

The intent of the Street Activity Program is to bring more street vitality to New Westminster while creating employment opportunities for small business operators.

### What is Busking?

Did you know that Robin Williams, Dolly Parton, Steve Martin and Eric Clapton all started out as buskers?

Busking is the art of performing in public spaces for tips and gratuities. Buskers (also known as street entertainers, street performers, minstrels or troubadours) provide entertainment by playing an instrument, singing, juggling, dancing, doing mime, comedy, magic, etc. Buskers may perform solo or comprise a group of performers. Tips and gratuities are not mandatory (performers are prohibited from suggesting an amount or requesting a contribution), but are highly encouraged. If you have enjoyed a performance, offer up some money in the busker's open musical instrument case, box or hat. Monetary donations are the busker's source of income.



### Why do I need an ID badge?

So the public can identify you as a City approved busker. All buskers on designated public property require a Street Activity Busker Permit and Photo ID Badge which has been issued by the City of New Westminster. Buskers must display their City-issued photo ID at all times.

### How do buskers acquire an ID?

All buskers must apply for a business license and be approved by the City before being issued a Street Entertainment Permit and photo ID.

### When and where can Buskers perform in New Westminster?

Buskers can perform from 10:00 am to 9:00 pm, seven days a week, at any of the designated "Busk Stop" locations in New Westminster (see over).

## What are the regulations regarding busking in New Westminster?

- Performances are permitted at designated Busk Stops only (see box below). These locations are best for making sure sound from neighbouring buskers don't interfere, lessening the sound impact to residents, are high pedestrian traffic areas and don't block access to businesses.
- Buskers are responsible for ensuring doorways, display windows and pedestrians are not blocked by their performance or their audience.
- Busker permits are only valid between the hours of 10:00 am to 9:00 pm, seven days a week and you are limited to up to 2 hours at any one Busk Stop. After 2 hours, you must move to a new Busk Stop.
- Busk Stops are self-regulated by the performers and based on a first-come, first-served basis. It's ok to wait for another busker to finish their set. Buskers can leave their equipment in queue. As such, a busker cannot be in queue for one spot while playing another. Remember that other buskers are your colleagues; please be polite and courteous.
- Buskers are encouraged to share information with fellow buskers. If somebody has harassed you or tried to steal your tips, warn buskers taking over your spot. If a passerby compliments your show, tell them to check out the other busker performances. If a new busker is unaware of how 'busk stops' work or busking etiquette, take time to educate them.
- Some amplification may be used. Amplification is a privilege and can be revoked at any time at the discretion of City Staff. Sound levels will be set by the decibel meter at 65-75 dB, at 6 meters, and the maximum being 75 dB, to accommodate the surrounding businesses and the acoustic properties of these locations.
- No high risk or unsafe performances, which may put the public and/or the performer at risk are permitted. The use of sharp or dangerous objects is prohibited. This includes juggling knives, hatchets, chainsaws or flaming objects.
- Buskers must wear appropriate clothing and maintain a neat and clean appearance at all times while performing at a Busk Stop. Shoes and shirt are required.
- Buskers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at Busk Stop locations and be present during the entire performance. The parent must sign all application and release forms granting permission for the minor to perform.
- Buskers may receive donations for their performances, but must not charge a minimum or set fees for performances. Aggressive or persistent solicitation of donations is not permitted.
- Musicians are permitted to sell recordings of their original work during their performance without a Street Vending Permit. No other sales are permitted.
- Consideration must be given for other acts performing in close proximity.
- No busking is permitted within sites that have been booked for events or festivals.
- Busking at transit stops or in transit vehicles is not permitted.
- Busking in public parks or non-Busk Stop sites is prohibited.
- All performances must be suitable for a general family audience rating. Buskers must refrain from the use of lewd or offensive conduct or language in the course of their performances.
- Performers must co-operate immediately with the request of any member of the Police Department, By-law Enforcement Officer or Parks, Culture & Recreation staff.
- Failure to display a valid City-issued photo ID or failure to comply with these guidelines may result in fines, confiscation, suspension or cancellation of your permit and busking privileges.
- Buskers agree to clean up any garbage left behind after performing
- Buskers agree to indemnify and save harmless the City of New Westminster from all costs, loss, damages, proceedings, actions, claims, demands and expenses incurred by the busker and sustained or caused by, or arising out of the buskers' performance and behaviour on City of New Westminster public property.

### How much is a permit?

- Annual permit = \$30.75

## Locations

- Eighth Street - outside New Westminster SkyTrain Station
- Hyack Square - foot of Eighth Street at Columbia Street

For more information:  
Development Services Department,  
Planning Division  
604.527.4532