

FIFA & Your Rights

A black and white photograph of a protest on a city street. In the foreground, a large white banner is held across the street by several people. The banner has the text "NO FIFA ON STOLEN LAND" written in large, bold, black capital letters. In the background, there are city buildings and a street sign that reads "Cordova St". The scene is captured from a low angle, looking down the street.

**NO FIFA ON
STOLEN LAND**

2026

Acknowledgments

Pivot Legal Society is located on stolen lands of the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Indian Band), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish Nation), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). We are grateful to Indigenous Peoples for their continuous relationship with their lands and are committed to learning to work in solidarity as accomplices in shifting the colonial default.

This resource provides information about your legal rights and risks during FIFA. It is not legal advice. If you need assistance with a legal matter, speak to a lawyer. The laws and policies in this resource are current to May 2026.

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Your Legal Rights & Risks During FIFA

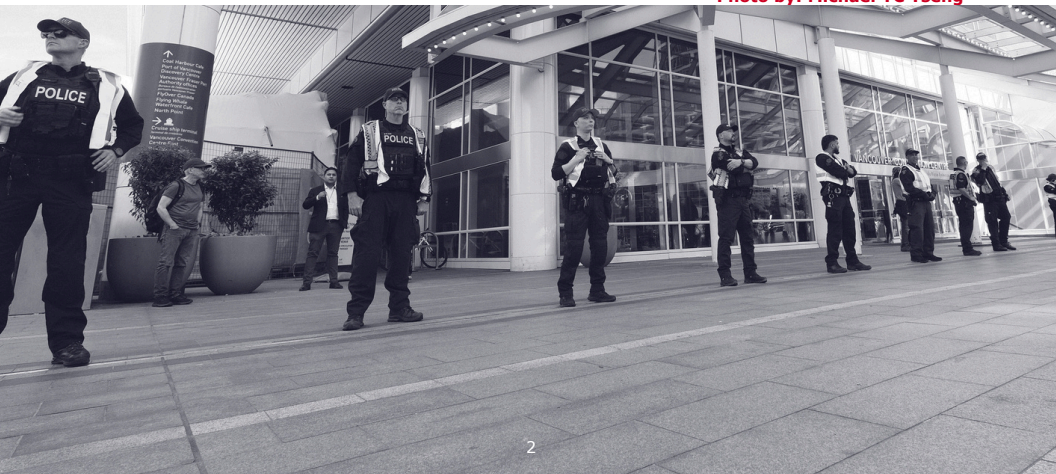
The FIFA World Cup 2026 will take place from **June 11 to July 19, 2026**. Vancouver match days are scheduled for June 13, 18, 21, 24, 26, and July 2 and 7.

During this period, you can expect:

- **Increased law enforcement** presence throughout the City, especially downtown and in the Downtown Eastside. This includes police (RCMP & VPD), transit police, bylaw enforcement officers, and private security guards;
- **Intensified surveillance** and security checkpoints within the “Controlled Area”, which includes a 2 km radius surrounding BC Place and a 100 m perimeter surrounding the FIFA Fan Festival at Hastings Park; and
- **Increased use** of new and existing bylaws to issue tickets and fines.

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Photo by: Michael YC Tseng



Types of Law Enforcement

Vancouver has increased police deployment during FIFA, particularly on match days. This chart explains the powers and limitations of different law enforcement actors.

Police (VPD/RCMP/Transit)

Arrest

Yes, if:

- They witness you committing an offence;
- They have reasonable grounds to believe you have committed or are about to commit an offence; or
- There is a warrant for your arrest.

Detain

Yes, if:

(prohibit you from leaving a location)

- They have reasonable grounds to suspect that you are connected to a specific ongoing or recent crime; and
- It is reasonably necessary to detain you to investigate that crime (as opposed to letting you go and talking later).

Search / seize your belongings

Yes, but only for specific reasons.

If you are detained: police may conduct a frisk or pat-down search for safety reasons only (i.e. looking for weapons). Police can seize any weapons they find.

If you are arrested: police may conduct a search of you, your clothes, and belongings for safety reasons or to discover or preserve evidence ("search incident to arrest"). Police can seize any weapons, evidence, or illegal items they find.

Issue tickets / orders

Yes.

Police can issue tickets including for traffic offences, bylaw infractions, and provincial offences. Police can issue legally-binding orders. **This includes:**

- Releasing you on an "undertaking" to abide by certain conditions (ex. banning you from an area, ordering you to attend court)
- Issuing verbal commands, including to stay clear of a crime scene.

Order you to move

Yes, if there is a lawful reason.

For example, if: you need to move for safety reasons, you are on private property, you are obstructing an officer in their duties, or you are violating a bylaw by being in a certain location.

Note on Transit Police:

transit police have full municipal police powers (as above). Though they focus on transit property and related incidents, they can legally patrol and act on incidents outside that context.



Photo by: Michael YC Tseng

Bylaw Officers

Arrest No, unless:

They suspect that you are committing an offence under specific laws, including the *Trespass Act* and the *Safe Streets Act*

However, they must turn you over to police ASAP.

Detain Yes, but generally only to issue a ticket.

Bylaw officers may detain you while obtaining your identification in order to issue you a bylaw infraction ticket.

Detention beyond this is unlikely to be justified. While they can detain you to investigate a suspected offence, this is unlikely to be necessary for bylaw violations.

Search / seize your belongings Rarely.

Like police, they may conduct a safety search if you are detained. However, they must have a reason to think you pose a safety risk, which is less likely in a bylaw offence context.

A full search incident to arrest is unlikely to be justified. If you are arrested under the *Trespass Act* or the *Safe Streets Act*, bylaw officers do not need to search you to find evidence of the violation.

Bylaw officers may seize items that violate bylaws related to nuisance, waste, or hazardous conditions, and animals for violations of animal control bylaws.

Order you to move Yes, if you are violating a bylaw.

Forced displacement is most common when you are alleged to violate bylaws that govern public space.

For example, if: you are sheltering in public during restricted hours; you are smoking too close to a doorway; or you are illegally parked.

Issue tickets / orders Yes.

They may issue tickets in accordance with bylaws adopted by their specific municipality or regional district.



Private Security

Arrest No special power.

However, they can perform a [citizen's arrest](#) if they witness a criminal offence being committed on or in relation to the property they are protecting. They may use only reasonable force and must alert the police ASAP.

Detain No special power.

However, they can detain you as part of a lawful citizen's arrest while calling and waiting for the police.

Search / seize your belongings No special power.

A search may be justified as part of a lawful citizen's arrest. They can also search outside the arrest context in certain circumstances, such as looking in your bag at events they are hired to protect. **NOTE:** The *Charter* does not generally protect against searches by private security.

Issue tickets / orders Only for parking.

Private security may issue a parking ticket on private property they are hired to protect.

Order you to move Yes.

On property they are hired to protect, private security can remove people who trespass or disobey property rules.





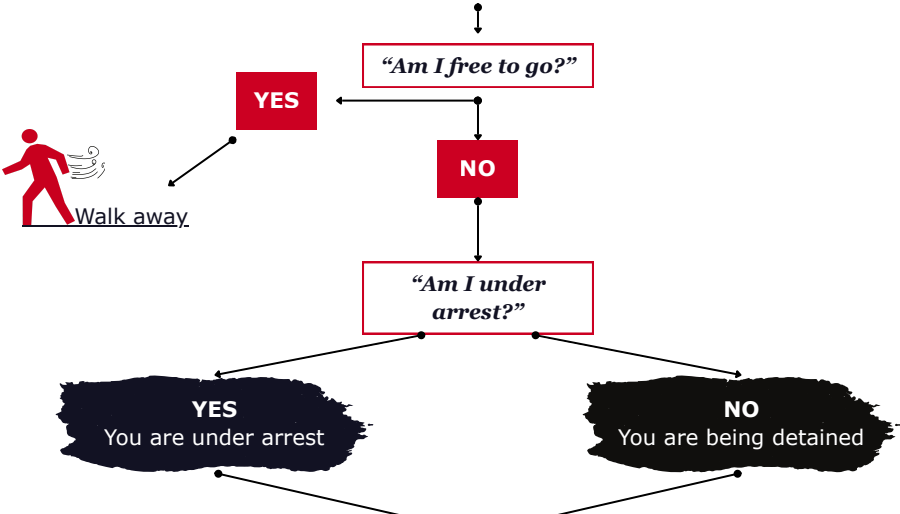
Speaking to Law Enforcement

Everything you say can and likely will be used against you at a later date. We recommend not speaking to or responding to law enforcement of any kind (including police, bylaw officers, and private security), unless legally required. **You must provide your name and address only if:**

- You are arrested
- You are being detained by police or a bylaw officer for the purposes of issuing a ticket
- You are stopped by police or a bylaw officer while riding a bike or driving a car

Street Stop Flowchart

An officer walks up to you...



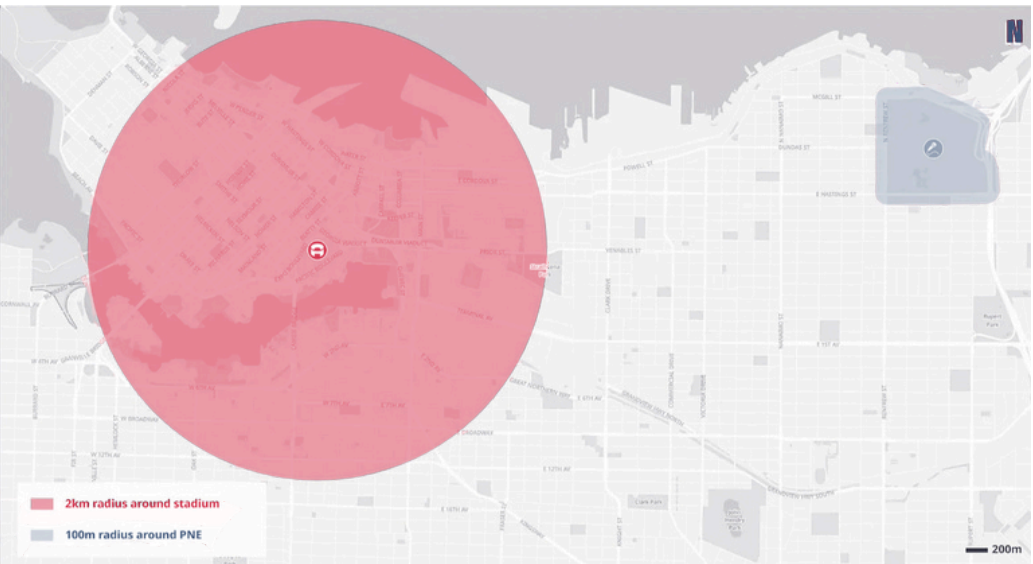
If you are under arrest or being detained, you must provide your name and address. Otherwise, you have a right to legal counsel and a right to remain silent. We recommend exercising these rights. You also have a right to know why you are being arrested or detained, as well as the badge number and name of the police officer(s), but it is up to you if you want to ask for this information

Controlled Area

The “Controlled Area” includes a 2 km radius around BC Place and a 100 m perimeter around the FIFA Fan Festival at Hastings Park. In these areas, expect large crowds, road closures, increased police presence, and heavy enforcement of the FIFA Bylaw and other Bylaws. Consider avoiding this area, especially on Match Days and each day before.

The “Controlled Area” includes:

- **BC Place Vancouver Stadium:** a 2 km radius on each Match Day and the day before, namely: June 12-13, June 17-18, June 20-21, June 23-24, June 24-25, June 25-26, July 1-2, and July 6-7.
- **FIFA Fan Festival at Hastings Park:** a 100m perimeter around the Fan Festival, which runs June 11 – July 19.



FIFA World Cup Bylaw (Effective May 13, 2026 – July 20, 2026)

The City of Vancouver passed the **FIFA World Cup Bylaw** in service of “cleaning up” the City and facilitating FIFA’s event needs.

The Bylaw will be enforced by City bylaw officers and police, who can issue tickets with fines of up to \$1000 for violations. If you receive a ticket and are not sure what to do, you should get legal advice.

Key provisions of the FIFA Bylaw include:

For individuals, street vendors, and street performers

\$1000 fines for displaying merchandise and street postering:

The Bylaw sets strict fines for certain existing offences under the *Street and Traffic Bylaw*:

- A \$1000 fine for **placing merchandise or other items** on the streets, including sidewalks, without authorization (s. 66.1)
- A \$1000 fine for **defacing or postering lamp posts or “street furniture”**, such as benches, bus shelters, garbage cans, and traffic signs (s. 85A). Public bulletin boards and other permitted areas may still be posterred.

Street vendors and community organizers should be aware of the increased risk of being fined for these offences.

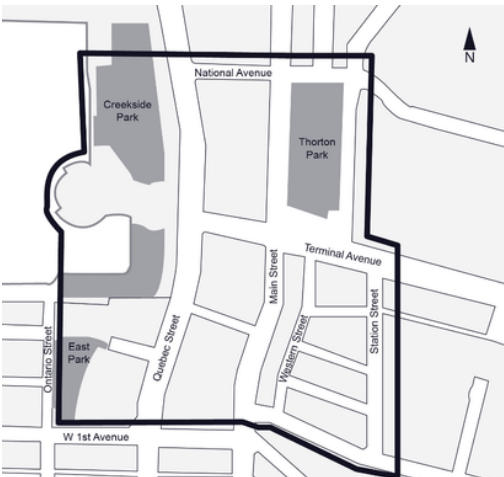
New permit requirements for downtown street performers:

Street performers must obtain a permit from the City to perform in areas that are usually exempt: sidewalks adjacent to Library Square, Science World, the Vancouver Art Gallery, Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Terry Fox Plaza, and all downtown SkyTrain stations. Anyone performing without a permit in these or other non-exempt areas is subject to a \$1000 fine.



Restrictions on food vending near Main Street-Science World:

Food vendors cannot operate within the restricted area near Main Street-Science World SkyTrain Station (see map below) without special permission from the City, enforceable via a \$1000 fine. Existing restrictions on setting up food vending units – for example, in public parks, schools, and private property – still apply.



NOTE:
The FIFA Bylaw does not change the rules for overnight sheltering in parks. For otherwise unhoused people, sheltering is generally permitted in Vancouver parks (but not beaches or sports fields) between dusk and 7am.

For businesses, service providers, and property owners

The FIFA Bylaw puts strict limits on displaying or distributing new advertising materials during the FIFA period. The Bylaw also creates new powers for the City to take rapid action to remove graffiti and prohibited advertising signage.

No new advertising on the streets:

Businesses cannot display or distribute advertising materials on a street (including a street pole) or sidewalk, unless they have prior authorization from the City or a special event permit related to FIFA. This includes anything that advertises or promotes a product, activity, or service for a *commercial purpose*.

This restriction should not apply to material that advertises free community events, political demonstrations, or services. However, exercise caution as the fines for postering of any kind on poles or street furniture still apply.

Crackdown on non-compliant advertising signage:

The City can order that a property owner or occupier remove, cover, or alter an unauthorized advertising sign within 24 hours. Note that these rules only apply to signs that advertise or promote a product, activity, or service, for a *commercial purpose* – meaning they will primarily impact businesses, rather than individuals.

The FIFA Bylaw does not change what kind of signs are authorized, but steps up the enforcement mechanism for the existing rules:

If the property is **NOT a private dwelling** (i.e. a business or service), and the owner or occupier does not comply with the order, the City can:

- Fine the owner/occupier \$1000;
- Enter the property and remove, cover, or alter the sign after taking “reasonable steps” to advise the owner/occupier beforehand; and
- Charge the owner/occupier for the costs.

If the property is **a private dwelling** (i.e. the property is used as a home), the City cannot enter the property unless:

- The occupier consents;
- A warrant is issued; or
- There are “reasonable grounds to believe that failure to enter and remove the sign may result in a significant risk to anyone’s health or safety”

The Bylaw does not specify when a sign may pose a “significant risk to anyone’s health or safety.” **However, in general, the City should only be able to enter a property used as a home to remove advertising signage in extremely limited circumstances.**

Increased graffiti removal powers:

The City can order that a property owner or occupier remove graffiti from their property within 24 hours. If the property owner or occupier does not comply with the order, the City can:

- Fine the owner/occupier \$1000;
- Enter the property and remove the graffiti after taking unspecified “reasonable steps” to advise the owner/occupier beforehand; and
- Charge the owner/occupier for the costs of the graffiti removal.

NOTE: Unlike with advertising signage, the Bylaw does not require the City to have the owner/occupier’s consent in order to remove graffiti. However, given that graffiti is typically displayed on the outside of property, the City should not have to enter inside of a home to remove graffiti.



For all city residents

More noise permitted for FIFA purposes:

The City has also carved out exceptions in its noise bylaws for FIFA, so residents living near sites being used for FIFA purposes can expect increased noise in their areas. Within the FIFA-related sites, noise from music and loudspeakers is allowed from 8 a.m. to midnight and noise from logistical work like waste removal, set-up, and deliveries is allowed 24 hours a day.

Additional Resources

Drug policy: BC's Decriminalization Pilot is no longer in effect. It is illegal to possess any amount of illegal drug(s), including in private residences. You will not be criminalized for drug possession in limited circumstances:

- In sanctioned supervised consumption sites and overdose prevention sites. For a Vancouver site map, go to: <https://www.vch.ca/en/media/29016>
- If you are at the scene of an overdose when police arrive (whether you are the person who called 911, the person requiring medical attention, or a bystander) you will not be criminalized for simple possession and certain other breaches. For more information, go to: https://www.pivotlegal.org/good_samaritan_drug_overdose_act_rights_card



Sex workers' rights: Selling your own sexual services is legal in Canada, but most activities that would allow you to do so safely are not. BC and the City of Vancouver have [sex work enforcement guidelines](#) that purport to target violence and exploitation over offences in consensual situations.

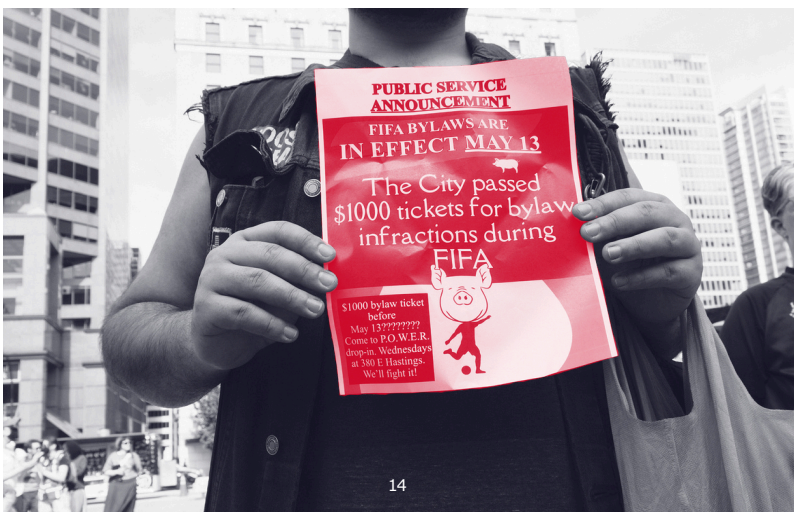
However, the City has been engaged in a major anti-trafficking campaign in anticipation of FIFA that will increase the overall policing of sex workers. Sex workers should expect increased scrutiny, especially in heavily surveilled areas. For more information, check out:

[Pivot's Canada's Sex Work Law card](#)
SWAN's Trafficking Resource Booklet
([English](#) version & [Chinese](#) version)
SWAN's Know Your Rights card
([English](#) version & [Chinese](#) version)



Community-led police reporting: Police Oversight with Evidence and Research (P.O.W.E.R.) is a community-led research project based in the DTES that collects and analyzes accounts of law enforcement practices, including bylaw ticketing. Drop-in hours: Wednesdays 11am-1pm at 380 East Hastings (VANDU) or by appointment (power@vandu.org). To learn more about the project, visit www.policeoversight.ca and subscribe to their newsletter.

Photo by: Michael YC Tseng



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