



## 2026 *FIRST*® Championship

George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston, TX

# Community 53' Trailer Rules and Information

## Overview

The George R. Brown Convention Center loading dock space allows access to 53' trailers, and *FIRST* can offer teams the option to use them for Load In and Load Out in 2026. Multiple teams can collaborate and pool resources toward ordering a large trailer to transport all robots and pit materials to the *FIRST* Championship.

The ability for *FIRST* to provide this option cannot be guaranteed for any future *FIRST* Championship, including those at the same venue. Applicants should always review the rules and requirements each year.

## Rules and Requirements

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- 1. A Lead Contact must be identified.** The Team, Community, Region, or District must have and appoint a Lead Contact to communicate between the freight company and *FIRST*.
- 2. A minimum of 10 Teams per Trailer.** The trailer must transport ten (10) or more *FIRST* Robotics Competition team pit materials and/or robots that are competing in the event. Groups with fewer than ten teams may apply but may be denied if capacity for the truckload option is high. *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams are invited to join Community Trailers but do not count towards this minimum.
- 3. Teams Load In and Load Out the same way.** All Teams utilizing a Community 53' Trailer must both Load In and Load Out using the same method and cannot use additional vehicles at the loading dock.
- 4. Acceptance of Risks.** Teams and those setting up their Community Trailer are fully responsible for the safety and security of their items on the freight trailer. *FIRST* is not responsible for additional fees or charges issued by the freight company and cannot guarantee any flexibility or in the competition schedule for delayed deliveries. While *FIRST* and venue staff will work diligently to prevent charges being levied, the parties using the Community 53' Trailer option must prepare for the potential additional costs.
- 5. Guarantee Service for Saturday Pickup.** Arrival of the 53' Trailer for Load Out on Saturday must have a guaranteed truck service applied as the venue may not be accessible after Saturday.
- 6. Get approval from *FIRST*.** Unauthorized trailers are not accepted into the Loading Dock of the George R. Brown Convention Center during *FIRST* Championship. There are no exceptions. Groups that do not receive authorization will be required to locate an alternate location off-site to unload into different vehicles.

## Application for Approval

Interested parties must apply for acceptance of their Community 53' Trailer option. Email all below information to [fclogistics@firstinspires.org](mailto:fclogistics@firstinspires.org). Additional information or questions may also be directed to this email.

- Lead Contact's Name, Email, and Phone Number.
- Lead Contact's Team Number, if any.
- Name, Email, Phone number of a Team representative at *FIRST* Championship, if different than Lead.
- Team Number list of confirmed and potential *FIRST* Robotics Competition and *FIRST* Tech Challenge Teams traveling with the Trailer.
- Name of Freight Company or Freight Forwarder being chosen.

**The deadline for application is April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025.** Any application made after this deadline should have an expectation to be declined. The final list of participating Teams for a Community 53' Trailer is due April 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Approval cannot be guaranteed.** Please avoid securing logistics transport until approval has been granted.



# Truck Requirements and Best Practices

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## Load and Trailer Specifications & Limits

- Teams must be able to load and unload the trailer by hand and by themselves. Volunteers cannot be expected to be available on site for either Load In and Load Out.
- **Pallet Jacks and Forklifts are not allowed** on the Loading Dock or inside the venue. Package team materials in a way to not require pallet jacks or forklifts.
- Trailers must be able to unload at a fixed dock height of 48". Dock levers are not available.
- Truck Drivers must be able to arrive during the specified timeframe provided. Early arrivals may be temporarily turned away or parked in a holding area until their timeframe is ready.

## Best Practices

- We recommend teams that ship their Robot via the FedEx Voucher should consider having access to a set of hand-tools to uncrate their robot separate from the tools in their Community Trailer.
- We recommend teams review 53' Trailer options with a freight forwarder with specialization or experience in Event or Trade Show services. These groups typically do not issue holding fees.
- We recommend ordering a truck with e-clip tracks and either purchase or request the trailer provide e-clip ratchet straps to secure freight in transit.
- We strongly recommend teams have all materials on wheels or be moved by wheeled carts.
- We strongly recommend vetting all transportation and freight forwarding companies, with a preference to selecting companies that service all or nearly all of the United States.

## Load In and Load Out Timelines

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### Load In

1. At least 1 week prior to *FIRST* Championship, *FIRST* will provide a 60-minute arrival time slot for each Trailer. Lead Contacts must notify their time slot to their freight company and request the driver arrive at that time only.
2. Team Reps may check in starting at 7:00AM and will be let into the Hall A loading dock at 8:00AM.
3. Team Reps and the Truck Driver must both arrive at the Hall A Loading Dock at the arrival time.
4. Team Reps unload the trailer into Hall A quickly. Once all items have been unloaded, Team Reps can begin moving the pit materials throughout the *FIRST* Robotics Competition Pits to each team's pit. The unloading of all items must be done first to avoid delays and holding fees.

### Load Out

1. As each team has finished competing on Saturday, Community 53' Trailer teams must fully pack their pit materials and visit the Hall A Load Out Desk. The desk volunteers will allow the team to stage their materials at the designated area in Hall A or the surrounding area.
2. Once all teams for that Trailer have been confirmed to be staged for Load Out, the Lead Contact must notify the freight driver to arrive to the Hall A loading Dock.
3. Team representatives must be available at the time the trailer parks to the Loading Dock to load the trailer in full quickly and without delay. Volunteers cannot be expected to be available.
  - Trailers will not be allowed to enter the loading dock temporarily to load half-way. All teams must finish competing and the teams must provide the workforce to load their trailer at any potential time during the competition day.
4. Load Out must be completed quickly and swiftly, mindful of **venue closure at 10:00PM**.