



Hostess Guide

Who Can Be a Hostess

Free Events

Any Sister in good standing

Fee-Based Events including Large Events and Independent Events

Must have hosted a fee-based event in the past; or Must have an experienced Co-Hostess **and**

Must be a Sister in good standing with no unpaid fees outstanding

At SOTF we want to make sure that hostesses have the experience needed to host events. Additionally, with Independent Fee-Based Events where monies are being sent directly to the hostesses, we want to make sure that we have experienced, known hostesses collecting and accounting for event money to reduce the exposure to our members.

Event Types

Free Casual Events

- A free event such as a Meet and Greet or an outing for lunch, a day event such as a museum visit or a casual camping weekend where everyone foots their own costs and shares food
- An event where money is collected at the time of the event for the sole purpose of paying a single vendor such as a restaurant or a group fee for a movie.

Independent Fee-Based Events

- A Sister-Organized and hosted trip or ticketed activity that is expected to generate less than \$5000 in gross receipts.
- The Hostess collects all fees directly and therefore is responsible for the delivery of the event as described and the safekeeping of attendee money.
- These events are to be designed to “break even”.
- All taxes and tax reporting are the responsibility of the Hostess.

Large Event

- A SOTF event, trip, or ticketed activity which is expected to generate more than \$5,000 in gross receipts. These events may include a charitable fundraising aspect. This will be clearly defined by the hostess.
- All receipts related to these events are collected and managed by SOTF if SOTF is handling the monies. SOTF then reimburses hostesses for events costs and pays event vendors based on submitted receipts. If the Hostess is handling the money then no budget is necessary and all expenses are handled by the Hostess.
- On occasion, any hostess may request an impressed amount to cover upcoming expenses to alleviate the hostess financial burden of paying for the expense.
- Any remaining funds from a large event should be donated to a charity.
- The costs for this event must include the an administrative fee paid to SOTF if SOTF is handling the money. This cost will be a percentage based on credit card fees.

Getting Started

- **Hosting** - If you are thinking about hosting a SOTF event but have never attended an event, it is a good idea to get one or two under your belt before jumping right in. Even better, you might serve as a co-host before you host your own event. Having a co-host is a good idea, it is always nice to have help.
- **Scheduling** - When picking a date, think way ahead. You will need enough time to get everything lined up and you will want to try and avoid conflicts that will make it hard for people to choose or reduce your desired attendance.
- **Location** - Pick a place that enhances your planned activity, is accessible and not too far out of the way. Become acquainted with the conditions and the available resources (dry camping, expected weather, etc.) and determine a single point of contact for you to work with at that location. Make sure you visit and become familiar with the site and the closest emergency services, food, fuel and water. Gather materials and information about the local area to share with attendees who may be visiting for the first time.
- **Theme** - Keep it simple but remember to make it fun. A theme is not required but helps with planning to narrow things down.

- Pricing - Include all the costs and decide what the attendee pays separately, taking into consideration the number of anticipated attendees.
- Staffing - Round up some volunteers to help. Hosting can present time challenges so surround yourself with dependable people who are ready, willing and able, but make sure they have all the information they need to be effective.
- Cancellations and Refunds – For fee-based events, develop an objective cancellation policy based on both your fixed and variable costs and stick to it. We suggest that if you offer refunds early on during registration, that all monies be nonrefundable 60 days prior to the event. This will help you manage last minute cancellations and the waitlist.

Gather the Facts

- Event Name - When you are entering the event name, include the City and State at the end. Example: Sisters at the Keys, Key West, Florida
- Hostess Contact Info - Hostess Name, Sister #, Email and Phone Number
- Event Description
- Costs, Payment Schedule and Refund Policy - (Be sure your refund policy makes sense based on your “sunk” costs such as facility fee or port-a-potty rentals)
- Summary Itinerary - Provide a short one or two line overview of each day

- Food Plans
- Special Activities
- Detailed Description
- Additional Location Information
- Any Additional Charged Activities
- Waitlist Instructions
- Event Payment - How to pay. For Independent Fee-Based Events, the hostess will need to state to whom, where and how participants should remit payment.

When you are ready follow the guide called How to Create an SOTF Event on the Website

Forms Required

| Type of Event | Hostess Forms | Attendee Forms |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Casual No-Fee Event | Casual Event Agreement | Annual Membership Waiver |
| Independent Fee-Based Event | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fee Event Agreement | Annual Membership Waiver |

Large Fee-Based
Event

if

- Fee Event Agreement
- Budget Form

Annual
Membership
Waiver

if SOTF is

handling

money.

Insurance

- Insurance Policy: SOTF carries two types of insurance policies that apply to official events and the certificates are available by contacting SOTF staff.
- Liability coverage for official events providing; vendors protection in the event of property damage; injured guests, a small medical reimbursement; and, SOTF and volunteer staff defense if sued for damages. NOTE: Sisters sign waivers and are responsible for their own insurance coverage, i.e., medical for injury and homeowner's policy for defense if named in a lawsuit.
- Accident coverage for any Sister injured due to an accident while attending an event up to \$25,000 of a Sister's accident medical expense at 100% of usual & customary charges and \$10,000 accidental death, dismemberment & paralysis.

No-Fee Events

- Gather all your information and create the event on the SOTF website, making sure your Wrangler is in the loop
- Begin marketing your event
 - Consider a private Facebook page for attendees
 - Develop an email group for attendees
- At least 14 days prior to the event run your CVS report and look for attendees needing to sign the waiver. Notify those that haven't signed the waiver

Independent Fee-Based Events

- Gather all your information and create the event on the SOTF website, making sure your Wrangler is in the loop
- Review the Event Budget Form and build your budget, projecting revenues (not to exceed \$5,000) and expenses.

- Begin marketing your event
 - Consider a private Facebook page for attendees
 - Develop an email group for attendees
- Manage your Booking, Waitlist and Cancellations
 - Event fees \$200 or less, will be paid in one payment. This is for ease of book keeping in the case of an allowed refund. The refund is at the discretion of the hostess.
 - Event fees costing \$200.01-\$500 can be collected in 2 equal payments.
 - Event Fees over \$500 may be paid in equal payments as needed.
 - In the event of left-over funds, they are to be donated to a charity of the hostess choosing and a receipt of the donation turned in to SOTF.
 - Establish a waitlist (that is part of the event itself) using a first in first off method. If an attendee does not have current contact info move to the next Sister on the waitlist
- At least 14 days prior to the event run your CVS report and look for attendees needing to sign the waiver. Notify those that haven't signed the waiver
- Prepare any required tax reporting and pay any required taxes (you may want to engage the advice of a tax professional)

Large Fee-Based Events

- Gather all your information and create the event on the SOTF website, making sure your Wrangler is in the loop
- Review the Event Budget Form and build your budget, projecting revenues and expenses.
- Booking large event should not exceed 12 months in advance of the date of the event without notifying SOTF in advance
- Begin marketing your event
 - Consider a private Facebook page for attendees
 - Develop an email group for attendees
- Manage your Booking, Waitlist and Cancellations
 - Event fee- Fully refunded within 16 weeks of the event date.
 - Event fee- Fully Refunded less \$50 from 16-12 weeks of the event
 - Event fee- partial refund of 50% from 12-6 weeks of the event
 - Event Fee-No Refund within 6 weeks of the event
 - Establish a waitlist (that is part of the event process) using a first in first off method. If an attendee does not have current contact info move to the next Sister on the waitlist

- Reimbursements will be made within 5 business days for PayPal and within 7 business days if a check is required if SOTF is handling the money.
 - Receipts must include the event name, payee, and PayPal account or mailing address
 - Notify SOTF when you are ready to close the event so that any remaining funds are properly disbursed
- At least 14 days prior to the event run your CVS report and look for attendees needing to sign the waiver. Notify those that haven't signed the waiver

Pets or NO Pets

- Most of our events are currently not dog friendly events
- Any service animals, which have been registered by the owner with SOTF are welcome at all times. Service Animals are not pets they are properly registered working animals that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people living with disabilities.
- If you have a service animal please register it with us at SOTF so we have record of the animal. This will remove the burden of verifying the service animal from the individual hostesses at the time of the event
- If your event is pet friendly-
- Please make sure you and all pet owners follow the pet policy posted on the website. Safety for all should be the top priority.

As a Hostess, please help us in managing events based on their dog/no dog status. Attendees who choose to ignore the rules should be prepared to be turned away.