

Festival House Rules

24–26 September 2026 · Clarens, Free State

These House Rules apply to all Clarens Festival of Lights events and venues. They exist to keep the festival safe, welcoming and magical for everyone; our families, visitors, artists, performers and community. By entering any festival venue or event, you agree to follow them, together with each venue's own rules and the ticket terms of service.

AT A GLANCE

- Bring a valid ticket or wristband and keep your wristband on.
- By purchasing a ticket, you agree to the house rules listed below.
- Smoking and vaping in designated outdoor areas only, never indoors, near children or near fire.
- You attend at your own risk. Participation in activities is at your own risk. The CFoL accepts no responsibility for any loss, damage, or injury.

1. Tickets, wristbands and entry

- A valid ticket or wristband is required for all ticketed events. Please keep it with you and be ready to show it.
- The Clarens Square Day Ticket covers the House of Lights and the Square programme for that day. Several venues and experiences are ticketed separately, so please check each event.
- Wristbands must be worn as instructed and kept on for the day or event. Tampered, transferred or removed wristbands are not valid. CFoL Cup wristbands are colour-coded per day.
- Tickets are only valid if bought from Tixsa or another authorised channel. Damaged, copied or resold tickets may be refused. For ticket queries, contact Tixsa on 012 880 2635 or support@tixsa.co.za.
- Some venues have limited capacity and timed entry. To respect performers and other guests, latecomers may not be admitted once a concert, screening or guided tour has started, for example the Candlelight Concert and the guided tours. Where re-entry is allowed your wristband lets you come and go; where it is not, please plan accordingly.

2. No outside food or drink

- A Licensed bar operate across the festival.
- Please do not bring your own food, drinks or alcohol into ticketed or licensed areas. This helps us meet our licence conditions.
- Sealed water is welcome, and essential items for medical needs, special diets, babies and small children are allowed. Bags may be inspected on entry.

3. Alcohol, sold and enjoyed responsibly

- Alcohol is sold and may only be consumed within clearly marked licensed areas.
- Strictly no alcohol for anyone under 18. Proof of age may be requested, so please carry ID. It is an offence to buy alcohol for, or to supply it to, a minor.
- Our bar teams will not serve anyone who is intoxicated.
- If you drink, please do not drive. Arrange a lift, a designated driver or accommodation in advance.

4. Smoking and vaping

- Smoking and vaping are permitted only in designated outdoor smoking areas.
- There is no smoking or vaping indoors or in enclosed venues, including the NG Church, the school venues, hotel venues, and none near children's activities, food areas, seating or any fire or candle installation.
- Please use the bins provided and never discard cigarette ends on the ground, in planters or near dry vegetation. Use only ashtrays.

5. Personal responsibility, conduct and belongings

- You attend at your own risk and are responsible for your own safety and belongings. Please take care of yourself, your group and your belongings at all times.
- Treat other guests, our team, artists, performers, residents and the town of Clarens with respect. We have zero tolerance for harassment, discrimination, aggression, or offensive, racist or sexist behaviour of any kind.
- Please follow the instructions of festival staff, marshals, security and emergency personnel at all times.
- The festival cannot accept responsibility for loss or theft of, or damage to, personal property, so please keep your belongings secure. Lost property is held for 30 days after the festival; to enquire, please contact us via www.clarensfestivaloflights.co.za.
- Participation in activities such as workshops, guided walks, night tours, cycling and sport is at your own risk. The CFoL accepts no responsibility for any loss, damage, or injury.

6. Children and families

- Children remain the responsibility of their parent or guardian and must be supervised at all times.
- Please agree a meeting point with your group in case anyone is separated.
- If you find a lost child, or become separated from your child, please notify the nearest festival staff member immediately.

7. Staying safe in the dark and around the installations

- This is a light festival, so some spaces are intentionally dark and others have uneven ground, steps, cables, water features or open terrain. Please wear comfortable, sensible footwear, watch your step, keep to marked routes and follow the lighting and signage.
- Do not touch, lean on, climb on, sit on or interfere with any light installation, artwork, screen, cabling, generator or technical equipment. Many pieces are delicate and some carry electrical current.
- Please do not shine torches, lasers or bright lights into performers' faces, onto projection surfaces, or into other visitors' eyes.
- Controlled fire and candles are used at some events, for example Campfire Stories. Keep a safe distance, follow the marshals, and never leave children unattended near fire or candles.

8. What you may not bring

For everyone's safety the following are not permitted, and bags may be searched on entry:

- weapons of any kind, including firearms, knives and traditional weapons;
- explosives, fireworks, flares, smoke devices, laser pointers and compressed-gas containers;
- illegal substances (see Section 10);
- outside alcohol and glass containers (see Section 2);
- professional or commercial photography, recording or drone equipment without written accreditation (see Section 9);

- unauthorised commercial or marketing material, including flyers, banners, stickers and product sampling;
- any other item our team reasonably considers dangerous or a nuisance.

Prohibited items will be refused or removed.

9. Photography, filming, drones and privacy

- You are welcome to take photos and videos for your own personal use. Please be considerate of performers and other visitors (see also Section 7 on torches and lasers).
- Professional or commercial photography and filming require accreditation. No drones or remotely piloted aircraft may be flown at any festival venue without prior written authorisation and compliance with South African Civil Aviation Authority requirements. To request accreditation or drone authorisation, please contact us via www.clarensfestivaloflights.co.za.
- The festival and its partners take photographs and video at our events for reporting and promotion. By attending, you consent to your image being captured and used for these purposes.
- We handle personal information in line with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) and our privacy policy. If you have any concern about being filmed, please speak to a member of our team.

10. Illegal substances

- Illegal drugs are strictly prohibited and we operate a zero-tolerance policy.
- Cannabis, although decriminalised for private adult use in South Africa, may not be used or consumed anywhere on festival premises. This is a family event.

11. Accessibility and inclusion

- We want the festival to be enjoyed by everyone and work with the National Council for Persons with Physical Disabilities to improve access.
- Accessible routes and facilities are provided at key venues. Please note that some heritage buildings, outdoor paths and intentionally dark areas have natural limitations.
- Some installations include flashing lights, haze or sound effects. Visitors who are sensitive to these effects should follow the warning signage.
- Registered assistance and guide dogs are welcome. If you have specific access needs, please contact us in advance via www.clarensfestivaloflights.co.za so we can help.

12. Pets and assistance animals

- Other than registered assistance animals, please leave pets at home. A busy, bright and sometimes loud festival is not a comfortable or safe place for them.
- Emotional support animals are not regarded as assistance animals unless recognised as such under applicable law.

13. Health, first aid and wellbeing

- First-aid points and a medical officer are available during the festival. In an emergency, please alert the nearest team member immediately.
- Visitors with medical conditions requiring medication or equipment, for example insulin or an adrenaline auto-injector, are welcome to bring these items. Please inform security if necessary.
- Festival vendors cannot guarantee allergen-free preparation. Visitors with food allergies should check with vendors before purchasing food.
- September evenings in the Free State can be cold, so please dress warmly and look after one another.

14. Emergency and evacuation

- In the event of an emergency, please follow the instructions of festival staff and emergency services immediately. Do not run. Proceed calmly to the nearest exit or assembly area.

15. Weather and safety suspensions

- The festival goes ahead rain or shine. It is an outdoor, spring-evening event, warm by day and cold after dark, so please bring warm layers, a rain jacket and sensible shoes.
- In the interest of public safety, some outdoor installations and activities may be paused, postponed or closed during severe weather, such as lightning.
- For reasons of safety, weather or circumstances beyond our control, the organiser may change, postpone or cancel any part of the programme, and may vary times, artists, venues, capacities and arrangements. This will always be indicated on the information screens at the Ticket Shop.

16. Looking after Clarens, our Green Legacy

- Please help us keep Clarens, the Conservancy and the surrounding Golden Gate landscape clean and beautiful. Use the bins and recycling points provided, take nothing from natural and heritage areas, and leave nothing behind.
- Please respect all heritage buildings, monuments and natural sites used during the festival.
- Help us protect Clarens' beautiful night skies by avoiding unnecessary bright lights outside the designated festival areas.
- Please respect our neighbours by keeping noise to a minimum when leaving venues late at night.
- Our planning follows recognised good practice for sustainable events (ISO 20121), in keeping with the festival's Green Legacy.

17. Enforcement and right of admission

- Right of admission is reserved. Anyone who breaches these House Rules, behaves dangerously or offensively, or appears intoxicated or impaired, may be refused entry or removed from the festival without refund.
- Where an offence is committed, the matter may be reported to the South African Police Service.
- By entering, you accept these House Rules together with each venue's rules and the Tixsa ticket terms of service (tixsa.co.za). For ticket queries, contact Tixsa on 012 880 2635 or support@tixsa.co.za. For anything else, visit www.clarensfestivaloflights.co.za.