

2026 Iowa State Fair Queen Competition Rules and Regulations

1. Each contestant must be female and at least 16 years of age and not more than 21 years of age on Aug 13th, the first day of the 2026 Iowa State Fair.
2. Contestants must have never been married.
3. A county fair queen must reside in the county she represents or an adjoining county if most of her activities are in the county she represents. If a fair represents more than one county, the winning contestant must reside in one of the participating counties.
4. Each contestant must be an active member of at least one service organization in her community such as a church group, Girl Scouts, 4-H, FFA, etc. (Eligibility is not limited to 4-H or FFA membership.)
5. Each entrant in the State Fair Competition must be selected from a competitive queen contest at her county fair. If an Iowa fair does not have a contest, it may sanction another queen contest in their county as the "Official County Fair Queen Contest." The winner of this is then eligible to compete at the Iowa State Fair. Only contests sponsored by county fairs that are members of the Association of Iowa Fairs will be eligible to compete at the state level.
6. Only winners as indicated under Rule 5 are eligible to represent counties at the state pageant. In the event the county queen is unable to participate, alternates will be considered in order of selection.
7. No professional model (one who has had ongoing employment in which modeling was the primary part of the job) is eligible to compete in the state competition.
8. Any contestant who has competed at the Iowa State Fair Queen level of the competition may not compete again.
9. Any county fair queen selected after the 2025 Iowa State Fair and meeting the above qualifications is eligible for the 2026 competition
10. The Iowa State Fair will accept only one entry per county. Should there be more than one queen contest in the county, it will be the responsibility of the fairs concerned to hold an elimination contest. The only exception to this rule will be in those counties where more than one fair qualifies for membership with the Association of Iowa Fairs. In those cases, both fairs will be eligible to submit candidates for competition.
11. It is the responsibility of each contestant to plan transportation to and from Des Moines.

12. The county fair queens will be the guests of the Iowa State Fair Tuesday, August 11th, through the time of the crowning Saturday evening, August 15th, 2026.
13. The Iowa State Fair will provide a sash and crown for each county fair to award their queen at the county fair. This must be worn when she appears at the Iowa State Fair.
14. County fairs are requested to select their candidates by competition in which personality, leadership, and beauty are judged.
15. A competent committee will select the “Iowa State Fair Queen”. Judging comments are not available to the contestants or county representatives. Judging will be based on the following:

Personality, Attitude, Appearance, and Awareness Leadership and Citizenship -
Contribution to Community, Overall Appearance, Charm, Poise
16. Each contestant should be prepared to appear in a variety of attire, such as business attire or a suit, evening attire, or casual wear.
17. The winner of the state competition will be crowned “2026 Iowa State Fair Queen.” The 2026 Queen will be required to remain at the Fairgrounds for the remaining time of the 2026 Fair.
18. The state competition winner must agree to appear for the Iowa State Fair Board in official capacities as requested throughout the year until her successor is crowned. This includes daily appearances at the 2026 Fair and the first three days at the 2027 Fair. The Iowa State Fair will help with food and transportation expenses for these appearances.
19. If the winner cannot reign until a new queen is crowned at the 2027 Fair, she must forfeit the title, and all awards associated with it to the first runner-up. She may then accept the title and all awards associated with it to the first runner-up. She may then accept the title and awards for the first runner-up.
20. The winning contestant at the Iowa State Fair must agree to accept no other queen titles nor endorse any commercial product as “Iowa State Fair Queen” for 12 months following the 2026 Iowa State Fair without the written permission of the Iowa State Fair Board.
21. The winning contestant will receive all the prizes at the time of the finals except the scholarships. The scholarships will be presented to her after the 2027 Iowa State Fair Queen is selected.

22. The reigning 2026 “Iowa State Fair Queen” is expected to conduct herself in a manner that reflects positively on herself, her family, and the Iowa State Fair. Should the reigning “Iowa State Fair Queen” become involved in any activity, including drug, alcohol, or tobacco-related offense that reflects negatively on herself, her family, or the Iowa State Fair, she may be required to forfeit her crown, title, and rights to the scholarship award to the first runner-up.
23. Should the 2026 “Iowa State Fair Queen” marry or become ineligible before the 2027 queen is crowned, she will forfeit her title, crown, and rights to the scholarship award for the first runner-up. Should the first runner-up marry or become ineligible, she will forfeit the title, crown, and rights to the scholarship to the second runner-up.
24. The Iowa State Fair Board reserves the right to change and interpret the foregoing rules and regulations at any time as may be deemed expedient.