



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe

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Office of the Governor

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Emergency Regulations Governing Permitted Events at the Robert E. Lee Monument in Richmond Enacted

RICHMOND – Governor Terry McAuliffe today announced that the Virginia Department of General Services (DGS) has promulgated emergency regulations to govern permitted events at the Robert E. Lee Monument located in Richmond. Governor McAuliffe signed [Executive Order 67](#) in response to the “Unite the Right” rally that devolved into a violent incident of civil unrest in Charlottesville on August 12. The executive order temporarily suspended permitting at the Lee Monument pending a thorough review of the existing rules by the Task Force on Public Safety Preparedness and Response to Civil Unrest, which was established through [Executive Order 68](#).

The Task Force, chaired by Brian Moran, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, determined that establishing a robust permitting process is a critical component of preparing for events and protecting public safety. Accordingly, the Task Force developed a regulation for the Lee Monument to be implemented by DGS that requires a permit for assemblies of 10 or more people, limits capacity at the monument to 500, restricts the possession of weapons, including firearms, during permitted events and limits the duration and open hours at the monument.

“In the aftermath of the tragedy in Charlottesville and upon learning that the permitting rules for the Robert E. Lee Monument had not been updated in decades, I immediately ordered my team to review the permit application process and develop regulations to protect public safety,” **said Governor McAuliffe**. “I want to thank Secretary Moran for his leadership in pulling together state and local experts on this issue and for developing a regulation that will balance First

Amendment rights and ensure that all Virginians remain safe. We believe these regulations can be a model for localities across Virginia as they consider how to approach these types of events in the future.”

The Governor’s Task Force and Permitting Work Group conducted an extensive review and gave significant consideration to each component of the proposed regulation. The Task Force reviewed research from other states and engaged subject matter experts on legal and constitutional issues throughout the review process.

“One of the key findings emerging from the Task Force is the critical importance of adopting a robust permitting process that involves first responders and all necessary departments in planning and preparation efforts,” **said Brian Moran, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security.** “As Chair of the Task Force, I want to thank all of the members of the Task Force and Work Group for contributing their time and expertise to this important discussion.”

The emergency regulations will be in effect for 18 months while DGS promulgates a final regulation pursuant to the [Administrative Process Act](#). As DGS prepares to finalize the regulation, there will be opportunities for public comment and a public hearing. Additionally, DGS will consider whether changes should be made to the Capitol Square regulations in light of the lessons learned from Charlottesville and the work of the Task Force. Members of the public are invited to submit comments on any changes that should be applied to the Capitol Square Regulation.

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