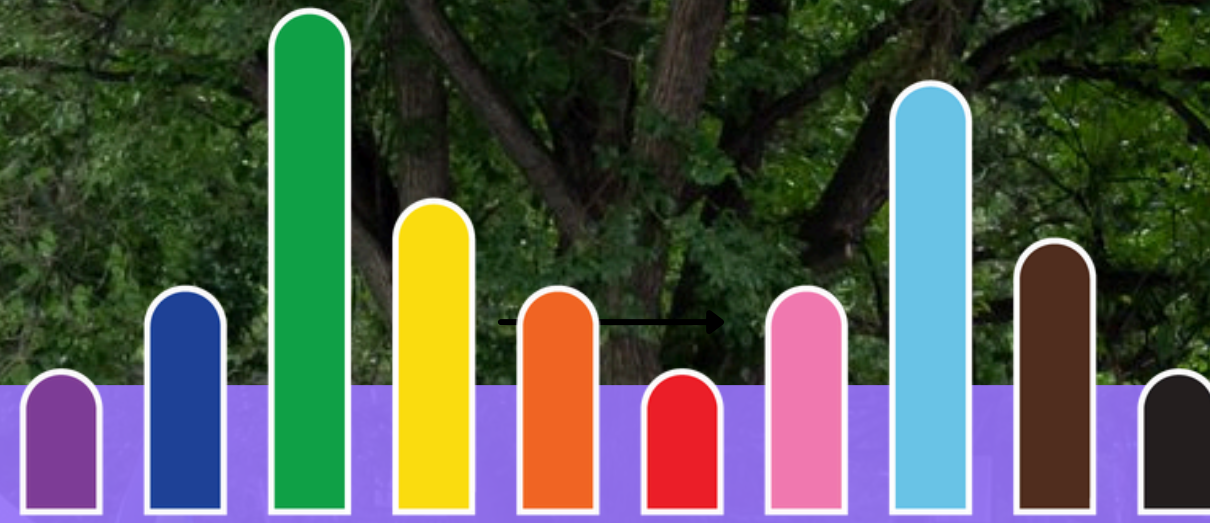


3 MAY, 2026

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TWIN CITIES PRIDE

2026

First Time Vendor
(What I Wish I Had Known...)

FESTIVAL DATES: JUNE 27TH & 28TH, 2026

PRIDE EVENT VENDOR TEAM



Le'O Wallace
He/Him
Vendor Manager



Mitch Markgraf
He/Him
Food Vendor Manager



Emily Sears
She/Her
Vendor Coordinator



Sarah Barnett
She/Her
Vendor Coordinator



Cory Hilden
She/Her
Logistics Director



Chloe Koshiol-Wright
She/Her
Safety Director

2026 TWIN CITIES PRIDE FESTIVAL THEME

In moments of challenge, our community does what it has always done — we rise, we organize, we protect one another, and we keep going. Across Minnesota, LGBTQIA2S+ people have made their voices heard, fighting for the future we deserve. Our history is one of resilience, and that strength is alive and well today. Pride 2026 is happening. The Twin Cities Pride Festival will once again create space for our community to gather in joy, solidarity, and celebration. We will show up boldly. We will take up space. We will honor the generations who came before us and invest in those who will carry us forward.

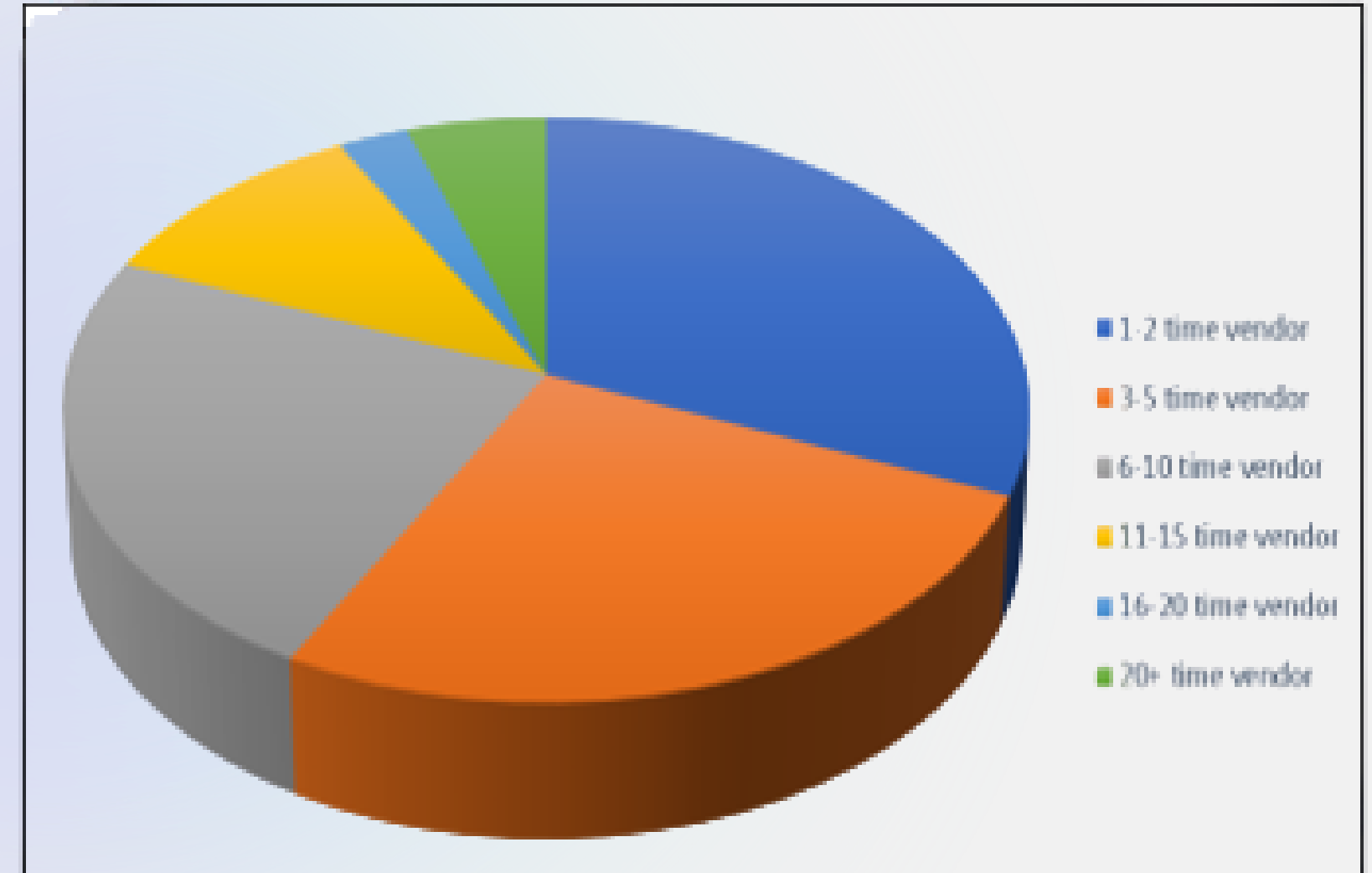
Our Voices, Our Future is a declaration, that we are still here, that we are not backing down, and that the future of Minnesota includes and celebrates LGBTQIA2S+ people exactly as we are.



SURVEY RESPONSES

40+ Food & Booth Vendors Responded to These 4 Questions

- Looking back on your first Pride, what do you wish you would have known?
- What suggestions (tips & tricks) would you share with a first-time vendor at TC Pride?
- What would you recommend a first-time vendor NOT do?
- What would you recommend a first-time vendor actually do or plan for?





WHAT DO YOU WISH YOU HAD KNOWN?

- Expect huge crowds - It can become extremely crowded, so be prepared for large crowds and busy conditions.
- Bring extra supplies - Bring plenty of materials and promotional items to meet the high demand.
- Plan extra time to set up - Allow extra time for entering the park, finding your booth, and getting set up.
- Restocking is difficult - Restocking inventory during the event is challenging due to limited parking and unloading access.
- The park is confusing - Navigating and driving within the park can be confusing (especially when tents are up) and requires planning.
- Ask questions early - Don't hesitate to ask questions if you are unsure about anything, including directions or setup.

WHAT SUGGESTIONS (TIPS & TRICKS) DO YOU HAVE FOR A FIRST-TIME VENDOR?

- Pack a “go bag” with essentials - *you won't get a chance to leave once you are set up.*
- Bring plenty of your own food, snacks, and tons of water to stay hydrated.
- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes, and bring a good chair to sit in.
- Recruit extra volunteers to help - *you'll need breaks and backup.*
- Prepare for nonstop talking - *rest up before and protect your voice.*
- Plan recovery time after Pride - *schedule a massage and take days off if possible.*
- Arrive early to limit stress about parking and setup.
- Bring duct tape, bungee cords, markers, and weights (rocks) for holding down literature.



WHAT SUGGESTIONS (TIPS & TRICKS) DO YOU HAVE FOR A FIRST-TIME VENDOR? (CONT.)



- Pack supplies in plastic bins for weather protection (including morning dew) and easy transport.
- Use a cart to move your gear more easily.
- Get a “good” tent - and make sure it’s weighted properly (40lbs per tent leg) for wind.
- Prepare for rain, mud, and uneven ground with the right supplies.
- Be prepared for payment issues - bring sales receipt book, small bills for change, and check your POS connection.
- Offer a range of price points to accommodate different budgets.
- Provide an interactive exhibit to engage attendees, make personal connections, and make sure volunteers are trained to respect the event and community.

WHAT ABOUT FIRST-TIME FOOD VENDORS?

- Set up day is crazy. Don't be in a hurry.
- Make sure you know the route you are coming in on. Have your Entry Pass!
- Plan to be busier than almost any other event you do. Don't under prep!
- Have a person that can run and get you supplies before you run out. No vehicles are allowed in the park Saturday or Sunday.
- Don't run out of starting money.
- Utilities are hard to come by.
- The park is not level - needed more shims.
- Restocking is very difficult during the event due to how busy it is and the large crowds. Leave more stock at your spot than you would expect to go through.
- Restocking Saturday night or Sunday morning needs to be done by carrying/carting it in so plan for that when considering time and effort needed.



WHAT SHOULD A FIRST-TIME VENDOR NOT DO?



- Be late for load-in to set up your booth - You only have the 2 hour window to have your vehicle in the park.
- Assume setup will be quick - Allow extra time for any issues that may arise while setting up.
- Set up your booth too close to the walking path - Booths are to be set up within the marked areas to reduce congestion on the pathways when it is busy.
- Buy a cheap canopy tent/only use the stakes that came with it - Wind or storms can damage lower quality tents and small stakes do not provide 40lbs worth of weight to each leg.
- Be cash only - It is difficult to replenish change and many attendees may not be carrying cash.
- Remain standing behind your table - Interacting with the attendees through having energy and activities will greatly increase positive interactions.
- Don't think you can do it alone - It is better to overstaff your booth than to become overwhelmed by crowds.
- Bring high cost/low volume swag - TC Pride festival sees more than 500k attendees each year.

WHAT SHOULD A FIRST-TIME VENDOR PLAN TO DO?

- Plan for all possible weather types.
- Follow directions and be courteous.
- Scope out your spot early and have a load-in/load-out plan.
- Bring your food and water - it gets super busy which can make it difficult to go buy food.
- Plan for text messages to NOT work when the park is crowded.
- Plan for crowds - have Venmo QR code ready to share.
- Plan for focused products - hot sellers often run out quickly.
- Be your best self - Smile lots, compliment people, wear pronoun pins, and enjoy the festival.
- Capture learnings in real time - notes can keep you from forgetting later.



ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FROM TWIN CITIES PRIDE

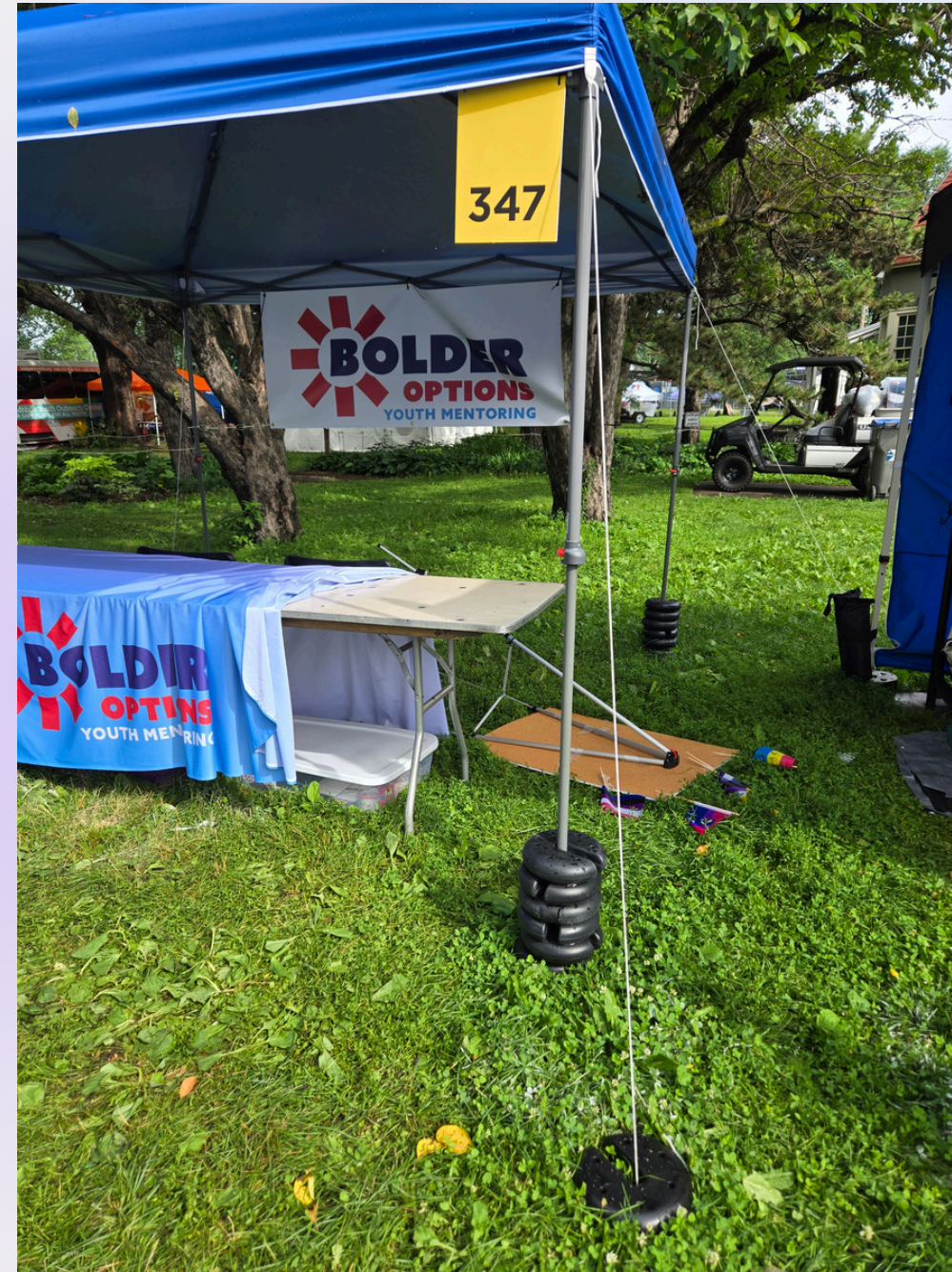


- Make friends with your neighbors and help each other out when you are feeling overwhelmed or need a restroom break.
- Don't expect rides or help hauling supplies from staff on golf carts. Due to insurance reasons, staff are not permitted to give anyone a ride, unless with the accessibility carts and then only from specific pick up and drop off locations.
- Save the dispatch number in your phone so it is readily available if you need help or witness anything of concern.
- Have everyone who will be at your booth study the Code of Conduct. Booth owner will be held responsible for the actions of anyone helping at their booth. [Twin Cities Pride Code of Conduct](#)
- Don't just rely on the stakes that come with your tent. Tents need to be weighted to a minimum of 40lbs per leg to reduce risks of injury or damage in adverse weather conditions.

IMPROPERLY WEIGHTED TENTS AFTER 2025 STORM



HOW TO PROPERLY WEIGHT A TENT



SIGN UP NOW FOR THE TC PRIDE TEXT ALERTS.



Text the following "keywords" to 333111

TCPRIDE
Public Messaging Alerts

TCPVENDOR
Festival Vendor Messaging Alerts

Text alerts expire shortly after the festival and will NOT be used for marketing purposes.

FESTIVAL LOAD-IN INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS

May 24, 2026 - 11:00am - [Meeting Link](#)



What will be covered in this meeting:

- Packet Pick-up - June 10-13
 - Entry Passes will be in packet
- Setup information for Thursday and Friday, June 25-26
- Information regarding street closures and routes to take to get to park
- Festival times and what to expect during the festival
- Safety briefing
- Load-out information for Sunday and Monday, June 28-29

Q&A

This deck and recordings of session will be available at

<https://tcpride.org/2026-vendor-info/>

Please send feedback and additional questions to festival@tcpride