HEART OF THE USA

MISS HEART OF THE USA

More Than a Crown.

SERVING WITH HEART. ♥ LEADING WITH PURPOSE. ♥

HEART OF THE USA

Contestant Information Packet

2027 Edition

NATIONALS 2027

July 8–10, 2027

Crestview Community Center · Crestview, Florida

missheartoftheusa.org · pageantcommunications@gmail.com

Welcome to Miss Heart of the USA

I am so excited to welcome you to Miss Heart of the USA! Our national pageant was created to honor service, leadership and the meaningful impact of those who work to strengthen their communities. We proudly celebrate girls and women of all ages who lead with compassion, purpose and a heart for serving others.

Whether this is your first pageant or one of many, my goal is a positive, professional and memorable experience for every contestant and family. Miss Heart of the USA is about confidence, growth and community pride, and every contestant deserves an experience that is supportive, organized and fun.

This packet will guide you as you prepare. Please read it all the way through, and keep it handy. If you still have a question it doesn't answer, email me at **pageantcommunications@gmail.com**.

I can't wait to meet you and celebrate everything that makes you and your title unique!

Mrs. Jacqueline Listau

NATIONAL DIRECTOR



HOW TO USE THIS PACKET

Page 3 Quick Guide
Page 4 Fees & how to pay
Pages 5–8 Awards & competitions
Pages 9–10 People's Choice & titles
Pages 11–12 Venue, travel & schedule
Pages 13–16 FAQ, rules & conduct

Your Quick Guide

Everything you need on one page. The details follow in this packet.

KEY DATES

Age is as of	**January 1, 2027**
Balance paid in full by	**June 1, 2027**
Late fee after June 1	**$5 per day**
Nationals weekend	**July 8–10, 2027**

FEES AT A GLANCE

FULL LIST P.4

State title (crown & sash)	**$195**
National registration, ages 0–6	**$300**
National registration, ages 7+	**$400**
Scholarship donation	**$100**
Optional competitions	**$35–$50**

QUESTIONS?

- Email **pageantcommunications@gmail.com**
- Or use the Contact Us form at **missheartoftheusa.org**
- Please don't use Facebook Messenger

AGE DIVISIONS

Baby Miss	**0–23 months**
Toddler Miss	**2–3 years**
Future Little Miss	**4–6 years**
Little Miss	**7–9 years**
Junior Miss	**10–12 years**
Teen Miss	**13–16 years**
Miss	**17–21 years**
Ms.	**22–39 years**
Elegant Ms.	**40–59 years**
Elite Ms.	**60+ years**

WHAT TO BRING

- One 8x10 headshot for Photogenic
- Ages 7+: 3 printed copies of your interview résumé
- Ages 0–6: your typed introduction
- Black bottoms, shoes and accessories of your choice (your T-shirt is handed out at check-in)
- Formal gown or pageant dress, and your Heart Wear outfit
- Food donations for Queen of Hearts

TWO WAYS TO NATIONALS

- **State queen?** Confirm with a $100 deposit to reserve your spot.
- **No pageant near you?** Register as a state delegate.

NEW FOR 2027

- Win your division title plus up to one signature title.

Entry Fees

Guaranteed $4,000 in Scholarships!

No surprises! Here is every fee, up front.

State Title

State Title Fee (crown & sash) For state delegates only $100 deposit, then $95 by invoice within 30 days. Crown and sash ship once paid; allow 4–6 weeks.	**$195**

National Registration

Ages 0–6	**$300**
Ages 7 and up	**$400**
Scholarship donation (required)	**$100**
Contestant T-shirt Handed out at check-in	**Included**
Adult escort T-shirt (required, ages 0–3)	**$25**

Optional Competitions

Portfolio (all ages)	**$35**
Service Essay (ages 7+)	**$35**
Platform Pitch (ages 7+)	**$35**
Community Queen (ages 7+)	**$50**
People's Choice Minimum 100 votes to qualify	**$1 / vote**

Additional Costs

Extra photogenic photo	**$15 each**
Program book ad (8½ x 11)	**$100**
Printed program book Picked up at the pageant / shipped	**$25 / $30**
Heart of Agriculture crossover	**$175**
Guest admission armband In advance / at the door. Not needed for contestants.	**$25 / $30**

June 1 Your balance is due in full by **June 1, 2027**. After that, a late fee of **$5 per day** applies until paid. All fees are non-refundable.

HOW PAYING WORKS

1 **Register** online at missheartoftheusa.org with a $100 deposit.

2 **Get your invoice.** The National Office emails an itemized invoice for your balance.

3 **Pay in full by June 1, 2027.** Add optionals any time before then.

Paying by check? Checks are accepted up to the June 1, 2027 deadline only. Make them payable to **Jacqueline Listau** and write "Heart of the USA" in the memo line. Mail to: **Jacqueline Listau, 4419 Sherylwood Dr., Port Arthur, TX 77642**.

Titles, Awards & Scholarships

Here is everything you can win at Nationals.

Division Titles

- National Baby Miss
- National Toddler Miss
- National Future Little Miss
- National Little Miss
- National Junior Miss
- National Teen Miss
- National Miss
- National Ms.
- National Elegant Ms.
- National Elite Ms.

Signature Titles

- National Cover Miss
- National Hostess (unlimited)
- National Community Queen
- National Queen of Hearts
- National People's Choice
- National Miss Photogenic
- National Social Media Influencer
- National Ambassador
- National Spokesmodel

NEW FOR 2027 A contestant may win her division title **plus up to one signature title**, if warranted.

2027 Scholarships

Highest score overall	**$2,000**
National Community Queen	**$2,000**
Any division with 10+ contestants	**$1,000**

Awarded in person when the recipient returns to crown her successor the following year. If she does not return, the scholarship is void. Exceptions need approval in advance, and only in extreme circumstances.

Placements

- Divisions with 5 or more contestants: a 1st and 2nd runner-up
- Divisions with 10 or more contestants: a Top 5 is announced

2027 National Prize Package

- Custom National Crown
- Rhinestone Trimmed Embroidered Title Sash
- National Participation Trophy
- Custom Royalty Tote Bag, Lap Blanket and Luggage Tag
- Custom Logo Sash Carrier
- Incoming Queens' Gifts
- Service Journey Charm Bracelet
- Official Queen's Photoshoot
- Digital Crown & Sash Image and Facebook Fan Page

...and more may be added!

Required Competitions

Set by age division, so every contestant competes fairly, comfortably and confidently.

Formalwear ALL AGES

- Ages 0–3: short pageant dress
- Ages 4–6: short pageant dress or floor-length gown
- Ages 7+: floor-length formal gown
- Not allowed: heirloom, high-low or tea-length dresses
- Semi-glitz: sparkle is welcome, but keep it age-appropriate
- **Judged on (30 pts):** Ages 0–6: stage presence & comfort, appearance & styling, personality & expression. Ages 7+: stage presence & confidence, appearance & styling, modeling & presentation

Self-Introduction ALL AGES

- Wear your official T-shirt (given at check-in), black bottoms, and shoes and accessories of your choice
- Ages 0–6: the emcee reads your introduction. Type it in third person and turn it in at check-in
- Ages 7+: present your own
- 1 minute or less. It's less about what you say than how you say it
- **Judged on (30 pts):** Ages 0–6: stage presence & comfort, personality & expression, overall appearance. Ages 7+: clarity & delivery, personality & authenticity, stage presence & confidence

Heart Wear Fashion ALL AGES

- Model your best outfit of choice
- It must have a heart (or hearts) somewhere. An accessory counts!
- Props are allowed if you can carry them on and off stage yourself
- Get creative and have fun!
- **Judged on (30 pts):** heart theme representation, creativity & design, overall presentation

Photogenic ALL AGES

- Turn in one 8x10 headshot at check-in
- Color or black and white. It doesn't have to be professional
- No frames, sleeves or over-edits
- No crown or sash in the photo, or it scores a zero
- Extra 8x10 headshots: $15 each
- **Judged on (30 pts):** expression & connection, overall appeal, photogenic ability

Interview AGES 7+

- A closed interview with the panel of judges
- Wear your official T-shirt and black bottoms
- Bring 3 printed copies of your résumé, one per judge
- Questions come mostly from your résumé, but be ready for anything
- Judges want your opinions, your food insecurity knowledge and how you communicate, not rehearsed answers
- Nothing political or religious unless it's on your résumé
- **Judged on (30 pts):** communication & speaking ability, content & thought quality, confidence & presence

Optional Competitions

Add any of these for an extra fee. They're a great way to show more of who you are.

Portfolio

ALL AGES · $35

- Show off your photogenic side with 8–10 high-quality 8x10 photos in a portfolio binder
- Choose photos in a variety of settings that show confidence, personality and authenticity

Platform Pitch

AGES 7+ · $35

- A 60–90 second pre-recorded video, submitted virtually
- Pitch a cause or service project you care about, such as fighting food insecurity, organizing food drives or helping families in need
- Judged on knowledge of the issue, clarity of delivery and passion for your topic

National Community Queen

AGES 7+ · $50

- Based on community service, mentoring, appearances, social media presence and food donation involvement
- Judged from your service impact scrapbook, which the judges review before the pageant
- Your scrapbook should show your service activities, mentoring, leadership and the difference you've made in your community
- The National Community Queen receives a $2,000 scholarship

Service Essay

AGES 7+ · $35

- Share your passion for community service in writing: your voice, your experiences and your view on helping others and fighting food insecurity
- Prompts and guidelines are on the next page

People's Choice

ALL AGES · $1 / VOTE

- The only title decided by the public. Friends and family vote for you!
- See page 9 for how it works

Service Essay

Ages 7 and up · $35 entry fee · Choose **one** of these prompts:

OPTION 1

Food insecurity affects many families. What are some ways people in your community can help make sure everyone has enough food?

OPTION 2

Describe a community service project you have taken part in or would like to organize. How can it make a difference in the lives of others?

OPTION 3

Why is it important to help people in need? Share how you can make a positive impact in your community.

OPTION 4

If you could start a food drive or service project in your community, what would it look like and how would it help others?

Length

Ages 7–9	**100–200 words**
Ages 10–12	**200–300 words**
Ages 13 and up	**300–500 words**

FORMAT

- Typed (preferred) or neatly handwritten
- If typed: a standard, readable font, about 12 pt
- If handwritten: black or dark ink
- Include your name and division

YOUR ESSAY SHOULD

- Be written mostly by you (age-appropriate help is fine for younger contestants)
- Sound like you, in your own voice
- Be positive, respectful and right for all audiences
- Focus on service, leadership, helping others, food insecurity or your own service experiences

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- Understanding of the issue
- A clear message
- Authenticity and heart
- Age-appropriate writing, spelling and grammar
- Overall impact

People's Choice

The only title decided by the public! Friends, family and supporters vote for their favorite contestant: you.

HOW IT WORKS

- Votes are **$1 each**, cast online during the voting period
- Each contestant has her own voting link on the People's Choice page at missheartoftheusa.org
- Voting dates and details are shared before the event
- You need at least **100 votes** to qualify

WHO WINS

- The most votes in each age division wins that division's People's Choice award
- The most votes overall is crowned **National People's Choice**
- It's optional and doesn't affect your scores in any other category

Cover Miss & Hostess

Sell ads for our 2027 virtual program book and earn a title while you support the pageant.

National Cover Miss

The contestant who sells the **most ad pages** is crowned National Cover Miss.

National Hostess

Sell at least **10 ad pages** and you're crowned a National Hostess (unlimited), if you're not Cover Miss.

Ad details

- Full-page ad, 8½ x 11: **$100**
- Submit the print-ready ad and payment together on the Ad Submission page at missheartoftheusa.org
- The program book is digital. Printed copies can be ordered ahead: $25 picked up at the pageant, $30 shipped
- All ad sales are final

Tip

Local businesses, family and friends love to send a shout-out to their queen. A congratulations page with your photo is a perfect first ad!

Signature Titles

Every signature title winner receives her National Crown, Rhinestone Trimmed Sash and National Prize Package!

National Social Media Influencer OPTIONAL

For the contestant who best represents Miss Heart of the USA with engaging, positive and impactful social media, sharing her journey, promoting service and food insecurity awareness, and inspiring others online.

- State titleholders may create a Facebook Fan Page named **First & Last Name – Official Title** (strongly encouraged)
- Use it to document your reign: community service, food donations, appearances and events, and promoting Miss Heart of the USA
- Send video "commercials" to the National Office from time to time: talking videos, voiceover slideshows or creative reels
- Post only after the National Office approves, with all required tags and hashtags
- Keep it positive and appropriate. Deadlines are shared during the year

National Ambassador

Awarded to the queen who raises the most in scholarship donations for the National Scholarship Fund.

Only donations above the required $100 scholarship donation count.

National Spokesmodel

Awarded to the queen who recruits the most contestants to compete at Nationals. Share the Miss Heart of the USA experience and help our program grow!

National Queen of Hearts

Awarded to the queen who collects and donates the most non-perishable food at the National Pageant. Bring your donations with you!

Cover Miss & Hostess

Earned by selling ads for the 2027 virtual program book. See page 9 for how it works.

Heart National Talent OPTIONAL · AGES 2+

Singing, dancing, gymnastics, baton, cheer, martial arts, an instrument, sign language, magic, comedy or any other skill: share your gifts! Talent is on Thursday of Nationals weekend and is another chance to earn awards and national recognition. Email us for details.

See you in Crestview, Florida



THE VENUE

Crestview Community Center

1446 Commerce Dr
Crestview, FL 32536

July 8–10, 2027

FLYING IN

Destin–Fort Walton Beach Airport (VPS) CLOSEST
1701 State Road 85 N, Eglin AFB, FL 32542
flyvps.com

Pensacola International Airport (PNS)
2430 Airport Blvd, Pensacola, FL 32504
flypensacola.com

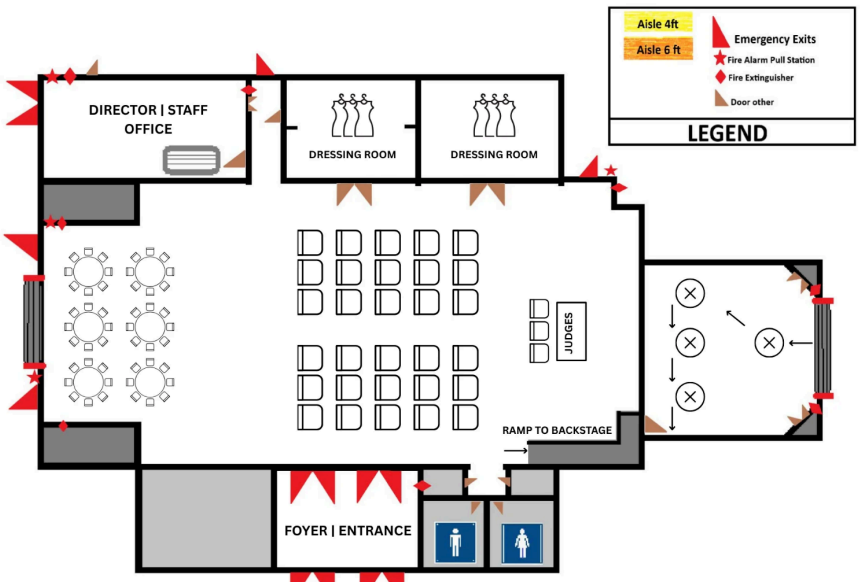
HOTELS & THINGS TO DO

See our **Florida Travel Guide**. Tap the button on the Nationals page at **missheartoftheusa.org**.

HAIR & MAKEUP

Book your artist early! Our 2027 vendors include **Hair & Makeup by Brantley** (Instagram @hmbyBrantley) and **Beauty by Elissia**. Send them a message on social media to book.

VENUE FLOOR PLAN



Weekend Schedule

The general flow of Nationals weekend. A detailed final schedule with times is posted after the June 1 deadline.

THURSDAY July 8	**Arrival, Check-In & Talent**
FRIDAY July 9	**Interviews, Introductions, Heart Wear Fashion & Queens Party** The Queens Party is optional.
SATURDAY July 10	**Formalwear, Crowning & Royalty Photos**

Arrive fully prepared and on time for every segment. The schedule may be adjusted to keep the weekend running smoothly.

Two Ways to Nationals

ALREADY A STATE QUEEN?
Confirm with the State Queens' Confirmation form on the Register for Nationals page at **missheartoftheusa.org**. A $100 deposit is required with your confirmation to reserve your spot.

NO PAGEANT NEAR YOU?
Register as a state delegate with the State Title Registration form and advance directly to Nationals.

What Happens Next?

STEP 1 CONFIRMATION
Once your paperwork is reviewed, you'll get a confirmation email with your title and upcoming deadlines.

STEP 2 INVOICE
The National Office sends an itemized invoice. Make payments any time; it must be paid in full by June 1, 2027.

STEP 3 PREPARE
Review the competitions in this packet, practice your introduction and gather everything on your bring list.

STEP 4 FINAL DETAILS
Before the event you'll get the final schedule, check-in steps and reminders, plus a GroupMe chat for updates.

Your Questions, Answered

Where do I go with questions?
First, check this packet. Still stuck? Email **pageantcommunications@gmail.com** or use the Contact Us form at missheartoftheusa.org. Please don't rely on Facebook Messenger. Messages there are often missed.

How do state queens reserve their spot at Nationals?
If you won your title at a state pageant, a **$100 deposit** is required with your State Queens' Confirmation form. This deposit reserves your spot at Nationals. Your remaining balance is due by June 1, 2027.

Who do I make checks out to?
Make checks payable to **Jacqueline Listau** and write "Heart of the USA" in the memo line. Mail checks to Jacqueline Listau, 4419 Sherylwood Dr., Port Arthur, TX 77642. Checks are accepted only up to the June 1, 2027 deadline. You can also pay your invoice online.

Are deadlines flexible?
No. All deadlines must be met unless we say otherwise, so please plan ahead.

How many contestants are in my division?
We won't know until after the final deadline.

Will there be a group chat?
Yes! A GroupMe chat is created for all contestants closer to the pageant for updates, schedules and announcements.

Do I bring my photogenic photo?
Yes, bring one 8x10 headshot to check-in. Extra headshots are $15 each. No frames, sleeves, crown, sash or over-edits.

How many résumé copies do I bring?
Three printed copies, one for each judge.

Is there a rehearsal?
There's no formal rehearsal, but you'll get a stage diagram to practice at home, and time to walk the stage before the judges are seated.

Will there be a dressing room?
Yes. Please respect the space, clean up after yourself and don't hang out there. **No photos or videos in the dressing room, ever.** Doing so is grounds for disqualification.

Do parents go backstage?
Baby Miss and Toddler Miss: a parent, guardian or trusted adult must walk the contestant on and off stage, wearing the adult escort T-shirt ($25, ordered ahead) and black bottoms (no shorts or leggings).
Future Little Miss and older: please drop your contestant with our backstage attendants. Parents only go backstage if a contestant needs help for a disability, special need or medical reason. Your child is in good hands, and we promise to fluff her dress!

Will the pageant be live-streamed?
No.

Still wondering?

Email **pageantcommunications@gmail.com**.
We're happy to help!

More Questions

What if I'm late?
You must attend all scheduled events: check-in, line-up, competitions, crowning and official photos (the Queens Party is optional). Arriving late can mean missed opportunities or disqualification from some categories. In a true emergency, tell the director right away.

Can we take our own photos?
A professional photographer is on-site for state shots and still shots. **No other photography is allowed in the ballroom during the event.** Breaking this rule can mean disqualification or a 1-point deduction.

Do guests need tickets?
Every guest needs an admission armband: $25 bought in advance or $30 at the door, while supplies last. Wear it at all times; it can't be shared, and a lost one must be bought again. Contestants don't need one.

What is expected of a queen?
Represent with respect, grace and involvement. Be courteous to everyone at all times. Be proactive in your reign (your director is not your handler), seek out ways to serve, and return next year to crown your successor. *Your reign is what YOU make of it!*

Is there a non-compete clause?
No. We only ask that you don't compete in any event that would make you give up your title or cut your reign short.

Can I compete in both programs?
Yes! With the $175 crossover add-on, you can compete in both Miss Heart of the USA and our sister program, Heart of Agriculture, plus any optionals you choose. The fee doesn't include a second crown or sash (sold separately). Each program has its own judges and scores, and you may only take one title. If you win both, you receive the title you chose before Nationals, and the runner-up in the other program is crowned. You must meet both programs' rules.

Is Miss Heart of the USA a non-profit?
No. It operates under Empabo Co., which is owned by Jacqueline Listau.

Can I use the logo?
No. The logo may only be used by Empabo Co. and its approved vendors.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- All deadlines must be met to take part
- Good sportsmanship and respectful conduct are expected at all times, from contestants, families and guests
- Miss Heart of the USA may adjust the schedule, format or program as needed
- Keep this packet handy as you prepare!

Rules & Policies

Please read these carefully. By registering, you agree to them.

Eligibility

- Age is as of January 1, 2027
- You must live in the United States or have legal permission to live here
- If you're under 18, a parent or guardian must agree to these terms too

Refunds & Cancellations

- **All fees are non-refundable**, for any reason (illness, travel delays, disqualification). This includes sponsorships.
- If you withdraw, you forfeit all fees paid
- If Miss Heart of the USA cancels an event entirely, your paid registration fees are applied as a **credit toward a future** Miss Heart of the USA event

Scoring

- **All judges' decisions and scores are final.**

Grievances

- Submit concerns in writing to pageantcommunications@gmail.com within 24 hours of the event
- The National Team reviews every grievance; its decision is final
- Verbal or social media complaints, or confrontational behavior, are not tolerated and may lead to permanent disqualification

Changes

- We may change rules, requirements and schedules with notice
- It's your job to stay informed through email, the website, this packet and social media

Photos & Liability

- By competing, you allow Miss Heart of the USA to use photos, video and audio for promotion, education and archives
- We are not responsible for injury, loss, theft or damage to personal property

ALL SALES ARE FINAL AND NON-REFUNDABLE.

Full Terms & Conditions and our Privacy Policy are at **missheartoftheusa.org**. They are governed by the laws of the State of Texas.

Queens' Code of Conduct

As a titleholder, you are an ambassador and a role model. In person and online, lead with integrity, kindness and professionalism.

1. **Professionalism & Respect.** Be gracious, kind and respectful with fellow contestants, directors, sponsors and the public. No negativity, gossip or drama.
2. **Social Media.** Keep a positive, uplifting presence. Avoid controversial topics and inappropriate language.
3. **Service.** Take part in community service and appearances that fit our mission.
4. **Timeliness & Communication.** Be on time to every appearance. If you can't attend, let the right person know in advance.
5. **Substance-Free.** No smoking, vaping, alcohol or illegal substances while representing the program.
6. **Public Behavior.** No public displays of affection, inappropriate dancing or language.
7. **Crown & Sash.** Wear them with pride and care, and never lend them out. If your crown breaks during an active reign, we'll replace it once, free (same style if available, or one of equal value).
8. **No Drama Policy.** Bullying or failing to uphold our values can lead to losing your title.
9. **Appearances.** Represent one title per appearance. Never switch titles, even for photos. Post appearances on your fan page and send them to the National Director for our social media.

Dress Code for Appearances

- **Casual events** (volunteering, outreach): branded T-shirt, polo or blouse with jeans or dress pants. Neat shoes, no flip-flops
- **Formal events** (fundraisers, banquets): a modest cocktail dress or evening gown
- Crown and sash at every event unless told otherwise, kept clean
- **Parades:** a dress or matching team outfits, comfortable shoes, neat hair and makeup
- **Photo shoots and interviews:** age-appropriate, polished, not revealing. No "tongue out" photos!
- Neat hair, natural daytime makeup, and never pajamas or sloppy clothes

Thank you for being part of Miss Heart of the USA!

I can't wait to celebrate you.

Mrs. Jacqueline Listau

NATIONAL DIRECTOR

HEART OF THE USA