

OAKHURST PORCH FEST '26

2026 Block Captains Responsibilities Guide

Six simple tasks to ensure a
safe and enjoyable Porchfest.



Here's all you need to do:

1. Get connected with Decatur Police and coordinate in advance.

Your Block Captain team of six will be working collaboratively with Decatur Police. To ease that process, they'll be conducting a **mandatory Zoom meeting** as we get closer to the event to meet and brief you on what's expected and how to be responsive.

You'll also need to coordinate and establish shifts. However you choose to do so is up

to you. All we ask is that, between noon and 6pm, a **minimum** of one person be "on-call" assuming the role of Block Captain at any given time.

Block Captaining can be as simple as just keeping an eye on things or as involved as creating a full-on local organizing committee for your street. Whatever feels right for you.

2. Encourage neighbor-initiated traffic management efforts.

Making room for crowds at Porchfest can be difficult, particularly on skinnier streets with a lot of participating porches. Throw in on-street parking necking down the space and it's tough for folks to clear the way when vehicles pass through.

Block Captains can help by working with neighbors on a little grassroots traffic management to help absorb the crowds. Here's how everyone in your Block Zone can contribute:

- » On Porchfest morning prior to the event, move vehicle(s) off the street — either into driveways or to a nearby location.
- » Drag some lawn chairs or other such fillers out to the curb to prevent on-street parking during the day (like they do up north after shoveling out a parking space). Or, do a makeshift parklet for hanging out. Or whatever!



3. Help clear crowd obstructions and/or temporarily direct traffic as necessary during the event.

As you likely know, we don't close streets during Porchfest. This is for a variety of reasons but the biggest one is that CoD police need equal access to any address in the event of an emergency and they're happiest when our streets remain open and manageable during the event.

That's why it's key that, in the event of a bottleneck or street blockage, Block

Captains are available to encourage attendees back to the edges of the street and onto the sidewalk to restore through access by vehicles.

This is the number one reason we've established Block Captains as a part of Porchfest. It's critical we manage through traffic effectively to ensure our event be allowed to continue.



4. Ensure performances don't occur outside assigned times or exceed allowable volumes.

Every year we have at least a handful of performers who just don't get it: Porchfest is about contributing to a whole that's greater than the sum of its parts. It only works when all performers work together in a spirit of solidarity.

Sometimes such lofty ambitions need a little nudge. Here's how:

- » Keep each performer to their time slot. This includes soundchecks, encores, whatever. Everyone gets an hour and that may need to be enforced.
- » Performance volumes at Porchfest are admittedly subjective and context-dependent. But if you feel someone's sound level is infringing on another's performance or on everyone's ability to enjoy the event, turn 'em down.

5. Monitor alcohol availability.

The Oakhurst Porchfest's spirit of radical generosity and good will has become legendary, reflected in extraordinary acts of hospitality by our porch hosts. But that hospitality also means access to alcohol must be properly managed.

Block Captains can assist in these efforts by ensuring sources of alcohol (coolers, kegs, etc.):

- » Are kept discretely on private property.
- » Remain monitored by hosts to ensure no access by minors.

CoD police have graced us with considerable leeway in the past, so long as safety and decorum prevailed. **Hosts should be reminded that they can be held accountable by police should they fail to meet this expectation.**

6. Be proactive in dealing with emerging problems.

The ultimate role of a Block Captain is simple: See a problem, solve a problem. If it's too big, get some assistance from fellow Block Captains or other Porchfesters. If it's still too big, call the police.

Remember that for attendees, all normal rules of law and order apply and, just like

any other day, everyone remains responsible for their own actions and welfare when moving from yard to yard.

Block Captains are not responsible for attendee behavior. But if that behavior gets out of hand, or if a significant injury occurs, 911 should be the first call.

Many neighbors have been assuming this role informally for years. We're just making it official. Want to help? Get your crew together and sign up today!



BONUS: Get issued this snappy vest. Maybe even a whistle!

Block Captain Checklist

Wanna make sure you think of everything? Here you go.

Stuff that comes with the job:

- Coordinate with your fellow Block Captains and attend the required Zoom meeting with DPD.
- Encourage neighbors to move vehicles from the street to increase crowd space at the edges and aid through-traffic.
- Help clear streets during the event if bottlenecks occur.
- Monitor volumes and keep performers to their allotted hour (including soundcheck).
- Spread the word about being mindful with the booze.
- Remain available / on-call for the duration of your shift.

Optional ideas for overachievers:

- Touch base with the various Porch Hosts in your Zone.
- Check in with elderly neighbors or anyone else who might not be aware of what's happening.
- Inspire your neighbors to fancy up their yards or do artful, ridiculous things with their property.
- Outdo all the other Zones with a coordinated theme.