

# Information

**Cooke County is now accepting applications for the allocation of 2021 Cooke County Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) funds for organizations and entities who feel they qualify for such funding.**

1. The purpose of the HOT funding is to assist and support qualified events/projects/programs in promoting tourism to Cooke County which increases business for our local overnight accommodation venues. The amount of funding to be distributed from the Hotel Occupancy Tax is solely collected from visitors/tourists who are using overnight venues in the county.

2. By law of the State of Texas, Cooke County collects a Hotel Occupancy Tax from hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, and inns located in Cooke County. Under state law, the revenue from the HOT may be used only for specific tourism-related purposes. Tax funds may only be used if both parts of the following two-part test are met.

**Part One** requires the usage of the HOT funds directly enhances and promotes the tourism and/or convention and hotel industry by being expended to attract out-of-town visitors who will likely spend the night in a Cooke County lodging venue.

**Part Two** (under Chapter 352 of the Tax Code) states that the usage of these funds is limited to the following: (a) Facilities that serve the purpose of attracting visitors and tourist to the county; (b) Registration of Convention Delegates; (c) Advertising, Solicitations, and Promotions that directly promote tourism and the hotel and convention industry; (d) Promotions of the Arts that directly promote tourism and the hotel and convention industry; and (e) Historical Restoration and Preservation Activities that directly promote tourism and the hotel industry.

3. Cooke County accepts applications from organizations and entities whose program fits into one or more of the above categories. All requests for funds should be submitted in writing on an application furnished by Cooke County.

4. Application packets will be available from the County Judge's Office located in the Cooke County Courthouse or you can download a copy from the county website at [www.co.cooke.tx.us](http://www.co.cooke.tx.us)

**5. Completed applications should be submitted to the Cooke County Judge's Office at 101 S. Dixon Street, Gainesville, Texas 76240 by the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on June 11, 2021.** The Judge's Office is located on the first floor of the Courthouse. Applications may not be faxed; however, they may be submitted via email as attachments to [steve.starnes@co.cooke.tx.us](mailto:steve.starnes@co.cooke.tx.us). Late submissions will not be accepted and changes are not allowed to applications after they have been received.

**6. All applications will be reviewed and presented for Commissioners Court consideration at the during the June budget workshops and at first regular meeting of July.** Among the criteria evaluated, but not limited to, will be quality, visitor appeal, administrative ability, the overall benefit as to the increase of overnight visitors to Cooke County, use of local vendors, use of revenues from event, and post event report, invoices and proofs of payment. All Cooke County Hotel Occupancy Tax policies and procedures are intended to strictly support statutes and guidelines set forth by the State of Texas.

**For further information, please call the Cooke County Judge's Office at 940.668.5435.**