

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Countdown to Winterfest Is On: Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest Returns November 27

Philadelphia's beloved winter tradition opens November 27 with a festive Opening Weekend including the annual Holiday Tree Lighting powered by PECO

PHILADELPHIA (August 19, 2026) – The countdown to winter is officially on! In just 100 days, Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest will once again transform the Delaware River Waterfront into Philadelphia's ultimate winter wonderland. Opening Friday, November 27, the beloved seasonal destination will return with ice skating, cozy cabins and firepits, festive food and drink, and holiday fun along the Delaware River.

Opening Weekend runs Friday, November 27 through Sunday, November 29, with the annual Holiday Tree Lighting powered by PECO taking center stage Sunday at 6 p.m. The celebration will light up Winterfest's towering holiday tree and officially welcome the holiday season to the Waterfront. Entertainment, special guests and additional details about Opening Weekend and the Tree Lighting will be announced this fall.

Winterfest will remain open through Sunday, February 28, giving visitors more than three months to skate, gather, and enjoy the season against the backdrop of the Ben Franklin Bridge.

"For more than three decades, Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest has been a place where Philadelphians come together during the holiday season. Seeing generations of families make Winterfest part of their traditions is incredibly special," said **Joseph A. Forkin, President and CEO of the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation**. "From welcoming the season's first skaters to gathering around firepits and cozy cabins, there's an energy on the Waterfront that signals the holidays are here. We can't wait to welcome everyone back for another season."

"At IBX, caring means helping people stay well in every sense of the word," said **Steve Fera, Executive Vice President of Public Affairs and President of Government Markets at Independence Blue Cross**. "That's why we're proud to continue our decades-long support of Winterfest, a beloved Philadelphia tradition that inspires connection, encourages movement, and creates joyful moments all season long."

WINTERFEST 2026-27 AT A GLANCE **Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest**

Season: Friday, November 27, 2026 – Sunday, February 28, 2027

Location: 101 S. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA

Admission: Free

Ice Skating: \$5 admission; \$12 skate rental

Hours: Open **7 days a week, including holidays**, unless otherwise noted.

Regular Hours

- **Monday–Thursday:** 1:00 PM–11:00 PM
- **Friday:** 1:00 PM–1:00 AM*
- **Saturday:** 11:00 AM–1:00 AM*
- **Sunday:** 11:00 AM–11:00 PM

*After MLK Weekend, Friday and Saturday closing time changes to **12:00 AM (midnight)**.

Holiday Hours: December 19, 2026–January 2, 2027

During this period, open 11:00 AM–1:00 AM daily, with the following exceptions:

- **Christmas Eve (12/24):** 11:00 AM–8:30 PM
- **Christmas Day (12/25):** 1:00 PM–8:30 PM
- **New Year's Eve (12/31):** Special hours apply

Information: RiverRink.com

Tickets and Reservations: On-sale date will be Wednesday, October 28, 2026

For more than three decades, Independence Blue Cross RiverRink has been a seasonal destination on the Delaware River Waterfront. Winterfest transforms the riverfront into a winter gathering place centered around an NHL-sized outdoor ice rink with views of the Delaware River and Ben Franklin Bridge.

Admission to Winterfest is free, with pay-as-you-go amenities that let visitors plan their visit their way. Returning favorites include outdoor firepits, private warming cabins, the Rinkside Lounge and The Lodge at Winterfest, where guests can warm up with hot chocolate, festive cocktails, local brews and seasonal food and drink. Classic amusements, including the Ferris wheel and indoor arcade, will return in December. Additional details about food and beverage partners, entertainment, programming and seasonal attractions will be announced closer to opening.

Guests are encouraged to reserve skating tickets, cabins, firepits and Rinkside Lounge packages in advance once reservations become available at RiverRink.com.

Independence Blue Cross members receive free skate admission for themselves and up to three guests by showing their IBX member ID card online or in person; skate rental is not included. Military personnel and first responders also receive free skate admission for themselves and up to three guests with valid ID when purchasing in person; skate rental is not included.

SAVE THE DATES:

Opening Weekend

Friday, November 27 – Sunday, November 29, 2026

Winterfest kicks off its 2026–27 season with three days of ice skating, seasonal attractions, food and drink, and holiday fun along the Delaware River.

Holiday Tree Lighting powered by PECO

Sunday, November 29, 2026 | 6 p.m.

The annual Holiday Tree Lighting returns Sunday evening, bringing the community together as Winterfest's towering holiday tree lights up the Waterfront for the season. Entertainment, special guests and additional details will be announced this fall.

New Year's Eve Fireworks

Thursday, December 31, 2026

Celebrate New Year's Eve on the Waterfront with fireworks over the Delaware River. Additional details will be announced.

Fire & Ice Valentine's Day Party

Saturday, February 13, 2027

Winterfest's annual Valentine's weekend celebration returns in February. Additional details will be announced.

PLAN YOUR VISIT

Winterfest is open seven days a week, including holidays, unless otherwise noted. Admission is free, with skating and other experiences available separately. With limited on-site parking, visitors are encouraged to arrive via public transit, rideshare, bicycle or on foot using the Delaware River Trail.

For more information about these events and additional Waterfront programming, visit [DelawareRiverWaterfront.com](https://delawareriverwaterfront.com) or follow the Delaware River Waterfront on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

ABOUT DELAWARE RIVER WATERFRONT CORPORATION:

The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) is the nonprofit responsible for planning, developing, and maintaining public spaces along Philadelphia's Central Delaware River Waterfront. With a mission to create a welcoming and connected Waterfront for all, DRWC blends design, culture, and community to transform formerly industrial land into beloved public destinations. DRWC's year-round programming, parks, and trails—including Spruce Street Harbor Park, Cherry Street Pier, Race Street Pier, and the Delaware River Trail—welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Through thoughtful placemaking and strategic investment, DRWC continues to shape a vibrant waterfront that reflects the spirit of Philadelphia and strengthens its future. Learn more at delawareriverwaterfront.com.

ABOUT INDEPENDENCE BLUE CROSS:

Independence Blue Cross is the leading health insurance organization in southeastern Pennsylvania. For more than 85 years, we have been enhancing the health and well-being of the people and communities we serve. We deliver innovative and competitively priced health care products and services; pioneer new ways to reward doctors, hospitals, and other health care professionals for coordinated, quality care; and support programs and events that promote wellness. To learn more, visit ibx.com. Connect with us on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Independence Blue Cross is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

ABOUT INDEPENDENCE BLUE CROSS RIVERRINK:

Produced by DRWC, the Independence Blue Cross RiverRink is Philadelphia's premier Waterfront destination for skating, tradition, and memories. For over 30 years, it has welcomed families and visitors of all ages to enjoy seasonal traditions set against the scenic backdrop of the Delaware River and the Ben Franklin Bridge. Independence Blue Cross RiverRink is open

seasonally, transforming into Winterfest, a cozy, holiday-themed ice-skating retreat in the winter – and Summerfest, a lively boardwalk experience with roller skating in warmer months. As part of a larger effort to create access to the Waterfront, it is a welcoming space for all, with programs to support community access to skating and free admission for Independence Blue Cross members, the region's largest health insurer, to promote greater accessibility.

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