



Democratic National Convention – Association Preparation

August 2024

As many are aware, the Democratic National Convention (“DNC”) is scheduled to take place in Chicago from August 19, 2024 through August 22, 2024. Boards and managers of condominium and homeowners associations throughout Chicago, particularly downtown, the West Loop, Gold Coast, Streeterville, River North, South Loop, museum campus area, and the United Center area, should begin preparing for the disruptions it may bring.

The Chicago Police Department (“CPD”) and the Chicago Office of Emergency Management & Communications (“OEMC”) have provided valuable information that our clients can consider and use for their communities.

1. **Main Areas of DNC** – The primary areas where the DNC events will take place are in or around McCormick Place and the United Center. Additionally, areas near or adjacent to the Loop are also areas of concern, as protests may originate downtown and proceed to/from symbolic areas within the City (Federal Plaza, Daley Plaza, Grant Park, Michigan Avenue).
2. **911 Calls** – The Chicago Police Department and OEMC are taking a “see something, say something” approach to the DNC. Association residents should be advised that if they observe anything outside of the norm that represents a potential danger, they should call 911. Residents should also be informed that if they call 911, they should provide the dispatcher with the address of the condominium association as opposed to the condominium or homeowners association’s formal name. Be particularly mindful of associations that have dual addresses (some associations have multiple physical addresses if located on a cross street). There will be police from cities other than Chicago responding to calls during the week of the DNC, and thus, the names of the associations may mean nothing to these responding officers. Make sure that the proper address of the building is provided to the 911 dispatcher or, as an alternative, the nearest intersection.

When calling 911 to report criminal activity, the CPD will ask for a physical description of the perpetrator(s) (male/female, height/weight, color of clothing). The 911 dispatch prefers a “head-to-toe” description, with particular attention to the perpetrator’s footwear. A perpetrator may change their shirt or remove a coat to confuse the police, but they are far less likely to change their footwear.

3. **OEMC App** – Boards and management should advise residents to download the Chicago OEMC Safety app (available for Android and iPhones). The app is intended to send out important information (regarding emergencies or otherwise) and will also provide key information related to street closures and other issues of which they should be aware.
4. **Vandalism or Destruction of Property** – As many downtown associations are unfortunately aware from recent years, vandalism and destruction of property can occur during large gatherings and protests. Regarding the destruction of property, all associations should have window board-up service information (and potentially

materials to allow for a board-up available on-site) readily available. Active destruction of property should be reported to 911 immediately.

To the extent the board or management notices graffiti on their building, they should be advised to call 311 or submit an online request at https://311.chicago.gov/s/article/Graffiti-removal-services?language=en_US. The online request can be useful insofar as it allows the reporting party to include a photo of the graffiti in the report. We understand from the CPD that graffiti that involves hate speech, obscene material, or gang-related language results in a more rapid response for the graffiti clean-up.

5. **“No Trespassing” Signage** – Boards in areas where protests may occur or tourism is popular should consider posting a sign at the Association’s entrances, explicitly stating “Private Property – No Trespassing.” The signs can be as simple as a computer print-out (they need not be professionally printed). A non-invited individual is still trespassing even without such signage displayed, but the sign can be helpful to refute any argument that the individual was unaware that the association is considered private property.
6. **Short-Term Rentals** – Check your community documents to determine whether or not short-term rental is prohibited. The week of the DNC may be a popular time for individuals to attempt to license their units on a short-term basis. Advising Association occupants and key staff members to be vigilant of suspected (or obvious) short-term renters is recommended, with the board taking all necessary disciplinary action pursuant to the Association’s documents against the offending owner.
7. **Street Closures** – The barriers and street closures will start, at the latest, on August 17th (a couple of days before the official start of the DNC, set to begin on August 19th), and will likely be in place until August 23, 2024. The biggest night of the DNC will be August 22nd. Again, downloading the OEMC app is the best resource for learning about street closures and detours.
8. **Additional Security and Armed Security** – To the extent your community has opted to hire additional security or is considering doing so, many of the third-party services have staff availability for additional personnel the week of the DNC. The board should be prepared for “premium” pricing of the staff. Regarding questions as to whether hiring armed security is advisable, the board must make sure that the individual hired is highly trained, and be advised that most armed security guards are often off-duty police officers. However, the week of the DNC, the CPD has unequivocally stated that there will not be any “off-duty” police officers the week of the DNC (all active officers will be reporting for official duty).

For any further questions, feel free to contact [Bartzen Rosenlund Kasten](mailto:Bartzen.Rosenlund.Kasten@brkchicago.com) at 312.450.6655 or at info@brkchicago.com.