



JEFFERSON COUNTY PAGEANT

CONTESTANT & PARENT HANDBOOK

Presented by Crown & Cape Productions LLC

BEAUTY • GRACE • CONFIDENCE • FAITH

October 10, 2026

Jefferson College Fine Arts Center
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Welcome

Welcome to the 2026 Jefferson County Pageant! We are excited to have you join us for a day designed to celebrate confidence, individuality, kindness, personal growth, and community.

The Jefferson County Pageant is beginner-friendly. You do not need previous pageant experience, professional coaching, an expensive gown, or professional hair and makeup to participate and do well.

Our goal is for every contestant - from our youngest participants to our Classic Ms. contestants - to walk away feeling proud of herself and encouraged by the experience.

You do not have to be an experienced pageant contestant to belong here.

Our Pageant Values

BEAUTY True beauty includes character, kindness, individuality, and the confidence to be yourself.

GRACE Grace is demonstrated through kindness, composure, good sportsmanship, and the way we treat others.

CONFIDENCE Contestants are encouraged to step outside their comfort zones, try something new, and be proud of themselves.

FAITH Faith is part of the foundation of Crown & Cape Productions. We strive to conduct our pageant with integrity, compassion, gratitude, and a heart for serving our community.

Supporting BackStoppers

The Jefferson County Pageant is proud to support BackStoppers of Jefferson County. A portion of pageant proceeds will benefit BackStoppers, and contestants may also help raise additional funds through the People's Choice voting page.

The contestant who raises the greatest amount in donations designated for BackStoppers will receive the BackStoppers Community Champion Award.

**People's Choice and the BackStoppers Community Champion Award are completely separate.
Donations do not purchase or increase People's Choice votes.**

Before Pageant Day

Free Pre-Pageant Party

Sunday, September 27, 2026 • 2:00-6:00 PM • Hillsboro Civic Center

Registered contestants are invited to attend our free Pre-Pageant Party with a live DJ, light refreshments, time to meet fellow contestants, and an opportunity for first-time contestants to become more comfortable before pageant day.

Competition Overview

Formal Wear

Present yourself with confidence, grace, and poise in an age-appropriate gown or formal outfit. An expensive pageant gown is not required. Judges are evaluating the contestant, not the price tag.

Stage Time: Up to 2 minutes total. This time includes completing the designated Formal Wear walking pattern and answering one age-appropriate on-stage question. Contestants should demonstrate poise, grace, confidence, posture, and overall presentation, with brief pauses at designated points for judging. The on-stage question gives contestants an additional opportunity to demonstrate confidence, personality, communication skills, and the ability to express themselves. Younger contestants will receive simpler, age-appropriate questions.

Fun Fashion

Show your personality! Choose an age-appropriate, family-friendly outfit that reflects your interests, hobbies, talents, favorite activities, or personal style. This presentation may be more energetic and playful than Formal Wear.

Stage Time: Up to 60 seconds. Each contestant will have up to 60 seconds to complete the designated Fun Fashion walking pattern and showcase her personality, confidence, and individual style. Contestants are encouraged to have fun, use natural and intentional poses, and keep the presentation moving.

Optional Competitions

Optional competitions may include Photogenic, Talent, and Essay Writing. Specific submission requirements and judging criteria are provided separately. These are separate awards and do not replace regular pageant competition.

People's Choice

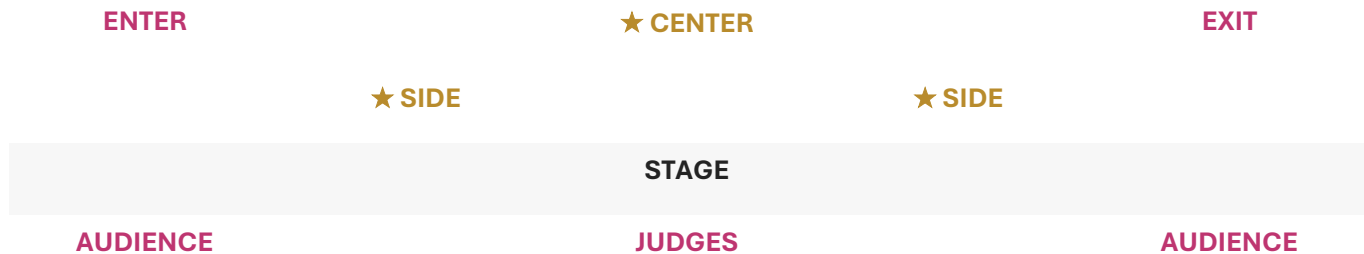
Friends, family, and community members may support their favorite contestant through People's Choice voting. This award is separate from regular judges' scoring.

Your Basic Stage Walk

If you have never competed in a pageant before, don't worry. You do not need an elaborate choreographed walk. A simple, confident presentation is perfectly acceptable.

1 ENTER	Walk onto the stage when your name or number is announced. Take your time, smile, and look toward the audience and judges.
2 CENTER	Walk to the center mark. Stop, smile, and hold a comfortable pose for about 2-3 seconds.
3 FIRST SIDE	Walk to the first side mark. Stop, smile, and pose.
4 OPPOSITE SIDE	Walk across to the opposite side. Stop, smile, and pose.
5 CENTER	Return to center. Give the judges one final smile and pose.
6 EXIT	Exit calmly and confidently.

Simple Stage Diagram



Exact entrance, exit, and stage marks may be adjusted based on the final stage setup. Contestants will receive instructions.

Stage Tips

- Keep your head up and try not to watch your feet.
- Smile naturally and walk at a comfortable pace.
- Do not rush from one stage mark to another.
- Pause long enough for the judges to see you.
- Make eye contact when you feel comfortable doing so.
- Keep movements and poses age appropriate.
- Formal Wear should generally feel graceful, calm, and confident.
- Fun Fashion may have more energy, personality, movement, and fun.

If you make a mistake: SMILE AND KEEP GOING. How you recover can show just as much confidence as doing everything perfectly.

Hair & Makeup

Professional hair and makeup are not required. Families may do their contestant's hair and makeup themselves, or may choose an independent professional provider. Hiring a professional does not automatically result in a higher score.

For younger contestants especially, we encourage an age-appropriate appearance. Judges are evaluating the whole contestant and her presentation - not simply makeup, hairstyle, gown, or accessories.

The Shining Stars Division

The Shining Stars Division is a special division of the Jefferson County Pageant created to provide contestants with disabilities and differing abilities an opportunity to compete in an encouraging and supportive pageant environment.

Shining Stars contestants compete within their own division using judging criteria created specifically for Shining Stars. Reasonable accommodations may be made to help each contestant comfortably participate.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to contact Crown & Cape Productions before pageant day regarding communication needs, sensory considerations, mobility needs, additional assistance, or other accommodations.

A Shining Stars contestant will never be expected to perform a stage movement that is unsafe or inappropriate for her individual abilities.

Backstage Expectations

- Be dressed and ready when your division is called.
- Listen to pageant staff and volunteers.
- Keep personal belongings together and label important items when possible.
- Respect other contestants' belongings and personal space.
- Keep dressing areas clean.
- Never photograph or record another contestant while she is changing.
- Remain in designated contestant areas when instructed.

Crown & Cape Productions cannot be responsible for lost, stolen, misplaced, or damaged personal belongings.

Contestant Code of Conduct

- Treat fellow contestants with kindness and show good sportsmanship.
- Respect judges, staff, volunteers, vendors, venue employees, contestants, and families.
- Use appropriate language and behavior.
- Avoid bullying, teasing, gossip, or intentionally excluding another contestant.
- Never intentionally interfere with another contestant's performance.
- Respect the venue and the property of others.
- Accept judging results respectfully.
- Represent Crown & Cape Productions appropriately while participating in pageant activities.

Another contestant's success does not diminish yours. Cheer for one another, compliment one another, make new friends, and have fun.

Parent & Guardian Code of Conduct

- Encourage your contestant without negatively comparing her to another contestant.
- Treat all contestants and families respectfully.
- Follow instructions from pageant staff and venue personnel.
- Do not confront or argue with judges.
- Avoid coaching or calling instructions from the audience during judged competition.
- Respect backstage access restrictions.
- Supervise younger contestants when they are not under pageant staff direction.
- Use respectful language and avoid disparaging comments, including on social media.
- Bring concerns privately and respectfully to Crown & Cape Productions.

Unsportsmanlike, threatening, abusive, or severely disruptive behavior may result in removal from the event when necessary to protect contestants, guests, staff, or the integrity of the pageant.

Judging & Sportsmanship

Judges evaluate contestants according to the criteria established for their competition and division. Pageantry is subjective, and qualified judges may view the same performance differently.

Scores represent a contestant's performance on that particular day. They do not measure her worth, beauty, intelligence, talent, or future potential.

Judges' decisions are final. Contestants and families may not approach judges during the event to question scores or results.

A Note About Winning

Of course, everyone loves a crown! But not receiving a particular title does not mean a contestant was not beautiful enough, talented enough, or good enough.

Stepping onto a stage takes courage. Trying something new takes confidence. Congratulating someone else takes grace. We hope every contestant leaves proud of herself for participating.

Titleholder Expectations

Winning a Jefferson County Pageant title is both an honor and an opportunity to represent Crown & Cape Productions within the community. Titleholders may be invited to participate in community events, parades, sponsor events, photo opportunities, charitable activities, promotional appearances, future Crown & Cape Productions events, and the following year's Jefferson County Pageant.

Whenever possible, titleholders should return to help crown their successors. Parents/guardians remain responsible for minors during titleholder appearances unless otherwise specifically arranged.

What to Bring

- | | |
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| ☐ Formal Wear outfit | ☐ Fashion tape |
| ☐ Fun Fashion outfit | ☐ Extra hosiery if applicable |
| ☐ Appropriate shoes for each outfit | ☐ Deodorant |
| ☐ Undergarments | ☐ Water bottle |
| ☐ Hair supplies | ☐ Approved snacks |
| ☐ Makeup, if being used | ☐ Comfortable clothes/shoes for downtime |
| ☐ Hairbrush or comb | ☐ Phone charger |
| ☐ Hairspray | ☐ Necessary personal items or medications |
| ☐ Safety pins | ☐ For Shining Stars: comfort, communication, mobility, or sensory items as needed |

Pageant Day Checklist

- All competition outfits, shoes, and accessories packed
- Hair/makeup supplies packed
- Optional competition requirements completed
- Contestant has eaten
- Directions and address confirmed
- Tickets confirmed
- Phone charged
- Contestant reminded to HAVE FUN!

Frequently Asked Questions

We've never done a pageant before. Is that okay?

Absolutely. The Jefferson County Pageant welcomes beginners. No previous pageant experience is required.

Does my contestant need a professional pageant coach?

No.

Do we need an expensive pageant gown?

No. Choose something appropriate that makes the contestant feel confident and comfortable.

Do we have to hire someone for hair and makeup?

No. Professional services are completely optional.

What if my contestant forgets her stage walk?

Smile and keep going! Pageant staff will help direct contestants when possible.

Does People's Choice affect regular judging?

No. People's Choice is a separate award.

Does donating to BackStoppers give a contestant more People's Choice votes?

No. People's Choice and the BackStoppers Community Champion Award are separate.

My Shining Stars contestant needs assistance. What should I do?

Contact Crown & Cape Productions before pageant day so we can discuss accommodations that may help her have the best possible experience.

A Final Message to Our Contestants

You don't need to walk exactly like anyone else. You don't need to look like anyone else. You don't need the most expensive dress. You don't have to be perfect. Walk onto that stage as YOU.

Smile. Be kind. Be confident. Encourage the girl or woman standing beside you. And be proud that you were brave enough to step onto the stage.

WE CAN'T WAIT TO WATCH YOU SHINE!

Contestant & Parent Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Jefferson County Pageant Contestant & Parent Handbook.

I understand the general expectations regarding pageant procedures, contestant behavior, parent/guardian behavior, backstage conduct, judging, and sportsmanship.

I agree to help maintain a positive, respectful, and family-friendly environment throughout the Jefferson County Pageant and related activities.

Contestant Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (if applicable): _____

Contestant Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____