

Chapter Tent Program 2026

Program Overview

The Chapter Tent Program is rooted in a longstanding concept. Originally, the Emerging Maker's Tent began as the "Chapter Tent," where each chapter received an equal number of spots within a group tent managed by a chapter-appointed mentor. The program's name was later changed to highlight a focus on mentorship, aligning with member feedback and the organization's Strategic Plan. However, recent analysis by the Fair Committee shows that the EMT is no longer meeting the needs of chapters, evidenced by limited participation—with as few as three chapters at some fairs. As a result, the committee recommended separating the "chapter model" from the EMT and establishing it as an independent program. This change is intended to provide chapters with greater autonomy and flexibility, allowing them to participate in ways best suited to their individual needs.

Goals of the Chapter Tent Program

- Empower chapters with increased autonomy in their participation at the Spring and Fall Tennessee Craft Fairs.
- Demonstrate the organization's commitment to a membership-driven approach by generating additional opportunities for members and helping fair attendees better understand the role and significance of Tennessee Craft chapters.
- Support mid- and early-career artist members who are not yet ready for a full booth but have surpassed the EMT's limits. Participants have noted that some artists reach the maximum number of years allowed in the EMT, yet factors like limited inventory or personal circumstances prevent them from acquiring their own booth. Depending on chapter tent utilization, this program can enable these members to remain active in the fairs.

Chapter Tent Program Implementation Details

Program Launch

The Chapter Tent Program is scheduled for launch at the Fall Fair in 2026. These tents will be grouped together within the fairgrounds to foster a sense of community among chapter members. Chapter tents' "cul-de-sac" will be located on the grass, at the northwest section of the north row. Near The Parthenon, high-traffic area. This area will allow for easier load-in and out which is necessary, especially if artwork from different artists will be brought in and out on different days (multi-day changing of displays is allowed only for this Chapter Exhibition program).

Autonomy and Use of Tent Space

Chapters have full autonomy in determining how to use their tents. Possible uses include demonstrations, exhibitions, or the promotion of future chapter events. Chapters may focus on selling artwork to help offset participation expenses. Tennessee Craft does not require the artists to be present at all times, but someone must man the booth, keeping it open for sales for the duration of public hours of the three-day fair. Chapter organizes oversight and executes setup, sales, and teardown. Participation can be structured so that artists take turns staffing the tent day-by-day, rather than for the full three-day event. Individual artist may display per day rather than for entire Fair, at discretion of the Chapter.

Tent Provision and Compliance

The fee for a 12'x12' space for a 10'x10' tent is \$210 for Fall 2026, set at half the standard member-discounted booth fee. Double booth 24'x 12' space is also available at \$420. Tents are available for rent from Tennessee Craft at \$350 for a 10'x10' tent, and \$450 for a 10'x20' tent. Electricity will not be available. Art must be displayed within the purchased booth space, 2' extra given at above price for storage etc. Optional additional space 6' backyard space, behind a booth, can be purchased for \$40, and can be used for storage or additional exhibition space.

All tents and displays must comply with established guidelines, art eligibility, legal statement and regulations including tent specifications, display arrangements, and weight requirements and other fair and exhibiting artist Tennessee Craft Fair regulations (refer to FAIR GUIDELINES).

Tents must be white and must be secured with at least 50 lbs. weight on each tent corner. Cinder blocks or water jugs are not permitted even if they weigh to be 50+ lbs. For the safety of all, this will be enforced - weight solutions will be checked on Thursday load-in day and on Friday morning, and tents that do not meet required weight regulation will be taken down if additional weight is not quickly and properly secured and/or added. If a tent is rented, Tennessee Craft will setup and take-down/remove tent. Rented tents come with weights.

A "sidewalk" floor into the Chapter Area may be provided by Tennessee Craft. The chapter will provide flooring within the tent as they choose per standard Fair practice. Per metro parks, no straw, mulch or other materials are allowed in or around a booth; nowhere on the park's grounds. Use of rugs are permitted. Exhibit-specific flooring is permitted. Per Metro Parks, no tent stakes are allowed, regardless of stake size for tents, art, signage or other purpose.

All booths must be open and ready for patrons with vehicles removed by 9:00 AM Central Time each of the three days, and vehicles not brought up to take-down until 30 minutes after the fair ends on each day (Metro rule). No vehicles allowed on any grass areas, sidewalk, or walking trails, even during load-in and load-out per metro parks. Expect to dolly in and out.

Management of Fees and Payments

Interested Chapters are expected to submit a short proposal explaining how they plan to use the space by the standard application deadline date for each Fair.

Chapters must reserve the space. Prior to the standard booth fee deadline, payment for reserved chapter space must be forwarded to Tennessee Craft by the Chapter, not individual exhibitors. Reservation and payment are on the same deadline date as general exhibitors. The booth fee constitutes an agreement to show. Booth space will NOT be reserved without full payment of fees.

Chapters may elect to add their own administrative fees or take a percentage of sales to cover additional costs if desired. Tennessee Craft will not take any percentage of sales from chapters. How the Chapters decide to cover costs is up to each chapter.

SALES and SALES TAX

All sales are handled by the exhibitors. Tennessee Craft collects no commission on sales. Sales tax must be collected by the exhibitors. Instructions and forms from the Tennessee Department of Revenue for filing and paying your sales tax will be provided.

Participation Requirements and Maintaining Standards

To ensure fairness and uphold the value of individual and collaborative booth fees, each chapter tent selling artwork must include at least three participating artists.

All exhibited artwork must comply with established fair eligibility guidelines.

- Juried Event. All artists (including those dividing the tent into individual sales spaces) in the Chapter Tent Program must be juried. Chapter leadership may conduct the jury process using the Tennessee Craft rubric (See EMT jury guidelines) or select a qualified juror. A staff member will participate to help oversee this process.
 - If the Chapter Tent will be divided by 3 or more artists all selling their work, chapters are expected to jury in the artists by reviewing samples of the body of work they plan to exhibit/sell. If the chapter decides to use the tent to display a juried member exhibit showing individual pieces by a large number of artists, then individual pieces need to be juried in.
- See General Guidelines for Handmade Artwork
- See General Guidelines for Media
- See General Guidelines for Reproduction Policy

Any work not meeting these standards will be removed by staff.

Signage and Public Engagement

To educate attendees about Tennessee Craft chapters and clarify the purpose of the Chapter Tent section, dedicated signage will be developed. Tennessee Craft staff will design and manage

the primary signage for the area, including one professionally made banner identifying each chapter attached to each chapters' booth.

Chapters will be responsible for providing their own signage for individual artists, artwork and Chapter PR.

Assistance for Out-of-Town Participants

To reduce barriers to participation, Tennessee Craft will seek volunteer hosts to provide free housing to out-of-town members. The extent of this support will depend on volunteer availability, as staff resources are limited.

Security

Tennessee Craft provides 24-hour security on the fair layout grounds (from 8 AM Thursday through 8 pm Sunday); however, all artists exhibit work at their own risk. Be alert. It is understood that Tennessee Craft does not carry insurance to cover your personal property. As an independent contractor, you are advised to obtain your own insurance.