**Section 543.700 Application, Fees, and Other Regulations**

a) Application

1) In order for a tourism attraction to be considered for the program, an application form must be obtained from and, after completion, returned to the:

Tourism Attraction Sign Coordinator

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Office of Tourism

620 East Adams

Springfield, Illinois 62701

A separate application form must be completed for each tourism attraction.

2) When DCEO determines from the application that a tourism attraction meets the criteria listed in this Part, the application will then be reviewed by the Department to determine if space is available for the signs in accordance with this Part.

3) If the Department determines that space is available, the application will be approved and returned to the tourism attraction, along with instructions concerning the number and location of the tourism attraction signs, the annual fee, and other appropriate information.

b) Fees

1) A $100 non-refundable application fee for each tourism attraction must be submitted to the Department (see Appendix A) once the Department determines that space is available. The $100 application fee for each request for attraction signing that is not approved will be charged when a tourism attraction reapplies for signing after the attraction's signs have been removed due to late rental payments or temporary withdrawal from the program, or when a tourism attraction changes its name and its ownership at the same time.

2) An annual rental fee sufficient to offset the cost of the program will be charged for each tourism attraction sign displayed on a freeway panel, exit ramp panel, and trailblazer assembly. The annual rental fees as of July 1, 2007 will be $200 for each tourism attraction sign displayed on a freeway panel, $130 for each tourism attraction sign displayed on an exit ramp panel, and $30 for each tourism attraction sign displayed on a trailblazer assembly. Fee will be due on July 1 of every year. When a tourism attraction makes an annual payment, it will be guaranteed usage of the paid space on the specific attraction panel for the entire year, as long as it continues to meet the criteria established under this Part. Any tourism attraction closing or withdrawing from the program after making its annual payment will not be given a refund. A prorated fee will be charged for signs erected for a partial year when a business is accepted and a sign is installed after July 1.

3) When the annual rental fee is not received by the Department within 30 calendar days after the due date specified in the annual billing letter, the tourism attraction sign or signs will be removed by the Department. Where receipt of payment is delinquent and tourism attraction panels are full, the tourism attraction will lose its signing priority to the next tourism attraction desiring the space. When the fee is received after the tourism attraction sign is removed, and space is still available on the panel, the $100 application fee as provided for in subsection (b)(1) of this Section will apply. The annual fee for the remainder of the fiscal year, as well as any portion of the annual fee owed for the period of time between the end of the preceding fiscal year and the date the sign was removed will also apply.

4) A fee of $50 for each tourism attraction sign will be charged for a tourism attraction requesting that its signs be replaced with new signs for any reason other than due to damage or vandalism, as provided for in subsection (c)(2) of this Section. When replacement is requested, all tourism attraction signs for the specific tourism attraction, including those on freeway and exit ramp panels, as well as any Department-installed trailblazer sign, must be replaced at the same time. However, when the replacement only involves a change in a supplemental message, any signs not containing a supplemental message need not be replaced.

5) No fees will be charged to qualifying tourism attractions owned by the State of Illinois or the federal government, nor will any fees be charged to qualifying tourism attractions that are tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) or other applicable section of the federal Internal Revenue Code.

c) Placing and Maintaining Tourism Attraction Signs

1) A tourism attraction must pay for and supply tourism attraction signs to the Department within 60 calendar days after approval of a sign design. If the signs are not received by the Department within the 60-day time period, the space will be declared available. Only the Department will install, or cause to be installed, the tourism attraction signs on the specific attraction panel and trailblazer signs.

2) When an attraction sign is so deteriorated, damaged or vandalized that it needs replacement, the Department will notify the attraction to resubmit a logo design within 30 days after the notification. The Department reserves the right to make the final determination of whether an attraction sign needs to be replaced. Once the logo design is approved, the attraction must supply the Department with the replacement signs within 60 days after the logo design has been approved. There will be a fee of $50 for each sign replaced due to deterioration that has been installed less than 10 years. There will be no charge for the replacement of an attraction sign that has been damaged or vandalized. If a logo design is not received within the 30-day time period or a replacement sign is not received within the 60-day time period, the Department will remove all of the attraction's business signs at the interchange and the attraction will lose its signing priority.

3) Tourism attractions will be required to certify on the application that their signs meet the criteria established under this Part. When DCEO receives a complaint from a third party that an approved tourism attraction may not be in compliance with the criteria established under this Part, the tourism attraction will be contacted by DCEO to determine if the tourism attraction signs meet the established criteria. If DCEO determines that the tourism attraction fails to qualify, DCEO will notify the tourism attraction in writing to make the necessary change or changes so as to comply or the tourism attraction signs will be removed.

(Source: Amended at 35 Ill. Reg. 18932, effective November 26, 2011)