

September 3, 2021

State Executive Directors and State Teen Directors

Miss America & Miss America's Outstanding Teen
Effective Immediately: Candidate Age Eligibility Increase

The Miss America Organization Board of Directors is excited to announce an increase in the candidate age eligibility effective immediately!

The Miss America Organization is revising the language in the 2022 Miss and MAOTeen State and Local Candidate Agreements to include the extended age eligibility. A public announcement will be made available after the 100th Anniversary events at Mohegan Sun Resort and Mystic, CT from Sept 6th to 8th.

In the meantime, you may share the information below internally with your State Board, Local Directors, and potential candidates for upcoming Local Competitions.

1. Immediate Age Eligibility Changes for MAO & MAOTeen

- A. Miss America program maximum age for candidates **increases to twenty-six (26) years old by December 31st** in the state competition year - from twenty-five.
- B. MAOTeen program maximum age for candidates **increases to eighteen (18) years by December 31st** - from seventeen (17) years by July 31st.
- C. Miss and MAOTeen programs will both have the same calendar cutoff date of December 31st in the state competition year.
- D. The education level requirement which also determined whether candidates were eligible for either the Miss or MAOTeen programs has been removed with the increases in age.

2. Benefits after Transition Year

- A. Age eligibility cutoff dates are now consistent for Miss and MAOTeen Programs
- B. Miss Candidate ages will be 18 - 26 (if 18 years on Dec 31st, then MAOTeen)
- C. All Miss Candidates will be legal adults by their State Competition
- D. More Miss Candidates will have completed high school or equivalent and have an opportunity to attend post-secondary education by their State Competition
- E. MAOTeen Candidate age increases to 13 - 18 (no older than 18 on Dec 31st)
- F. Age alone determines which program, regardless of education level
- G. Age eligibility is easier to understand and interpret

3. Execution for 2022 State and Local Season Transition

- A. MAO Candidates 18 years of age on Dec 31, 2022 are grandfathered to continue in the "Miss" program and not mandated to compete in the MAOTeen program
 - a. Candidates currently competing for 2022 State Titles are able to remain in the Miss program in 2022
- B. MAOTeen Candidates 18 years of age on Dec 31, 2022 may continue in the "MAOTeen" program and grandfathered to continue competing in the MAOTeen program and not mandated to the Miss program

- a. Candidates currently competing for 2022 State Titles are able to choose either the Miss or MAOTeen program
- C. 2022 Candidate agreements (Miss & MAOTeen) as well as 2022 Candidate Agreement Amendments for existing executed agreements are being created and will be available by mid-September.

4. Proposed Candidate Agreement Age Eligibility Language Changes

A. 2022 MAO State and Local Candidate Agreements

- 1) Must be at least ~~eighteen (18)~~ **nineteen (19)** years of age as of ~~July~~ **on December** 31st in the calendar year of the State Competition in which she competes;
- 2) ~~Must be at least a high school graduate or equivalent by July 31st in the calendar year of the State Competition in which she competes; and~~
- 3) Must not be older than ~~twenty-five (25)~~ **twenty-six (26)** years of age as of ~~the last day~~ **December 31st** in the calendar year of the State Competition in which she competes (~~December 31st~~).

*For the avoidance of doubt, Candidate cannot turn ~~twenty-six (26)~~ **twenty-seven (27)** years of age at any time during the calendar year (~~January 1st through December 31st~~) in which she ~~will~~ **could** compete at the State Competition. (**Calendar Year defined as January 1st through December 31st**).*

*For the avoidance of doubt, Candidate cannot be **eighteen (18)** years of age on December 31st in the year she ~~would~~ **could** compete at the State Competition. **If the candidate is eighteen (18) years of age on December 31st in the year she could compete at the State Competition, then she must compete in the MAOTeen program, unless she meets the Grandfather Clause below.***

~~For the avoidance of doubt, 13 to 17 year old high school graduates, as well as 18 year old non-graduates as of July 31, 2020, must compete at the MAO "Teen" level.~~

Grandfather Clause for 2022 State and Local Agreements ONLY: Since age eligibility was revised after the start of the 2022 state & local competition season, Candidates who are:
1) eighteen (18) years of age on or after July 31, 2022 (the year of the State Competition) are eligible to compete in the Miss program, as long as candidate is also a
2) high school graduate or equivalent by July 31, 2022. Note, this grandfather clause will not be in effect for the 2023 State & Local Competition season.

B. 2022 MAOTeen State and Local Candidate Agreements

1. Must be at least thirteen (13) years on the first day of the State Competition in which she competes;
2. Must be no older than ~~seventeen (17)~~ **eighteen (18)** years of age as of ~~July~~ **December** 31st in the calendar year of the State Competition in which she ~~could~~ competes, ~~unless she is 18 years old and has not graduated from high school as of July 31st in the calendar year of the State Competition in which she competes.~~

~~For the avoidance of doubt, 13 to 17 year old high school graduates, as well as 18 year old non-graduates as of July 31st compete at the MAOTeen level and not the Miss America level.~~

For the avoidance of doubt, Candidate cannot turn **nineteen (19)** years of age at any time during the calendar year in which she could compete at the State MAOTeen Competition (January 1st through December 31st).

Grandfather Clause for 2022 State and Local Candidate Agreement ONLY: Since the age eligibility was revised after the start of the 2022 state & local competition season, Candidates who are: 1) eighteen (18) years of age on or after July 31, 2022 through December 31, 2022 (the year of the State Competition) may choose to compete in either the MAOTeen or Miss programs, as long as candidate is also a 2) high school graduate or equivalent by July 31, 2022. Note, this grandfather clause will not be in effect in the 2023 State & Local Competition season.

Exception: Since Alabama, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Utah ~~will~~ did not hold competitions in 2021, if the Candidate exceeds the 17-year-old age eligibility in 2022, she is hereby "grandfathered" to continue competing in **only these state's MAOTeen Miss Montana's Outstanding Teen Competitions** as well as the 2022 Miss America's Outstanding Teen Competition as long as the Candidate is not **19 years old on December 31st, 2022.** ~~older than 18 years old on July 31st, 2022.~~

5. Summary After Transition Year

MAOTeen Candidates must be no older than 18 years old on December 31st in the same year she could compete at the State Competition.

Miss Candidates must be at least 19 years old and no older than 26 years old on December 31st in the year she could compete at the State Competition.

A Miss Candidate may compete at a Local Competition at 17 years old, but she must turn 18 years old by December 31st that same year in order to be 19 years old by December 31st in the year she could compete at the State Competition. For example, a Miss Candidate could:

- 1) Win a Local Competition August of 2022 at 17 years old,
- 2) Turn 18 years old on Dec 31, 2022 (must turn 18 years old by Dec 31st that same year),
- 3) Compete at State Competition June of 2023 at 18 years old, and
- 4) Turn 19 years old on Dec 31, 2023 (same year she competes at State)