



## BOARD POLICY

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Subject: **Fair Ticketing Policy & Procedures**

Established: **12/17/2024**

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It is the policy of the San Mateo County Event Center that the CEO will follow established policies and procedures about the equitable distribution of complimentary event tickets in support of the San Mateo County Fair's strategic goals. All ticketing policies and implementation of those policies must comply with all applicable state laws and regulations.

This policy ensures the proper distribution and use of credential and courtesy passes, maintaining the fair's security and integrity while accommodating those who contribute to its success. It applies to all directors, staff, volunteers, sponsors, and contractors.

It is desirable to encourage the general public, whether an exhibitor, demonstrator, or fair attendant, to participate in fair activities. While no-pay admission may accomplish this, it is well recognized that the fair cannot continue to operate economically if free admissions are not controlled and/or restricted by Board Policy.

General Admission Policies and Ages - All admission and parking prices shall be set annually by management as part of the budget process

The California Food and Agriculture Code allows admission to the Fair without payment of an admission fee, under certain circumstances and within certain restrictions. Courtesy admission may not exceed four percent (4%) of the previous year's fair's paid admissions. For clarification, the four percent (4%) limitation shall not include special days allowed or required by the California Food and Agriculture Code.

California Food & Agriculture Code requires that the fair offer free admission to youth twelve (12) years of age and under on at least one weekday of the Fair (currently Thursday)

Types of Tickets – The Fair has two types of complimentary tickets for distribution.

Courtesy Admissions – Passes issued to VIPs, special guests and other individuals or groups as a courtesy – they provide no service to the Association – limited by State Statute to 4% of the previous year's paid fair attendance. (approximately 2,800 tickets)

Credential Admissions – provided to individuals or groups who are participating in the fair or providing a service to the Fair i.e.: Employees, entertainers, vendors, food concessionaires, sponsors, community stage groups, volunteers, or media. Any person rendering a necessary public service, protecting the public health, or a state or county official in the performance of their duty also qualifies for Credential admission. Credential admissions shall admit the bearer to the fairgrounds without payment of ordinary admission fees and may only be used for admission in connection with legitimate Fair business on the grounds.

Detailed records shall be maintained documenting the number of credential and courtesy pass admissions issued. Any records concerning no-pay admissions must be retained for audit purposes and/or public inspection.

No person who receives a ticket according to this policy shall sell or receive reimbursement for the value of such ticket.

By applying for and accepting credential or courtesy tickets all recipients must adhere to the Fair rules and regulations.

The CEO (or their designee) shall have the authority, at their sole discretion, to establish procedures for the distribution of tickets following this policy. All requests for tickets that fall within the scope of this policy shall be made following the procedures established by the CEO.

The CEO shall determine the face value of tickets distributed by the Association (face value shall be the value of the ticket if it was sold to the general public at full price)

The CEO, at their sole discretion, may revoke or suspend the ticket privileges of any person who violates any provision of this policy, or the procedures established by the CEO for the distribution of tickets following this policy.

Only the following Association Employees have the authority to approve ticket requests - The CEO; CAO and the Controller (or other staff persons authorized to sign Association checks)

Conditions under which tickets may be distributed – subject to the provisions of this policy, complimentary tickets (courtesy and credential) will be distributed as follows:

### **Badges**

Badges are issued to working staff (payroll or contracted) who will be on-site for the entire run. All badges issued by the Association shall be valid for Fair admission for the person to whom the badge is issued for the performance of their official duties.

<b>Badges</b>	Employees – Full Time; Part Time and As Needed
	Contracted Staff – working staff including
	Vendors – 2 per each 10 x 10 space
	Food Vendors – working staff (maximum of 15 per stand)
	Sound & Light – working staff
	Entertainment & Attractions – working staff
	Sponsors – booths same as the vendor
	Media – a maximum of 4 per news outlet
	Entities providing displays – Working Staff
	Youth Livestock Exhibitors

Eligible to Purchase Discounted Admission Tickets – Management shall annually set Price.

- Food Vendors
- Vendors
- Sponsors

**Non-Profit Organizations** -To qualify for complimentary or discounted tickets, organizations must:

Be a registered non-profit organization with a valid tax-exempt status under section 501© 3 of the Internal Revenue Code

Operate within the county and serve a sizable portion of the county's residents

Demonstrate a clear community benefit for attending the County Fair

Interested non-profit organizations must submit a completed Ticket Request Form at least 30 days before the start of the Fair. Applications received after this deadline may not be considered.

Required Documentation:

Proof of 501 ©3 status

A brief description of the organization's mission and programs

A statement of how the tickets will be used and the expected impact on the community

The number of tickets requested and the dates for which they are needed

Applications can be submitted via email to [tickets@smcec.co](mailto:tickets@smcec.co) or mailed to SMCEC – Tickets; 2495 S. Delaware Street, San Mateo, CA 94403 – ensure all supporting documents are attached to the application

Review and approval – a designated committee of staff and board members will review all applications

### **Criteria for approval**

Alignment with the Fair's mission to support the local community

Demonstrated need and potential community impact

Availability of tickets

Notification – Applicants will be notified of the committee's decision via email or mail within 15 days of application submission. Approved organizations will receive instructions on how to obtain their tickets.

### **Ticket Allocation**

The number of tickets granted will be based on the size of the organization and the impact of the requested tickets

Tickets must be used for the purposes outlined in the application. They are not transferable and cannot be resold

Organizations that receive tickets are required to submit a brief report within 30 days after the fair, detailing how the tickets were used and the impact on their members or beneficiaries

Organizations that fail to submit the required post-event report of misuse of the tickets may be disqualified from future ticket requests.

This policy is designed to be fair and transparent, ensuring that the Fair can effectively support the community through partnerships with local non-profit organizations.

## Procedures for Requesting Tickets

### General

The CEO shall appoint a Ticket Manager to manage all aspects of ticketing for the San Mateo County Fair under their general oversight. The Ticket Manager will work directly with the departments for the issuance of appropriate tickets and badges. Badge/Ticket requests should be made as early as possible to avoid a backlog the week before the fair. A Word or Excel document attached to a request form as backup is acceptable along with other required documentation.

Any request for more than 5 badges must be accompanied by a csv spreadsheet with all required fields ready for import. All photos must be saved on the Z drive/badges/badge photos – saved by first and last name. Badges do not include parking – so every badge request will need a seasonal parking pass if they are parking on-site. Tickets can be provided electronically or as hard tickets. The preference is to distribute hard tickets. Requests for electronic tickets must have the following information First Name, Last Name, email address; and phone number for each person receiving tickets, in addition to the other criteria.

**Employees** - All employees will be credentialed for access during the Fair or year-round as appropriate. Badges are issued by HR as part of the onboarding process. HR requests and distributes comp tickets for all eligible employees as follows:

- Full-Time and Part-Time Regular:
- 16 Admission
- 4 Parking; 1 Season Parking
- As Needed: 8 Admission; 2 Parking; 1 Season Parking

### Entertainment -

Any ticket requests for stages must include a stage schedule showing when the individual/group will perform.

Community Stages – a stage schedule showing the group, and several performers in each group shall be attached to each request. If the group consists of minors, 1 chaperone for each three performers will be approved. 1 vehicle pass shall be issued for every three admission tickets unless an exemption is specifically authorized by the CEO or their designee.

Contracted Staff – Grounds entertainers, sound, light – must follow criteria for badges, tickets, and parking and the contract # shall be included on request

Attractions – Static displays (Black History Museum, Juggers Car Show)  
Promoter/Owner/Coordinator must fill out forms and provide documentation justifying the number of credentials requested. Badges are only for people working all 7 days – otherwise, they will be issued tickets.

**Vendors** – Commercial and Food – Contract numbers must be included with all requests. Any tickets requested above the limits stated in the contract must be purchased at a discounted rate.  
Badge requests must follow the badging criteria above  
It is at the discretion of the CEO or their designee to issue badges or tickets.

**Marketing** – Press credentials will be prepared. They are good for parking and admission. Marketing Contests – reference the station and number of spots along with the number of tickets requested.

Donations to nonprofits for fundraising -  
Tickets will be printed and distributed before the raffle/event. No letters will be issued stating “pick up tickets.”

**Sponsors-** Sponsors with an “on-site” presence will be given tickets/badges consistent with commercial policy.

Badges will only be issued to sponsors that have an on-site presence.  
Admission Tickets will be valued as part of each Sponsorship Agreement.

**Competitive Exhibits-** Each Department shall complete its credential requests with appropriate documentation justifying their requests.

**Volunteers** - Volunteers shall be scheduled in no less than 4-hour increments. Tickets for volunteers must include a volunteer schedule. Volunteers will receive 1 admission ticket for each 8 hours worked. Volunteers will be encouraged to carpool, or park offsite, parking shall be provided on an as-needed basis for volunteers.

**Board of Directors** - Distribution of Fair Admission tickets, parking passes, and carnival ride passes to members of the San Mateo County Event Center Board of Directors shall follow the California Fair Political Practices Act (FPPA), specifically addressing the acceptance and reporting of gifts.

Each member of the San Mateo County Event Center Board of Directors shall be provided with the following for the San Mateo County Fair:

- 21 Fair Admission Tickets
- 7 Fair Parking Passes
- 1 Carnival Ride Pass (allowance for complimentary rides for cardholder and 1 guest, not accepted at games)

Ticket distribution is intended to comply with the California Fair Political Practices Act (FPPA) regulations regarding the acceptance of gifts by public officials. The Board members are required to adhere to the following provisions:

1. **Personal Use Limitation:** The tickets, parking passes, and a Carnival ride pass provided to Directors are for use by the Board members, their immediate family, and their guests for official Fair-related purposes. Personal use beyond these purposes must be reported in compliance with FPPA requirements.
2. **Disclosure Requirement:** Under FPPA regulations, if the total value of the tickets, parking passes, and ride passes exceed the current gift limit from a single source (set by the FPPA), the Board member must disclose the gift on their FPPC Form 700 (Statement of Economic Interests).