



SEMINOLE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT SPORTS AND SPECIAL EVENT INCENTIVE APPLICATION

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

PURPOSE:

This document sets forth the guidelines for applicants requesting incentive funds for sports tournaments and special events through the use of Tourist Development Taxes. Applications will be accepted from organizations that will host a sports tournament or special event within Seminole County that will bring a substantial number of visitor's, hotel room nights, and economic impact to the County. Room nights must be tracked and reported in order to receive a sports and special event incentive from the County.

Applications must conform to the guidelines as outlined within the application. Applications that do not conform to these guidelines will not be considered for funding. The funding limits are subject to final approval by the County Manager and the Seminole County Board of County Commissioners. Seminole County reserves the right at its discretion to reduce the total incentive amount awarded for all events that apply and receive sports event incentive funds.

SPORTS AND SPECIAL INCENTIVE FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE FOR LARGE MULTI-DAY EVENTS STAGED IN SEMINOLE COUNTY BY ORGANIZATIONS THAT ATTRACT A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF OUT OF TOWN VISITORS TO SEMINOLE COUNTY. THE EVENT APPLYING FOR FUNDS MUST GENERATE A **MINIMUM OF 150 ROOM NIGHTS IN SEMINOLE COUNTY** TO BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING. AN EXAMPLE WOULD BE A NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR SPORTS EVENT, OR A NATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL.

Consideration for Sports and Special Event Incentive Funds is determined by the number of room nights and the overall direct economic impact the event will bring to Seminole County. The level of funding will be determined strictly based upon the **number of room nights** the event will bring to Seminole County hotels. Room nights generated outside of Seminole County will not count towards the sports event incentive. Effective January 1, 2021: All Pre-Event and Post Event Economic Impact Reports will be completed by staff. County staff will complete a pre-event internal economic impact by filling out the Economic Impact Form (Exhibit C) utilizing the event projections provided by the applicant within the application. Once the event has concluded, staff will then put together a post-event economic form (Exhibit C) to reflect actual use based upon the actual visitors generated from the event.

All event incentive applications will be reviewed by County staff and the final funding recommendation and final incentive payment will be made by Seminole County. If approved, the applicant will receive a funding agreement from Seminole County which will include all of the requirements and obligations of the organization in order to be granted incentive funds from the County.

AUTHORIZED USE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUNDS:

Florida State Statutes Section 125.0104(5)(a)3 states that Tourism 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 must 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.

EXAMPLES OF AUTHORIZED USES OF FUNDS:

The following are examples of how Tourist Development Funds may be used as Sports and Special Event Incentive Funds to promote tourism for Seminole County.

PROMOTIONAL EXPENSE

Promotional expenses in conjunction with the event to increase participation and bring visitors to Seminole County. Eligible expenses may include advertising and publicity of an event outside of the Central Florida area to increase participation, attendance and awareness of the event in an effort to generate overnight stays and hotel room nights. All promotion advertising and marketing must target a market outside of a 75 mile radius from Seminole County with the primary target of attracting overnight visitors to Seminole County.

- 1) Hotel rooms must be tracked and reported in order to qualify for marketing and advertising reimbursement.

(Example: Printing and distribution of promotional pieces sent out to out of area softball teams to promote a National Softball Tournament to be held in Seminole County.)

OPERATIONAL EXPENSE

Section 125.0104(5)(a)(1)(a) and (b) of Florida State Statutes provides the permissible use of tourist tax funds. Operational expenses are only allowable when they logically and defensibly can be attributed purely to the event that specifically targets and promotes out of town visitors to Seminole County. All funding requests will be reviewed by the County Attorney's office to ensure the funding request is an authorized use of funds.

The following are examples of operational expenses:

- 1) In Kind Services such as facility rentals for events that take place at publicly owned and operated facilities (Example: Rental of fields at Seminole County Sports Complex, Seminole County Softball Complex)
- 2) Bid fees (As authorized by the County Attorney's office and the Florida State Statute)

UNAUTHORIZED USES OF FUND:

The following are examples of unauthorized use of Tourism Tax Funds:

FUNDS MAY NOT BE USED FOR THE FOLLOWING:

1. Prize money, scholarships, awards, plaques, or certificates.
2. Travel expenses.
3. Private entertainment, food, and beverages.
4. Annual operating expenditures not directly related to the event or event.
5. Legal, medical, engineering, accounting, auditing, planning, feasibility studies or other consulting services.
6. Salaries.
7. Real property or capital improvements to privately owned facilities.
8. Tangible personal property including but not limited to office furnishings or equipment, permanent collections, or individual pieces of art.
9. Interest or reduction of deficits and loans.
10. Expenses incurred or obligated prior to or after the grant event period.
11. Advertising and promotional materials distributed at the event site or after the event.
12. Any and all other uses that are directly prohibited by the Florida State Statute.

INCENTIVE FUNDING PROCESS - IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS:

- 1) Events that generate a **minimum of 150 room nights** can apply to receive funding through the sports and special event incentive application. County staff will review each event incentive application and make a funding recommendation to the appropriate County staff member for each incentive application. Seminole County reserves the right to reduce the amount of funding or not provide any funding at all based upon a wide variety of circumstances including available budget. Once the application and funding recommendation is approved by the County, the applicant will be notified and the County Attorney's office will draft a sports and special event incentive agreement which will be sent to the applicant and required to be signed off by the applicant and the County. All incentive applications must be submitted a minimum of 30 days prior to the start of the event. Maximum incentive request per event shall not exceed \$25,000. Under special limited circumstances, requests that do exceed \$25,000 can be taken to the Seminole County Board of County Commissioners for consideration and approval by staff's recommendation.
- 2) If event applicant is applying for a sports event incentive requesting funding to pay the full facility rental for the event, the maximum incentive amount the applicant can apply for shall not exceed the total estimated facility rental. (Additional marketing incentive dollars as authorized by the state statute may still be requested in addition to the facility rental cost).

- 3) If the organization applying for funds has multiple events throughout the year, the organization has the option to fill out one funding application for multiple events that take place during the current fiscal year (which ends on September 30, 2023). If the organization chooses to do this, the following rules apply once the incentive funding agreement has been approved:
- The organization must provide a projected total room night guarantee for all events combined within their application.
 - The organization will be required to pay for the field costs directly to the facilities in full at the time of each individual event unless specified otherwise.
 - Once the final event has concluded, the total number of documented rooms will be calculated for all events under the agreement and the organization will be reimbursed utilizing the established room night multiplier as explained below.
 - The total final amount the organization will be reimbursed will never exceed the total facility rental.
 - Example:** Baseball Organization is hosting 4 events over the next three months. Organization fills out one application for all four events requesting \$10,000 in facility fees to cover facility costs at Seminole County Sports Complex for all four events combined, and guarantees the four events combined will generate a minimum of 666 room nights. The facility cost for each event is approximately \$2,500 and the organization pays the facility fee in full at the time of each event. Event 1 generates 100 room nights, Event 2 generates 250 room nights, Event 3 generates 56 room nights, Event 4 Generates 260 Room Nights. All four events combined generate a total of 667 room nights. The event organization in this scenario would be eligible to be reimbursed for up to the 667 documented room nights at the \$15 room night multiplier (667 rooms x \$15= \$10,005) and will submit the reimbursement request to the County after the final event has concluded and all room nights have been confirmed and documented. Since the final total facility bill for all four events is \$10,000, then \$10,000 is the maximum amount that the County would reimburse to the organization.
- 4) The maximum incentive amount is determined based upon a maximum room night multiplier of \$15.00 per room night. The applicant must provide the Seminole County room night guarantee within the incentive application which is then multiplied by the maximum \$15.00 to determine the maximum funding amount that could be applied for and awarded.
- 5) At its discretion, Seminole County has the ability to reduce the per-room night multiplier and overall funding awarded for the event.
- 6) In an effort to help reward applicants for over-performance, Seminole County has the ability to pay up to 20% for events that exceed their room night guarantee towards the facility rental cost only if the total facility cost has not been fully covered. The County will only cover up to 20% above the room night guarantee and only up to the total facility cost.
- Example:** Event A guarantees 150 room nights and applies for funding to help cover a portion of their field cost for their softball event at the new sports complex in the amount of \$2,250. The total actual cost to rent the facility is \$3,000.
 - The actual number of rooms generated from the event were 180 rooms which in this case were 30 more rooms (20%) above the original room night guarantee. Seminole County would be able to provide an incentive up to \$2,700 (180 rooms x \$15 per room night multiplier = \$2,700.)

- 7) After the event, the event organizer is required to track and document actual booked Seminole County room nights and submit all hotel room night verification documents to the County's Sports Tourism Manager.

The event holder is responsible for accurate tracking and reporting the total actual confirmed hotel room nights from the event to the County by providing the County a detailed housing report reporting the total number of verified rooms that were booked at all of the Seminole County hotels. Event organizer has the option to either get the hotel pick up form **(Exhibit D)** completed and returned by the hotels to verify the rooms generated, or through the room night call log verification process. If hotel pick up forms are unable to be provided to the County, then the reported room nights provided to the County will be verified by County staff in the form of a room night call log verification form **(Exhibit E)** where County staff will contact the hotels to independently audit and verify the total number of rooms reported. After internal review, the County will determine the final amount of room nights generated for each event. Any room night disputes or discrepancies will need to be handled and resolved directly between the event organizer and the hotel(s).

- 8) The County reserves the right to conduct hotel room count audits to verify and confirm rooms reported.

Please note: All final incentive paper work as outlined within the sports and special events incentive agreement with the County must be submitted to the County's Sports Tourism Manager within 30 days of the conclusion of your event(s). Your request for reimbursement will be considered incomplete until all of the following forms are submitted to Seminole County. Failure to submit your reports on time could result in partial or total loss of incentive funding. After the event, the forms that are required to be submitted by the organization to the Sports Tourism Manager are the following:

Exhibit B (Attached) - Request for Funds Form

Exhibit C (Attached) - Post Event Economic Impact Form

Exhibit D (Attached) - Hotel Room Night Pickup Forms Verification of room nights

Exhibit E Room Night Call Log Verification Form (Optional)

INTERNAL SPORTS EVENT INCENTIVE REVIEW PROCESS AND PROCEDURE:

Applicants can apply for Sports and Special Event Incentive Funds by completing the Sports and Special Event Incentive Application. After the applicant completes the application, the following review/approval process will take place:

- **Step 1:** Application for incentive is reviewed by County staff and County Attorney to ensure funding request meets compliance of grant rules and regulations. After review for compliance, County staff provides a funding recommendation to County Management and funding approval has to be signed off by the appropriate County personnel listed below depending on the funding threshold.
 - Funding Requests that do not exceed **\$15,000** go to the Chief Administrator of Strategic Initiatives for Approval
 - Funding requests that do not exceed **\$25,000** go to the County Manager for approval
 - Funding Requests that exceed **\$25,000** will require Board of County Commissioners approval

- **Step 2:** If and once approved, County staff requests County Attorney's office to draft an incentive agreement with all of the rules and regulations regarding the incentive which requires appropriate County signatures and Applicant signatures.
- **Step 3:** Contract is executed by both parties and contract is filed by Sports Tourism Manager

ROOM NIGHT TRACKING

All approved incentive requests are contingent on the event applicant being able to prove that the guaranteed minimum number of room nights are achieved. It is the responsibility of the event applicant to track and report the total confirmed room nights at the conclusion of the event and to prove the event has satisfied their room night guarantee through the administration and collection of the hotel pick up forms **(Exhibit D)** and/or the room night call log verification form to verify actual number of hotel rooms generated.

The hotel pick up forms filled out by the hotels will serve as the official verification needed by the County to confirm total room nights booked for the incentive. Confirming hotel counts with the hotels is the responsibility of the event organizer and not the County. After the event, the applicant must submit all hotel room night verification forms to the Sports Tourism Manager within 30 days after the event. Events that are utilizing a third party housing company can also provide total rooms booked at each hotel as long as the rooms have been confirmed and verified by the hotel.

Any room nights generated outside of Seminole County do not count towards the guaranteed minimum number of hotel room nights. Verification of all documented room nights must be provided in writing to the County Sports Tourism Manager within **30 days after the event.**

If the event fails to meet the guaranteed room nights as stated in the application, the applicant will be required to pay any remaining balances owed to the County or local municipality within **30 days of the conclusion of the event.**

I. GENERAL INFORMATION:

PLEASE COMPLETE THE ENTIRE APPLICATION

To assist us in evaluating the impact of your event on Seminole County and to better understand what support you are requesting, the following questions must be answered completely. Please do not skip any information.

Please contact Danny Trosset, Director of Sports Tourism at 407-665-2902 with any questions.

GENERAL INFORMATION - PLEASE COMPLETE THE ENTIRE APPLICATION

(1) NAME OF ORGANIZATION: _____

- (2) NAME OF EVENT: _____
- (3) CONTACT PERSON: _____
- (4) CONTACT PERSON E-MAIL: _____
- (5) COMPLETE ADDRESS OF ORGANIZATION:

Phone: _____

Cell: _____

Fax: _____

- (6) ORGANIZATION'S CHIEF OFFICIAL: _____

Title: _____

Address if different from above:

Phone: _____

Cell: _____

Fax: _____

- (7) INTENDED USE OF FUNDS: (Refer to Page 2 – Authorized/Unauthorized Uses of Funds)

- (8) HAS YOUR ORGANIZATION EVER RECEIVED FUNDING FROM Tourism Development Council?

☐ Yes ☐ No

- (9) TOTAL AMOUNT ORGANIZATION IS REQUESTING FOR THIS EVENT: \$ _____

II. DETAILS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION AND THE EVENT(S):

In the text box below please provide details about the organization and an overview of the schedule and format of the tournament and event.

III. EVENT INFORMATION: (Use additional sheets where necessary.)

Is this application for multiple events or one single event? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(1) EVENT NAME: _____

(2) TYPE OF EVENT: _____

(3) DATE OF EVENT: _____

(4) LOCATION OF EVENT (LIST ALL VENUES):

(5) NUMBER OF DAYS: _____

HOURS: FROM: _____ TO: _____

(6) EVENT PROMOTER: (IF OTHER THAN YOUR ORGANIZATION)

NAME OF PROMOTER: _____

COMPANY NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Phone: _____

Cell: _____

Fax: _____

(For the information requested below, please check if this is for one event or all events combined)

One Event:

All Events Combined:

PROJECTED NUMBER OF OUT OF TOWN TEAMS: _____

OUT OF STATE: _____

IN-STATE NON-LOCAL (Residing outside of a 75 mile radius): _____

IN-STATE NON-COUNTY (Residing within a 75 mile radius): _____

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS ON EACH TEAM: _____

PROJECTED NUMBER OF TOTAL SPECTATORS: _____

OUT OF STATE: _____

IN-STATE NON LOCAL (Residing outside of a 75 mile radius): _____

IN STATE NON-COUNTY (Residing within a 75 mile radius): _____

PROJECTED NUMBER OF MEDIA, STAFF, COACHES, OFFICIALS

OUT OF STATE: _____

IN-STATE NON LOCAL (Residing outside of a 75 mile radius): _____

IN-STATE NON-COUNTY (Residing within a 75 mile radius): _____

- (7) The estimated direct economic impact this event will generate for Seminole County: \$ _____

(New: Effective January 1, 2021: All Pre-Event and Post Event Economic Impact Reports will be completed by staff. County staff will complete a pre-event internal economic impact by filling out the Economic Impact Form (Exhibit C) utilizing the event projections provided by the applicant within the application. Once the event has concluded, staff will then put together a post-event economic form (Exhibit C) to reflect actual use based upon the actual visitors generated from the event)

- (8) WHAT IS THE GUARANTEED MINIMUM NUMBER OF ROOM NIGHTS THE EVENT(S) WILL BRING TO SEMINOLE COUNTY? _____

(This is the minimum number of rooms that must be captured by the event, documented, and confirmed by submitting the Room Night verification forms to the County within 30 days of the conclusion of the event. The Seminole County Tourism Office reserves the right to reduce the sports event incentive should the event fail to meet this minimum room night guarantee).

- (9) PROVIDE TWO (2) YEARS OF THIS EVENT'S HISTORY, IF APPLICABLE.

Previous Event: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Total Room Nights: _____

Contact Name/Phone: _____

Economic Impact (If available) \$ _____

Previous Event: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Total Room Nights: _____

Contact Name/Phone: _____

Economic Impact (If available) \$ _____

EVENT BUDGET SUMMARY

INCOME SOURCES: TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX INCENTIVE REQUEST \$ _____

ADDITIONAL INCOME SOURCES (Seminole County cannot be sole source. Please list all event income)

Income Source Type	Income Amount
TOTAL ADDITIONAL INCOME	\$
TOTAL INCOME ALL SOURCES (ADDITIONAL INCOME + INCENTIVE)	\$

EVENT EXPENSES:

Provide an itemized summary indicating the intended use of incentive funds at the bottom of the page. Please be as explicit as possible, including facility fee rentals, intended publications, promotional materials, etc. and the dollar amount that will be expended (tentatively) for each category. This is the total amount of the incentive you have requested. Use additional sheets if necessary. If you are requesting marketing and advertising incentive please include a marketing plan in addition to the application.

TOTAL EXPENSES- Please list all projected expenses other than the intended utilization of funds.

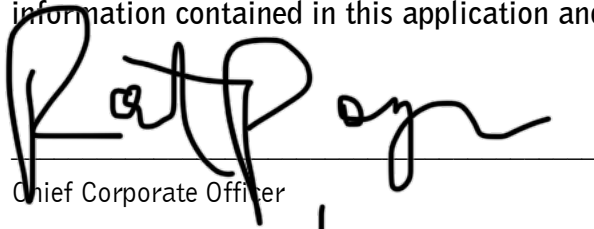
Expense Type	Expense Amount
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$

Intended Use of Tourist Tax Funds	Amount
TOTAL EVENT EXPENSES	\$

CERTIFICATION

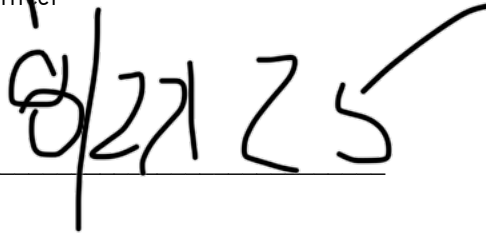
I have reviewed and completed this application for Sports and Special Event Incentive Funds.

I am in full agreement with the information contained herein. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application and its attachments is accurate and complete.



Chief Corporate Officer

Date: _____



All completed applications are to be sent to Danny Trosset at dtrosset@seminolecountyfl.gov

Please provide our staff 2-3 weeks to review your application and someone will be in contact with you shortly.

This document was last updated on August 16, 2023.