

July, 2007

**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
**VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER ACCESS POLICY**

Georgia Visitor Information Centers function as an extension of the warmth and hospitality of Georgians to visitors by providing them with information and services designed to promote travel spending in our State. According to Georgia Code 50-7-12 Section (b) of Volume 38, it is the duty of the Department to construct, operate and maintain the welcome centers and keep them supplied with such information, pamphlets and other materials as will advertise and publicize the tourist attractions, natural resources, industry, history and commerce of this State. Because the centers play such a prominent role in providing travelers with an impression of Georgia, all printed promotional brochures scheduled for display and distribution must be approved before they are placed in the centers.

**I. SOLICITATION POLICY**

Solicitation of any kind for any purpose is strictly prohibited, including the distribution or dissemination of literature and materials, except as provided for in Section II below. This restriction is pursuant to the statutory authority to advertise and publicize only the tourist attractions, natural resources, industry, history and commerce of the State as set forth in O.C.G.A. 50-7-12.

**II. BROCHURE DISTRIBUTION POLICY**

**PROCEDURE**

**Those desiring to have a travel-related publication distributed in the Georgia Visitor Information Centers should make a written request to Pam Cain, Georgia Visitor Center, P.O. Box 595, I-20 East GA/AL Line, Tallapoosa, GA 30176. One copy of the publication must be sent in with the request.** A blue line copy from the printer will also be accepted for approval process. Your name, address, email address, telephone number and fax number is required.

Effective July 1, 2001 a fax a copy will no longer be accepted for approval process.

If a publication is approved for placement in the centers, a list of the centers will be returned within 2 weeks along with a recommended quantity for each center. The brochures should be sent directly to each center according to these quantity recommendations. The quantity enclosed should be listed on both the outside and inside of the package.

Due to the large volume of brochures, all brochures in all categories will be placed in racks according to a rotating basis.

Please include an self-addressed stamped envelope or card or email address in each shipment to a center for re-ordering purposes. **PLEASE UPS CASES OF BROCHURES DIRECTLY TO CENTERS. THE CENTERS NO LONGER HAVE STAFF TO HANDLE HEAVY PACKAGES.**

The Local Visitor Centers operated through chambers of commerce and convention and visitors bureaus in the State will also be notified of the brochure's availability at this time. The managers of these Local Visitor Centers will contact properties directly if they wish to distribute approved publications.

Brochures must be approved every five years **AND WHENEVER ANY PRINTING CHANGE SUCH AS PRICE, EXPIRATION DATE OR CONTENT OCCURS.** The only exception to this requirement will be the following:

**Fair & Festival** approvals are good for 5 consecutive years. For example, if the brochure for the Dogwood Festival is approved in 1995, then they do not have to resubmit it until the year 2000, even if the dates and details of the brochure change.

**Regular Quarterly/Bi-Monthly Etc. Updated Editions** of Category I or III approvals, such as the Georgia Flea Market & Antique Directory, the Gainesville Event Calendar, Atlanta Calendar of Events are required to receive only one yearly approval.

**Note: Individual hotel coupons still must be approved each time an expiration date changes so that our staff will know of the most recent discount available and book hotel reservations using the appropriate coupons.**

The Department of Economic Development requests that any organization distributing brochures through the Visitor Centers comply with the Americans with Disability Act.

## **PRIORITY**

### **CATEGORY I**

First priority for display and distribution will be given to brochures describing primary travel attractions, sight-seeing tours and events such as the Cherry Blossom Festival. Also included in this category are tourism publications published by convention and visitor bureaus, chambers of commerce, municipalities, local associations, and those publications describing industries of Georgia such as agricultural commodities, textiles, etc. Other priority publications include those produced by historical and recreational organizations and those produced by agencies of the State of Georgia that are travel related.

## CATEGORY II

Secondary space priority will be given to primary tourism commercial establishments, such as lodging properties and restaurants. Site specific retail tourism brochures will be displayed in this category as well. Such material will be displayed in the literature racks on a space available basis only. Because space will accommodate only a portion of the available literature, the Visitor Center Manager will determine priorities on a rotating basis. Each manager is requested not to allow more than one publication per property for rack display if space is a problem.

## CATEGORY III

Limited additional information on Georgia may be placed at the centers if it has been determined that it will be of benefit to the staff in answering inquiries from visitors concerning tourism and that it is an aid in promoting travel spending. Material in this category will be placed under the counter in limited quantities and produced in response to questions. Any travel related material which does not meet size or paperweight requirements may be included in this category depending on the need for information.

If a tabloid or magazine-sized publication is approved, the manager of the center has a right to request that a rack be furnished. These publications should contact each center to see if a display rack is required. If the center has space, the rack must be built according to our specifications in order to match our decor. **Please note that we will not allow wire racks.**

## CRITERIA FOR SELECTION:

The following criteria shall apply in the selection of publications to be distributed:

1. Information must promote tourism and furnish pertinent information to visitors about Georgia points of interest.
2. Format: Size of brochure or discount coupons should measure from 7 to 10 inches in height and 3.5 and 4.5 inches in width, vertical format, with the main message and/or name on the top of the brochure. The paper should be of a sufficient weight which will stand in the rack without bending - the discount coupon should be at least 80 lb. cover weight for single page coupons and the multiple page brochure should be at least 80 lb. text weight.
3. Brochures should be professionally typeset, error free and should contain proper grammar.
4. Coupons or brochures which quote special rates must have a **PROFESSIONALLY PRINTED OR STAMPED EXPIRATION DATE** and a professionally printed or stamped rate. If the discount is a percentage or dollar amount off, the regular rate that this discount applies to should be printed on the

coupon. This will allow the visitor to know what the rate is after the discount is applied.

5. Coupons must state any and all restrictions that may apply such as certain number of people per room, number of beds per room, floor level of rooms, etc. If the coupon is not good for advanced reservations it must state this on the coupon as well.

Please note that once a coupon is approved, that coupon will be available to the public until the date it expires. This coupon may be rotated off the racks at various times because of space limitations in the centers, but will never be pulled from the racks because of increased occupancy rates, etc. Once a coupon is approved it will be available except when the property is booked.

There are approximately 2000 brochures and coupons approved for distribution in the Visitor Center at any given time. Because of this large number and because of the increased traffic at the centers, we cannot guarantee that the coupons pulled from the racks at the property's request will be replaced on exact dates requested. If the coupons are not available for more than 50% of a given month, the coupon will be pulled until the first of the next month.

For a brochure to be placed on display, the center must have adequate quantity in stock to refill the racks. Please note that thousands of visitors per day come through the centers and sending small quantities of a brochure does not meet the needs of the center.

A publication of a Georgia property should not bear an out-of-state heading or address on the front of the brochure. A brochure can contain not more than 5% out-of-state information. Depending on demand for information, the 5% limitation may be waived by the Department of Economic Development at their discretion.

Many publications in the centers are sponsored by advertising. Advertisers should note that the Department of Economic Development is only responsible for distribution of approved publications **as supplied** by publisher.

## **EXCLUDED PUBLICATIONS**

Even if a publication meets the minimum criteria for selection as set forth, it will be ineligible for display and distribution if:

1. The brochure is political or religious in nature or content. The only exception to this is a directory of the locations of religious organizations in the immediate area of the visitor center. These directories should list only the locations and/or times of services (category III).
2. The publication is devoted primarily to the advertisement of real estate.
3. The publication represents a property which has changed names since the brochure was originally printed and approved.
4. The publication is a coupon with a special rate or discount but has no expiration date. No expiration dates or rates can be hand-written and center personnel cannot make alterations.
5. The publication promotes a time-share or membership establishment which does not rent to traveling public or which offers a gift or discount in exchange for attendance at a sales presentation.
6. The publication represents a property which does not meet Department standards.
7. The publication does not advertise and publicize the tourism attractions, natural resources, industry, history and commerce of this State.

## **Brochure Yearly Usage Estimate**

The numbers on the address listing that you receive upon approval are for first shipments only. The following is the estimate of how many brochures we need to supply the Georgia Visitor Centers for one year. Please remember that these totals do not include the Local Visitor Centers throughout Georgia.

|                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Category I Festivals                | 12,000 Per Event |
| Category I Major Attractions        | 175,000          |
| Category I City Brochure            | 100,000          |
| Category II Lodging - Rack Brochure | 50,000           |
| Category II Lodging - Coupons       | 60,000           |
| Category III                        | 20,000           |