



The CREATE Plan: Updates to Special Event and Performance-Related Permits and Licenses

The CREATE Plan outlines specific actions policymakers can take to foster a thriving arts and culture scene in Delaware. By addressing key challenges such as outdated permits and licenses, we can create a more supportive environment for artists and organizations in the creative economy. This will not only boost economic growth but also enrich our communities. Implementing the CREATE Plan's recommendations will lead to increased job opportunities, greater tourism revenue, flourishing local businesses, and a higher quality of life for all Delawareans.



Image © Cityfest, Inc. Wilmington

Action Items and Recommendations from the CREATE Plan

Liquor Licenses

Accessible liquor licensing is crucial for events featuring music or performances. **Licensing requirements should be clear, achievable, and easily accessible, with options available for both for-profit and nonprofit events.** Read more [here](#) about the benchmark case study: Lafayette's Liquor Licensing, Louisiana.

Sound Ordinances

Delaware's regulations primarily address industrial noise but sound ordinances are vital for managing amplified music at events. **Clear guidelines should reflect time-based sound differences, with special event permits offering exceptions for both for-profit and nonprofit events.** Read more [here](#) about the benchmark case study: Austin Noise Ordinances, Texas.

Special Event Permitting

Special event permits cover events lasting one or several days, and apply to everything from local gatherings to weekend festivals. **Clear, non-discriminatory guidelines are essential to ensure fair application for all promoters and audiences.** Read more [here](#) about the benchmark case study: Austin event permits, Texas.

All Ages Ordinances

With all-ages permits, licensed venues can host events for mixed-age audiences, using safeguards to prevent alcohol sales to minors. These permits are ideal for family-oriented events. Read more [here](#) about the benchmark case study: All Ages events licenses in Milwaukee, WI.

Busking Guidelines

Encouraging busking—also known as street performing—boosts foot traffic and downtown engagement. **Clear, accessible guidelines informed by local input are key, with limits on days, hours, or seasons. Expanding busking can also position a town as a music-friendly, creative hub.** Read more [here](#) about the benchmark case study: Asheville Street Performers guidelines, North Carolina.

Agent of Change

Agent of Change is an urban policy that protects existing businesses, especially music venues, from noise complaints by new neighbors. As a longer-term project, stakeholders will investigate zoning and permitting laws that need to be implemented to foster entertainment districts in cities and towns throughout the state. Read more [here](#) about the benchmark case study: Agent of Change in Victoria, Australia.

Regulations to Prioritize

Based on the findings from the regulatory assessment, the table below shows the regulations and licenses recommended for urgent consideration in each location.

Statewide	Delaware <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liquor Licensing 			
	New Castle County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound Ordinance Event Permits All Ages Ordinances 	Kent County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound Ordinance Event Permits All Ages Ordinances 	Sussex County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound Ordinance Event Permits All Ages Ordinances 	
	*City / Town <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilmington Sound Ordinance All Ages Ordinances Agent of Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Middletown Sound Ordinance Event Permits All Ages Ordinances Agent of Change Busking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dover & Smyrna Sound Ordinance Event Permits All Ages Ordinances Agent of Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milford & Georgetown Sound Ordinance Busking All Ages Ordinances Agent of Change

*Note: other cities/towns were not included in the regulatory review but should utilize this information to review their own regulations and policies.



Image © Delaware Arts Alliance

Next Steps: Download the CREATE Plan and Resource Guides

- **CREATE Plan Implementation Guidance:** See [here](#) (pages 68-73) for additional considerations for updating permits and licenses, including regional and DEA&I factors.
- **County Summaries:** See [here](#) for other key data and actionable recommendations specific to the county and local level.

Ready to learn more and get involved?

The CREATE Plan provides a wealth of data, insights, mapping tools, and recommendations for shaping the future of Delaware's creative economy.

Learn more about the CREATE Plan and read the report at:
[DELWAREARTSALLIANCE.ORG/CREATIVEECONOMY](https://delawareartsalliance.org/creativeeconomy)