



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF GENERAL SERVICES
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OGS ANNOUNCES WINTER AT THE PLAZA SERIES

Empire "Skate" Plaza Ice Rink to Open The Day After Thanksgiving and Feature Free Skate Rentals, Courtesy of Hannaford Supermarkets

RoAnn M. Destito, New York State Office of General Services (OGS) Commissioner, today announced the Empire State Plaza ice rink will open at 11 a.m. on Friday, November 28, weather permitting. The rink will play a major role in a series of free events planned for the Plaza this season, including the annual holiday tree lighting on Sunday, December 7, a special Valentine's Day event on Saturday, February 14, and a Mardi Gras celebration on Tuesday, February 17.

The rink will be open 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week, and skating is always free. Lockers and skate rental are located on the Plaza level adjacent to the rink. Each Friday, including opening day, will feature free skate rentals, courtesy of Hannaford Supermarkets. Also, BlueShield of Northeastern New York will sponsor a series of learn-to-skate clinics.

"From the traditional holiday tree lighting to a new Mardi Gras celebration, OGS has an exciting lineup of events planned at the Empire State Plaza ice rink to keep folks active and entertained over the winter months," Commission Destito said. "I want to thank I Love NY, Hannaford Supermarkets, BlueShield of Northeastern New York, and all our other sponsors for their generous support."

Empire State Development Division of Tourism Executive Director Gavin Landry said, "I LOVE NEW YORK is pleased to partner with the Office of General Services and sponsor the Empire State Plaza ice rink to help shine a spotlight on the great winter activities and attractions in the Capital Region. With a series of fun, family friendly events lined up throughout the winter, we encourage residents and visitors from around the State to visit."

“Hannaford is thrilled to continue our partnership with the New York State Office of General Services as we welcome families back to the Empire State Plaza to experience what has become a truly beloved winter tradition,” said Hannaford Supermarkets Community Relations Specialist Amy White. “Now in its third year, our free skate rental program has proven tremendously popular with local families. We are excited to once again welcome Capital Region residents onto the rink for a fun and affordable outing against the backdrop of the spectacular State Capitol.”

“At BlueShield of Northeastern New York we understand that it can be difficult to stay active when the weather turns cold,” said Dr. Kirk Panneton, Regional Executive and Medical Director of BlueShield. “We are proud to sponsor the Learn to Skate clinics at the Empire State Plaza because it encourages individuals and families to learn something new that can help them to stay active throughout the winter months.”

Schedule Highlights of Free Rink Events:

- **Friday, November 28**, 11 a.m. – 8 p.m., ice rink **opening day** and the first Hannaford free skate rental Friday.
- **Saturday, November 29**, 9 – 11 a.m., First **Learn-To-Skate Clinic** sponsored by BlueShield of Northeastern New York. Online pre-registration required at www.empirestateplaza.org (More dates to come, and online registration will begin on Monday, November 17).
- Sunday, December 7, 9 a.m. – 8 p.m., **New York State Holiday Tree Lighting presented by SEFCU**. This family-fun annual event has something for everyone with a full day of indoor and outdoor activities, including a chance to meet Santa, ice sculpture demonstrations, a holiday arts and crafts fair, and skating demonstrations by the Hudson Mohawk Figure Skating Club, live music, train rides around the Empire State Plaza concourse, and a holiday rock and skate with Electric City Horns. The tree-lighting ceremony begins at 5:15 and concludes with a fireworks show. The event also coincides with the Taste NY Holiday Expo at the New York State Museum, which has a \$5 admission and the Great Train Extravaganza in the Empire State Plaza Convention Center, admission \$7, kids under 12 free.
- **Friday, December 19**, 6 - 8 p.m., **Holiday Skate**, skate to the sounds of the holiday season and Hannaford free skate rental Friday.
- **Sunday, January 4**, 1 - 4 p.m., **National Trivia Day** at the rink.
- Sunday, February 1, **Super Bowl Sunday**. Skaters will be encouraged to wear the jersey of their favorite team.
- **Tuesday, February 3**, **Rock 'n Roll Day**. Skate while listening to the greatest hits of the 1950s, from the Big Bopper to Buddy Holly.
- **Saturday, February 14**, plan a special date and come skate at the plaza rink for a special **Valentine's Day** event.

- **Tuesday, February 17, Mardi Gras** at the Empire State Plaza. For this event, OGS will create a festive atmosphere at the plaza associated with this iconic New Orleans celebration. The event will feature beads, New Orleans jazz, and make-your-own crafts.
- **Saturday, February 21, 9 – 11 a.m., Try Hockey For Free With USA Hockey.**
- **Saturday, March 7, Hannaford 10th Anniversary Kidz Expo.**
- **Sunday, March 8, last day of skating** for the season.

General Rink Information

- **Hours:** Every day from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., weather dependent.
- **Cost to Skate:** Free
- **Skate Rental:** \$3 for children 12 and under and \$4 for adults. Skate rentals will be available whenever the rink is open. A photo ID is required to rent skates. Every Friday is free skate rental Friday courtesy of Hannaford Supermarkets.
- **Amenities:** Full-service snack bar open Friday nights, weekends, and school holidays; skate lounge with lockers for personal items now located at the Plaza level; and music.

Winter at the Plaza sponsors include I Love NY, Hannaford Supermarkets, BlueShield of Northeastern New York, SEFCU, Hudson Mohawk Figure Skating Club, Dave & Busters, Albany Jewish Community Center, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Siena Basketball, El Mariachi, Times Union, Albany.com, Metroland, and AllOverAlbany.com, Oldies 98.3, 99.5 The River, Kiss 102.3, Fox Sports 980, News Talk 810, 103.1 WGY.

Sponsors of the tree lighting include SEFCU, Hannaford Supermarkets, National Grid, MetLife, New York Lottery, Dave & Busters, Hudson Mohawk Figure Skating Club, Schenectady Community College, the Times Union, News 10, and 99.5 The River.

For updates on any of the above listed events, find the Empire State Plaza on Facebook at [empirestateplaza](#), on Twitter [@plazaevents](#) or call the OGS Convention & Cultural Events Office at (518) 474-05491. For additional information about Winter at the Plaza events, including directions, parking, and ground rules, visit www.ogs.ny.gov.

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