



Columbia County Sports Commission

SPORTS & EVENTS SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM Policies and Procedures

IMPORTANT: Columbia County Sports Commission (CCSC) sponsorship applications must be received before the designated sponsorship deadline. One application will be accepted per event per fiscal year. If a sponsorship application is received after the CCSC-designated sponsorship deadline, the CCSC **will only** consider if funds are available for the advertised sponsorship cycle.

Sponsorship deadline – July 15	For events held <u>after October 1st</u>
Sponsorship deadline – October 15	For events held <u>after January 1st</u>
Sponsorship deadline – January 15	For events held <u>after April 1st</u>
Sponsorship deadline – April 15	For events held <u>after July 1st</u>

Approved by the Columbia County Tourist Development Council

Sports & Events Sponsorship Program – Policies

I. INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION

Columbia County Sports Commission is a government organization created to attract local, state, regional, national, and international events and sports-related businesses and activities to Columbia County, located in north Florida. These events provide tremendous exposure opportunities for Columbia County and are a proven economic driver for its businesses. Columbia County is a member of the National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC) and the Florida Sports Foundation.

The CCSC allocates funds from its annual budget to a sponsorship program for Event Owners, Rights Holders, Tournament Directors, Groups, and Organizations that coordinate events with a demonstrated history of visitor impact or significant potential to draw visitors to the area. This sponsorship program is designed to support and enhance your event, providing a platform for it to reach its full potential. The CCSC administers the Sports and Events Sponsorship Fund with recommendations from designated advisory groups, including the TDC Board.

Direct sales, advertising, or marketing programs that are either supplemental to or conflict with the “Columbia County Sports Commission” direct sales, advertising, or marketing programs do not qualify as a special event.

Each application will be evaluated against established criteria and historic precedent. The evaluation process is designed to be fair and transparent, ensuring that all applications are given equal consideration. The number and extent of these sponsorship opportunities will depend upon the availability of designated funds and specific allocations. Ideally, the funds allocated by the CCSC will eventually be returned through an increase in transient lodging sales and the tourist development tax generated from those sales.

IMPORTANT: Columbia County Sports Commission (CCSC) Sponsorship applications must be received before the designated deadline. One application will be accepted per event per fiscal year. If a sponsorship application is received after the CCSC-designated sponsorship deadline, the CCSC **will only** consider it if funds are available for the advertised sponsorship cycle.

- Sponsorship request must be received before the deadline – **July 15** for events after Oct. 1st
- Sponsorship request must be received before the deadline – **Oct. 15** for events after Jan. 1st
- Sponsorship request must be received before the deadline – **Jan. 15** for events after April 1st
- Sponsorship request must be received before the deadline – **April 15** for events after July 1st

II. STATEMENT OF POLICIES

- A. The event must meet a minimum of seventy-five (75) room nights to qualify for sponsorship funds.

- B. Sponsorship funds are intended to supplement the sponsoring organization's budget.
- C. Funding is not intended to support administrative costs or non-public events. Funding supports marketing and promotional efforts and venue/site rentals.
- D. Hotels secured for the event must be located within Columbia County.
- E. To be eligible for payment, a completed Post-Event Report must be submitted within 30 days of the event's completion. The report must include tracking statistics regarding out-of-town visitors and their overall impact on the local economy, particularly transient lodging facilities and occupancy. The report should be submitted to ccoleman@columbiacountyfla.com.
- F. Failure to submit a complete Post-Event Report will result in the disqualification of support. If the event occurs near the end of the fiscal year, a request for reimbursement must be received by August 31.
- G. All sponsorship funds awarded may be subject to an audit.
- H. To qualify for reimbursement, proof of insurance lists the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners as an additional insured, with a minimum liability of \$1,000,000 per occurrence.
- I. The CCSC may choose to lend assistance or administer grant funds approved for advertising, public relations, and promotions through its respective agency of record on behalf of the applicant.
- J. Allowable expenses shall include the following:
 - Promotions
 - Marketing and programming expenses
 - Paid advertising and media buys outside of the area market
 - Production and technical expenses
 - Site fees/costs (contract help, rentals, insurance)
 - Rights fees
 - Sanction fees
 - Non-monetary awards (medals, ribbons, plaques, etc.)
- K. Unallowable expenses:
 - General and administrative expenses
 - Marketing within Columbia County
 - Building, renovating, and/or remodeling expenses
 - Permanent equipment purchases
 - Debts incurred before the sponsorship request
 - Programs that solicit advertising or sponsorships
 - Hospitality or social functions

III. **FUNDING ELIGIBILITY**

The Sports and Events Sponsorship Program intends to provide funding assistance for events that attract overnight visitors to Columbia County, impacting the commercial lodging

industry, hotels/motels, campgrounds, condominiums, restaurants, retail establishments, and other businesses. To be considered for funding, the following criteria must be established:

The event must meet a minimum of seventy-five (75) room nights to qualify for sponsorship funds.

1. Each application must include a signed Certification and Compliance page
2. The event must occur between October 1 and September 30 of the upcoming fiscal year.
3. The event must have the potential to bring or have a history of attracting out-of-town visitors.
4. The applicant may be asked to provide a marketing and promotions plan.
5. The applicant may be asked to provide a detailed event budget.
6. To be subject to the tourist tax, the event must use commercial lodging establishments or RV/campground sites within Columbia County.
7. Must provide proof of an “Additionally Insured” certificate.
8. The applicant must provide details related to the room night tracking process.

IV. APPROVED USE OF PTC LOGO

Recognition of *the Columbia County Sports Commission* and *Visit Lake City* logo must be included where appropriate on all printed material and the organization’s website, columbiacountysportscommission.com, under About Us/Brand Assets, and referred to in public relations activities. A camera-ready logo will be provided if needed. All printed materials featuring the CCSC logo must be submitted with the Post-Event Report. The applicant must also share the provided Playeasy event profile on all social media and with event attendees.



V. VISITOR TRACKING

To assess the impact of each event on Columbia County's transient lodging industry, CCSC emphasizes the importance of tracking the number of overnight visitors attending the event.

Should your event use a registration procedure, we encourage you to utilize the attached **Visitor Tracking Form** (Appendix A) to gather the requested information. Each participant/group should sign their name, the hotel where they reside, the number of rooms secured, the number of days, and the number of guests staying in each room. Room

block reports from hotels are the preferred method of reporting room data. This information will help track the number of visitors attending each event. Furthermore, the information can be used to determine the growth of a particular event. Subsequently, the development of an event can impact the funding level of the sponsorship funds awarded to the organization.

Following the event, CCSC reserves the right to conduct a post-event audit of information presented in the **Post-Event Report** (Appendix B). All lodging accommodations listed will be contacted to confirm the number of room nights generated for the event.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY MISLEADING OR FALSE INFORMATION PRESENTED CAN AND WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT FUTURE SPONSORSHIP AWARDS. Failing to track your event rooms and/or visitors could result in the voiding of your post-event funding.

VI. CONCLUSION

Applicants are asked not to contact board members of the Tourism Development Council and/or the Sports and Events Sponsorship Review Committee. However, the event director, fiscal administrator, or other designated contact person may be contacted by any of these groups or their staff during the review process.

Please submit the event sponsorship application to:

Columbia County Sports Commission
Sports and Events Sponsorship Program
971 West Duval Street, Suite 145
Lake City, Florida 32055

Or

Email the sponsorship application to:
ccoleman@columbiacountyfla.com

Failure to meet the specified guidelines may result in disqualification.

For questions or additional information, please call (386)719-1453