

2026 MINI & MAXI TALENT SHOWCASE COMPETITONS

The New York State Fair Talent Showcase is an annual event that aims to encourage, develop, and discover amateur entertainers. By participating in the Talent Showcase, you consent to the use of your photos in future advertising for the event and the New York State Fair.

Reminder: There is a \$15 fee per group competing

Please take note of the following information:

- Talent Showcase sponsorship is non-commercial competition.
- Contestants are allowed to participate in only one county competition in order to qualify for the NYS Fair Talent Showcase Competition.
- All awards will be distributed **after** the 2026 New York State Fair.
- In the case of a group performance, if not all performers live in the same county, the group should compete in the county where the majority of performers reside. Age requirements for groups, as outlined in rule number two (2) above, are also applicable.

Attention County Chairpeople:

The NYS Fair Talent Showcase must receive a list of the top 15 winners in both the Mini and Maxi competitions from each County Contest Chairperson within five (5) days after the local contest has ended. Please use the Spreadsheet provided by Superintendent Mary Buchmann to record your winners. Your county entry form should include the following information: Name of Act, Performer Names, Age(s) as of 7/1/26, Type of Act, Title of Music If Recorded Music is being used, ONE phone number, and ONE email address that should be contacted to set the date and time of their Preliminary Competition. If the act is a group, only one email address and one phone number should be designated for registering that act. If the NYS Fair has not received the correct information within the allotted time, we reserve the right to decline the entry. The \$15 fee per group will need to be paid online only.

GENERAL RULES

- **NEW! No pop-up tents will be allowed on the fairgrounds under any circumstance.**
- The NYS Fair Talent Showcase will accept up to, but no more than, the Top Fifteen (15) Mini, and up to, but no more than, the Top Fifteen (15) Maxi acts from county-level preliminary talent competitions. Each entry must be approved by your county and verified with the state fair staff for proof of placement.
- **Age limits are:**
 - Maxi Talent - 13 years of age and over.
 - Mini Talent - 12 years of age and under. (Age of each contestant as of 7/1/2026).
- The 50% rule will be strictly followed for groups. In a duo, if one contestant is 12 and under and the other is 13 and over, they will compete in the MAXI Division. In a group of three or more, if 50% or more of the group is 13 and over, they will compete in the MAXI Division.
- **No one over the age of 14 may perform or be a part of a Mini Division Group.**
- The Time limit for each act must not exceed five (5) minutes **maximum-including trios**. Any act running over five (5) minutes will be disqualified. Acts will be timed.
- No acts using batons, machetes, knives, etc. will be accepted.
- No fire will be allowed on stage during the competition.
- No animal acts will be accepted.
- Contestants must be strictly amateur. They must not have been under contract or received reimbursement for their performance. Also, performers holding union cards are not eligible. Expense money should not be considered reimbursement for performance.
- To be eligible for the New York State Fair Talent Showcase, contestants must have performed and placed in the top 15 in a County Fair Talent Show or County Talent Contest sanctioned by the New York State Fair. Contestants who audition in one county are not eligible to audition in another county.

- Contestants may represent only one county (groups and solos), and up to the Top 15 Mini and Top 15 Maxi per County winning acts will be allowed to enter the NYS Fair Talent Showcase.
- Contestants must perform the **exact** same act that they performed at the county level. There can be no performance changes of any kind. The same personnel must be used, along with the same routines, music, costumes, and attire. No changes of any kind are allowed. This rule also applies to our Prelims, Semi Finals, and Finals. Any violation of this rule will result in disqualification.
- A contestant may perform a maximum of three times. This includes one solo performance and participation in two other groups, or participation in three groups with no solo performance. Two or more performers are considered a "group." If this rule is violated, both the contestant and the group will be disqualified.
- After each act uses the link provided by the Superintendent Mary Buchmann to register online and pay the entrance fee (**This MUST be done online**) and fills out the preference form for what day to compete in the preliminary competition, the act will be scheduled for a day to perform. Every act scheduled to perform at the NYS Fair Talent Competition will receive an email confirmation. This confirmation will also include the date and time of appearance. Contestants using recorded music for their performance must send their music as a MP3 file in the form, or email Assistant Superintendent Laurie Yager at: LYAGER888@GMAIL.COM. Everyone then must report to the Talent Showcase at the scheduled time for sign-in.
- The top 10 place winners from the **Mini and Maxi Preliminaries** will move onto the **Semi-Final Contest** on Friday, September 4th and the top 10 place winners from the **Mini and Maxi Semi-Finals**, will be eligible to enter the **Final Competition**, held Saturday, September 5th.
- **First Place Maxi Final Winners** and previous **First Place Mini Contest Winners** are not eligible to enter the competition in the same category. For example, a solo winner cannot return as a soloist the following year. However, they are allowed to perform as part of a duet, trio, or group. When a performer moves from the Mini to Maxi Division, they can compete again in the same category.
- Teachers are not permitted to compete or perform in their professional talent, e.g., a dance teacher could not compete as a dancer. This rule does not apply to students under scholarship who assist in teaching.
- An electric piano and sound system is provided by Talent Showcase.
- There is no rock band contest. No rock bands will be scheduled.
- Transportation to and from the Fair, meals and lodging are the responsibility of the contestant.
- **There is a \$15 entry fee for each act.** (PLEASE MAKE SURE THIS ONLINE STEP IS COMPLETED) Contestants MUST follow the exact directions to register and pay the \$15 for their act for the Talent Showcase or they will not be able to be paid if they win a monetary prize.
- The decision of the judges will be final.
- If you would like to receive the judges' scores, you must request them before the end of the fair. Please include the name of your act, the date of performance, and whether you are a Mini or Maxi Division contestant. Any requests received after the NYS Fair is over will not be honored. There will be no exceptions to this rule.
- Sponsor is not held accountable for judges' decisions. Any questions regarding the judges' decisions should be directed to **the Superintendent Mary Buchmann at: mbuchmann888@gmail.com**
- Submission of an application to participate in the New York State Fair Talent Showcase signifies acceptance on the part of all participants, contestants, chairpeople, teachers, parents, etc., of all terms and conditions set forth in any of our rules, regulations and communications.
- Contestants are responsible for any risks, including theft, loss, or injury to themselves or their property while participating in or attending the New York State Fair. This includes incidents caused by negligence, intentional acts, accidents, acts of nature, or any other reason. Exhibitors are solely responsible for their property, and the New York State Fair, as well as their officers, directors, employees, representatives, and assigns, are not liable for any damages or losses. Exhibitors release them from any liability and agree not to sue them for any such risks or damages.
- Every contestant will receive a participation ribbon at each level of competition. The top 10 contestants will receive an additional ribbon, and a commemorative sticker at each level of the competition.

The following premium money will be paid by the New York State Fair Talent Showcase **AFTER THE FAIR to contestants only:**

Final Mini Contest and Final Maxi Contest

1st	First place ribbon & \$500.00
2nd	Second place ribbon & \$400.00
3rd	Third place ribbon & \$300.00
4th	Fourth place ribbon & \$200.00
5th	Fifth place ribbon & \$100.00
6th place.....	ribbon only
7th place.....	ribbon only
8th place.....	ribbon only
9th place.....	ribbon only
10th place.....	ribbon only

Preliminary Contests for Mini and Maxi will be held on: Friday-8/28, Saturday-8/29, Sunday-8/30, Monday-8/31, Tuesday-9/1 and Wednesday-9/2.

Mini

- Sign-in will start at: 9:00 am in the Talent Showcase Dressing Room.
- Competitions will begin at 10:30 am.

Maxi

- Sign-in will start at: 1:00 pm in the Talent Showcase Dressing Room.
- Competitions will begin at 2:30 pm.

Semi-Final Contests held on: Friday-9/4

Mini & Maxi

Mini

- Sign-in will start at: 9:00 am in the Talent Showcase Dressing Room.
- Competition will begin at: 10:30 am.

Maxi

- Sign-in will start at: 2:30 pm in the Talent Showcase Dressing Room.
- Competition will begin at: 4:00pm.

Final Contests held on: Saturday-9/5

Maxi & Mini

Mini

- Sign-in will start at: 9:00 am in the Talent Showcase Dressing Room.
- Competition will begin at: 10:30 am.

Maxi

- Sign-in will start at: 1:00 pm in the Talent Showcase Dressing Room.
- Competition will begin at: 2:30 pm.