Christmas Doors of Wonder: The Official Elf Standards

A Christmas decorating challenge benefiting The Banquet

One Door. Endless Imagination. A Community Full of Christmas Spirit.

Christmas Doors of Wonder invites individuals, families, businesses, churches, schools, and organizations to transform an ordinary door into something extraordinary this Christmas season!

Whether your door is on a front porch, inside an apartment building, in a business, or down a hallway, everyone is welcome to share their creativity and Christmas spirit while supporting The Banquet Sioux Falls.

The Official Elf Standards

1. Everyone Is Welcome!

Christmas Doors of Wonder is open to individuals, families, businesses, churches, schools, nonprofit organizations, and community groups. There is no cost to enter. A participant must be at least 18 years old to register, or have a parent or legal guardian submit the entry.

2. One Entry, One Door

Each individual, household, business, or organization may submit one entry featuring one decorated entrance door. Multiple doors, entire buildings, and full-yard displays are not eligible.

3. The Four-Foot Decorating Rule

Your door must be the centerpiece of your Christmas creation. Decorations may extend no more than:

- **4 feet to the left** of the doorframe.
- **4 feet to the right** of the doorframe.
- **4 feet above** the top of the doorframe.
- **4 feet outward** from the doorway.

All decorations must remain within an area you are authorized to use. Displays extending beyond these boundaries, including decorations continuing into lawns, sidewalks, parking lots, or other building areas, are not eligible for consideration.

4. Keep the Door the Star!

The decorated door must remain the primary focus. Wreaths, garlands, lights, small trees, handmade decorations, themed props, and other creative touches are encouraged, provided they remain within the established boundaries.

5. Bring on the Christmas Creativity!

Traditional, whimsical, nostalgic, handmade, religious, humorous, and imaginative Christmas themes are welcome. Participants are encouraged to create something unique that reflects their own Christmas spirit.

6. Keep It Family-Friendly

All decorations must be appropriate for a family-friendly community contest. Displays containing hateful, discriminatory, threatening, sexually explicit, or otherwise inappropriate material will not be accepted.

7. Safety Comes First

Decorations must be safely secured and must not create fire hazards, block required exits, obstruct accessible routes, damage property, or endanger visitors. Participants are responsible for following applicable building rules, fire codes, and property restrictions.

8. Get Permission Before Decorating

Participants must have permission to decorate their chosen door and surrounding area. Renters, apartment residents, employees, and organizations are responsible for obtaining any necessary approval from landlords, property managers, or building owners.

9. Every Door Counts, Even Behind Closed Doors!

Your decorated door does not need to be visible or accessible to the public. Apartment doors, interior business doors, office doors, assisted living community doors, and other appropriate entrances are welcome.

10. Only 50 Doors Will Be Accepted

The Christmas Doors of Wonder contest will be limited to the first **50 complete, eligible entries approved by The Banquet**. Submitting a form does not automatically reserve a spot. Registration may close early once all 50 entries have been approved.

11. Your Photo Is Your Entry

Participants must upload **one clear, original photograph of their completed decorated door at the time of registration**. Entries without an acceptable photo will not be considered complete.

The photograph must show the entire eligible decorating area, including the door and surrounding decorations. Photos should accurately represent the actual display, without digital additions or alterations that misrepresent the decorations. Basic adjustments for lighting, cropping, or image clarity are acceptable.

12. One Photo, One Final Submission

Only one photograph will be used for each entry in the public voting gallery. Replacement photographs may be accepted before registration closes at The Banquet's discretion, but participants should plan to submit their finished display.

13. All Entries Are Subject to Review

The Banquet reserves the right to review, approve, request clarification or corrections, or decline any entry that does not meet the Official Elf Standards. Approved participants will be notified before public voting begins.

14. Public Viewing Is Optional

Participants may choose to have their display included in an optional public viewing listing if it can be safely viewed from a permitted public area.

Only those who explicitly opt in will have their display location published. Participation in public viewing is not required and provides no advantage in voting or judging.

15. Respect the Property and the Christmas Spirit

Anyone visiting displays in person must respect private property, traffic laws, parking restrictions, residents, businesses, and posted visiting hours. No one is required to open their door, allow visitors inside, or provide access to private property.

16. Let the Voting Begin!

Public voting will take place online through Zeffy from **December 4–17, 2026**.

Each **$5 donation equals one People's Choice vote**. Supporters may purchase multiple votes and support multiple entries. Votes must be submitted through the official voting process and designated to an eligible entry.

All voting donations benefit The Banquet Sioux Falls.

17. Two Awards, Two Ways to Shine

- **People's Choice Award:** Presented to the eligible entry receiving the highest number of valid donation-based votes during the official voting period.
- **Christmas Spirit Award:** Selected by independent judges based on creativity, originality, overall presentation, and Christmas spirit, regardless of the number of donation votes received.

Both awards are open to every approved entry.

18. Play Fair, Spread Cheer!

Participants are encouraged to share their entries and invite family, friends, coworkers, and others to vote. Fraudulent transactions, manipulated submissions, misrepresentation, or other conduct that undermines the integrity of the contest may result in disqualification.

19. Photo and Promotional Permission

By entering, participants grant The Banquet permission to use their submitted display photograph and approved public entry name for contest administration, online voting, promotional materials, social media, and related publicity.

Private contact information will not be published. Display addresses will be shared only when participants expressly authorize public viewing.

20. The Banquet Has the Final Sleigh!

The Banquet reserves the right to interpret and enforce contest guidelines, resolve disputes, address unforeseen circumstances, and make final eligibility and award decisions consistent with the published rules.

Any material changes to the contest will be communicated to participants as appropriate.