

# **2024 Ballyshaners St. Patrick's Day Parade Unit Instructions**

**While many of you have participated in past Parades, it is important that you read this information.**

The St. Patrick's Day Parade is wholly funded, staged, and sponsored by The Ballyshaners, Inc., (The Ballyshaners). The Ballyshaners have sole control over the content, format, and operation of the Parade. The Ballyshaners appoint a Parade Captain who has complete operational control of the Parade. As such, participation by any unit in the Parade is at the discretion of the Parade Captain. While we hope that everyone enjoys themselves, we must stress that all participants in the Parade will be held to certain standards of conduct as explained in this document. Participation in the Parade requires each organization and individual to comply with these instructions. Your application for the Parade is your acknowledgment you have read and agree to comply with these instructions.

On Saturday, March 2, 2024, the Ballyshaners will present the 2024 Ballyshaners St. Patrick's Day Parade in Old Town Alexandria, commencing at 12:30 PM.

1. **Parade Formation:** The 2024 Parade route, courtesy of the City of Alexandria, extends eastward along King Street, from St. Asaph Street, left onto Lee St., left onto Cameron Street, and ending at the intersection of Cameron and Pitt streets.

1. **Dignitaries:** Dignitaries will check at the grandstand for seating.
- 2.

3. **Parade Divisions:** The Parade is separated into divisions:

- i. Division 1 - Military District of Washington
- ii. Division 2 – Celtic Division
- iii. Division 3 – Harp Division
- iv. Division 4 – Troy Division
- v. Division 5- Emerald Division
- vi. Division 6- Shamrock Division

4. **Special Notice to Units:** The Ballyshaners, Inc., is a non-profit, tax-exempt (501(c) 3), noncommercial, non-sectarian, and nonpartisan corporation organized and operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. In keeping with these principles:

No unit or individual therein will be permitted to display or wear any sign or emblem that may be considered controversial in nature or not in the spirit and intent of the St. Patrick's Day celebration. Nor will any unit be allowed in the Parade with members that are in violation of any laws regarding public behavior such as the drinking of alcoholic beverages in public, public intoxication, or disorderly or abusive behavior. This will be at the sole discretion of The Ballyshaners, Inc., and all decisions are final. The Parade Captain and Marshals are authorized to eject individuals or units that do not comply with instructions. Should members and units asked to leave not comply, Parade Marshals will contact the Alexandria Police Department and the Parade Captain. Units removed from the parade will not be entitled to a refund of their application fee or invited back.

**All units are strongly encouraged to identify their units and any vehicles that accompany them with banners and/or signs.** This aids in the staging, starting, and management of the Parade, and people want to know who you are! Any marching unit; e.g., bands, drill teams, majorettes, dance groups, etc., with vehicles must identify the vehicles as part of their unit. ***Any vehicles that are not an integral part of a unit's performance and are not identified with a banner or sign will not be allowed to participate in the Parade.***

5. **Parade Safety:** No unit or individual (with the exception of the Military District of Washington or official law enforcement units) will be permitted to participate while carrying loaded weapons.

2. **Unit Arrival:** Units must arrive in the Staging Area no earlier than 11:00 AM and no later than 11:45 AM. Upon arrival, each unit will notify their Division Marshal of their attendance. Each unit should be complete and in position by 12:00 PM.

**If you do arrive in the area prior to the assigned time, do not attempt to enter the Staging Area or Parade Route. Single vehicles may park anywhere on a city street that is a legal parking spot. Parade Day is not a holiday and all parking rules including meters are in effect.**

**If you are late, Parade Marshals will attempt to place you into the Parade, but if you miss the lineup, you are NOT assured you will be permitted to march.**

3. **Parade Movement:** Parade Marshals will be assigned to specific staging areas to ensure a proper sequential lineup of units in each division, identify and resolve space problems, and coordinate movement of staging units. Each Division will be assigned at least one Parade Marshal who will validate the presence and placement of units and accompany the Division.
  1. **Parade Start:** The Parade will start at 12:30 PM at the direction of the Parade Captain. No unit will cross the starting line without the permission of the Parade Captain or Parade Marshal. Each unit should expect to stop at the starting line as the Parade Captain and marshals coordinate the complex operation of the Parade.
  2. **Staging Area Movement:** The Parade Divisions will move out of their Staging Area in order as the Parade proceeds. We realize that it may feel like a long time to wait in the staging area, but please be ready to move up or start at a moment's notice.
  3. **Individual Unit Movement:** Parade units will move through the Parade Start Point at King and St. Asaph Streets to the Parade End Point on Cameron and Pitt streets.
    - i. **Spacing:** Generally, units will maintain an interval between units of not less than 25 yards and not greater than 50 yards within each Division. However, units may be asked to move closer together or farther apart depending on the circumstances. **All units will follow the directions of the Parade Marshals or be asked to leave.**
    - ii. **Pace:** Units should proceed at a normal adult walking pace. To assist you, all Divisions are led by a bagpipe band who will set the pace for your Division. **Units that cannot keep up the pace and impede the Parade's orderly and planned progress may be directed to leave the Parade.**
    - iii. **Special Maneuvers and Demonstrations:** Units will **not** stop their forward

movement to perform for spectators along the Parade route or at the Reviewing Stand—unless otherwise instructed specifically by the Parade Chairman at the main Reviewing Stand. Units that do not comply may be asked to leave the Parade and will not be invited back.

- iv. **Distribution of Materials:** **PARTICIPANTS WILL NOT THROW ANYTHING TO THE SPECTATORS.** All units are allowed and encouraged to distribute appropriate materials related to their unit. However, materials must be **handed** directly to spectators along the Parade route. **No unit or individual therein will be permitted to throw or toss any type of item to the crowds along the Parade route. Thrown items can injure spectators and entice children to run onto the Parade route. Any unit throwing items will be asked to leave the Parade and not invited back.**

4. **Dispersal:**

**Units on Foot and Floats:** At the end of the Parade, all marchers and floats will continue moving until they have exited Cameron St. It is very important that units obey the instructions of the Parade Marshals in the Dispersal Area. We cannot allow the units in the Dispersal Area to back up into the Parade Route.

Once in the dispersal area, bands should stop playing and move onto the sidewalk, marchers on foot should move onto the sidewalk, Floats or any vehicle needing disassembly should pull to the curb. Those on foot should exit the dispersal area on the sidewalks.

**Motorized units:** Vehicles should exit the Parade at the end point, going either North or West (IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO CROSS KING ST.)

5. **Coordinating Instructions:** Overall coordination will be accomplished between participants and the Parade Marshals and the Parade Captain. Where and when necessary, Parade Marshals will communicate with Alexandria law enforcement units who are stationed at each intersection along the Parade route.
  1. **First Aid and Evacuation:** Please contact any police officer for first aid assistance. Follow the directions of public safety personnel at all times.
  2. **Restrooms:** There are public restrooms along the Parade route. Parade participants should try to avoid using local area establishments and should use the facilities provided by the City.
  3. **Lost Children:** Reports of a lost child should immediately be reported to the nearest Parade Marshal or Alexandria Police Officer. This information will be passed to the Alexandria Police.

## TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

All Parade participants are encouraged use METRO and the DASH mass transportation systems. The METRO station at King Street is a short walk from the Staging Area for the Parade and is extremely convenient. You can contact METRO for schedule information at 202-637-7000, or on the web at <http://www.wmata.com>. DASH stops are located throughout the Old Town Area, especially along King Street. You can contact DASH at 7038383800 or on the web at <http://www.dashbus.com>.

In the event that mass transit is not practical, we offer the following advice on driving to the Parade. (Please note: If your vehicle will **not** be in the Parade, then you will have to drop off the Parade participants or park and walk to the staging areas. Only vehicles that are integral to a unit's performance and are marked as part of that unit will be allowed in the Parade. There is no dedicated parking area for Parade participants in the Staging Area at the beginning of the Parade.

**Approaching the Staging Area:** All transportation units should approach the staging area from one of the following major traffic routes: Duke Street/Route 236-Eastbound, U.S. Route 1-Northbound or Southbound, or Washington Street-Southbound. (Washington Street Northbound is **not** recommended because of the restrictions on left turns.)

Due to anticipated congestion in the vicinity at the Masonic Memorial (King Street and Russell Road) and the Metro Station (King Street and Diagonal Road), units should avoid approaching the staging area via King Street (Route 7).

- A. **Departing the Staging Area:** Unit transportation departing the staging area should proceed North or West. Once the Parade Route has been closed, King Street can no longer be used.
- B. **Departing the Dispersal Area:**
  - a. Unit transportation must depart North or West to avoid crossing King St. and to avoid extensive delays.