



# 2026 Mayor's Christmas Parade Participation Guidelines

## Hampden/Medfield, Baltimore

Thank you for being part of this beloved community tradition! To ensure a safe, organized, and festive experience for everyone, all participants must follow the guidelines below.

By selecting the "I accept participant guidelines" option on the registration form, you acknowledge and agree to these guidelines. No physical signature is required.

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## 1. Mandatory Virtual Meeting

- All group leaders must attend a virtual parade briefing held no later than one week before the event.
  - The meeting will cover staging details, rules, safety protocols, and important updates.
  - Attendance is required. Groups that do not attend may not be permitted to participate.
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## 2. Arrival & Check-In

- Check-in begins at **11:00 AM** at the Poly-Western High School parking lot.
  - All participants must arrive by **12:00 PM**. Late arrivals may be turned away.
  - The parade begins promptly at **1:00 PM**.
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## 3. Cleanliness & Responsibility

- Each group is responsible for keeping their staging area, float area, and the parade route clean.
- No littering. All trash, decorations, and materials must be removed after the parade.
- Groups are encouraged to leave their area cleaner than they found it.
- Groups that leave trash behind may be excluded from future events.

## 4. Line-Up & Parade Conduct

- Remain in your assigned order and maintain a steady pace. Avoid large gaps between groups.
  - Do not throw items into the crowd. Items may only be handed out safely by walkers.
  - Open flames and fireworks are strictly prohibited.
  - All participants must demonstrate respectful, family-friendly behavior at all times.
  - Emergency access routes must remain clear.
  - Follow all instructions from parade officials and marshals immediately.
  - Misconduct may result in removal from the parade and/or exclusion from future participation.
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## 5. Vehicles & Floats

- All vehicles and floats must be decorated in a festive holiday theme.
  - Drivers must be **licensed and insured**. By agreeing to these guidelines, you confirm compliance.
  - Vehicles must travel at walking speed (approximately 2–3 mph).
  - Floats and trailers must be secure and stable. No riders are allowed on vehicle roofs.
  - Each motorized float must carry a working fire extinguisher.
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## 6. Performances & Sound

- All music, performances, and displays must be family-friendly.
  - Amplified sound must remain at a respectful level and not overpower nearby groups.
  - Parade officials may require volume adjustments at any time.
  - Performance groups must maintain a consistent pace and spacing.
  - If planning performance stops, notify organizers in advance and keep stops brief.
  - Follow all marshal instructions regarding sound and movement.
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## 7. Animals

- Only well-behaved animals on a leash or harness are permitted.
- Groups must bring and use proper cleanup supplies.

## 8. Political & Commercial Messaging

- This is a non-partisan, family-friendly event. Political signs, slogans, or campaign materials are not permitted.
  - No commercial advertising is allowed. Groups may display signs or banners with their organization's name only.
  - Parade marshals may require removal of any prohibited signage.
  - Failure to comply may result in removal from the parade and exclusion from future events.
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## 9. Santa Claus Policy

- There will be one official Santa Claus at the end of the parade.
  - Traditional Santa impersonators are not permitted within parade entries.
  - Creative or alternate holiday-themed characters are allowed, as long as they are clearly not traditional Santa.
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## 10. Safety & Conduct

- No alcohol or illegal substances are permitted before or during the parade.
  - Follow all instructions from parade officials, police, and EMS personnel.
  - Emergency routes must remain clear at all times.
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## 11. End-of-Parade Procedures

- Exit the parade area promptly after completing the route.
- Remove all trash, decorations, and materials before leaving.
- Follow all directions from parade officials.
- Detailed end-of-route instructions will be provided in participant packets.

## 12. Weather Policy

- The parade will take place rain or shine unless conditions are deemed unsafe.
  - Updates will be posted on the official website and/or Facebook page.
  - Unless otherwise announced, the parade will proceed as scheduled.
  - If your group cannot attend due to weather, notify organizers as soon as possible.
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## Enforcement

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in immediate removal from the parade and/or exclusion from future events.

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## Agreement

By selecting the "I accept participant guidelines" option on the registration form, you confirm that you have read, understand, and agree to follow the 2026 Mayor's Christmas Parade Participation Guidelines.