

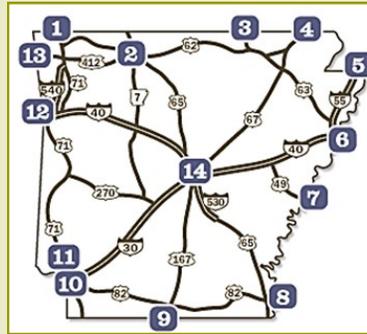


Arkansas Welcome Center at Blytheville

The mission of the Arkansas Welcome Centers is to present a positive impression of Arkansas by assisting the traveling public in a knowledgeable manner, in order to enhance and extend visits and to maximize economic benefit to Arkansas.



Arkansas Welcome Center at Helena-West Helena



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|--|---|--------------|
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| 2. Harrison
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| 3. Mammoth Spring
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| 4. Corning
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| 5. Blytheville
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| 7. Helena-West Helena
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| 8. Lake Village
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| 9. El Dorado
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| 10. Texarkana
Melissa Adams, Manager | I-30 East
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| 11. Red River
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| 12. Van Buren/Fort Smith
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| 13. Siloam Springs
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| 14. Little Rock
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Arkansas Welcome Center at Corning

Arkansas Welcome Centers



Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism



Arkansas Welcome Center at Van Buren/Fort Smith



ARKANSAS WELCOME CENTERS

The Arkansas Welcome Centers are positioned at 13 strategic points of entry to the state. An additional Welcome Center, housed in the central office in Little Rock, serves the dual purpose of being the reception area for the department as well as a centrally located center.

Arkansas Welcome Centers are open 8 am—5 pm, seven days a week. Summer hours are extended by one hour to accommodate the busy traveling season.

The centers are closed these major holidays: New Year's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and a half-day on Christmas Eve (open 8-12 and closed 12-5).

The central office Welcome Center is open 8 am—5 pm Monday through Friday.

<http://www.arkansas.com/travel-tools/welcome-centers/>

VISITOR SERVICES AND RESOURCES

The centers' 46 full time staff members, who make up 71% of the Tourism Division, are onsite at our 13 Welcome Centers, ready to provide visitors with a positive first impression of Arkansas.

LITERATURE DISTRIBUTION

The Welcome Centers display over 1,000 approved Arkansas publications. These include government, federal, state, city, regional, and private sector brochures. The brochures promote restaurants, lodging, parks, and many attractions that offer services to visitors. This available literature, along with our vacation planning kit pieces, is important to the state and is a valuable resource for the traveling public. Welcome Center staff are trained to become familiar with all approved publications so that they can better serve visitors.

PROMOTING THE STATE OF ARKANSAS

Travel Consultants may provide visitors with their first impression of Arkansas. A cheerful greeting and professional demeanor are essential, along with the ability to provide helpful and accurate information. Travel Consultants are able to suggest possible side trips or nearby attractions that visitors can easily fit into their travel schedules. Visitor services is a top priority for our Welcome Center staff, who are always available to help promote Arkansas attractions and events. Travel Consultants are also available to set up booths at local events or give special presentations to groups. In addition, social media has become an integral part of the job at our Welcome Centers. Each center has its own Facebook page and uses this platform to further extend the center's reach to more visitors.

SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR STAFF

Each year, the Welcome Center staff participate in 2 familiarization tours of the 12 Arkansas Tourist Regions. It is important that our Travel Consultants visit attractions so that they can recommend them to our nearly one million visitors from first-hand experience. Over a 3-year period, each region will have been covered by the "fam tours." The state's tourism industry is constantly changing and expanding. These tours are essential to the Welcome Center staff training program so that staff can stay up-to-date on everything Arkansas has to offer our visitors. The staff are also CPR/First Aid certified. Another important component of the Welcome Center program is the administration of our Travel Consultant Certification Exam, which is overseen by The U.S. Travel Association. This exam covers topics such as geography, history and culture, attractions, directional information, traveler safety, and economic information. Travel Consultants must take and pass the exam within one year of employment.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

The Welcome Center staff are involved in various special tourism projects throughout the year. For example, Welcome Center managers are responsible for organizing, staffing, and implementing the silent auction at the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism. The Welcome Center section is also responsible for the central office tourism gift shop. Another way the Welcome Centers promote Arkansas is through their participation in National Tourism Week. Each year in May, the centers plan events during this week. The Welcome Center managers staff the Arkansas State Fair booth each year, as well as various other special events. Responsibilities and coordination of events associated with Jingle, the Holiday Hog, also fall under the Welcome Center section umbrella. Throughout the year, many other special projects are assigned to the Welcome Centers.

STATISTICAL REPORTING

The Welcome Centers work with the Research & Information Services section to gather statistical data from our visitors.

ADMINISTRATIVE & PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

The Welcome Center section is responsible for all administrative support for the 46 Welcome Center staff members and 13 field locations. This includes general supervision and management of staff and policies, personnel actions and documents, monitoring the budget, scheduling, staff training, employee uniforms, state service contracts, meetings, regular onsite visits, social media supervision, advertising decisions, monthly commission reporting, and various other activities that support our mission.

YOUR CENTRAL OFFICE WELCOME CENTER STAFF:

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Arkansas Welcome Center at Texarkana