



Official Rules & Terms and Conditions

1. Overview

Picture Hocking Hills is an online photography contest hosted by Explore Hocking Hills. The competition invites photographers of all skill levels to submit images that capture the beauty, experiences, and spirit of the Hocking Hills region.

Participants may submit photos into designated categories, with winners selected by a panel of judges. Finalists will advance to a public vote, where the Grand Prize winner will be determined.

2. Competition Categories

Photos must be submitted into one of the following categories:

- **Girls Trip:** Images that capture the experience of a getaway with friends, emphasizing connection, fun, and shared moments.
- **Family Vacation:** Images that represent families enjoying time together, highlighting togetherness and shared experiences.
- **Sustainability and Nature:** Images that showcase the natural environment, conservation, and responsible enjoyment of nature.

- **Hocking Hills Activities:** Images that highlight recreational and leisure activities available in the region.

3. Eligibility

- Open to individuals 18 years or older.
- Participants must be the original photographer and hold full rights to the submitted image.
- By entering, participants agree to comply with all competition rules and requirements.

4. Submission Requirements

- Each participant may submit up to three (3) photos total.
- All photos must be taken within the Hocking Hills region.
- Photos must be taken on designated trails or permitted areas only.
- Photos must not depict unsafe, illegal, or environmentally harmful behavior.
- Submissions must be original and not infringe on any third-party rights.

Drone Photography

- Drone photography is permitted outside of Hocking Hills State Park only.
- All drone use must comply with local, state, and federal regulations, including FAA guidelines.
- Any drone imagery captured within restricted or prohibited areas, including Hocking Hills State Park, will be disqualified.

Editing

- Basic editing (cropping, color correction, exposure adjustments) is permitted.
- Heavily manipulated or AI-generated images are not allowed.

Model Release Requirement

- A completed model release form is required for any photo that includes identifiable individuals.
- The photographer must have permission from all recognizable individuals in the image.
- Failure to provide a completed release form upon request will result in disqualification.

5. Image Guidelines

- Accepted formats: JPEG or PNG
- Photos must be high resolution suitable for marketing use
- No watermarks, logos, or text overlays

6. Judging and Selection

- Submissions will be reviewed by a panel of judges based on:
 - Creativity
 - Composition
 - Relevance to category
 - Overall visual impact
- One winner will be selected in each category.
- Selected finalists will advance to a public “People’s Choice” voting round.
- The photo receiving the most public votes will be awarded the Grand Prize.

7. Prizes

- Category Winners (4 total): \$100 each
- Grand Prize (People’s Choice): \$500

8. Usage Rights & Licensing

By submitting a photo, participants agree to the following:

- The photographer retains ownership of their image.
- Participants grant Explore Hocking Hills, Friends of Hocking Hills, and Hocking Hills State Park a perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive license to use submitted images for promotional, marketing, and educational purposes.
- Images may be used in digital and print formats, including but not limited to websites, social media, advertising, publications, and displays.
- Images may be used with or without photographer credit.
- No compensation will be provided for the use of submitted images.

9. Code of Conduct

- All submissions must reflect responsible recreation and respect for nature.

- Photos that show individuals off-trail, damaging natural resources, or violating park rules will be disqualified.
- Explore Hocking Hills reserves the right to disqualify any submission that does not align with organizational values or guidelines.

10. Competition Timeline

- **Submission Period:** May 26 – June 26, 2026
- **Photographs:** Photos can be from anytime, not just during the submission period.
- **Judging Period:** Immediately following submission close
- **Category Winners Announced:** June 29, 2026
- **People's Choice Nominees Announced:** June 29, 2026
- **People's Choice Voting:** June 29, 2026 – July 1, 2026
- **People's Choice Winner Announced:** July 2, 2026

11. Liability

- By entering, participants agree to release and hold harmless Explore Hocking Hills, Friends of Hocking Hills, and Hocking Hills State Park from any claims related to participation or submission.
- Participants are responsible for ensuring their submissions comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

12. General Conditions

- Explore Hocking Hills reserves the right to modify, suspend, or cancel the competition if necessary.
- Submission of an entry constitutes full acceptance of these rules and terms.

13. Contact Information

For questions regarding the competition, please contact:
jdean@explorehockinghills.com