

IOWA STATE FAIR

GET IN THE SPIRIT

Corporate Outing

Team Building:

A Day at the Iowa State Fair with Your Co-Workers

Welcome to the ultimate team-building experience at the Iowa State Fair!

Get ready for a day filled with fun and food as you explore the world-renowned Iowa State Fair. This manual will guide you through everything you need to know for a successful corporate outing at the Fair.

1. Planning Your Outing:

Dates: Coordinate with your team to select a date that works best for everyone. Consider factors such as work schedules, transportation and any other commitments. The full schedule for the Fair will be posted on our website, www.iowastatefair.org, in early July. You can also download the official Iowa State Fair App or get a printed copy in the Des Moines Register on August 9. To view the schedule, check out iowastatefair.org/entertainment/fair-schedule.

Transportation: Arrange transportation to and from the Fairgrounds. Depending on the size of your group, options may include carpooling, chartering a bus or using public transportation. The address for Uber, Lyft or Taxi pick up is 203 Rock Island, Des Moines, IA 50317. On-site parking is available for \$10 per vehicle as available and payable at the gate. Charter buses are welcome and can drop people off at the gate and park in a designated area on the Fairgrounds. Shuttles and golf carts operate in the parking lots and take you to the entry gates.

DART buses are available for pick up or drop off from two locations in the Des Moines Metro area. The cost is \$3 per person and they run from 8 a.m. to midnight. The routes are here: iowastatefair.org/visit/parking-park-ride

Free Bus Service: For 2026 the Iowa State Fair and CIT Charters will be offering a complimentary busing option from Southridge Mall.

The new CIT Transportation buses operating from Southridge Mall will be free for all riders. Free parking will be marked in the Southridge Mall parking lot and buses will run continuously from 8 a.m. to midnight (service from the Fairgrounds will end at 9 p.m. on Sunday, August 23).

All buses will drop off and pick up Fairgoers at Gate 10 off East 30th sponsored by Select Iowa Buick Dealers.

Tickets: Purchase admission tickets in advance to streamline entry into the Fair AND save money. Large orders can be placed together using the Corporate Opportunities Form here: iowastatefair.org/visit/groups-tours/corporate-outings

ADMISSION

Advance Tickets (through August 12) Fair Time Tickets (August 13-23)

<p>Adult (12 and up) \$11 Child (6-11) \$7 Children 5 and under: Free</p>	<p>Adult (12 and up): \$16 Child (6-11): \$10 Children 5 and under: Free</p>
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Adult and child advance admission tickets are available online at iowastatefair.org and can be printed at home, without fees. Tickets can be ordered online and mailed with a fee. Adult and child advance admission tickets are also available at participating Iowa Hy-Vee and Fareway stores (without fees). All advance admission tickets will remain on sale (while supplies last) before August 13.

DISCOUNT DAYS

The following fairtime discounts are available at the gates and are not good with any other offer.

Discounted Admission: \$12 adult admission, \$8 child admission (ages 6-11); available Monday-Thursday from 5 to 10 p.m.

Veterans Day (Monday, August 17): Active and former members of the United States military who show proof of veteran or active military status plus one enjoy \$12 gate admission from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Older Iowans' Day (Wednesday, August 19): Fairgoers ages 60 and older receive \$12 gate admission from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday Funday (Sunday, August 23): \$12 for adults and \$8 for kids ages 6-11. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.: with donations of 3 cans of non-perishable food, adult admission (ages 12 and up) is \$9.

Fair Hours

Date	Grounds	Buildings	Thrill Parks
Aug. 13-22	8 a.m. to midnight	9 a.m. to 8 p.m.	Thrill Ville: 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Thrill Town: 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Thrill Zone: 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.
Aug. 23	8 a.m. to 9 p.m.	9 a.m. to 8 p.m.	Thrill Ville: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thrill Town: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thrill Zone: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Aug. 13-22: No on-site ticket sales and no entry/re-entry allowed after 10 p.m.

Aug. 23: No on-site ticket sales and no entry/re-entry allowed after 7 p.m.

2. Itinerary:

Fair Hours: Plan to arrive at the Fairgrounds early to maximize your time. If you are there shortly after the gates open at 8 a.m., you will beat the crowds.

Meeting: Gather your team for a brief welcome meeting to outline the day's activities and establish meeting points throughout the Fairgrounds. Groups can rent the --- at the Fairgrounds (subject to availability). Please contact eventservices@iowastatefair.org to be put on a waiting list.

Explore: Encourage team members to explore the Fair at their own pace, taking in the sights, sounds and attractions that interest them most.

Group Activities: Competitions or group activities, visiting specific exhibits, participating in competitions or enjoying rides together can be fun. Bulk orders for food tickets and ride passes can be ordered ahead of time. Checklists of sites to see and a scavenger hunt are at the end of this document.

Fair Schedule: A list of building descriptions and events can be found here: iowastatefair.org/entertainment/fair-schedule. Plus, check out special entertainment on the free stages, in the Grandstand and in Elwell Family Park.

Food: Coordinate a designated lunch break where team members can enjoy a meal together. A shelter is available for rental if available. It is often booked, but there is a list of semi-permanent vendors that can host gatherings. Setting up food and drinks ahead of time with the vendor is advisable for medium to larger groups. Pre-ordering food coupons, working with a vendor or arranging for bulk purchasing are other options. You can find the information at iowastatefair.org/visit/groups-tours.

Fun: Continue exploring the Fairgrounds, making sure to check out any must-see attractions or entertainment. Check out the checklists in this guide or try the scavenger hunt.

Closing: Gather your team to share highlights, express gratitude for their participation or go to an evening concert at a free stage or in the Grandstand. To purchase Grandstand tickets, visit iowastatefair.org/entertainment/grandstand. You can find free horse shows throughout the Fair or free or paid shows in our outdoor arena, Elwell Family Park, iowastatefair.org/entertainment/attractions/elwell-family-park

3. Tips for a Successful Outing:

Comfortable: Advise team members to dress comfortably and appropriately for a day spent outdoors. Comfortable shoes are a must for walking around the Fairgrounds.

Hydration: Remind everyone to stay hydrated throughout the day by drinking plenty of water, especially if it's hot outside. All bags are subject to inspection. Outside food and drink are allowed. Small coolers for medication or perishables are permissible. For a full list, check out the safety page on the Iowa State Fair website, iowastatefair.org/safety.

Sun Protection: Encourage the use of sunscreen and hats to protect against sunburn. Consider providing sunscreen for easy access. We have care cubes throughout the Fairgrounds that offer things you might have left at home like sunscreen, bandages or Tylenol.

Group Photos: Capture memories of the day with group photos at various locations around the Fairgrounds. Consider designating a team photographer to document the outing. There are multiple selfie locations throughout the Fairgrounds to create great shots and memories.

Safety First: Remind everyone to be mindful of their surroundings and adhere to safety guidelines. Visit iowastatefair.org/safety.

First Time Fairgoer: Stop by an Information booth for a brochure and First Time Fairgoer button, plus Information volunteers are the best at explaining the can't miss events and attractions at the Fair!

4. Post-Outing Follow-Up:

Feedback Survey: Distribute a brief survey to gather feedback from team members about their experience at the Fair for future outings. We always welcome feedback, please share any improvements with us at info@iowastatefair.org.

Photo Sharing: Share photos from the outing with the team via email or a shared online platform. Encourage team members to reminisce about their favorite moments from the day. Follow us on social media and feel free to use #IowaStateFair or #FairSpirit.

5. Additional Resources:

Iowa State Fair Website: Visit the official Iowa State Fair website for information about attractions, exhibits and entertainment options at iowastatefair.org.

Iowa State Fair App: Don't want to miss any of the Iowa State Fair action? Download the Official Iowa State Fair App to keep up with all the fun! Access the daily schedule, Grandstand shows and purchase admission tickets all from your mobile device.

Fair Map: Download a map of the Fairgrounds to help navigate your way around the event. Visit iowastatefair.org/visit/fairgrounds-map.

Event Schedule: Check the Fair's event schedule for special performances, competitions and other activities happening throughout the day. Visit iowastatefair.org/entertainment/fair-schedule.

To have the best time at the Fair, check out our visitor information at iowastatefair.org under the visit tab.

With this manual as your guide, you're ready to embark on an unforgettable outing at the Iowa State Fair. Get ready to experience Fair Spirit at the Iowa State Fair, August 13-23, 2026.

6. Location Rentals

The Alliant Energy Landing and the Maytag Family Theater are available for rental during the Fair. Contact eventservices@iowastatefair.org to for more information

In addition to our on-site shelter, the following Fair food locations are able to accommodate groups. Please contact the vendors directly to inquire about availability.

Iowa Cattlemen's: waynebaumhover@gmail.com

Blue Ribbon Bar & Eatery and The Rib Shack: greatc8765@gmail.com

Bud Tent: mike@budtent.com

The Depot: campbellscorendogs@msn.com

Iowa Craft Beer Tent: steve@iowacraftbeertent.com

Jalapeño Pete's: sue.a.kirke@gmail.com

JR's South Pork Ranch: Brooks Reynolds, brooks@brbfest.com

Old West Roadhouse: robinhotchkiss@cox.net

Stockman's: stockmansinn@gmail.com

Scavenger Hunt

Have some fun answering the questions below and finding some iconic Fair locations.

1. Iowa's most famous love boat.
2. Do you even know what your county's flag looks like? Where can you find all of the county flags?
3. Did you know, the Iowa State Fair owned a baby elephant for several years? Where can you find the statue of Baby Mine?
4. Band-Aids, Ibuprofen or broken legs are found here.
5. Meet me at the _____ . (Hint: It's not Coca Cola...)
6. The birthplace of the Polled Hereford.
7. Where cow chips fly.
8. SSSSSome people will pay to take a picture with me during the Fair.
9. These little buildings can make a farmer out of anyone.
10. 600 lbs of butter.
11. Climb 71 steps to the top of this.
12. Baby ducks, lambs, goats and cows, Oh My!