

2026 Sunflower Summer Guidelines

Overview of the Sunflower Summer Program

The Sunflower Summer Program is a benefit for Kansas families with school-aged children to encourage them to explore, and fall in love, with Kansas. The program is designed to give affordable access to tourism attractions across the state and support the Kansas tourism economy. Eligible Kansas families download the Sunflower Summer App to claim tickets to participating venues that meet the criteria stated below.

Tickets are redeemed at participating venues upon their arrival. Each user can only use tickets once per venue during the 2026 season.

2026 Sunflower Summer Season

The scheduled 2026 Sunflower Summer user season will run from **Thursday, July 9 through Sunday, August 2, 2026.**

The season **may be shortened or extended based on availability of program funds. Due to approved funding by the Kansas Legislature for this program, we must stay within the funding provided. If funds are depleted early, the Sunflower Summer program must cease operations. If funding is still available at the end of the regular scheduled season, the program may be extended. All changes to program season will be communicated to participating venues via email with as much advance notice as possible.**

Venue Eligibility

Venues must meet eligibility requirements below to participate in the 2026 Sunflower Summer Program:

- The attraction must be a tourism-driven attraction located in the state of Kansas. Attractions must fit into one of the following categories: museums, discovery centers, historic sites, arboretums, zoos, guided trolley tours, live theater events, professional sports events.
- Live professional theater events and professional sport events are eligible for program participation for one event date or show run during the 2026 Sunflower Summer Season. Live theater events must be rated 'G' and/or appropriate for children of all ages. Professional sport events must be for an existing team sport with league play.
- A formal application must be submitted no later than May 6, 2026 and approved by Kansas Tourism to participate in the program. **Application submission does not mean acceptance into the program.**
- Eligible venues must have standard operating hours. While there is no minimum requirement for number of operating hours, the venue must have a consistent schedule of operations during the Sunflower Summer program duration. **Venues that are open by appointment only will not be accepted. Hours of operation must be easy to find, either on your website or social media.**

- Venues must be an existing attraction. **Experiences that have been developed for Sunflower Summer participation will not be accepted.**
- All venues are required to have an up-to-date TravelKS.com listing that meets the requirements listed at <https://sunflowersummer.org/venue-info>.
- **All frontline admissions staff are required to participate in a virtual Sunflower Summer program training to maintain eligibility for the 2026 season.** This training will be made available closer to program launch.

If you are a tourism related business that is not eligible under the above criteria, there are other opportunities for promotion through Kansas Tourism. We **HIGHLY** encourage your locations to **add a coupon or deal on TravelKS.com (instructions to do so here)**, a page that will be promoted to Sunflower Summer users. This opportunity is free and does not require an application submission. For more information, contact Rosa, rosa.cavazos@ks.gov.

Admission Based Venue Pricing Structures

Venues will be required to provide pricing information on the submitted application for their 2026 summer. Sunflower Summer reimbursements cannot exceed standard published attraction pricing.

- The program requires a maximum of two demographic distinctions: 1 student rate (Pre-K – 12th Grade) and 1 adult rate (for accompanying adults).
- Proposed reimbursement rates should reflect Summer 2026 standard admission pricing, not to exceed \$15 per ticket. Any proposed admission price rate greater than \$15 will be negotiated.
- Kansas Tourism reserves the right to negotiate with participating venues regarding their eligible redemption dates, based on overall Sunflower Summer program budget availability.
- Submitted summer pricing **must be independently verifiable** by being listed on the attraction's website or a pinned post on their social media profiles. If prices are not able to be verified, the attraction will not be admitted into the program.

Non-Admission-Based Venues

Non-admission-based venues are eligible for participation in the Sunflower Summer program. **Per legislative requirements, attractions in counties with 15,000 or less population are eligible for a \$5 grant per ticket claimed at your location. Attractions in counties with more than 15,000 population are not eligible for grant payments but may still participate in the program for marketing and ticket tracking purposes.** [Click here for the list of county populations](#) used for this purpose (provided by the Kansas Division of the Budget).

Reimbursement Requirements

- Participating venues (excluding those ineligible for payment) will be required to enter into a signed agreement with Kansas Tourism, a division of the Kansas Department of Commerce, to receive reimbursements.
- State processes require the following to be submitted to enter into an agreement with the state. These items are required to be submitted along with your application:
 - W-9 (must be dated within the last 12 months.)
 - Signed State of Kansas Sexual Harassment Form stating that you acknowledge that the State of Kansas has a Sexual Harassment Policy
 - Signed Certification of Company- By signing, the vendor/contractor is agreeing that they will not provide or procure to the State of Kansas any covered telecommunications equipment that is listed (on the certification) during the commission of any service.
 - If your reimbursements are over \$100k in a Fiscal Year, you will be required to sign a certification that your organization is not currently engaged in a boycott of goods or services from Israel as required by Kansas State Statute, HB 2482, 2018 Legislative Session. Once your reimbursements approach that requirement, members of the Sunflower Summer team will reach out to coordinate.
- **Venues are required to check the countdown timer on user app for every participant.**
- **Failure to check countdown timer or other protocols may result in non-reimbursement for documented tickets. Kansas Tourism reserves the right to terminate a venue's participation in the program for multiple infractions.**
- Venue employees may assist qualifying individuals (as detailed in Program Participant Criteria below) in signing up for the Sunflower Summer program, but user criteria must be met and followed by participants.

Payment Schedule

One payment will be made to all participating venues approximately 2-3 weeks after the completion of the 2026 program.

Paper Voucher Use

Paper vouchers are an acceptable alternative to digital tickets proving the following requirements are met. Paper vouchers will be provided to venues closer to program launch.

- Paper vouchers should be used **very sparingly and ONLY under extenuating circumstances**. Paper vouchers will only be accepted if either:
 - The user doesn't have access to smartphone technology.
 - Technology issues (ie internet outage) prevent users and venues from using the app.*
- Paper vouchers **must be filled out to completion or they will not be accepted and the venue will not be reimbursed for the attendees listed on an incomplete paper voucher.**
- If a paper voucher is not accepted by Kansas Tourism, the venue will be provided feedback and an explanation.

- If our staff notices increased usage of paper vouchers we will be in contact with your organization for additional clarification.

Please note: **If the user is having an app related issue, please have the attendee reach out to the 24/7 chat assistance available in app. The response time should be fast (let us know if that isn't the case). This service is provided by our app developers, so they have extensive knowledge of the app and how to troubleshoot. We pay for this service, so PLEASE USE IT. **Paper vouchers are the LAST RESORT** for any app issues.*

Secret Shoppers

Kansas Tourism will utilize secret shoppers to monitor user experience and program compliance to maintain the best possible experience for users and venues. These visits will be well documented and will result in written feedback.

Program Participant Criteria

Program participants must meet the following criteria to participate in the 2026 Sunflower Summer program. Program participants will only be allowed to redeem a ticket once per attraction, per season through the app or via paper voucher.

- **Both students and the guardian must be residents of the state of Kansas.**
- There must be at least one qualifying school age student present when claiming ticket admission. Adults claiming tickets with no student present are not eligible and will not be reimbursed.
- Student criteria:
 - Students from Pre-K-Grade 12, or approximately ages 4-18.
 - Students enrolled in 18-21 Transition Programs are also eligible.
 - Students attending public schools, private and faith-based schools, or who are home-schooled may participate.
 - Must have correct grade, age, school district, and county of each student listed in the app.
 - Students must be accompanied by an adult to gain admission to the attraction.
- Guardian criteria:
 - Per legislative requirements, **only one guardian per visit is eligible for admission reimbursement under the program.** If two (or more) guardians are present, additional adults must pay for the remaining admissions out of pocket.
 - Guardians for the program may include: parents, legal guardians, grandparents, other adult family members, daycare providers, etc.
 - An adult creates an account first in the app. Once the adult account is created, the children and other eligible adults are added. This becomes the family account.
 - There will be an option in the Sunflower Summer app for users to transfer a child's ticket voucher to another adult who also has downloaded the app. Each child will have

one ticket for each participating attraction; when it has been used their passport is stamped and will no longer be accessible for future use for that attraction.

Sunflower Summer Promotion and Marketing

Kansas Tourism will be promoting state-wide use of the 2026 Sunflower Summer Program. Stakeholders, such as participating venues and local destination marketing organizations, may market the program when the following guidelines are met:

- Unpaid promotions – Any unpaid promotions (flyers, social media) that utilize provided materials can do so without Kansas Tourism approvals. Toolkits providing materials will be provided by Kansas Tourism by May 15.
- Unpaid promotions – Any unpaid promotions with customized materials (custom flyers, social posts, etc.) must be approved by Kansas Tourism in advance.
- Paid promotions - If stakeholders wish to run a paid marketing campaign for the program, all materials and campaign plans are required to have written approval from Kansas Tourism. All paid promotions must be submitted to Kansas Tourism for approval no later than June 30, 2026.

For more information on the Sunflower Summer Program, please contact Rosa Cavazos, rosa.cavazos@ks.gov.