



# WEDDING PERMIT APPLICATION

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The Elkhart County Parks provides beautiful settings for small outdoor weddings. To ensure that the beauty is preserved, the following rules and regulations apply to all weddings in the park, including DeFries Gardens, Cobus Creek Sensory Garden, Bonneyville waterfall, and the Hickory Hill Chapel. All couples granted a wedding permit assume responsibility individually and separately for their party's compliance with the rules and regulations.

## APPLICATION

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Reservations begin on or after October 1 of the preceding year. Payment for the reservation must be made in full at the time the reservation is made to confirm date. Reservations may be made online, by phone at (574) 535-6458, or in person at the Parks Department office at 211 W. Lincoln Ave., Goshen, IN 46526. A signed contract and full payment, including a security deposit will be required to confirm the space. Payment may be made with credit or debit card, cash, or check. All security deposits are CASH ONLY, except for DeFries Gardens, which will be paid at the time of reservation with credit/debit card.

## WEDDING CEREMONY PERMIT & SCHEDULE

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The permit fee grants one of the following for the purpose of conducting a wedding ceremony:

Reservation of a two-hour time slot at DeFries Gardens.

Reservation any time during park open hours at the following locations:

- Waterfall area at Bonneyville Mill County Park (includes Feedlot Shelter)
- Sensory Garden at Cobus Creek County Park (includes Cobus Creek Shelter)
- Hickory Hill Chapel at Ox Bow County Park

## SECURITY/DAMAGE DEPOSIT

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All security deposits must be paid in cash at the Elkhart County Parks Department office, except for DeFries Gardens, which requires online reservation (please visit [elkhartcountyparks.org](http://elkhartcountyparks.org) for more information). For security deposit rates, see the "Fees" section.

The deposit will be refunded if site conditions are in an "as found" condition after the wedding. The renter is responsible for picking up the refunded security deposit in person. Only the



DeFries Gardens security deposit refunds will be issued via mail. If cash security deposit is not picked up within 30 days of the rental date the deposit will not be refunded.

## **CANCELLATION, REFUND, OR TRANSFER**

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This policy pertains to refunds for facility reservations, interpretive programs, and other fees.

The Elkhart County Parks commits resources of staff to confirm registrations, purchase supplies, and prepare for programs and shelter reservations. Receipts from admission and charges are used to defray the operation and maintenance costs of the Elkhart County Parks.

Due to the cost of processing paperwork and attempting to re-fill a cancellation, refunds may only be issued if the administrative office is notified in the following circumstances:

### **Facility Reservations:**

Facility reservation fees (and security deposit if applicable) will be refunded minus a \$15.00 service charge fee if the cancellation occurs more than twenty-one (21) days prior to the reservation date. As an option, a one-time transfer to another specific date at the time of your cancellation may occur within the same calendar year if it occurs more than twenty-one (21) days prior to the original reservation date (minus the \$15.00 service charge).

Facility reservation fees will not be refunded or transferred if cancellation occurs less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the reservation date.

When a reservation date is cancelled it is forfeited by the intending party. The shelter will be released and made available for rental by another party.

### **Public Programs and Field Trips:**

Group, per person, and offsite fees for field trips and public programs will be refunded if notification is given more than ten (10) working days prior to the program day.

Cancellations less than ten (10) working days prior to the event date will not be refunded.

If a public program or field trip is cancelled by Elkhart County Parks (i.e. low enrollment), a full refund, credit, or make-up class will be offered.

### **Annual and Daily Passes:**

Annual and daily passes including for park entry, disc golf, and archery are non-refundable.

### **Other User Fees:**

All other fees and charges including, but not limited to, special events, field use, day camps, vendor fees, tent permits, group camping permit, photography permits, late/early openings must be cancelled more than ten (10) working days prior to day of event to receive a refund.



Rentals and programs are rain or shine. Inclement weather is not a valid reason for any refunds unless the park or shelter has been officially closed to the public or a program has been cancelled by the Elkhart County Parks. Special consideration may be given by the director in the case of documented life altering situations and medical emergencies. Credit card convenience fees are nonrefundable. Refunds can only be reimbursed via a check. Refunds take 3-4 weeks to process.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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*All park ordinance rules and regulations apply to these locations, including, but not limited to the rules and regulations set forth in the following Exhibit "A", which is incorporated by reference.*

I HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD, AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THESE TERMS AND CONDITIONS AS SET FORTH ABOVE.

Signature (Required): \_\_\_\_\_

## EXHIBIT "A" WEDDING PERMIT RULES & REGULATIONS

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The Park Department reserves the right to revoke and right to use the parks for the violation of any statute, ordinance, park rule, this agreement or as otherwise may be authorized or allowed by law.

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

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The areas have the following capacity for weddings (including the bridal party and all guests):

- **DeFries Gardens:** 50 people
- **Sensory Garden / Cobus Creek Shelter:** 50 people/garden, 100 people/shelter
- **Bonneyville Waterfall and Feedlot Shelter:** 150 people
- **Hickory Hill Chapel at Ox Bow County Park:** 50 people

## ACCESS TO DEFRIES GARDENS

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You will be allowed access to DeFries Gardens one (1) hour before the wedding to set up. DeFries Gardens will NOT be closed to the public during the two-hour reserved time slot. All wedding materials, equipment, chairs, etc. must be removed from the Gardens by the end of the two-hour time slot.

Please be aware that all park locations are open to the public and reservation DOES NOT allow user exclusive rights to the park areas rented.



## RECEPTIONS

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No receptions are allowed at DeFries Gardens. Receptions may be held at the Bonneyville Mill County Park and Cobus Creek County Park locations when combined with your wedding package. The reception must conclude, and the area completely cleaned one (1) hour before park closing time.

## TENTS

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No tents are allowed at DeFries Gardens. A tent may be set up on the day of the wedding one (1) hour before the wedding outside the wedding area in a location designated by the Park Department. A tent larger than 200 square feet will need a special tent permit. The ability to accommodate the size of a larger tent will be determined by park staff.

## REHEARSALS

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A rehearsal may be held without further permit during the week prior to the wedding ceremony provided the rehearsal does not interfere with other scheduled reservations or events, the public, or other weddings taking place. You must call the Park Department at (574) 535-6458 to secure a time for the rehearsal.

## DECORATIONS

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Highlighting the area with decorations is permitted if they are freestanding and able to be hand-carried across lawn areas. Decorations may be set up one (1) hour before the time slot and must be torn down and removed before the end of your reservation. At no time may streamers, banners, garland, etc. be attached in any way to any structure or any flora or improvement. The use of nails, tape, tacking, screws, and the like is prohibited.

**The following items are NOT PERMITTED BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER a wedding ceremony:**

- Aisle cloths or plastic of any kind are not permitted on lawn areas.
- Rice, birdseed, confetti, or rose petals are not to be thrown. Balloons, butterflies, and birds are not to be released.
- No fireworks are allowed. No fires, candles, or torches are allowed.
- Possession or consumption of alcohol is prohibited in all areas of the park.
- One freestanding directional sign is allowed outside of the park. All signage and its location must be pre-approved by the Park Department and must be removed at the end of the ceremony.



## ACCOMMODATION

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All parks remain open to the public before, during, and after the reservation time slot. As a public facility, the Parks Department cannot guarantee complete privacy nor allow wedding parties to disrupt or disturb the activities of other visitors. Wedding parties and their photographers must observe common courtesies and not block entrances, walkways, drinking foundations, restrooms, or access to the parking lot.

At the discretion of Park personnel, reasonable accommodation for limousines bearing the members of the wedding party may be made (although reservation of parking spaces is not possible). "No Parking" areas must be always kept clear. Park personnel may direct you to appropriate parking.

No facilities are available at any of the sites for dressing or other bridal party preparations. No parking will be reserved for the wedding. You must make alternate plans.

## SEATING

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Guests are encouraged to stand during the ceremony because chairs are permitted only on paved and brick surfaces at DeFries Gardens and Sensory Garden. Chairs may be set up no earlier than one (1) hour before the two-hour time slot at DeFries Gardens and Sensory Garden, must be removed by the end of the time slot. Chairs may be placed on grass surfaced near the waterfall at Bonneyville Mill County Park.

## MUSIC

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Musical accompaniment is encouraged; however, electricity access is limited depending on location. Live acoustic music is encouraged. Amplification of music beyond the reasonable limits of your ceremony is prohibited. Instruments must be hand-carried, set up, and disassembled in the same manner and time frame as decorations and chairs.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

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Commercial wedding photography is permitted in DeFries Gardens at no charge for the wedding only.

## RENTAL EQUIPMENT

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If you are renting special equipment from a rental company, please have the delivery of the equipment coordinated with the Parks office. Delivery of equipment whenever park staff is not on duty will result in an additional fee for Parks staff call outs. The Parks staff will not guarantee or warrant the equipment's safety. Any equipment or property left unattended is at your risk of loss. If you are using a rental company, please be certain that they will remove rental equipment at the end of the ceremony.

## TRASH

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All trash must be placed in park dumpsters or garbage receptacles. Please make certain that trash and decorations are removed, or it will affect your security deposit. If trash remains after your event, you will be billed for staff per hour for all cleaning or damage to the park, plus any other costs, expenses, or fees incurred to correct any damage of any type.

## PARK PERSONNEL

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The park's staff may not be present at weddings and due to limited staffing may not be available at the time of your wedding. Law enforcement in County Parks is handled by the Elkhart County Sheriff's Department.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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I HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD, AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THESE RULES AND REGULATIONS AS SET FORTH ABOVE.

Signature (Required): \_\_\_\_\_



# WEDDING PERMIT APPLICATION FORM

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Weddings can be reserved October 1<sup>st</sup> for the following year.

**Wedding Date (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Arrival Time (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Departure Time (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group Size (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Decorations:**

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**Location of Wedding (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Rehearsal Date (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Rehearsal Time (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_



**Special Instructions:**

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**Contact Name (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Phone (Required):** (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code

**Additional Contact Phone (Required):** (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code

**Contact Address (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address Line 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Email (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Bride's Name (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Groom's Name (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_





## FEES

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- **DeFries Gardens (2-hour time slot):** \$225.00 (2 hours) / \$250.00 security deposit
- **Cobus Creek Sensory Garden / Shelter Package:** \$250.00 (per day) / \$100.00 cash security deposit
- **Bonneyville Waterfall / Feedlot Shelter Package:** \$200.00 (per day)
- **Hickory Hill Chapel at Ox Bow County Park:** \$75.00 (per day)
- **Tent larger than 200 square feet:** \$50.00 (per day)

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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1. All Elkhart County Park ordinances, policies, and facility use guidelines will be in effect.
2. No vehicles of any type will be permitted off the roadway except for parking areas.
3. Any alteration of park facilities or natural features will result in a charge for damages.

I have willfully applied for this permit and understand that I am responsible for proper execution of any activities approved by it. Any violation will result in immediate loss of the right to use Elkhart County Park facilities.

**Date (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_