

2026 KENTUCKY DERBY FESTIVAL CREDENTIALING POLICY & ACCESS GUIDELINES

Kentucky Derby Festival Media Credentials and Passes allow easy access for media to cover most official Derby Festival (KDF) events. Credentials are available for **WORKING MEDIA ONLY** and can be requested online at KDF.org. **DEADLINE TO APPLY is April 15.**

KDF provides credentials and passes to members of working media, defined as those who are full-time paid employees or representatives of known and established media organizations, including but not limited to newspapers, magazines, wire services, television stations, radio stations, websites, and blogs.

KDF passes and credentials are non-transferable and may not be duplicated or reproduced in any manner. Media may be asked to present photo identification to verify the validity of a pass or credential. Derby Festival reserves the right to revoke passes or credentials at any time. Derby Festival credentials should be worn at all times while on-site at Derby Festival events.

Freelance journalists, photojournalists and videographers may receive media passes and/or credentials only if on a specific assignment from a known and established media organization. In these instances, credential requests must be submitted by the assigning media outlet.

Filming or photographing of Derby Festival events for private sale or commercial distribution requires prior written approval from Kentucky Derby Festival, Inc.

SPECIAL NOTE

Derby Festival credentials DO NOT provide access to Churchill Downs. Kentucky Derby Festival, Inc. is a separate entity from the Kentucky Derby and Churchill Downs, Inc. To request Churchill Downs press credentials, contact the Churchill Downs Press Office, (502) 636-4460.

MEDIA ACCESS GUIDELINES

The following events require special media accommodations or restrictions:

Kentucky Derby Festival They're Off!® Luncheon, Friday, April 17. General Derby Festival Media Badges allow access to the VIP Reception in the Galt House East. Special arrangements are made for photos and interviews with the Guest Speaker and are announced prior to the event. You may cover the luncheon, on a standing room only basis, after 11:00 AM in the Grand Ballroom.

Kentucky Derby Festival Opening Ceremonies: Thunder Over Louisville®, Saturday, April 18. General Derby Festival Media badges permit access to event areas along the Downtown Riverfront, Belvedere, and Indiana shorelines. WEBSITE: ThunderOverLouisville.org.

Credentials do NOT allow:

- The right to offer **live broadcast coverage** of Thunder. The permitted event venue extends from Main Street to the Ohio River, between Campbell and 10th Streets.
- Ability to set up in **RESTRICTED AREAS** for any purpose. **RESTRICTED AREAS** include: the Second Street Bridge, all fireworks barges, the Command Center, the Belvedere TV area and the Big Four Bridge.
- Photographing from on top of buildings. This requires permission from the individual property owners.
- Parking and access for media vehicles. This is extremely limited within the event venue. Contact the Derby Festival Press Office for more information.

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MEDIA ACCESS GUIDELINES cont'd

L&N Federal Credit Union Great Balloon Rush Hour Race. Friday, April 24. Special credentials are needed for working media to ride in competing Hot Air Balloons. Requests should be made in advance with the Kentucky Derby Festival Press Office. Space is limited.

Humana Kentucky Derby Festival miniMarathon®/Marathon. Saturday, April 25. Special credentials are required to be on the route and at the start and finish lines of the event. Requests should be made in advance with the Kentucky Derby Festival Press Office. Space is limited. WEBSITE: DerbyFestivalMarathon.com.

L&N Federal Credit Union Great Balloon Race®. Saturday, April 25. Special credentials are needed for working media to ride in competing Hot Air Balloons. Requests should be made in advance with the Kentucky Derby Festival Press Office. Space is limited.

Zoeller Pump Company Pegasus® Parade. Sunday, April 26. General Derby Festival media badges allow parade route access to facilitate coverage. **Credentials do NOT allow:**

- The right to offer **live broadcast coverage** of the Parade. The Parade route extends for 1.7 miles along Broadway, from Campbell to 9th Streets.
- Ability to set up in the street for any purpose (e.g., setting up a tripod on Broadway), or entry into the "TV Zone" on between Preston to Floyd Streets.
- Access to VIPs on Parade Route once the event has started. Interviews with VIPs must be coordinated IN ADVANCE so as not to affect the pacing and operation of the parade.
- Photographing from on top of buildings along Broadway. This requires permission from LMPD.
- Access to the VIP Room for celebrity interviews on Parade Day. Arrangements must be made with press office in advance.

Shepherd Insurance Great Steamboat Race®. Wednesday, April 29. Special credentials are required for media to ride the Belle of Louisville or Belle of Cincinnati. Requests should be made in advance with the Kentucky Derby Festival Press Office. Space is extremely limited. **All approved credentials can be picked up on the Wharf on Race Day.**

BROADCAST GUIDELINES

Due to existing contractual agreements, there are restrictions on live broadcasts of some Festival events. No independent live broadcast of the events listed below, **other than for news coverage purposes**, is authorized or permitted. These include:

- Kentucky Derby Festival Opening Ceremonies: Thunder Over Louisville. Exclusive TV rights – WLKY (CBS Affiliate). Exclusive radio rights – MIX 106.9 (Summit Media).
- Zoeller Pump Company Derby Festival Pegasus Parade. Exclusive TV rights – WAVE 3 NEWS (NBC Affiliate).
- L&N Federal Credit Union Great Balloon Glows. Exclusive TV rights – WLKY TV (CBS Affiliate). Exclusive radio rights – MIX 106.9 (Summit Media).
- Great Bed Races®. Exclusive TV rights – WAVE 3 NEWS (NBC Affiliate). Exclusive radio rights – Classic Rock 107.7 (Summit Media)