



Wade Harrell <wade.harrell@gmail.com>

2021 Placement Newsletter #2: The 2021 Placement Process

1 message

Placement <placement@burningman.org>
Reply-To: placement@burningman.org
To: "wade.harrell@gmail.com" <wade.harrell@gmail.com>

Tue, Mar 16, 2021 at 10:55 AM

Dearest Black Rock City Camp Community,

It's been a full year of living with this global pandemic. A lot has been lost over the last year, but not hope. As I write this, it's estimated that every person in the United States who wishes to be vaccinated against COVID-19 will be able to by summer. While it will take longer to reach every person around the globe, the news is encouraging that we may be able to build Black Rock City this year.

You may have recently [read in the Burning Man Journal](#) that we are cautiously and carefully firing up the engines to Burn this year. Here at Placement, we've done a lot of thinking about the cultural direction of BRC, how theme camps have fared through this time, and how to welcome people Home. You are the biggest part of Black Rock City and we can't build this city without you, so this is our first step in figuring out how to rebuild it together.

This issue of the Placement Newsletter provides guidance on how theme camps and villages can participate in building Black Rock City this year. I've been inspired daily by the resilience and ingenuity of the human spirit on display throughout this pandemic. As people, we assess, we reconfigure, and we adapt to the obstacles thrown at us. As the cities we live in have adapted to the new realities of the last year, so too will Black Rock City.

Consider this a gentle nudge to start talking about your camp again. Put out your feelers among your campmates, and see how they're thinking about Burning Man this year. These conversations might inspire new creativity or purpose about how to Burn. Maybe they'll spark ways to gift as community members beyond the gates of BRC. And maybe they'll just be a great way to connect with old friends and tell stories about that one time on playa. This is the time to consider how your camp wants to Burn this year, even if it means not returning to Black Rock City. We don't expect any particular outcome — except that you do what you feel is best for you and your camp.

If Black Rock City can happen in 2021, it will be a unique Burn, and camps will be encouraged to think smaller and to go back to basics. We hope lessons and priorities have emerged from this pandemic to help us build a better Burn — one where we can dedicate ourselves to safety, decrease our impact on the environment, increase our mutual aid and sharing of resources, and bring an even more diverse community together.

We know you have questions, so be sure to read the below update and stay tuned for more information.

Your dusty friend,

Level, Placement Manager

2021 Placement Newsletter #2

The 2021 Placement Process

This year, the Placement Team wants you to focus on getting to the Black Rock Desert safely, and to remember how simple it can be to gather to make magic again. The pandemic has rattled all of our lives in many ways; if we can make it to Burn this year, it will be enough of a feat. So we're asking ourselves, "How can we simplify re-entry this year and prioritize things that matter most?"

Depending on where you are in the world or even the day of the week, your outlook on the pandemic can look very different. Many Burners have lost their livelihood, while others have not been able to sustain their camps financially. Priorities for many have changed, and That Thing in the Desert is on the backburner for many. But we also know from January's Foresight 2021 survey that two-thirds of us want to build our city again – with all the necessary safety parameters in place – even if it means building something different or with a fraction of our usual campmates.

What does Placement expect of theme camps and villages to be placed in Black Rock City 2021?

First, let's talk about Directed Group Sale (DGS) tickets. **If you were awarded a DGS allocation in 2020, it will carry over in 2021.** You may not need your full DGS allocation this year, and we will need to know the exact number to allocate for your theme camp or village when you complete the **Early Placement Decision Form** to access DGS this year. Any voluntary reduction in DGS allocations for 2021 will not be factored into future DGS allocations. If 2021 isn't in the cards for you, that's okay, too.

Our Ticketing team will have more information in a few weeks about sale dates and ticket prices, but you can expect the usual process: theme camp and village leads will allocate tickets to individual members of your camp. Camps who were rated "Limited Interactivity" in 2019 and received an initial reduction in their 2020 DGS allocation will be contacted separately about how they can be approved for additional DGS allocations in 2021.

We're sure you have a lot of questions about 2021 DGS, so we've created [this nifty set of FAQs](#).

Early Placement Decision Form? What's that?

Since we won't be opening the Placed Camp Questionnaire until May this year, the Early Placement Decision Form is required to receive a DGS ticket allocation for 2021. It's a new step, but is far shorter than the Placed Camp Questionnaire you are accustomed to. **If you do not complete the Early Placement Decision Form, you will not receive a DGS allocation for 2021.**

This form only needs to be completed by returning theme camps and villages. The link to the form will be emailed directly to all leads for theme camps and villages in the next 24 hours and will be **due on Wednesday, March 31, at 12pm PDT/ 3pm EDT / 7pm GMT**. The Art Department and Department of Mutant Vehicles will also be contacting artists and mutant vehicle owners to discuss their DGS allocations for this year.

The form will ask you to nail down the number of DGS tickets your theme camp or village will need this year, in addition to preliminary information about your anticipated interactivity. Placement will confirm 2021 DGS allocations for each theme camp and village by Friday, April 16.

Instructions and timelines for the ticket sale process will be provided in early April. This step is to initiate the process to access your DGS in 2021. **Choosing to receive your DGS ticket allocation does not obligate you to purchase those tickets.** We understand that we are still living with a pandemic and that things can change at any point to make going to BRC seem more or less likely.

If you're planning to skip this year, please fill out the form so we know to count you out for 2021, even if you've made a public statement about it. Allocations for theme camps and villages taking 2021 off will be held for 2022.

If your theme camp or village lead has changed, email placement@burningman.org with "Lead Change" and your camp name in the subject line. The email must include the names and emails associated with the Burner Profiles of both old and new leads.

What do theme camps and villages need to do to be placed in Black Rock City this year?

We are guaranteeing placement to all theme camps and villages that are in Good Standing with Placement for 2021. Yes, you read that right. If your camp was allocated DGS in 2020 and you wish to be placed in 2021, know that there is a dusty slice of heaven set aside for your camp.

We are doing this for several reasons — but mainly to give you a known variable in this year of unknowns. Let this be one less concern this year. The Placement Team will still need time to determine how the puzzle pieces fit together, but you can rest assured that you have a home marked by blue flags in the dust.

Please note that while returning theme camps and villages are required to complete the Early Placement Decision Form to receive DGS tickets, all camps (including new camps) must complete a Placed Camp Questionnaire by June 3 to receive placement in Black Rock City. You can access it starting May 3 by logging into your [Burner Profile](#).

Does that mean I don't have to do any interactivity this year?

We certainly hope you will! Being rooted in the 10 Principles means we still want to see theme camps and villages gift and participate. But this is an opportunity to reset, reflect, and do what's within your means. Perhaps you can only do half as much because of fewer resources or fewer people returning. That's OK! Perhaps your campmates can commit to come, but need to wait out the storm longer to figure out specifics. That's OK, too!

Through the [Cultural Direction Setting](#) process, we heard that theme camps and villages felt pressure to step up their game more and more each year, leading to a dynamic that felt like an arms race to be bigger and to do more. Let's use this Burn to stop that in its tracks.

With guaranteed Placement, we're trusting that you will show up, build something wonderful, and commit to Leaving No Trace. Your camp doesn't need to offer the same things as it always has or be bigger and more polished. Gifting and connecting can be as simple as pulling up a chair for a fellow Burner underneath some shade.

What else should I know for Placement this year?

This is a pivotal year, and coming out of our collective isolation we see new opportunities. The Placement team hopes theme camps and villages can find ways to incorporate the following areas of focus this year. You'll notice questions referencing these areas in the Early Placement Decision Form, and we're here to help support and facilitate where we can.

- **Collaboration!** Don't wait for Placement to tell you who your neighbors are to start conversations about collaborating. Put your feelers out now and form partnerships with other camps to share things. Will your regular interactivity be short-staffed? There might be a camp that can co-host it with you. Have a generator and want to share your power grid? Post online on [Spark](#) or other forums to find theme camps looking to share one. This year, Placement will honor the need for any camps that collaborate to be placed together as neighbors. And those partnerships can last even if we don't build Black Rock City this year.
- **A More Diverse, Sustainable, and Healthy Future!** Over the past year, Burning Man Project has been focusing on three areas that will be central to how we approach the event and our culture's growth and evolution: [Radical Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity \(R.I.D.E.\)](#), [Sustainability](#), and [Health & Safety](#). We know that theme camps and villages are figuring out these things as well, and want to invite all of you to join the effort around these important issues. What things can your camp and campmates do to be more radically inclusive and more carbon-neutral with or without returning to Black Rock City?

What support can I get to help think about how my camp can adapt to this year's Burn?

- The **Camp Support Help Desk** has experienced theme camp leads ready to provide advice and answer your questions about camp management. If you're looking for help, please email campsupport@burningman.org.
- The **Camp Advisory and Mentorship Program (CAMP)** will pair experienced peer mentors with camps seeking more sustained support.
- **Campfire Talks** is a monthly convening of camp leaders to share knowledge and stories on topics concerning theme camps around the virtual fire. The next talk is planned for March 23 from 5-7pm PDT. You can find out more info and [RSVP here](#).
- The annual **Theme Camp Symposium** is being renamed to "Camp Symposium" and scheduled for May 22. With or without Black Rock City, we want to bring the theme camp community together to harness our collective brainpower and make new connections, as we do every year. Look out for more details about how you can host a workshop or volunteer in a couple weeks.

What is the Placement Timeline in 2021?

- **March 16:** Early Placement Decision Form opens
- **March 31:** Early Placement Decision Form due at 12pm PDT / 3pm EDT / 7pm GMT
- **April 16:** 2021 DGS allocations provided to camp leads
- **April 28:** Form open in Burner Profiles for Camp Leads to distribute DGS access
- **May 3:** Placed Camp Questionnaire opens
- **May 22:** Camp Symposium (all virtual)
- **June 3:** Placed Camp Questionnaire due at 12pm PDT / 3pm EDT / 7pm GMT
- **Mid-July:** Placement decisions announced

Black Rock City won't look the same this year, and that's OK. We're embracing the change and looking forward to seeing all the creative ways that you will show up this year.

As always, if you have any questions about the Placement Process, please email placement@burningman.org with the name of your camp in the subject line.

If you have a question about your camp questionnaire, camp placement decisions, Directed Group Sale, Work Access Passes, etc. – email the [Placement Team](#) at placement@burningman.org. Anyone can subscribe to this Placement Newsletter [here](#).

If you have a question about the internal workings of camps or want support in addressing a camp challenge (i.e. build, food, acculturation, logistics, interactivity, frontage, leave no trace, camp finances, camper participation, leadership, etc) – email the [Camp Support Team](#) at campsupport@burningman.org

Burning Man Project • 660 Alabama St. San Francisco, CA 94110 • 415-865-3800

Burning Man Project is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, tax ID 45-2638273.

All contributions are fully tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Anyone can subscribe to the Placement Newsletter here:

<https://email.burningman.org/h/t/FB8796DCBA7695AC>