

International Festival of *Minnesota*



2026 POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Revised August 11, 2025

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF MINNESOTA

HISTORY

The International Festival of Minnesota ('IFest-MN', 'the Festival') is a revival of the Festival of Nations, which was established in 1932 by the International Institute of Minnesota. The Festival of Nations was officially suspended in 2022, with the last event happening in 2019.

IFest-MN leadership consists of past directors and area leads dedicated to bringing this great event back to St. Paul.

MISSION

IFest-MN is an educational event designed to bring Americans of all backgrounds together - native and naturalized citizens alike - to share the ties with our past and take pride in the richness of diverse cultures in our community as we build for the future together.

AREAS OF PARTICIPATION

IFest-MN has five areas of participation:

- Food and Beverage (Café)
- Bazaar
- Entertainment
- Exhibit
- Demonstration

WHO MAY PARTICIPATE

Due to space limitations, only one participant from any ethnic group can participate in each of the program areas (for example, we cannot have two Irish cafes, two Brazilian Bazaars or two Somali dance groups).

The IFest-MN board sets the criteria for vendor and artist participation and has oversight of each area of the festival. The Board set forth three goals for choosing and approving participants:

- Diversity of Participants – IFest-MN's goal is to have the festival represent as many diverse ethnic groups as possible from throughout the world. A Board member will lead each committee area to ensure this goal is achieved and report back to the full Board.
- Traditional & Modern Ethnic Participation – IFest-MN invites both traditional and modern ethnic representations in selecting artists and vendors to participate in the festival. IFest-MN's goal is to connect audiences to historical traditions as well as engaging audiences in representations of their ethnic groups today. A Board member leads this effort.
- Overall Qualifications – The Board's goal is to have high quality participants in all parts of the event. Participants are screened to ensure they are educational, high quality and engaging. The Board oversees each area committee and the operations committee to ensure these goals are met.

EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

HARASSMENT FREE ENVIRONMENT

IFest-MN expressly prohibits any form of harassment based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or related medical conditions), marital status, status with regard to public assistance, familial status, membership or activity in a local commission, disability (physical or mental), sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, age, military or veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under federal, state or local law.

CULTURAL PROMOTION

IFest-MN is designed to promote cultures and ethnic groups in ways that are chosen by the participants. IFest-MN has designated areas of participation, with specific rules to abide by, but each participant may showcase their specific culture in a manner of their choosing. Participants may come from within the city, State or elsewhere in the country and may have many different backgrounds and organization sizes.

COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS

Failure to follow these regulations is a breach of contract and may result in the removal of your booth without any further obligation by IFest-MN, including a refund.

PROMOTIONAL ALLOWANCES

IFest-MN is committed to showcasing the diversity of ethnic organizations, groups, and businesses that exist in our community. Participants will be allowed to share information about the ethnic organizations, groups, and businesses that they represent within the limitations outlined below.

- Participants can have printed materials (business cards, brochures, etc.) that include basic information such as contact information, general descriptions of activities, mission statements, locations, history, or an event calendar.
- Materials cannot contain political messages, language that could be considered derogatory toward another group, or messages or events that conflict with IFest-MN's mission.
- Promotional items may not be installed on café fronts.
- All promotional items must be reviewed by the area committee prior to posting or handing out.

CLOTHING EXPECTATIONS

IFest-MN encourages wearing traditional ethnic clothing where possible, while understanding there is a great diversity in the types of ethnic clothing participants and volunteers can wear. All participants should wear clothing that is significantly identifiable to the ethnic group they are representing. This could include contemporary items and modern designs inspired by traditional patterns and designs.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

All participants, attendees, staff and vendors are expected to treat each other with respect and consideration. All participants are expected to respect the diversity of viewpoints and opinions. All communication should be open and respectful of others, regardless of differences in opinion. Any participants using derogatory language or behaviors may be subject to immediate removal from the event.

NON-PROFIT STATUS

All profit-making participants (café, bazaar) must be or be affiliated with a non-profit entity. This affiliation shall be defined to IFest staff as a 'proof of non-profit affiliation'. This is a document provided each year by the non-profit entity to the participant, on official letterhead, stating their affiliation.



REGULATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

RESTRICTED ITEMS & ACTIVITIES

These items are prohibited from IFest-MN:

- Projectiles (an object which is fired, thrown or otherwise projected), or objects which are self-propelled (such as rockets, or weapons), or decorative knives, whips, guns, clubs, nunchakus, throwing stars or swords, or other weapon-like items.
- Helium tanks, balloons, lit candles, and burning of incense are prohibited by order of the Fire Marshall
- Gambling and other illegal activities
- CBD in any form
- Alcohol in any form
- Carbonated beverages of any kind
- Packaged foods which may be consumed at the event (unless expressly permitted by IFEST's Board or Area Chairperson)
- Any music, noise making devices, or video displays, without prior approval. These must not interfere with the entertainment stages or with the interactions of other vendors and their customers
- Political boundary maps, including reproductions on clothing or objects
- Symbolism/logos of an inflammatory nature
- Drug use, symbols of drugs or drug paraphernalia
- Any item endorsing any political cause or candidate
- Posters, handouts or business promoting items that are not within the promotional allowance guidelines

Any item that poses a safety concern or does not comply with festival regulations will be removed by either the St Paul Police and/or an IFest-MN staff Member, depending on the severity of the item(s).

SAFETY REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

The following are general safety guidelines that must be followed. When constructing your booth or setting up your merchandise, please think about the safety of your customers, the festival volunteers and yourselves!

- Only use LED bulbs in any lighting – other bulbs get too hot and pose a fire hazard. You will be asked to turn off and remove any lighting using other bulbs.
- Any freestanding shelving units must be secured or weighted at the bottom so they cannot tip and pose a safety hazard. Any shelving units deemed unsafe by the IFest-MN staff will be asked to be dismantled immediately.
- Any electrical cords running across the floor need to be entirely taped down or covered to avoid a tripping hazard. Any other cords should be secured out of the way with zip ties.
- Any shelving, tables or racks MUST stay within the confines of your booth. You may display merchandise

outside your booth by either hanging them on the side of your display booth, or by setting larger items just outside your booth, but you may be asked at any time to move items that may block traffic.

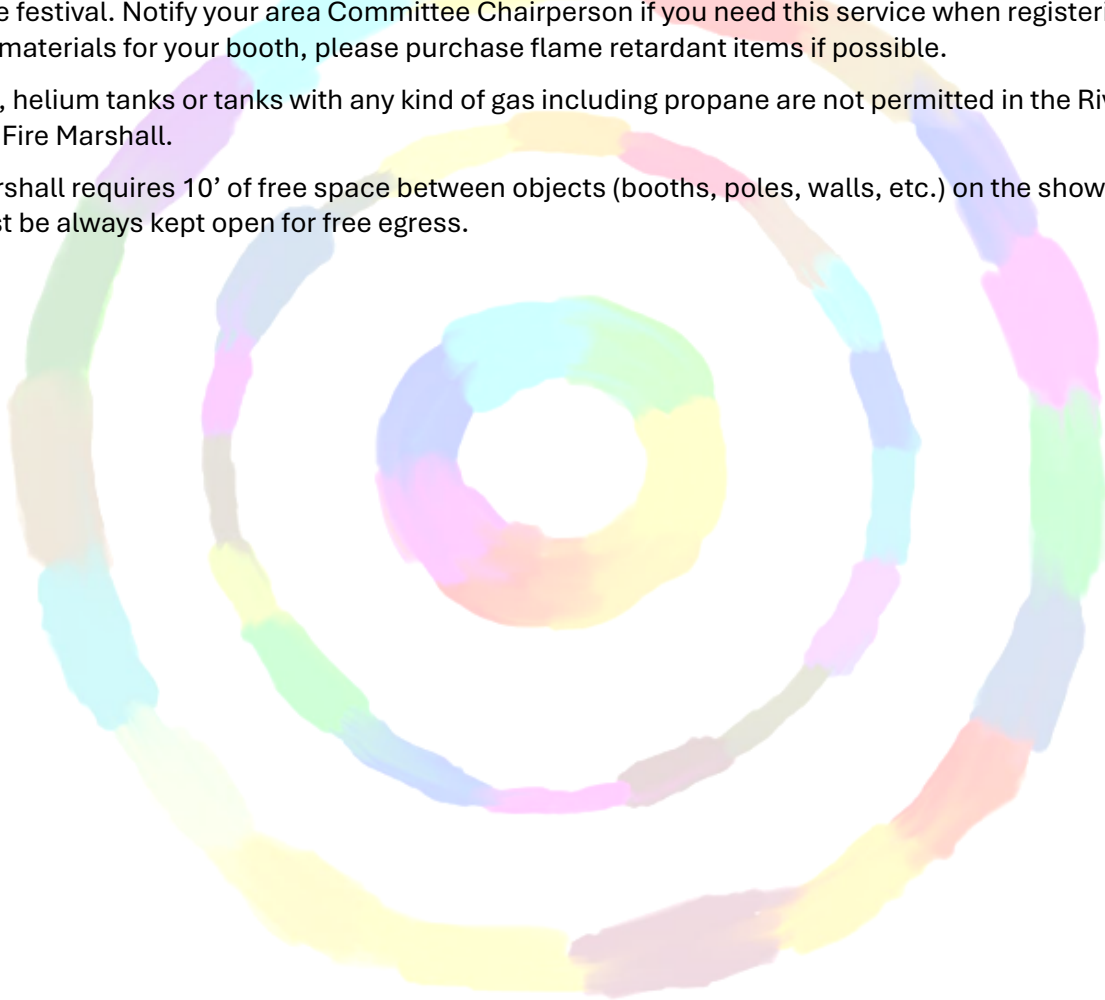
- Do not overload pipe and drape provided by IFest-MN. Pipe and drape are not load bearing and cannot support heavy loads.
- IFest-MN staff may remove hazardous items at their discretion and when necessary to remedy safety hazards.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS

Saint Paul Fire Department regulations require that all flammable material (such as fabric used anywhere throughout the festival) be flame proofed. IFest-MN will provide a spray applicator with a liquid solution that meets all fire code regulations for flammable natural fibers. This service is available at no cost to the groups prior to the set-up of the festival. Notify your area Committee Chairperson if you need this service when registering. If purchasing materials for your booth, please purchase flame retardant items if possible.

Open flame, helium tanks or tanks with any kind of gas including propane are not permitted in the RiverCentre by order of the Fire Marshall.

The Fire Marshall requires 10' of free space between objects (booths, poles, walls, etc.) on the show floor. These spaces must be always kept open for free egress.



SCHEDULE AND FEES

KEY DEADLINES

October 2025	Initial participant selections will be made, participants will be notified
November 7, 2025	All Booth Fees Due
November 2025	'Kick Off' Meeting – details forthcoming
February 2026	Entertainment Technical Reviews – Date TBD
March 1, 2026	All paperwork must be submitted for all areas in full or participation may be revoked (or earlier as directed by area chair)
TBD	Participant Tickets distributed
April 9	Participant Load-in
April 10-11	IFest 2026 is open
April 11-12	Participant Load-out

FEE SCHEDULE

Café	Fee
Café Booth Fee	\$500.00
Stove Rental – includes energy charges and hookups	TBD
Refrigerator Rental – includes energy charges and hookups	TBD
Freezer Rental – includes energy charges and hookups	TBD
220/208-volt appliance hookup fee, per vendor supplied appliance	\$50.00
220/208-volt appliance energy charge, per vendor supplied appliance	\$50.00
Freezer or refrigerator energy charge, per vendor supplied appliance	\$50.00
110/120-volt appliance energy charge, per vendor supplied appliance	\$30.00
Bazaar	Fee
Bazaar Booth Fee (per space)	\$500.00
Demonstration	Fee
Demonstration Booth Fee	\$0.00 if selling items made in booth

FOOD AND BEVERAGE (CAFÉ)

CAFÉ PARTICIPATION

All participants must comply with general IFest-MN Policy and Procedures. Failure to follow policy and procedures is a breach of contract and may result in the closing of your café without any further obligation by IFest-MN. Any fees or other services paid or rendered will be forfeited and no refunds will be made. Ethnic groups desiring to have a new café should contact IFest-MN staff for consideration. Due to space limitations, not all who apply may receive space at the event. Overflow participation requests will be placed on a waiting list.

If directed by the RiverCentre, Health Department, Fire Marshall or Café Committee participants may have modified regulations and requirements during the event. The Café Committee will advise each group of impacts to their operations.

- All ethnic groups are responsible to comply with policies and procedures, including entering into a rental agreement with IFest-MN for the Café booth.
- FEES: Café deposits are due at time of registration. If forms are not received and fees are not paid in full by specified date, the cafe may lose their space, and any prior payments made. See SCHEDULE & FEES for detailed information.
- Each ethnic group is required to submit a detailed list of menu items to be sold to the Café Committee for approval. Submitted menus should include only items that represent the ethnic group's cuisine and culture. Restricted Items are:
 - Carbonated beverages
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - CBD in any form
 - Prepackaged candy
 - Packaged foods
 - Certain concession items, as prohibited by the RiverCentre
- Café set-up is on April 9, the Café Committee will send drive-in times directly to each participant. **No Café will be allowed to set up their Café on morning of the festival.** The Café Committee will provide scheduled load-in and load-out times to each group. These times must be followed for safe and efficient operation. You must get approval, in advance, from the Café Committee to modify your given drive-in time. A cafe not following load-in or load-out instructions by staff at the loading dock will be held solely responsible any resulting damage or injury and may be asked to not participate in future events.
- All fabrics and linens used in Cafés must be flame proofed each year. The Café Committee will provide a spray applicator with a liquid solution that meets all fire code regulations for flammable natural fibers. This service is available at no cost to cafes during set-up. Cafes are responsible for the application of the flameproof solution and logging the application on the form provided. For any fabrics or linens not treated during set-up, a certificate meeting flameproof regulations must be provided to the Café Committee.
- Café participants must provide their own fire extinguisher for their booth. Any fire extinguishers purchased for the Cafe area must comply with fire codes which currently require a 5lb non-toxic Model number 2A10BC and a 40BC dry chemical extinguisher if your group is cooking with grease. All fire extinguishers must show a current date sticker. The Fire Marshall makes the final determination of required fire protection equipment.

Failure to supply a current, working fire extinguisher will result in not being allowed to open your booth until resolved.

- Promotional items must follow the promotional guidelines under EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION.
- Uniform signage provided by IFest-MN should be left in place at the conclusion of the event.
- Each Café booth must arrange all deliveries to the RiverCentre with notification given to the Café Committee. IFest-MN staff or volunteers are not authorized to sign for any deliveries under any circumstances. Suppliers making deliveries need to provide the following information to dock personnel:
 - Name of the cafe,
 - Café location in the RiverCentre, and
 - Receiving party name and phone number.
- Ethnic group participants working in the sales area (front) of the Café must follow the clothing expectations under EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION.

CAFE FORMS

The following forms must be completed to participate in the Café area:

- Contact Information
- Café Questionnaire
- Appliance Specifications and Energy Charge
- Café Unload/Load Time Request
- Café Booth Preferred Layout
- Proof of Non-Profit Affiliation
- ST19
- Proof of General Liability Insurance
- Certificate of Compliance Minnesota Workers' Compensation Law (MNlic04)
- MN Department of Health Special Event Application

CAFÉ SET UP AND LAYOUT

- The Café Committee will make the assignment and location of each café.
- Café booth space is approximately 20 feet deep and 20 feet wide. There is approximately 18 feet of table space at the serving area of each Café booth. The Festival provides 8-foot tables and chairs in the work area based on advance request on the appliance and energy form. Cafés may provide additional tables or chairs as necessary. Reconfiguration of assigned space is not permitted.
- Café participants are responsible for:
 - Providing attractive table covering in the serving area. Linens should be covered with washable clear plastic to keep the table sanitary for the entire event.
 - Fronts of tables - must be skirted 3 inches from the floor.
 - Sneeze guards or clear plastic cover must protect all food that is laid out on serving counters.
 - Hot foods served in the front area of the Café must be in electric units with temperature controls. The electric units must be protected from the public and placed on metal trays.

SERVING RESTRICTIONS

- Each day the Café must have all menu items available from open to Festival closing announcement. No early take down or closing will be allowed.
- Cafes may provide a sample of menu items to guests upon request; however, no food items can be laid out or displayed for unattended guest sampling.
- Food must be served using utensils, gloves or waxed paper and presented to the customer using the appropriate food service ware such as plates, bowls, napkins, and eating utensils.
- No Café worker with an open sore, cut, skin irritation, etc. or with a transferable illness will be permitted in the Café.

FOOD SERVICE WARE

- Food service ware may be available from IFest-MN – contact the Café Chairperson with questions.

APPLIANCES

- IFest-MN will make available standard household appliances (refrigerator, freezer, stove) for rent in the Cafés. Exact appliance size, configuration and rental costs will be confirmed as soon as available to event staff. Any appliances brought in by the ethnic group must be in good working order, have standard plugs, and labeled with the input voltage.
- Appliances rented are generally new and the Café Committee checks their condition once the appliance is positioned in the Café. The appliance location in the booth will be placed (to the greatest extent possible) where the participant submitted on their registration forms. Any appliance damage should be reported to the Café Committee.
- The RiverCentre provides the power and outlets for appliances. Energy charges apply to all appliances. This includes all appliances, rented, brought in, or not in use. A one-month advance notice prior to the event is required for any non-standard connections. Participating cafés are responsible for cleaning all appliances rented to a “like new” condition before scheduled drive out time (see APPLIANCE CHECK-OUT).
- Only heavy-duty extension cords can be used for all appliances with these specifications: minimum gauge 14, maximum length 25 feet, wattage per extension cord 1500 watts. If extension cord does not meet specifications a rental will be provided at a cost and will be required to be returned at the end of the event.
- Café take down begins with the announcement that IFest-MN is closed. All appliances rented through IFest-MN must be cleaned and approved by the Café Committee or delegate prior to leaving the RiverCentre. The Café participant or designee must be present at checkout. Cafés are responsible for cleaning all appliances rented to a “like new” condition before scheduled drive out time or will be subject to a \$250.00 cleaning fee per appliance. Excessive damage as deemed by IFest-MN or the supplier to appliances may result in additional fees.

****RiverCentre electricians reserve the right to deny electrical hook up of a personal appliance and are not authorized to make repairs to appliances.***

CAFÉ OPERATION FEES

The following are anticipated fees for a Café booth (See SCHEDULE & FEES). Cafés failing to pay fees by stated due dates will risk their ability to participate in the event.

- Café booth Rental Fee – Due upon registration. If registration is not completed in full by specified dates, your ethnic group may lose their space and the deposit.
- Appliance Rental Fee – Appliances for rent include residential style stoves, refrigerators and freezers.
- Energy Charge – All appliances and equipment on site, whether used or not, will be subject to an energy charge. An invoice will be provided to each booth prior to close, with payment due in full on Saturday. This will include charges for any non-standard connections. Failure to pay this invoice by the close of the Festival will result in a fine of \$250.00.
- Insurance – Proof of insurance must be submitted to IFest-MN as part of registration (a certificate of proof of insurance can be obtained from your current carrier).
- Health Permit – A permit from the State of MN to sell food at IFest-MN must be obtained by the participant. Any fees for this permit are payable to the MN Department of Health and are the responsibility of the participant.
- Damage – Café shall be fully responsible to pay for all damages to property owned by the IFest-MN and/or the RiverCentre, its owners or managers, which results from any act by the Café participant. The participant agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the IFest-MN and the RiverCentre, its owners, managers, officers or directors, agents, employees, subsidiaries and affiliates from any damages or charges resulting from café's use of the property. The participants liability shall include all losses, costs, damages or expenses arising from or out of or by reason of any accident or bodily injury or other occurrences to any person or persons, including the café, its agents, employees, and volunteers that arise from or out of the participant's occupancy and use of the exhibition premises or any part thereof.
- See FEE SCHEDULE for full breakdown of appliance rental charges, hookups and energy fees.

MENU

The individual Café vendors determine menu items. All items are subject to the approval of the Minnesota Department of Health, Environment Health Service Section –Food Beverage & Lodging and the Café Committee. Under no circumstances shall an item be sold which has not been pre-approved. The Café Committee must approve menus and all additions, deletions, or substitutions by the date given by the Café Chairperson.

MENU DISPLAY BOARD AND SIGNAGE

A menu display board is provided to each Café booth and is the property of the IFest-MN. The board should be used to display the menu items being served and the price of each item. Food display tent signs no larger than 4X6 inches, folded in half once, can be used with food item displays that are for sale. IFest-MN reserves the right to remove any signage or menu boards not within these parameters.

FOOD PREPARATION

By order of the Minnesota Department of Health, Environmental Health Service Section – Food Beverage & Lodging, all food prepared before IFest-MN must be prepared in a licensed and approved kitchen. In addition, all food prepared and served at the IFest-MN must comply with State of Minnesota rules and regulations. To maintain

authenticity, all food items sold in the Café area must be prepared by Café booths or by commercial suppliers according to the group's specifications. Estimate the total amount of food needed and then allocate it over the event. All guests are entitled to the same menu items as an earlier event visitor, even at the end of the night.

LOAD-IN AND LOAD-OUT

Staff or volunteers of IFest-MN or the RiverCentre may be available to assist in the unloading or loading of any equipment or items of the cafes but bear no responsibility for any damage that may take place during load in or load out. Load-in and load out will take place thru the Eagle Street Dock only. There is NO PARKING available within the loading dock, all vehicles must exit immediately following unloading or loading. All items must be removed upon completion of the event unless prior approval is obtained from the Café Committee Chairperson.

IFEST-MN REGULATIONS

Failure to follow any stated regulations is a breach of contract and may result in the removal of your booth without any further obligation by IFest-MN, including a refund.

