

2026 HOMECOMING SURVIVAL GUIDE

Dear Homecoming Participant,

For over a hundred years, the Penn State community has come together every year to celebrate our university and the incredibly memories, experiences, and friends it has provided us with. The ability to come together and celebrate our pride is one of the most memorable experiences one can have at Penn State, and I am truly so excited to watch you all come together and share in that pride together this year!

This Homecoming Guide is in place to educate you on the regulations and guidelines we have set to ensure you have the best Homecoming experience possible. While we strive to make this guide as comprehensive as possible, we encourage you to contact either our Competition Director, Tianna Endo (competition@homecoming.psu.edu), or myself (director@homecoming.psu.edu) at any time. Similarly, the entire Homecoming Executive Committee is always here to serve as a resource for our participants. Do not hesitate to contact any Director you feel is relevant to your needs throughout the entirety of this Homecoming season.

Competing in Homecoming is a very unique opportunity at Penn State. We continuously run Competition from year to year in order to allow organizations to make connections and build relationships with one another and to share in each other's pride for our university. As a Competitor for Homecoming 2026, we hope to provide several opportunities for you to come together with us and celebrate many years of Penn State tradition. The theme for Homecoming 2026 is "With Lion's Pride, Generations Thrive" so as we look back on the past, we also urge you to look forward to the future and expand your own horizons. Thank you for the time and dedication you will put into this year! We look forward to working with you to celebrate the best of Penn State's past, present, and future.

For The Glory,

Zach McGuire, 2026 Executive Director

Glossary of Homecoming Terms:

- **Community Organization** – an organization not affiliated with Penn State University and is not a registered Student Organization. Such organizations may participate in the parade and are encouraged to come to events such as Best of Penn State Carnival.
- **Competition Points** – Competition Points are awarded by a panel of guest judges based on defined scoring criteria. Competition Points can be earned for Float, Madhatter, Banner, and at the numerous Homecoming events held throughout the spring and fall semester.
- **Judging Tents** – located at the intersection of College Ave & Allen St, this is where participants in the Float Competition will be judged from.
- **Banner** - Overall competitors decorate a banner that will be walked in front of their float during the Parade. Judging for Banner competition takes place during the Best of Penn State Carnival.
- **Madhatter** – a costumed member of an organization that often walks in front of an organization’s float and excites the crowd. The Madhatter is often a character who correlates to the float’s theme.
- **Overall Competitor** – Overall Competitors must participate in Banner, Madhatter, and Float competitions. If at any time an organization, pair, or triad must withdraw from any of these competitions, they forfeit Overall Competitor status.
- **Personal Check**- a check drawn upon funds deposited in your personal checking account.
- **Pomps** – pomps are 5 1/2” x 5 1/2” squares of tissue paper used to decorate floats and Madhatter frames made of “chicken wire.”

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Overview of Being an Overall Competitor

Homecoming’s goal is to celebrate tradition and instill pride in all members of the Penn State family. Together we are trying to educate, form and bring people together by hosting competitors and hosting competitions. Through Homecoming you will receive active engagement from students, alumni, faculty and staff across the community. Overall Competitors must compete in all required events and are eligible to win the Overall Homecoming Competition. Overall Competitors are eligible to be paired with other Overall Competing organizations. When registered as an Overall Competitor, organizations are required to participate in these competitions:

- Banner
- Madhatter
- Float

There are many other competitions throughout the year that can increase engagement throughout the community. If an organization fails to participate in any of the required events above, their eligibility to continue with Overall Competition will be discussed amongst the Homecoming Executive Committee.

Winners

- **1st place prize** - \$1500 to go to organizations’ national philanthropy.

- **2nd place prize** - \$1000 to go to organizations' national philanthropy.
- **3rd place prize** - \$500 to go to organizations' national philanthropy.
- IFC and Panhellenic have sponsored these prize winnings. Prize winning will be evenly split by organizations in pair/triad. In the case the winning organizations do not have a national philanthropy, prize winnings will go to the philanthropy of their choice (excluding THON – but can do Four Diamonds).
- 1st - 3rd place Overall Competitors will be announced at the Homecoming Football game.
- Awards for individual events will be announced via the Homecoming website

Homecoming Organizations Meetings

- Each organization or pair is required to attend a fall and spring meeting that will be assigned based on availability. The time and date will be chosen in agreement between Homecoming and the Organization.
- Attendance at the Spring and Fall Info Meetings is mandatory for all organizations.
- Every Homecoming chair for each organization must be in attendance, with the exception of family/health related emergencies or class.
- All excuses should be sent to competition@homecoming.psu.edu and will be approved by the Competition Director.

Deductions:

- 15 points per organization will be deducted for failing to attend the Fall Information Meeting.

Registration and Pairing

Every organization that is registering to be an Overall Competitor will be placed in a pair or triad. These pairs/triads will work together throughout the year to earn points towards Overall Competition.

Registration

- The Registration form will be released on the Homecoming Website.
- Organizations that plan on competing must fill out the Registration form by **April 24th at 11:59 p.m.**
- This form will not include payments.

Pairing

- Pairings will be **randomized**.
- Pairings will be released no later than **April 26th @ 11:59pm** via e-mail.
- *Organizations may not be paired with the same organization(s) as Homecoming 2025.*
- An “Overall Competing Triad” will be synonymous with an “Overall Competing Pair” for all intents and purposes other than registration and may be referred to as “pair” henceforth.

Expectations of Participating Organizations

- An organization that chooses to participate in Penn State Homecoming represents the University and will always abide by the Penn State Student Code of Conduct. By registering to participate in any Homecoming event(s), organizations agree to abide by the Student Code of Conduct, Policies and Rules for Student Organizations, and to follow the rules and regulations set forth in the Homecoming Guide. The student code of conduct can be found at <http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/conduct/codeofconduct/>. Policies and Rules for Student Organizations can be found at <http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/organizationrules>.
- Paired organizations will be held responsible for the actions of their partner organization, regardless of fault. Penalties incurred due to failure to attend required meetings and events or failure to comply with the rules set forth by the Homecoming Executive Committee will affect both organizations.
 - Exceptions to this may only occur if the Homecoming Executive Committee is to handle an organization’s future participation in Homecoming following a disqualification. Organizations will then be handled separately.
- Unruly or disruptive behavior or intoxicated participants will not be tolerated. If any member of a participating organization is found to be intoxicated or acting inappropriately during any Homecoming event, the Executive Committee reserves the right to remove that person and disqualify their organization from the event without warning.
- In addition to disqualification, persons or organizations may be subject to penalties from the University or State College authorities.
- The Homecoming Executive Committee reserves the right to deny any participant(s) or organization(s) entry into any Homecoming competitive event.
- The Homecoming Executive Committee reserves the right to disqualify any inappropriate designs or performances. Banners, Madhatters, or Floats deemed to be inappropriate will be disqualified and will not be allowed to participate.
- Political propaganda, profanity, alcohol/drug related references and nudity are expressly forbidden.
- No decisions made by Homecoming Captains or Committee Members are binding and any such decisions are subject to review by the Homecoming Executive Committee.
- Any and all rules and regulations are subject to change at any time at the discretion of the Homecoming Executive Committee. Any modifications or additions to the rules and regulations of the Homecoming Guide will be publicized via the Homecoming listserv and the Homecoming website.
- All organizations that violate the rules and guidelines set place in the 2026 Homecoming Guide are subject to an automatic review by the Homecoming Executive Committee and can

have their participation in Homecoming 2026 revoked or their future participations restricted.

Competition Events and Point Opportunities

Description: Overall competing organizations, and Float competitors can earn Points by attending various events before and during Homecoming Week!

Events and Opportunities to earn Points:

- ***Homecoming Day of Service (4/26/2026) - 30 Points Possible***
 - Homecoming Day of Service is one of the main Days of Service on campus (including Fresh Start, MLK Day and Summer Day of Service. Through these days you can learn more about the community around you and how Penn State has reached the point we're at now.
 - Each year Homecoming plans a Day of Service to give back to the community and surrounding areas of State College. Our Directors, Captains, and competing organizations will volunteer a day in the Spring to help in recycling and clean-up efforts, nursing homes, as well as various businesses in the area.
 - When: April 26th, 2026
 - Organizations that participate in the Homecoming Day of Service may earn 5 points per participating member, up to 30 points.
- ***Legacy Celebration (4/28/2026) - 30 Points Possible***
 - Legacy Celebration is a celebration of the Homecoming Logo. This event in the HUB highlights a successful year at Penn State as well as preparing the community for the next year. Legacy embodies the idea that Homecoming is not restricted to just one week in the fall; it is a year-round celebration.
 - The event consists of music, student performers, interactive games, and fun food. A float of the Logo is also constructed that students can "pomp" throughout the day and reflect on the theme of Homecoming and ultimately celebrate all the great things we accomplish as a University.
 - When: April 28th, 2026
 - Where: HUB
 - Organizations may earn Points in the Legacy Celebration by attending the event, participating in the activity, and then checking in with the Competition Committee once the activity is completed. Up to 15 members of your organization, pair or triad may earn points at this event to receive the full 15 points (2 points per member).
- ***Allen Street Jam (9/21/2026) - 40 Points Possible***
 - Allen St. Jam is a fun mini festival on Allen St. at the start of Homecoming Week.

- This event consists of food trucks, games and performances throughout the night for everybody to come and enjoy. The Homecoming Dance Competition will occur this night where Penn State dance organizations will compete and show their Penn State Pride. This night is for everyone of all ages to come, have fun, and socialize all starting off an incredible Homecoming Week.
- Last year, Allen Street had vendors like the “make your own” street signs, caricatures, photo booths, and food trucks
- Up to 20 members of each organization, pair, or triad may complete the activity and sign-in at the Points table to receive a maximum of 40 points (2 points per member).
- **Past to Present (9/22/2026) - 40 Points Possible**
 - Past to Present is a celebration in the HUB that focuses on Penn State’s history and how it has come to be what we see today.
 - This event consists of displays and performances from many different Penn State organizations, interactive activities and food for the PSU community to enjoy. This event also showcases a Penn State Museum which presents the largest documented collection of Penn State memorabilia.
 - Up to 20 members of the organization, pair, or triad may successfully complete the activity to earn a maximum of 40 points (2 points per member).
- **For The Glory Talent Show (9/22/2026) - 30 Points Possible**
 - The Talent show is another way to display the vast array of talents possessed by our student body. The show is judged by invited esteemed faculty and students. Top 3 performances get the opportunity to perform their act at THON.
 - Tryouts for the Talent Show will take place at the beginning of Fall Semester
 - Organizations can earn points for members attending the For The Glory Talent Show. *To earn points, all members must stay for the entire duration of the talent show.* Members must write the name of their respective organizations on the back of the ticket and submit tickets to Homecoming captains upon exit of the building.
 - Up to 30 members of each organization, pair, or triad may submit tickets to receive a maximum of 30 points (1 point per member).
- **Best of Penn State Carnival (9/23/2026) - 40 Points Possible**
 - The Best of Penn State Carnival is Homecoming’s very own carnival on HUB Lawn. Last year we even had carnival rides and an escape room!
 - This event engages all members of the Penn State community for a day full of fun. There are countless activities to participate in such as carnival games, face painting, inflatables, rides, and more!
 - Fun carnival food is available throughout the day, perfect to snack on while enjoying the performances of different Penn State students and organizations. This event truly showcases the Best of Penn State and encompasses Homecoming’s mission by bringing together students, faculty, staff, alumni across the community.
 - Up to 20 members of each organization, pair or triad may attend in order to receive a maximum of 40 points (2 point per member).
 - Organization alumni are valid to check-in for points at this event.
- **Tailgate Competition (9/26/2026) - 20 Points Possible**

- The Penn State Homecoming Tailgate Competition is held right before the Homecoming football game and is open to any member of the Penn State Community, including students and alumni. Tailgates are based off of six categories: Best Food, Most Creative, Most Penn State Spirit, Best Overall, “Nittany Newcomer” and Best Student Organization. On the day of, judges help score all tailgates and reward winners with spirited prizes. This event helps promote Penn State pride and creates a fun atmosphere leading up to kick-off. Go State!
- **Rules:**
 - All competing tailgates are expected to display positive sportsmanship.
 - Entries will be eligible for prizes in each of the following areas:
 - Best Food
 - Most Creativity
 - Most Penn State Spirit
 - Best Overall
 - Nittany Newcomer
 - Best Student Organization (for student competitors)
 - Please be aware that, although alcohol is not forbidden for those of age, all participants must be respectful and representing Penn State students and alumni in the best possible light. All participants will be asked to show proper identification to Tailgate Competition judges if alcohol is present at a tailgate. Judges reserve the right to automatically disqualify any participants who fail to meet these requirements.
 - Registration for the Tailgate Competition will take place online at homecoming.psu.edu.
- Organizations will receive 20 points per registration if they register on-time beginning in late spring through September (20 Points for every Tailgate registered)
- **HOPE – No maximum**
 - Organizations can earn Points by collecting aluminum cans for the Homecoming Recycling Effort. Cans must be in a clear 30-gallon recycling bag and the bag must be filled completely. Organizations must label each bag they collect with the name of their organization in sharpie or permanent marker. No plastic or glass bottles will be accepted. Bags can be turned in every Sunday from **4 p.m. to 6 p.m.** at Blue Storage during the Spring and Fall Semester.
 - Organizations will earn 5 points per bag.
- **Homecoming Fundraisers – No maximum**
 - Organizations are encouraged to attend the designated Homecoming fundraisers organized by the Financial Management Committee.
 - Members from each organization, pair, or triad must sign-in with the Competitor Committee and show their receipt in order to earn points (1 point per member).
- **Office Competition – 30 Points Possible**
 - The week before Homecoming Week a Door Decorating Competition will take place among various organizations offices, academic offices, sorority floors, and fraternity houses. This is an OPTIONAL event, but another opportunity to earn points.
 - Participating – 5 Points
 - Placing in the Top 5 – 5 Points

- Winning – 20 Points
- ***Sustainability Seminar – 30 Points Possible***
 - Homecoming hosts a Sustainability Seminar in the beginning of the fall semester. The date of this will be announced when it is confirmed.
 - 2 Points Per Member (Max 15 Members)
- ***Homecoming Directors, Captains, or Committee Members – 30 Points Possible***
 - To thank the organizations that have members who volunteer their time to assist in the planning and execution of Homecoming, bonus points will be awarded to each of their organizations. Any Captain or Committee Member who does not perform to the expectations of the Homecoming Executive Committee will not be awarded points for their organization(s). Points will be capped at 30 points per pairing.
 - Executive Committee Member – 10 points
 - Captain – 3 points
 - Committee Member – 1 point
- ***Homecoming Court Nominations and Representative – 40 Points Possible***
 - If any member of an organization is in the top 10 Student or Alumni Court finalists, their organization will **be awarded 20 points**. No organization, pair or triad will receive additional bonus points for having more than one representative member.
 - Members can **nominate** for each court and will receive 2 points per nomination. Nominations must be legitimate to earn the points.

Banner Competition – 100 Points Possible (** Required)

Description: These banners are used to showcase organizations' names and themes throughout various Homecoming events. A banner must be submitted and judged before it can appear in any further events. Organizations' names should be clearly seen on the banner. All Overall Competitors must compete in the Banner Competition. Competition Points will be awarded based on the criteria below.

Rules:

- Banners may not have any type of frame or pole attached to them when they are submitted.
 - Poles used to carry the banner on Parade Day will be included with Parade supplies.
 - Poles must be returned with all other parade equipment before an organization's security deposit is returned.
- Banners must be made of fabric, cloth or canvas. **Paper and cardboard are prohibited.**
- Banners may be no larger than 40" tall by 72" wide (3'4" X 6').

- Banners must have an open ring in each of the upper and lower corners.
- The banner must be carried by at least 2 people throughout the entirety of the parade route.
 - If the organization also has a flatbed or float, the banner may also be attached to the float if it does not drag on the ground.
- Banners must be submitted by the designated date located on the Homecoming Calendar to a room that Homecoming Chairs will be notified of prior to Homecoming Week.
- Banners that are disqualified for any reason will not be allowed to appear in the parade.
- Submissions will be judged during Best of Penn State Carnival on the Wednesday of Homecoming Week, and Homecoming Chairs will be notified prior to Homecoming Week of where and when to pick up their banner for Parade Day.
- **In the event an Organization is disqualified, registration fees will not be returned.**

Scoring Criteria:

- Utilizes Size/Space
- Quality of Construction
- Professional/Complete
- Use of Materials
- Design and Color
- Originality and Creativity
- Use of Org's Theme
- Penn State/Homecoming Spirit

Deductions:

- 5-point deduction if the banner is made from incorrect materials or exceeds size limits.
- 5-point deduction if the banner does not have four holes/rings in every corner.
- 10-point deduction if the banner is submitted after the deadline.
- 5-point deduction if organization fails to place name or theme on banner.
- 5-point deduction for failing to pick-up your banner on the date specified.

The Banner Competition will be judged by invited faculty, students, staff and community members, as selected by the Talent Relations Committee.

Madhatter Competition – 75 Points Possible (** Required)

Description: The Madhatter is a unique costume that by a member of an organization in the parade. Madhatters traditionally represent a character related to the float's theme. All Overall Competitors must participate in Madhatter. Competition Points will be awarded based on the criteria below.

Rules:

- A Madhatter costume can be created **in any way an organization chooses** to do.
- Any electrical power use in the Madhatter must be battery powered or it will not be judged or allowed to appear in the Parade.
- Any Madhatter deemed inappropriate by the Homecoming Executive Committee will be immediately disqualified from all Parade participation.
- Madhatters will report to Parade Grounds at the designated check-in time assigned by the Parade Committee. This time will not be the same as the organization's Float check-in time.
- Madhatters must be complete at check-in. No repairs or alterations may be made after check-in unless previously approved.
- At least 1 member from the participating organization(s) must be present at check-in and during judging or the Madhatter will not be judged.
- The Madhatter must always remain in front of the float during the parade. If a Madhatter is behind its corresponding float it will be pulled from the parade and disqualified.
- The Madhatter may not increase height (i.e. stilts).
- **An extra 10 points will** be awarded to any Organization who chooses to pomp their Madhatter costume.

Scoring Criteria:

- Quality of Construction
- Complete & Professional
- Originality & Creativity
- Accurately Reflect Theme
- Enthusiastic/Crowd Friendly

Deductions:

- 5-point deduction if the Madhatter uses non-battery electricity.
- 10-point deduction if an organization or pair's Madhatter is late for the designated check-in time.
- 5-point deduction if the Madhatter exceeds size limitations.

The Madhatter Competition will be judged by invited faculty, students, staff, and community members, as selected by the Talent Relations Committee.

Float Competition – 400 points (** Required)

Description: Pomped floats participating in the Parade using flatbeds may enter the Float Competition and will be judged as they pass the Allen Street Gates at the Friends and Family Tent.

Rules:

- **Purchasing Supplies:** All organizations participating in the Float Competition must purchase all float making supplies (i.e. chicken wire, wood glue, and poms) through Penn State Homecoming and the Nittany Co-Op.
 - Poms are 5 ½" by 5 ½" sheets of colored tissue paper sold in individual packs or cases of 24. Organizations are encouraged to purchase poms in groups of 12 or 24. Each pack of poms covers 4 feet by 4 feet of a single-pomped float, or 2 feet by 2 feet of a double-pomped float.
 - Chicken wire is sold in 36-inch by 25-foot rolls.
 - Wood glue is sold by the gallon.
 - Instructions: Float supplies will be distributed by the Nittany Co-Op and must be ordered through Penn State Homecoming via homecoming.psu.edu.
 - To order float supplies, organizations must create an account on the Penn State Homecoming website (homecoming.psu.edu) and add the desired products to their cart.
 - The website will calculate the total amount for the supplies in the cart.
 - **The deadline to submit this form August 28th, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.**
 - All organizations may pay for supplies by writing a check made payable to "Penn State Homecoming" and the organizations' names must be written on the memo line. Please note, we will not be accepting personal checks. Checks must be written from the account of the competing organization, not an individual members account.
 - **Payment for float supplies is due on September 4th by 5 p.m.**
 - Organizations may also pay using an ASA Transfer, detailed in the "Financial Obligation Information" section.
 - Organizations must pick-up their float supplies from The Nittany Co-Op on **October 8th and 9th**.
 - Deductions:
 - 10-points for failing to pick-up their order at their scheduled time.
- **Float Construction: September 20th, 2026 – September 26th, 2026**
 - Begin at Noon on the Sunday of Homecoming Week – September 20th, 2026
 - Floats must not exceed 8 ft. Wide/20 ft. Long/15 ft. High.
 - *Floats must meet all Police and Fire Regulations below.*
 - **Police Regulations for Floats: failure to adhere to these regulations will result in immediate disqualification, loss of Equipment Deposit and the float will not be allowed to participate in the Parade.**
 - Decorative material used on parade floats shall be flame resistant.
 - A minimum of one (1) ten-pound multi-purpose (ABC) fire extinguisher shall be provided for each float. The fire extinguisher must be located in an accessible location, be currently certified and maintained in operable condition and present at the time of float inspections.
 - A generator or battery must power all electrical appliances.
 - All wiring and wiring connections must be located where they are not exposed to physical damage, secured to float and maintained in a safe condition.

- All generators must be uncovered, and exhaust discharge should not be located within 3 feet of combustible materials.
 - Generators shall not be located in enclosed spaces of the passenger compartment of vehicles. (Ex. Hatchback vehicles with the hatch open is not an approved location for a gas-powered generator).
 - All heat sources (lights etc.) must be located away from all combustible materials.
 - Safety chains must be affixed to the float and towing vehicle. Chains must be present and affixed at the time of float inspection.
 - No open flames are permitted on floats or vehicles.
 - Individuals riding on the float must be situated in a secure location. (Seated or provided with a secure handhold e.g. railing, pole, handle).
 - Maximum of 20 people can ride on float.
 - If more than 5 people, need to build a secure railing.
 - A slow-moving vehicle “reflective triangle sign” must be affixed to the rear of the float in an easily visible location.
 - Normal unobstructed vision to the front, sides and rear of the towing vehicle must be provided to the vehicle operator.
 - Working brake lights and turn signals must be present.
 - All safety devices must be in place and operational at Final Inspections.
 - **Fire Regulations for Floats: During Homecoming Week, many organizations build shelters to protect the float from weather conditions and to provide security. These shelters may create a fire hazard.**
 - Any shelters or tents must be fire resistant and away from flammable materials.
 - A 10-lb. ABC fire extinguisher must be placed near the exit of the shelter.
- **Inspections: September 24th, 2026**
 - **September 24th, 2026:** On the night prior to the Parade, the organization must have completed the following tasks:
 - The vehicle towing the float must be present for inspection.
 - If you are renting a vehicle to tow your float, you must rent it for Thursday and Friday.
 - The vehicle towing the float must have a full tank of gas.
 - Slow-moving vehicle triangle must be attached to the rear of the float and visible.
 - Flatbed must be properly hitched to the towing vehicle.
 - Flatbed brake lights must be attached to the rear of the float, working, and visible.
 - Float must have a 10-lb. ABC fire extinguisher on the float, not from the fraternity house.
 - Papier-Mache and airbrushing are prohibited during float construction.
 - Float dimensions may not exceed 8ft. Wide x 20ft. Long x 15ft High (from the ground). If a float fails to meet size requirement, it will be disqualified and not allowed to participate in the Parade.
- **Parade Arrival: September 25th, 2026**
 - No camping out on the Parade Route before 9 a.m. on Parade Day.

- Organizations/pairs must report to the parade check-in table at the designated time with their floats. Floats arriving more than 30 minutes late will lose their security deposit and will forfeit any points earned in the Float and Madhatter Competitions.
- **A towing vehicle and a member of the organization** must always accompany every flatbed on the staging grounds. A float may not be dropped off unless there is already another towing vehicle present to replace it. The towing vehicle must be filled with a full tank gas for Parade Day.
- Organizations arriving without the proper safety equipment will not be considered checked-in and will have 30 minutes to retrieve the equipment or be disqualified.
- Floats must be complete upon arrival at the staging area for check-in.
- Organization(s) names must appear clearly on the passenger's side of the float.
- Vehicles must be turned off upon arriving at staging grounds and may only be turned on when instructed by a member of the Parade Committee.
- Absolutely no smoking or vaping is allowed in the staging area at any time.
- An investment in a rain tarp is highly suggested if it rains in the staging area before the Parade begins.
- All trash should be removed from your area before leaving the staging area.
- **During Parade: September 25th, 2026**
 - The Parade will begin around 6:00 p.m.
 - Organizations should not stop during the Parade Route, unless directed to do so by Homecoming or Police personnel. Floats must complete the Parade route.
 - The Borough Traffic Coordinator strictly prohibits anything being thrown from a flatbed, float, or vehicle (this includes candy). Deductions will be made each time any person is caught throwing any item.
 - Floats must be pulled by a State College Borough-certified motor vehicle with a properly working towing hitch.
 - Any float deemed unsafe or inappropriate (contains obscene or political propaganda) by the Homecoming Executive Committee or the State College Police will be removed from the Parade and disqualified from Competition.
 - Parade order is determined at random by the Parade Committee.
 - Floats not complying with Police and Fire Regulations at float inspection on Parade Day will be disqualified and not allowed to participate in the Parade.
- **Recycle Your Float: September 27th, 2026**
 - Recycle Your Float is an initiative taken by Penn State Homecoming to increase our recycling efforts by going green. This event occurs on Sunday at the conclusion of Homecoming Week. All organizations using a flatbed rented from Nittany Mountain Trail Rides (NMTR) **MUST bring** their flatbeds and floats to be deconstructed during the event. **If an organization does not bring their float to this event, the organizations involved may be fined as per discretion by the Homecoming Executive Committee.**
- **Guidelines:**
 - Organizations must deliver their float back to float grounds at the time assigned for their float to be deconstructed.
 - Each pair/triad is required to attend this event with at least three organization members.
 - These members will help deconstruct the float and recycle its materials. If members are not sent, there will be a deconstruction fee charged.

- Each organization must bring the same tools they used to construct the float, fully charged.
- Once the float has been deconstructed, the organization members will leave the flatbed at the event.
- If an organization fails to attend with their rented flatbed, there will be a \$50 pickup fee charged by Nittany Mountain Trail Rides.
- If the flatbed is considered still fully constructed when retrieved by Nittany Mountain Trail Rides, an additional fee will be charged based on the condition of the float.
- If the flatbed is considered non-retrievable once again, there will be an additional \$50 fee per attempt made by Nittany Mountain Trail Rides to retrieve the float.

General Rules:

- Floats will be inspected several times during float inspection and on Parade Day. Each in accordance with all Police and Fire Regulations as well as Homecoming Competition Rules and Regulations. Please read each respective section carefully to ensure your float meets all regulations and will be allowed to participate in the parade. Homecoming Chairs must be present for ALL inspections (September 24th and Parade Day).
- Any member of an organization caught vandalizing floats, or any Parade equipment will be immediately disqualified from all Parade Competitions and forfeit its Overall Competitor status, and in addition may also face legal action. IFC, the Panhellenic Council, and the State College Police Department will be contacted.
 - Any organization that has a float subject to vandalism should contact the Competition Director immediately to discuss the circumstances. Organizations are responsible for their Float/Madhatter at all times. Homecoming is not responsible for any damage made to an individual organization's personal property or property entrusted to that organization.
- Alcohol and other illegal substances are not permitted on Floats at any time. This includes during Float construction and on Parade Day. Organizations who are caught with alcohol or illegal substances will be disqualified from the Float Competition, will lose their security deposit, will have an automatic review of their participation by the Homecoming Executive Committee and will be reported to the State College Police.

Deductions:

- 20-point deduction for beginning float construction before the Sunday night of Homecoming Week.
- 20-point deduction per infraction for not complying with Float Regulations during initial on-site inspection.
- 10-point deduction if an organization is late for check-in.
- 15-point deduction if the organization/pair's name(s) does not appear on the side of the float.
- 30-point deduction each time a member of your organization is caught smoking or vaping in the Parade staging area or while on the float.

- 20-point deduction (minimum) if an organization or pair's area is not cleaned prior to leaving the staging area.
- 10-points will be deducted if a pump pick-up time is not scheduled when the order is placed.
- 20-point deduction each time an object is seen being thrown from a float/vehicle.
- 5-point deduction for turning on the vehicle without permission.

The Homecoming Executive Committee reserves the right to disqualify and deduct points to any float that do not meet quality standards.

Scoring Criteria:

An organization/pair's float should display the hard-work and effort made by the organization/pair throughout construction and impress the audience and judges.

- Complete & Fully Pumped
- Utilizes Flatbed Space Effectively
- Quality of Construction
- Consistent Use of Materials/Decorations
- Appealing Design/Color Scheme
- Creativity/Originality
- Use of Lights, Moving Parts, Etc.
- Relates to Organization/Pair's Theme
- Promotes Penn State Spirit
- Appropriate for Audience
- Entertaining/Crowd Reaction

Registration Financial Information

Any organization that has outstanding fines will not be permitted to register until those fines are paid.

- Overall Competitors may begin final registration on the Homecoming website on **April 20th until April 27th** . All payments and online registration must be submitted to consider a pair/triad participant in Homecoming 2026.
 - *Registration signifies a commitment by the participating organizations to compete in all Homecoming events.*

- Organizations may use a check as payment made to “**Penn State Homecoming**” and the organizations’ names must be written on the memo line.
- Please note, **we will not be accepting personal checks**. Checks must be written from the account of the competing organization, not an individual members account.
- **Checks should be brought to 227B HUB no later than April 27th, 2026 at 5 p.m. to avoid late fees.**
- Please see “Financial Obligations” for more information.
 - A fine of \$20, up to \$100, will be levied for each weekday that an organizations’ money is late, up to one business week.
 - After May 1st, 2026 at 5 p.m., an organization will no longer be able to register as an Overall Competing Organization.
- *If an organization fails to submit their full payment by the registration due date, an extension may be given at the discretion of the Financial Management Director, and late fees will incur. If after the extension, the organization has still not paid, they are disqualified from participating in this year’s Homecoming celebrations.*

Financial Obligation Information

An overall pair is responsible for their entire payment. However, each organization that is part of an overall pair or triad may split the cost at their own discretion as long as the total payment is paid in full by the registration deadline.

All of the below fees are non-refundable, and all deposits will be cashed immediately.

- Security deposits will be reimbursed via electronic transfer to an organization’s ASA account. If an organization does not have an active ASA account, a check will be issued to one single organization within a pairing or a triad. A full reimbursement will only be issued if all security requirements were fulfilled and all equipment was returned undamaged by the scheduled return date.

“If any organization has concerns about participating due to monetary constraints, please reach out to competition@homecoming.psu.edu”

Overall Competition Fees:

Security Deposit	\$150.00
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<i>This will be returned at the commencement of Homecoming 2026 if organizations do not encounter financial penalties over the course of the year.</i>	
Competition Fees Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banner • Parade Participation • Float Competition 	\$180.00
Flatbed Rental <i>Decorations for floats are bought in addition to these costs.</i>	\$300.00

Guidelines

- The \$150.00 security deposit is required from all groups, due to participation in the float competition. This deposit will provide the organization with safety chains, quick-links, and reflectors. No security deposits will be returned to an organization until Penn State Homecoming receives clearance from R.B. Powell, owner of Nittany Mountain Trail Rides, that the flatbed and equipment were returned in proper condition.
- Security deposit returns will be returned to one single organization who will be responsible for redistributing the proper amount to the other organization. Returns will be made only if all security requirements were fulfilled and all equipment was returned undamaged by the scheduled return date.

Student Organizations paying via organization check:

Registration fees must be paid by writing a check made payable to “**Penn State Homecoming**” and the organizations’ names must be written on the memo line.

- Please note, **we will not be accepting personal checks.** Checks must be written from the account of the competing organization, not an individual members account.
- Checks will need to be turned in to 227B HUB for documentation no later than the final day at 5 p.m. of registration period to avoid late fees.

If all equipment is returned over time and in proper condition, the organization’s security deposit will be notified via email or phone when their refund will be available for pick up in the Homecoming Office (227B HUB). If the refund is not granted, the organization will be informed via email.

Organizations without organization checks may pay via Associated Student Activities (ASA) accounts:

The Registration fees can be paid by opening a transfer request with Penn State Homecoming acting as the vendor:

- Transfer request forms are available in 240 HUB. A copy will need to be turned in to 227B HUB for documentation no later than the final day at 5 p.m. of registration period to avoid late fees.
- *Be sure to use the object code of 50251 (Registration/Tournament Fee). The Income object code is 41006 and Homecoming's account number is 8525.*
- **If equipment is returned on time and in proper condition, the organization's security deposit will be reimbursed via an electronic transfer to their ASA account.** If the refund is not granted, the organization will be informed via email.

Merchandise Information

- Organizations DO NOT need to have their merchandise approved by the Merchandise Director. However, if organization merchandise is deemed inappropriate by any of the Homecoming Executive Committee, the organization will be disqualified from the event at which the merchandise was worn, and forfeit any points earned at that event.
 - Please note you must order from a Penn State approved licensed vendor. Custom Ink is not an approved vendor.
- If an organization would like to use any official Penn State Homecoming Logo, including the 2026, "S" or Legacy logos, they must meet with a member of the Merchandise Committee. The Homecoming Merchandise Committee must then place this order.
- All apparel must be appropriate, reflect Homecoming and Penn State in a positive light and should promote school spirit.
 - **ABSOLUTELY NO SEXUALLY EXPLICIT, ALCOHOL OR DRUG RELATED MATERIAL IS ALLOWED.**
- Individuals/organizations are not permitted to sell Homecoming merchandise as a means to make a profit for personal use. If an individual or organization is found violating this rule, the individual or organization will be required to shut down the sale, refund all individuals that anticipated buying merchandise, and pay a fine to Homecoming.
- Profit from Penn State Homecoming merchandise sales is used as a fundraiser for Homecoming, which in part, allows for registration fees for competitors to be as low as they are. Taking away profit from a Homecoming fundraiser will result in higher registration fees for competitors.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Can anyone donate blood during the Homecoming Blood Drive, or do you need to be in a participating organization?**
 - Anyone can donate blood at the Homecoming Blood Drive! Members of participating organizations do get bonus Points, but individuals are also needed and welcome.
- **Where can I find out the date or time of a meeting or specific event?**

- All of the dates and times of the required meetings for orgs and all other Homecoming events, including merchandise sales and fundraisers are on the Homecoming Online Calendar sent out by your Organization Liaison Captains. Also look for updates on the Homecoming list-serv, or in e-mails from the Competition Committee!
- **I am interested in learning more about Homecoming and being informed about the events that are going on. How can I stay updated?**
 - If you are a Competing Organization, you can contact the Competition Director at competition@homecoming.psu.edu to be added to the Homecoming Chair contact list.
 - If you are interested in being more involved in Homecoming 2026, please contact the Parade Director at parade@homecoming.psu.edu.
 - For the most recent event updates, you can visit the Homecoming Website located at homecoming.psu.edu. All general inquiries can be directed to the Executive Director at director@homecoming.psu.edu
- **Can anyone participate in the Homecoming Week events?**
 - Absolutely! For more information about how to get involved with Homecoming events, please contact the University Relations director at university.relations@homecoming.psu.edu
- **How do I nominate someone for Student, University, Alumni or Graduate Court?**
 - Nominations for Courts can be made by Penn State students digitally on the Homecoming Website or in person on select dates. Nominations can be made for Student and University Courts. Alumni and Graduate Courts require an individual to apply. Look out for dates on Nomination and Application periods on Homecoming social media and the Homecoming website.
- **My organization already has a flatbed, are we required to rent one for the Parade?**
 - No, if your organization already has a flatbed, they may use it as long as it does not exceed the maximum size allowed by Homecoming and the Borough.

Any further questions should be directed to the Competition Director, Tianna Endo, at competition@homecoming.psu.edu