guards for lamp protection are not installed where required. See [Building Official Interpretation 2018-11](#).
8. Emergency lighting and self-illuminated exit signs are not working properly.



### LINKS TO PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY DOCUMENTS

- Temporary Stage and Platform Submission and Inspection Guidelines (this document):  
[www.pwcva.gov/assets/2021-04/stageguidelines.pdf](http://www.pwcva.gov/assets/2021-04/stageguidelines.pdf)
- Temporary Tent Submission and Inspection Guidelines:  
[www.pwcva.gov/assets/2021-04/tentguidelines.pdf](http://www.pwcva.gov/assets/2021-04/tentguidelines.pdf)
- Building Permit Application:  
[eservice.pwcgov.org/ebuildingdevelopmentforms/forms/buildingpermitapplication.pdf](http://eservice.pwcgov.org/ebuildingdevelopmentforms/forms/buildingpermitapplication.pdf)
- Contact Information Form:  
[eservice.pwcgov.org/ebuildingdevelopmentforms/forms/contactinformationform.pdf](http://eservice.pwcgov.org/ebuildingdevelopmentforms/forms/contactinformationform.pdf)
- Policy 1.10 Inspections – Scheduling Overtime Inspections:  
[www.pwcva.gov/assets/2021-04/005771.pdf](http://www.pwcva.gov/assets/2021-04/005771.pdf)
- Prince William County Trade Permit Application Forms:  
[www.pwcgov.org/BDForms](http://www.pwcgov.org/BDForms)
- [Temporary Lighting Building Official Interpretation 2018-11](https://www.pwcva.gov/assets/2021-09/BI2018-11.pdf)  
<https://www.pwcva.gov/assets/2021-09/BI2018-11.pdf>