

## 2025 South County 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade Entry Rules

### PURPOSE

The South County 4th of July Committee, Inc. (“COMMITTEE”) is a nonprofit, non-partisan, and non-political organization. It does not promote any individual, business, social, commercial, or political purpose. It is formed solely for the purpose of promoting a celebration of USA’s Independence Day in a family-oriented environment. The Committee is an independent organization made up of volunteers.

### 1. AUTHORITY OF THE COMMITTEE

- a. The Committee reserves the right to refuse any entry into the parade which does not make a good faith effort, as determined by the compliance team monitoring the staging areas, to depict the parade theme and patriotic purpose or does not adhere to the policies of the Committee as stated.
- b. Parade entrants agree to abide by all rules and decisions of the Committee. Any misrepresentation or failure to abide by Committee rules are grounds for removal from parade. Decisions of the Committee are final and not subject to review by any other body.
- c. No entry will be allowed to enter the parade which did not meet the application deadline or fails to provide proof of approval by the Committee at the line-up staging area on Parade Day.
- d. Although an entrant chooses the category they wish to enter, the Committee makes the final decision as to the correct category for each entrant based on the nature of the organization and type of entry.
- e. Use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, or alcohol in the Parade is prohibited.

### 2. POLICY

- a. Decorations
  - i. All Parade entries and their support vehicles must (1) make a good faith effort to depict the Parade theme, as determined by the compliance team monitoring the staging areas, or (2) be **substantially** decorated in red, white, and blue, in keeping with the celebratory spirit of the Parade. Judges will take this into consideration when selecting winners.
  - ii. The Staging Area opens at 6:30 a.m. and the parade steps off promptly at 9:00 a.m. Any entry entering the staging area not decorated by 8:00 a.m. will be asked to obtain such items as necessary to comply with this Section 2. Policy, will be subject to removal from the Parade.
  - iii. All entries are required to exhibit proper decorum, fellowship, and family-oriented behavior in the staging areas and during the parade.
  - iv. All Parade entries shall consider that the parade is a family event, and children will be watching the event.
  - v. All Parade participants are encouraged to celebrate the history, values, and ideals of the United States of America rather than protest those matters in which they feel America falls short of its value and ideals. While the Committee values free speech rights of all, the Committee’s rules for this Parade are intended to encourage Parade participants to celebrate rather than protest.
- b. Banners and Flags
  - i. One banner preceding a parade entry is allowed. No size limit.
  - ii. Banner carriers must be capable of maintaining the parade pace. If the pace of the banner carriers is impeding the parade progress the banner will be removed.
  - iii. **All Parade entries must display at least one official Flag of The United States.**
- c. Commercial Entries
  - i. A logo or business name may be used on an entry however, entry may not be used primarily for advertising purposes and must be in keeping with the spirit of the parade. (See Section 2 above).
- d. Parade Entry Expense

- i. No limit. The use of ingenuity and creativity in the design and execution of an entry is encouraged and favored by the judging criteria. Traditional style parade floats and/or decorated platforms mounted on a wheeled chassis or that are towed behind a vehicle are strongly encouraged. Contact information for float building companies is located on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade website.
- e. Hand-outs or Giveaways
  - i. For safety reasons, handouts and giveaways are permitted during the parade, provided they are not thrown into the parade route or into the spectators or delivered in such a manner to entice spectators to enter the parade route.
  - ii. The manner in which hand-outs or giveaways are delivered must not delay or slow down the pace of the parade.
  - iii. Do not throw or shoot anything including but not limited to candy, water, balls or paper from, on, or alongside the parade entry.
  - iv. Shooting water at parade spectators is strictly prohibited.
  - v. Walkers may distribute items to the spectators if the \$25.00 clean-up fee paid in advance and in addition to the entry fee.
- f. Parade Entries
  - i. The Committee determines the placement of each entry in the parade.
  - ii. Parade Entries must maintain spacing between entries of no closer than 2 car lengths / 20 feet or no more than 3 car lengths/30 feet behind the preceding entry. Entries are not permitted to stop along the parade route except to maintain the spacing or during an emergency or as directed by a Parade Official or a Law Enforcement Officer.
  - iii. No Profanity or Offensive Speech. Parade Entries cannot display or broadcast messages which are profane or otherwise offensive, as determined by the Committee. This includes music with profanity.
  - iv. No Hate Speech. Hate speech is not permitted, including any form of expression which is disrespectful or hateful towards another person or group.
  - v. All entries must clean up after the parade.
- g. Performance
  - a. Any performance along the route or in front of the judges or announcer stands must be a moving/marching routine. Any entry that stops to perform shall be ineligible for an award.
- h. Political
  - i. The Committee is a non-political organization. Only current elected office holders are allowed to enter the parade. Small signs on either side of a car are permitted. No place cards or large advertising will be acceptable.
  - ii. **No campaigning.** Individuals or organizations who try to use the parade to further their own or others' political campaigns will be removed from the parade. Under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, tax-exempt organizations are prohibited from participating or intervening in political activities. Moreover, a large portion of the parade route occurs on property private property. The property owner prohibits political campaigning and the parade is subject to the terms of the License Agreement allowing the Committee to produce the parade on their property.
- i. Support Vehicles
  - i. Motorized entries (floats, cars, etc.) are permitted to have ONE support vehicle. Additional support vehicles may be allowed at the discretion of the committee but must be approved in advance of the day of the parade.

- ii. Descriptions of vehicles must be on the application to be eligible to have a support vehicle in the parade.
  - iii. All Support vehicles must be decorated, in the keeping of theme or in red, white and blue and display at least one United States Flag.
- j. Safety Rules
- i. No child under eight years of age will be allowed to walk in the parade. They may ride on floats, vehicles, or bicycles under adult supervision.
  - ii. Materials used in each entry should be fire-retardant and not of a dangerous nature. An on-board fire extinguisher is required for all floats and recommended for all entries.
  - iii. All parade participants (individual or organization) shall be required to adhere to the provisions of the Texas State Penal Code part 46.03, titled Places Weapons Prohibited and any changes thereto.
  - iv. Bike riders must adhere to state and local laws.
  - v. Do not hang off the sides of moving vehicles.
  - vi. No fireworks of any kind may be used in the parade.
  - vii. Auto Liability policies in the minimum amounts as required by the State of Texas must be in place for all operators of all vehicles used in the parade. Participants may be required to show proof of coverage.

### **3. APPLICATIONS**

- a. There is a \$250 entry fee for commercial entries. The entry fee for all other entries is \$50. Entry fee must be submitted at the time of the entry application.
- b. All applications must be postmarked or received by June 1, 2025. Any application or entry fees submitted after June 2 will be considered late and are subject to a \$50.00 late fee. No applications will be accepted after June 14, 2025.
- c. Entrants will be notified of acceptance to enter the parade within 72 hours of submission or by June 18.
- d. Late applications are subject to availability and Committee approval.
- e. All information for the Announcer's Script must be completed and provided with the application. Information provided for Parade Announcers is subject to editing to meet time constraints of the Parade.
- f. A separate application must be submitted for each entry in the parade.
- g. If an organization has more than one entry, please list on one of your applications the order in which you wish them to appear. Example: Schools with cheerleaders, drum majors, band, drill team and alumni groups