



FY 2024/2025
PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY HOST
FUNDING GUIDELINES AND
APPLICATION
for events from October 1, 2024
through September 30, 2025

APPLICATIONS DUE BY JULY 31, 2024

Okeechobee Tourism
55 S. Parrott Ave.
Okeechobee, FL. 34972
(863) 763-3959
tourism@co.okeechobee.fl.us

Promotional Hosting Guidelines and Application

Introduction:

The funding for the Promotional Hosting events is specifically for events that base the activity by the participants that are part of a group or organization that apply to participate or compete in the activity. The events that apply for this funding **must have the majority of participants from out of the Okeechobee County area**. The event must also meet eligibility guidelines which include but are not limited to events that have a history of or the potential for attracting out of county visitor either as participants or spectators generating hotel/motel/campground/RV room nights. Typically, **one-day events are not eligible** however if pre-events guarantee overnight stays or the tournament or event has been scheduled for a series of tournaments or events to visit Okeechobee County exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Tourist Development Council Advisory Board. Consideration will also be given to events that will generate regional, state, national or international media exposure for Okeechobee County. Applications for these events are reviewed by the TDC Advisory Board for not only the economic benefits to the community but also to ensure that the Okeechobee County Tourist Development Council (TDC) are following state statute guidelines. Promotional Host agreements reviewed and approved on a case by case basis for the economic impact to Okeechobee County. **Sliding scale hosting fees may apply** and will be determined between the TDC Board and/or Tourism Coordinator.

The state statute that regulates the funds used by the TDC is Florida State Statute 125.0104 - Tourist development tax; procedure for levying; authorized uses; referendum; enforcement. Okeechobee County TDC is 100% funded by the Tourist Development Tax (TDT). The TDT is a countywide 3% tax applied to short term overnight stays during a duration of less than 6 months. The TDT is not a tax collected by residents unless they are staying in local lodging but, rather, is paid by Okeechobee County visitors. Per the state statute which states that funds must be used to “promote and advertise tourism in the State of Florida and nationally and internationally; however, if tax revenues are expended for an activity, service, venue, or event, the activity, service, venue, or event shall have as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the activity, service, venue, or event to tourists”. (“Tourist” means a person who participates in trade or recreation activities outside the county of his or her permanent residence or who rents or leases transient accommodations”).

It is important to note that all funding is based on availability of funds as determined by the approved budget for the Okeechobee County TDC by the Board of County Commissioners. The Okeechobee County TDC is funded on a fiscal cycle beginning October 1 and ending on September 30.

Okeechobee welcomes you and looks forward to a successful year of events that help to promote our small community!

Factors used in the evaluation process include but not limited to:

- # of estimated overnight stays
- # of out of county participants
- # of events held throughout the year in Okeechobee County
- Economic Impact to the community

Application Process:

- The Tourist Development Council (TDC) will review each application for funding once each year for inclusion in the Council's Fiscal Year budget. *Please note that most budget allocations are determined during the Summer planning with a final approval by October 1st (beginning of the Fiscal Year).
- Each applicant must provide an application for each event each year regardless whether they have worked with TDC in the past.
- Applications must be complete or will be returned. If applicant does not return the application completed correctly to the TDC it will not be considered for funding.
- Applications may be mailed or emailed to Okeechobee County TDC 55 S. Parrott Ave., Okeechobee, FL. 34972 or tourism@okeechobeecountyfl.gov.
- Presentations by applicants will not be scheduled so it is advised to include as much information as possible regarding your event for consideration by the TDC Advisory Board. If you would like to be present at the meeting notify the Tourism Coordinator. Presentations are not required for consideration by the TDC Board.
- Out of Grant Cycle Applications and New Events/Tournaments will be considered on a case by case basis dependent upon budgetary allocations and scheduling requirements. Request must be made at least 60 days prior to event to allow for proper advertising and promotion.
*For information on Funding availability and TDC Board meetings please contact the Tourism Coordinator. TDC Board typically meets quarterly on the second Tuesday of the designated month. This information may also be found on the TDC website at www.visitokeechobeecounty.com

Use of Funds:

- Pre-Event Marketing
- Digital Advertisements (online, websites, social media)
- Print advertisements/brochures
- Radio Advertisements
- Outdoor signage/billboards/banners
- Promotional expenses related to the event such as pens, pencils, cups, t-shirts, flags, etc. (must be giveaways not merchandise for sale)
 - Plaques, trophies, medals, and similar items - THESE ITEMS MUST HAVE THE TDC LOGO (SEE BRAND GUIDELINES).

All advertisement and promotion must be out of county to be a reimbursable use of funds. Please provide links, copies of print or radio advertisement and any information on ways that your organization used to promote Okeechobee County. Brand Guidelines are included in this packet

and if using radio please announce Okeechobee as a host by referring to Okeechobee Tourism or Okeechobee Tourist Development Council. Pictures of promotional items are sufficient. ***Pre-press proof is still required to assure the TDC logo is used in accordance with the current TDC brand requirements. (i.e. flyers, print ads, in-town signs, signs at the event, promotional items, etc.)**

Ineligible Use of Funds:

- Expenses incurred or obligated prior to approval of TDC funding or after funding period.
- Annual operating expenditures of the organization.
- Professional, legal, medical, engineering, accounting, auditing, or other consultant services.
- Salaries of staff or supplements for salaries of existing staff.
- Capital improvements, including but not limited to new construction, renovation, restoration and installation or replacement of fixtures.
- Tangible personal property, including but not limited to office furnishings or equipment, permanent collections or individual pieces of art.
- Interest, or reduction of deficits or loans.
- Events which are restricted to private or exclusive participation.
- **Private entertainment, food or beverages.**
- Making payments or reimbursements for goods or services purchased for previous or other events.
- Advertising and promotion **within** Okeechobee County.
- **Prize money or scholarships.**
- Other expenditures not consistent with Florida Statutes or TDC objectives.

Award Notification Process:

- A form will be sent to all applicants after the TDC Advisory Board review providing notification of funding award as received, awarded with adjustment or notification of non-reward with additional comments.
- If awarded funding the Authorized Representative of the Organization will be required to sign an "Acceptance of Funding" form to be returned to the TDC. This form is assuring that the Authorized Representative understands the terms and guidelines included in this packet. This form must be received by the TDC Office prior to event to ensure funding.
- Organizations receiving funding shall designate a Funding Manager (Representative of the Organization that will be handling the reimbursement process). That individual shall be responsible for maintaining the file with the original application, correspondence, funding request for reimbursements, invoices, and samples of promotional and advertising materials used. The organization's Funding Manager will be responsible to assure that all of the elements of the funding application are followed, that requests for funds are accurate and appropriate attachment included. It is the Funding Manager's responsibility to see that any applicable Federal, state or County laws and policies are followed.

Reimbursement/Payment Process:

The payment process for each new event and/or tournament is based on the successful completion of the event and/or tournament in Okeechobee County. Invoices will not be submitted for

payment until the event is **complete**. Organizations awarded funding should take into consideration that payments from Okeechobee County TDC will be made in accordance to Florida Statute 218.74 that stipulates that payment may take up to 45 days for processing upon receipt. The invoice(s) must be submitted to the TDC office no later than 60 days following the event. Reminder notices will **not** be sent by the TDC office. The following documents must accompany the invoice for payment submission, these must include the TDC logo or mention (Okeechobee County Tourism or Okeechobee County TDC):

- Copies of all product(s) developed or produced, such as brochures or flyers and promotional items
- Copy of advertising (out of county) such as tear sheet or screen shot.
 - Pictures of sponsor mentions such as banners or logo placement on website and/or social media.
 - Post Economic Impact form (supplied by TDC office) or independent surveys (must include # of out of county participants and visitors as well as overnight stays in county) *Please note that majority of participants must be from out of county.
 - If a new event must provide a W-9 to be registered with Okeechobee County as a vendor to receive payment. **Payment address must be same as address on W-9.**

Record Keeping:

- Public Record: All materials submitted with funding applications will be a matter of public record open to inspection by any citizen of the State of Florida. Subject to Chapter 119 Florida Statutes.
- Audits and Records: The Organization awarded funds shall maintain such records and accounts, including property, personnel, and financial records, as are deemed necessary by the County to ensure a proper accounting of all TDC funds. The aforesaid records will be made available for audit or inspection purposes at any time during normal business.



2023/2024 HOST FUNDING APPLICATION

1) Name of Applicant Organization _____

2) Street/P.O. Box: _____

3) City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

4) Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

5) Telephone # _____ Cell # _____

(Must provide a DAYTIME contact number.)

6) Is this organization a nonprofit? Y or N EIN for nonprofit: _____

7) If this is a nonprofit organization, is the board Volunteer based? Y or N

8) e-mail _____ Fax # _____

9) Name of Event _____

10) Dates of Event: _____

11) Will you be requesting a fee waiver for usage of county facilities (Scott Driver or Ag Center)? Y or N

12) Description of Event: (Attach additional page if needed.)

13) PRE-EVENT ECONOMIC IMPACT INFORMATION

COMPLETE THE BOX BELOW WHICH IS APPLICABLE TO YOUR EVENT:

NEW EVENT TO OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Estimated Number of Participants: _____ Estimated Number of Attendees (Spectators): _____

Is the event at least 60 days from the submission of this application? ____ Yes ____ No

Has this event previously taken place in another community? No Yes If yes, where? _____

Room Nights Projected: # of Nights _____ x # of Rooms _____ = Total Room Nights _____

Have you secured a fixed Hotel Rate for participants & visitors this event? No Yes

If yes, what is that rate? _____

List all hotels that your feel participants & spectators will utilize for this event: (attached separate sheet if necessary): _____

REAPPLYING EVENT

PAST EVENT Number of Participants: _____ Number of Attendees (Spectators): _____

Room Nights: # of Nights _____ x # of Rooms _____ = Total Room Nights _____

Was there a secured fixed Hotel Rate for participants & visitors this event? No Yes

If yes, what is that rate? _____

List all hotels that your feel participants & spectators utilized for this event: (attached separate sheet if necessary)

PRESENT EVENT

Estimated Number of Participants: _____ Estimated Number of Attendees (Spectators): _____

Estimated Room Nights: # of Nights _____ x # of Rooms _____ = Total Room Nights _____

Have you secured a fixed Hotel Rate for participants & visitors this event? No Yes

If yes, what is that rate? _____

List all hotels that your feel participants & spectators will utilize for this event: (attached separate sheet if necessary)

NEW TOURNAMENT TO OKEECHOBEE COUNTY (Athletic / Fishing)

Estimated Number of Participants: _____ Estimated Number of Attendees (Spectators): _____

Is the event at least 60 days from the submission of this application? ____ Yes ____ No

Has this event previously taken place in another community? No Yes If yes, where? _____

Room Nights Projected: # of Nights _____ x # of Rooms _____ = Total Room Nights _____

Have you secured a fixed Hotel Rate for participants & visitors this event? No Yes

If yes, what is that rate? _____

List all hotels that your feel participants & spectators will utilize for this event: (attached separate sheet if necessary)

REAPPLYING TOURNAMENT (Athletic / Fishing)

PAST EVENT Number of Participants: _____ Number of Attendees (Spectators): _____

Room Nights: # of Nights _____ x # of Rooms _____ = Total Room Nights _____

Was there a secured fixed Hotel Rate for participants & visitors this event? No Yes

If yes, what is that rate? _____

List all hotels that your feel participants & spectators utilized for this event: (attached separate sheet if necessary)

PRESENT EVENT

Estimated Number of Participants: _____ Estimated Number of Attendees (Spectators): _____

Estimated Room Nights: # of Nights _____ x # of Rooms _____ = Total Room Nights _____

Have you secured a fixed Hotel Rate for participants & visitors this event? No Yes

If yes, what is that rate? _____

List all hotels that your feel participants & spectators will utilize for this event: (attached separate sheet if necessary)

TOURISM POTENTIAL, MARKETING STRATEGY & METHODS

14) Describe how the event will be evaluated for positive impact to the Okeechobee County community.

15) What plans have been made for the promotion of the event? (Attach additional page if needed.)

16) Provide details of where brochures will be distributed and where other print (i.e. newspaper, magazine) and audio/video advertising will take place. (Attach additional page if needed.)

Reminder: Recognition of Okeechobee County Tourist Development Council must be included on all print, audio and video advertising which will be reimbursed by the Okeechobee County Tourist Development Council. See "Okeechobee County T.D.C. Brand Guidelines".

17) Total T.D.C. dollars requested : _____

18) Specify what the T.D.C. dollars will be used for:

19) If T.D.C. dollar request has increased from a previous request please specify why the need for additional funding:

20) CERTIFICATION: I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I AM THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE FOR THIS FY 22/23 SPECIAL EVENT HOST PROGRAM FOR THE ABOVE APPLICANT. I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE OKEECHOBEE COUNTY T.D.C. SPECIAL EVENT HOST POLICIES, ADVERTISING, OKEECHOBEE T.D.C. BRAND REQUIREMENTS, AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THESE PROCEDURES AND THAT THE FACTS STATED IN THIS APPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF.

Signature _____ Title _____

Printed Name _____ Date _____

*PROVIDE A CURRENT W-9 TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE BILLING.

For TDC Office Use Only:

Amount approved \$ _____ Date approved: _____ Acceptance sent: _____