

*Miss Rodeo America, Inc.
National Director Handbook*



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This handbook is intended to be a resource to aid National Directors and those interested in becoming a National Director. A free copy can be requested from the MRAI Office.

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Preface

Welcome to Miss Rodeo America Inc. (MRAI), you are considering or have received the title of National Director, so now what? This handbook has been created to aid and provide suggestions to help you and your titleholder have the best possible experience.

Brief History

Miss Rodeo America was a concept created by a group of gentlemen under the name of International Rodeo Management. They realized the importance of having a spokesperson for rodeo and the promotional aspects that would ensue. In 1955 the first pageant was held in Casper, Wyo., and Marilyn Scott became the first Miss Rodeo America.

The Miss Rodeo America Pageant (MRAP) has moved several times through the years, being held in Casper, Wyo., Chicago, Ill., San Francisco, Calif., Oklahoma City, Okla., and since 1990 the pageant has been consistently located in Las Vegas, NV.

In the early 90s the relationship between Miss Rodeo America, Inc. and the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) was solidified as they recognized MRAI as the sole entity entitled to select a spokesperson for their organization.

Each year many contestants are selected as state titleholders and venture to Las Vegas to compete for the title. The Miss Rodeo America pageant is fortunate to have a large voluntary workforce that produce pageant events. Volunteers include former pageant contestants, parents of former contestants and people interested in furthering educational and life experiences for strong young women in our world today.

Purpose

The goal of the MRA program is to further opportunities for young women willing to passionately represent rodeo and an agricultural lifestyle.

Overview | *What do National Directors do for Miss Rodeo America, Inc.?*

- Serve as the state's liaison with MRAI by receiving and returning paperwork to the Miss Rodeo America, Inc. (MRAI) office and maintain deadlines.
- Communicate with MRAI office and notify the staff of any changes to your address, phone or e-mail.
- National Directors pay an annual fee of \$50 with the option to upgrade membership and become an Ambassador for an additional \$75. (Detail descriptions of the different benefits for each level are listed on at missrodeoamerica.com website. If you are a former MRAP contestant your Alumni Membership is included. These dues are set by the MRAI Executive Board annually.
- The deadline for making a change in the state's National Director is December 31. The MRAI office must be notified by the previous National Director in writing of the change along with the new person's contact information and the effective date of change. An application must be completed by the person being considered for approval by the MRAI Executive Board. The National Director approval is part of the annual Participation Agreement process.

- Represent your state's interests by attending annually a minimum of one out of two official Miss Rodeo America, Inc., meetings, and serve as a voting member for Miss Rodeo America Inc. The Annual Meeting is typically held in late April or early May, while the Pageant Year-End Meeting is conducted during MRAP in Las Vegas. Your RSVP is required. If you are unable to attend one or both meetings, please let the MRAI office know why you will not be attending. If you are unable to attend any meetings, send your proxy ballot with a paid MRAI member from your state, another National Director or a MRAI Executive Board member.
- Serve on MRAI pageant committees. The Executive Board maintains this list, if you have an area of expertise or have an interest in a certain committee, please notify the MRAI office. This list may be found on the MRAI website under members only or you may contact the MRA office. If you do not request certain committees, you will be automatically added to committees.
- Sign and submit the MRAI Participation Agreement on behalf of your state organization. The fee is \$500; however, fees and due dates are subject to change at the discretion of MRAI Executive Board. This document recognizes your organization as the official entity in your state entitled to send a contestant to the MRA pageant.
- Each state pageant is required to provide proof of a \$1 million liability insurance policy. Certificate of insurance must accompany your participation agreement when sent to the MRAI office by Dec. 31st. Coverage must at least cover the presentation of your state pageant.
- MRA Scholarship Foundation sells drawing tickets for a drawing at MRAP. It is encouraged that each member of the National Director, National Advisory Council, Executive Board members and titleholders sell drawing tickets.
- Each state organization is asked to bring a quality silent auction item to be sold during the pageant; proceeds benefit Miss Rodeo America, Inc. Plan to provide an auction item whether you have a titleholder representative at the MRA pageant or not. It can be shipped to the MRA office prior to pageant or brought to pageant.

What do National Directors do within their state organization?

- Ensure that your state's organization prepares and follows all required documents necessary to maintain a valid participation agreement with Miss Rodeo America, Inc. It's required that you or the state secretary keep a book of minutes with records from all meetings, financial reports, memberships, proxy ballots (if used), attendance and other pertinent information.
- Conduct a pageant in your state to select a Miss Rodeo State. National Directors may or may not serve as the state pageant director or on the committee. He or she is responsible to ensure the candidate chosen meets all MRAP Eligibility Requirements as stated in the MRAI Rulebook.
- Provide your titleholder's contact information to the MRAI office as soon as she is selected and notify the office if it changes throughout her reign.
- Ensure that your state titleholder's entry fee, along with her application and other materials are paid and turned in on or before the due date of Sept. 1. Fees and due dates are subject to change at the discretion of MRAI.
- Prioritize the support and guidance of your MISS titleholder, by aiding titleholder in scheduling appearances, helping with fundraisers, enforcing her contract, helping the titleholder prepare for the MRAP, as well as providing general guidance and instruction.
- Ensure your state titleholder has read and understands the rules set forth by MRAI. The MRAI rulebook is sent with her official entry packet and is also available online in the MRA Member's Only section.
- Inform your state titleholder and state board of items pertaining to the MRAP as discussed at the mid-year or annual meetings.

- Often National Directors keep financial records, maintain contracts, find state pageant sponsors and take care of legal issues concerning their states pageant, or you may appoint a state board member to take care of specific duties and report back to the state board of directors on a regular basis.
- At the end of the year, state titleholders may be asked for feedback on the performance of their National Director and Board of Directors. That feedback may be kept in a state file by the MRAI Executive Director.

Information Sent to States by MRAI

- Application for State Participation Agreements (PA) will be sent out in the fall. This agreement must be signed and all required documents submitted by December 31. Once those documents have been reviewed and accepted, each state's board member must sign and submit the Conflict-of-Interest document along with the \$500 PA fee on or before January 31. An invoice for the PA, National Director dues and pageant entry fee (entry fee due 9/1) will be sent to you upon request. Fees and due dates are subject to change at the discretion of MRAI.
- The Executive Board of Miss Rodeo America, Inc. has the sole right to issue Participation Agreements to state organizations. Participation agreements are issued annually and are valid for one year. The PA gives the state organization the right to conduct a state pageant to allow the selected state titleholder to participate in the MRA Pageant and to elect or appoint a National Director, with the approval of the Miss Rodeo America Executive Board, to conduct business on behalf of the state organization with Miss Rodeo America, Inc., provided all documents have been submitted and all fees are paid by deadline. Missing documents and fees may result in being placed on probationary status.
- A certificate of approval will be sent after the signed PA, all required documents and the appropriate fees are paid. Each state may utilize the official state logo provided by MRAI for promotional material. It is recommended that the state logo also be used on the queen's autograph sheets, business cards and other printed items. The MRA logo and state adaptation logos and verbiage "Miss Rodeo" are trademarked. If you become aware of any other entities in your state using the MRA logo, please report it to the MRA office promptly.

State Pageant Boards

Each state is expected to have a governing body of at least six board members to assist or oversee the planning and executing of the annual pageant, helping the state program grow, maintain the program while building increased credibility and stability and support the reigning titleholder. State organizations vary in structure. Some have the National Director in charge of everything while others divide the responsibilities with chairpersons and/or board members. Delegation of duties is up to the individual state and should be defined in the state's organizational structure. The National Director is the primary point of contact for all business related to Miss Rodeo America, Inc., and is responsible for communication between the state organization and Miss Rodeo America, Inc.

National Director Expectations and Requirements

For a state engaging in a Participation Agreement with Miss Rodeo America, the National Director is a critical position. It is the key contact for the state in every aspect of business with Miss Rodeo America. Information from MRAI to all state pageants will be sent directly to the National Director and responses will be expected from the National Director. Ideally, it should be the person associated with the state pageant with the most experience in the pageant process as well as the most experience with Miss Rodeo America, Inc. The National Director is responsible for helping with growth and development of the state pageant as well as the Miss Rodeo America Pageant.

REQUIREMENTS: Minimum requirements for submission of National Director applicants:

1. Must be an MRAI General Member, Ambassador or Alumni member for a minimum of three years prior to appointment.
2. Must have attended at least three Miss Rodeo America Pageants in the last seven years prior to appointment.
3. Must have been an active member of state organization for a minimum of three years prior to appointment.

Any National Director applicant who does not meet the above requirements may still be considered, but would only be considered and approved as provisional status and will not have voting privileges until such time as the above requirements are met and full approval is given by vote of the Executive Board of Directors.

New National Directors may be assigned a Mentor to work with during provisional status. Mentors will be assigned by the MRAI Office and/or Executive Board.

EXPECTATIONS: Once approved, regardless of status, all National Directors must abide by the following expectations or risk removal:

1. Must pay dues as set by the Executive Board.
2. Must reside in the state that they represent. States in their first year of their Participation Agreement have special residency requirements according to the National Director Handbook.
3. Must attend a minimum of one meeting of the Board of Directors per year (Annual Meeting or the end of year Pageant Meeting, unless otherwise attending to Pageant business during the scheduled meeting time). Attendance at both meetings is STRONGLY encouraged. A National Director may have up to two votes at any MRAI meeting, their personal vote plus one proxy vote from another National Director. If meeting requirements are not met, states will be notified by letter from MRAI and will be ineligible to vote at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by the Executive Board.
4. A National Director cannot be associated in any way with the administration of any other Rodeo Queen Pageant in your state. Administration includes, but is not limited to: judge selection, scoring, judging, coaching, chaperoning, setting pageant logistics, writing the rulebook/handbook, and serving on a pageant's Executive Board.
5. Assist in the planning and production of the Miss Rodeo America Pageant including serving and working on committees as appropriate for the Pageant.
6. Must sign and abide by the conflict of interest policy issued with Participation Agreements.
7. A National Director may be removed from their position with or without cause at the discretion of the Executive Board of Directors. In the event that a National Director is formally charged with a criminal offense, said National Director must inform the MRA President within a 10-day time frame.
8. National Director must provide all documents for a Participation Agreement application that must be received in the MRAI office by December 31st of the current year in order to be considered for a PA for the following year. Failure to provide all of the required information by December 31st will result in possible revocation of the PA or placed on probationary status.

For a first-year Participation Agreement, A non-resident National Director will be allowed eighteen (18) months to establish a viable program in a state and obtain a resident National Director in said state.

Suggestions for Forming a Board of Directors

Look for people with specific skills

- Someone who has financial knowledge, a CPA or banker
- A lawyer willing to give free advice or services at a reduced rate
- Communication specialist who can write news releases, maintain a website, create and distribute a newsletter
- Horse trainer/veterinarian or someone knowledgeable in the area
- Rodeo Committee members
- Various business professionals
- People willing to assist with pageant production, attend meetings and raise money

Give your board members specific areas of responsibility

Generally, people feel more committed and follow through when they are directly responsible or in charge of something. For example, you could assign someone to handle the scheduling of your titleholder; a sponsorship coordinator; a media/PR coordinator; a pageant director and/or a silent auction coordinator. By delegating and empowering your committee, it will relieve some of your workload and make the experience more enjoyable and rewarding for everyone.

Suggestions for State Organization Fundraising

Obtaining state sponsors

Depending on your state organizational structure, the following information is provided. Sponsors are vital to your organization and will help its success. It's very important to write thank you notes, have the contestants write thank you notes and participate in activities to help promote their business.

Please be respectful to the Miss Rodeo America Pageant sponsors, a complete listing of the sponsors can be found at www.missrodeoamerica.com. If you or your contestant want to ask for product sponsorships, you need to go through your local sales representative or Western stores. *Please do not try to contact Wrangler, Justin, Montana Silversmiths or other MRAI sponsors directly.*

It helps to have a sponsorship presentation packet for your state board members to take to potential sponsors to show what is included in their sponsorship. Set up autograph signings for contestants and/or titleholders during the pageant at sponsor locations and appearances throughout the reign, making sure appropriate sponsorship logos are printed on the Queen's autograph sheets; print sponsor logo or name on programs; give them an ad in the pageant program; provide sponsor flags during horsemanship and/or at the rodeo, and have a sponsor reel running of all sponsors at pageant events etc. are all ways you could implement to promote their sponsorship.

Many businesses may not have the budget to give money but may be willing to donate items like merchandise, food for contestants and judges, and other products and services. It is important to remember these in-kind sponsors need to be recognized for their donation also at the same value level as monetary sponsors.

Be professional when soliciting sponsors, taking along titleholders is often a good way to make an impression on the business you are soliciting.

- Call first to make an appointment with the individual that makes the decisions.
- Present ideas clearly and have information to leave behind so they can refer to it later.
- Follow up within a week.

Hosting State Pageant Fundraisers

The possibilities are limitless! Be creative, it will take a collaborative effort for the committee to raise funds.

Here are a few ideas:

- Jackpot barrel race or team roping
- Duck races – great addition to community festivals www.duckrace.com
- Goat roping booth at fairs or rodeos
- Product sales
- Drawings - contestants can help sell tickets to benefit the organization
- Advertisement Sales – contestants can sell ads for your program
- Hold a clinic

Clarify to titleholder what fundraisers or percentage of funds raised are earmarked as organizational dollars or for her official expenditures as Queen (see State Titleholder Fundraising). Make it clear any funds that go directly to the titleholder are liable for income tax.

State Titleholder Fundraising

Unless your organization has a lot of funding, it will take personal sponsors for your winner to be able to travel and compete at the Miss Rodeo America Pageant. In some states it is customary for the state organization to take a percentage of the monies earned from the contestant's fundraisers. It is a good idea to make sure the contestant is aware of any kind of cut or percentage the organization will be getting beforehand. It is also recommended that you let your contestant know what it will be used for (i.e., her entry fee to the MRA pageant, her program book ad, etc.).

Obtaining sponsors

Your contestant should be encouraged to solicit personal sponsorships from her hometown businesses and friends. Be sure that she is prepared to approach potential sponsors. She should have a positive attitude, along with the understanding there could be those who will pass on the opportunity to sponsor her. Encouraging her to not give up is key here. Depending on your organizational structure, personal sponsors may or may not be part of the program. If they are, then it may help to bring along the sponsor a professional presentation outlining what the sponsor may receive. REVISIT that you or the board of directors prepared, outlining the benefits sponsors may receive. Being certain that you and your titleholder are in communication is very important for many reasons, notably in this circumstance your titleholder would need to have the approval of you and/or the board of directors before she committed to appearances, or additional benefits for the sponsor.

Set a fundraising goal

It may be helpful to determine the amount of travel she wants to do and what kind, quantity and quality of clothing she wants/needs to buy or have made. Then, estimate the associated costs so that she understands the importance of obtaining sponsors.

Encourage your contestant to seek in-kind services

This could include a cell phone sponsor, dry cleaning sponsor, beauty services sponsor (hair, nails, facials), or sponsors for other items that can add up to a considerable amount of money over her reign. Remind your titleholder to follow through with sponsors and properly thank everyone who helps her in any way. If appropriate, encourage her to send personal, handwritten notes with a two-week period, as this makes a very positive impression.

Hosting state titleholder fundraisers

There are many types of fundraisers that your titleholder may consider. If appropriate, here are a few ideas for potential fundraisers:

- *Coronation party* | your contestant can host a coronation party to kick-off her reign. This could include a dinner, dance, a silent and live auction and a 50/50 drawing.
- *Drawing* | Have your titleholder get someone to donate an item she could sell tickets for throughout her reign.
- *Send-off party/trunk show* | Your contestant can host a "send-off party", often called a trunk show, prior to going to the MRAP where she will model clothing that she will wear during the competition. This would also be a great time to give an impromptu speech, summarize her year thus far and thank sponsors for their generosity. The event can include dinner, dancing, silent auction, and/or live auction of a few nice items or a less labor-intensive event such as an ice cream social or hors d'oeuvres and cocktail hour with an auction works too. When planning events, it is recommended to inquire about a venue sponsor to donate their space for your use as well as finding a sponsor for necessary items such as food, beverages, tableware etc. Keep out of pocket expenses as low as possible for a beneficial fundraiser.

Preparing State Titleholders for Miss Rodeo America

This is one of the biggest jobs of the National Director. Many of the state titleholders under your direction won't have any idea what to expect. With your help, they are more likely to have a successful, memorable, and enjoyable experience at the Miss Rodeo America Pageant.

Be patient, this can be a very daunting experience for titleholders, both in preparation and during the week of competition. Many National Directors have been through it several times, and it can be easy to forget how overwhelming it all can be for the titleholder.

State titleholders can be a big help in attracting future contestants or in discouraging other girls from competition all depending on how she was treated by the National Director and the state board of directors. Please remember to be patient with these girls and provide them with guidance. It is important for you to respect your titleholder and for her to respect you.

Communication

It is extremely important to have regular communication with your titleholder throughout her year. This will help her know what you and the board of directors expect of her and let you know where she is, both in her travels and in her preparations for MRAP. It is important for the two of you to be comfortable speaking with one another and to build a trusting relationship, while keeping her up to date with what is coming up. Many problems can be avoided simply with good open lines of communication. If something goes wrong, you will get the call, be sure to get both sides of the story and have a plan in place for action if needed.

It's a job, the position of a state titleholder should be treated professionally, and you are the supervisor.

Scheduling Appearances | As the national director, you may or may not be responsible for your titleholder's appearance schedule. If you are, then you should develop a contact list of people at various rodeos and pageants (names, phone numbers, e-mail addresses) both in state and out of state. Also keep a calendar from previous years and note the approximate dates of upcoming rodeos and trips on your current titleholder's calendar. Some rodeos and pageants require advanced reservations, for example the NFR Open, Hall of Fame Inductions and Cheyenne Frontier Days and it is imperative to be timely about notifying people of her upcoming visits.

If you have a "green" titleholder with little to no experience, it may be wise to attend her first appearance and give her some training or appoint a board member or past titleholder to accompany her until she is comfortable on her own.

MRA Pageant Preparation

Guidance | Each year your contestants may have a different level of refinement, or "polish" but no matter what, they can all use more assistance to help them reach their highest potential. It is your job to help her find the resources to do that. Whether it be a speech coach; etiquette classes; modeling coach; setting up interviews with various panels and/or a riding coach. Along with those mentioned, some other useful tools might be, setting up mock interviews; doing an impromptu speech for your local Rotary Club or Toast Masters clubs; schedule visits for her to speak at local schools; help her find study materials (i.e. PSN, PRCA Media Guide, news magazines, Internet sites, etc.). Urge her to watch the news and study both PRCA and equine information. The more practice she can get speaking in front of people and answering questions, the more comfortable she will be when competing.

MRA Pageant Media | Information may be found on the MRAI website to purchase pageant photos and video from previous years to use as prep material.

Wardrobe | Contrary to what some may believe, contestants don't have to buy clothing from the most expensive designers to win the pageant. The clothing should not wear the girl. Proper fit and feeling confident is more important than price tags. A misconception many people have is that the girls must spend \$20,000 on clothing, this is **NOT** true. Purchasing clothing from retired titleholders, looking on social media for forums selling rodeo queen clothes, checking eBay for new and used western clothing items, would be an excellent way to save money.

MRA Pageant Entry and Application | This includes the application itself, and all other material submitted to the MRAI office, such as ticket orders, publicity photos and advertising. Thoroughly read the application instructions and have your contestant read them. Be familiar with deadlines and put them on both your calendars. Start the application process well in advance, so you have a chance to proofread submitted items in a non-hurried environment, allowing time for others to proofread for proper spelling, punctuation and grammar. Submit materials by deadline or judges will be notified.

Relax | After all of the preparation, studying, reciting, and practicing is all done. Getting her to relax and be herself is one of the most important things that you can do for her before the competition. She is in for an unforgettable week full of memories, emotions and great experiences. Reassuring her that your state is proud of her no matter what the outcome of the MRAP, she will forever carry the title of Miss Rodeo State. It is natural for your state titleholder to be tired and perhaps emotional after the national pageant after a year of preparation and a week of competition, the sudden drop in adrenaline at the close of the pageant can bring her to an unfamiliar state. Assure her the future is bright no matter the outcome of this pageant. Many state titleholders who do not win the national crown still benefit greatly from their established rodeo network in multiple ways, including professionally, academically and socially.

Conclusion

The MRAI office can be reached at 719-313-9063 and www.missrodeoamerica.com. The staff is willing to help answer questions and provide you with additional resources. *MRA office email is info@missrodeoamerica.com or the email for MRA Executive Director Jeana Linton is jlinton@missrodeoamerica.com.*

Thank you for taking on the position of National Director for your state. You are joining a team that will create life-changing moments for these young ladies. As you experience this journey, you will learn from your state titleholder and she will learn from you. Remember the impression you leave on her will last a lifetime. There will be both challenging and fun times. Remaining positive, encouraging your state board, contestants and everyone that works with your state organization that the impossible can be accomplished by working together. We sincerely appreciate all of the work you will do as a volunteer in the Miss Rodeo America, Inc. organization.

Miss Rodeo America Inc.

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Addendum A * Conflict of Interest

The Executive Board has asked state organizations who hold Participation Agreements with Miss Rodeo America, Inc. to have a written conflict of interest policy in place. In order to assist with this and help make sure that there is consistency across the state pageants and organizations, the following policies are being offered to all states at this time. This policy is designed to avoid a perception of favoritism and to assure fairness for all contestants. These will be implemented as requirements for all states holding participation agreements and must be signed by each Board member in your state organization. A request for electronic signature will be emailed separately to each board member.

COACHING - Members of a state pageant's governing board should not individually or collectively coach, tutor, or instruct any individual contestant to a level that is above or beyond the coaching or instruction given to all contestants. This includes contestants for the immediate pageant as well as potential candidates for the ensuing three years. Singling out any contestant for coaching is a clear conflict of interest and should not be allowed.

NEPOTISM - Members of a state's governing board shall not hold any position on the board during a time in which an immediate relative (inclusive of, but not limited to; daughter, step- daughter, sister, niece, cousin) is a contestant. In addition, it is mandated that board members resign their position immediately should it become apparent that an immediate relative is likely to become a contestant at any point during their term. Immediate relatives of contestants should not have any role in the pageant – even as a volunteer – which involves planning or implementation of pageant activities that could in any way affect the judging process.

FINANCIAL - Members of a state's governing board should not financially benefit in any way from the pageant process or from any individual contestant's preparation for the pageant.

NOTIFICATION OF CONFLICTS - Any person who holds a board position at time when an immediate relative is or is likely to be a contestant in any state pageant must promptly give the state governing board notice of such potential conflict of interest. In addition, the state governing board must also notify Miss Rodeo America, Inc. of such potential conflict of interest. Such notice must specify the relationship between the contestant (or likely contestant) and the affected board member, the board members position on the board, and, if the board member has resigned, the effective date of such resignation.

OTHER POSITIONS IN A PAGEANT - This conflict of interest policy applies to any immediate relative of a contestant who is a board member or who holds or will hold any other position in connection with any state or national pageant which might affect the outcome of any pageant or contest (e.g. official or judge).

Be consistent and fair with allowing and not allowing certain people to be a part of the board or committee. Keep in mind that what you and your governing board/committee members are doing is to enhance the lives of young ladies involved.

Addendum B

State Business Practices – offered in a Guidelines for Holding a State Pageant and Setting up your State Organization.

State Bylaws

Definition: A required legal document outlining the self-imposed rules that will regulate an organization's own actions, a form of agreement or contract between the corporation and its owners to conduct itself in a certain way. When forming your state organization, start drafting bylaws. This will outline the structure of your organization. You can decide whether to have a general board of directors or maybe you will want to have an executive board and a general board. You determine the size and scope of your organization's leadership in the bylaws and can set limits on maximum/minimum number of board members, positions and officers, type(s) of memberships, etc. It is helpful to confer with another state to see how their bylaws are written. A copy of the MRAI bylaws is posted on www.missrodeoamerica.com in the Member's Only area. Remember that MRAI requires a minimum of six board members.

For more information look at the following web site: <http://nonprofit.about.com/od/glossary/g/bylaws.htm>

State Articles of Incorporation

Definition: The basic charter of a corporation spells out the name, basic purpose, incorporators and any special characteristics such as being non-profit. Each state has its own system of approval of articles, prohibits names which are confusingly similar to those of existing corporations (an incorporator can test the name by applying to reserve the name), set specific requirements for non-profits (charitable, religious, educational, public service, and so forth), and regulates the issuance of shares of stock. Articles must be signed by the incorporating person or persons or by the first board of directors. The starting point for filing and approval of Articles of Incorporation is usually the state's Secretary of State. There will be a fee and, often, a deposit of an estimated first year's taxes. *It's a good idea to file as a corporation to protect the individuals within your organization.

*When registering your organization, we have found that it is helpful to call it Miss Rodeo (State) Association. This helps if you wish to apply for non-profit status. <http://smallbusiness.findlaw.com/business-structures/corporations/incorporate-article-incorporation.html>

Definition: A legal structure authorized by state law allowing people to come together to either benefit members of an organization or for some public purpose. Nonprofit corporations, despite the name, can make a profit, but the business cannot be designed primarily for profit-making purposes, and the profits must be used for the benefit of the organization or purpose the corporation was created to help. When a nonprofit corporation dissolves, any remaining assets must be distributed to another nonprofit, not to board members.

Being regarded as a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization with the IRS has both advantages and disadvantages. The biggest advantage is that donors to your organization can deduct the value of their donation on their tax return and the organization is tax exempt, however you may still need to file an annual return. The drawbacks include extensive paperwork that must be kept on file, including receipts for every donation and making your tax return available to the general public. Many states have been able to achieve 501 (c) 3 status while others have applied for other forms of 501 (c) status or opted not to do so. Some states are patterned after Miss Rodeo America where they have two entities, one for the pageant organization and a scholarship foundation that is classified as a 501 (c) 3.

The charity designation 501 © 3 is a federal-level IRS non-taxable designation that is not related to your state not-for-profit status.

Whatever your case, it is wise to consult with an attorney for the best course of action for your organization. There are a variety of classifications for non-profit status. For example, you may be a form of non-profit in the eyes of the IRS and not

have to pay taxes on your income, but not eligible to count donations as tax deductible.
<http://www.irs.gov/charities/index.html>

State Finances

- Open an account for the organization under its legal name.
 - * It is a good idea to have multiple signers, including the treasurer, and president. You may or may not require two signatures on checks but having a second signer is good to have in case the primary signer becomes incapacitated.
- You or the appointed treasurer provide your board of directors with a printout of monthly/quarterly financials. Software, such as QuickBooks, is helpful in itemizing expenditures and generating reports.
 - *Be accountable for every income and expense in the account. Stay ready to report on financial status to the state board at any time.
- It's wise to be open and honest about all financial transactions.
- Your organization should start the year with a budget. Include your fixed annual expenses such as the MRAI Participation fee, MRAP entry fee, pageant insurance, etc. then add your other expenses such as newsletter, promotion and pageant expenses. Keep track of all receipts and bank statements in an organized fashion, in the event you'll need to file a tax return you'll be prepared.

State Meetings

Schedule meetings on a regular basis to keep the board and/or committees informed as well as plan for your state pageant. A good guide to follow for your meetings is Robert's Rules of Order. <http://www.parlipro.org/index.html>

Be Prepared...Have an **agenda** – this will drive the meeting and if followed will enable a productive meeting. See the example in the appendix.

- Limit points of discussion to the most important
- Basic structure/outline listed below:
 - Announcements should be made, at the start of each meeting, regarding current updated information that team members need to know. Followed by each team member reporting progress on assignments or projects. A progress report consists of results, problems, assistance needed, ideas to consider, and the next scheduled plans.
 - Other agenda items would be a report from the National Director updating the Board of Directors about the state titleholder, problems the team as a whole has to consider, etc. Examples: If there are overall results falling short, what the team can do? If the team is not working effectively with another team, what ideas can close the gap? Problem solving often leads to making decisions.
 - Finally, the team members must plan and revisit the tasks to be accomplished before the next scheduled meeting.

State Meeting Minutes are the written record of a meeting. They often give an overview of the structure of the meeting, starting with a list of those present, a statement of the various issues before the participants, and each of their responses. They can be created during a meeting or may be recorded during the meeting and issued to participants afterwards. It is recommended that the minutes are recorded and distributed as soon after each meeting as possible to allow time for review and correction before the next meeting, where it will be on the agenda to approve them as written.

See example.

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/TC060910481033.aspx?CategoryID=CT101172601033>

Minutes Book

The National Director or secretary should keep a notebook with the following:

- Bylaws
- Meeting minutes

- Copies of attendance sheets
- Proxy Ballots (if used)
- Monthly/quarterly financial transactions
- Memos/meeting notices
- Committee contact information
- This should be passed on to the next National Director

State Officers An election among committee members should be held to determine the organizations officers, each having responsibilities within the organization. An officer voted on by members is often done by secret ballot.

- *President* - Presides at meetings, creates an agenda, sees that the room is ready and that the meeting starts on time, arranges to have the vice president fill in if he/she can't be there, appoints committees with the help of the board, works with members and the board to plan the program for the year, communicates with the other officers to plan the order of business for each meeting, casts the deciding vote if there is a tie, gives other officers a helping hand with their jobs.
- *Vice President* - The vice president is the president's assistant, presides at meetings when the president is absent, handles other jobs in the organization, such as serving as a committee chairperson.
- *Secretary* - The secretary keeps a record of what the organization does and handles all correspondence, keeps minutes of all meetings, keeps a complete list of all members and takes attendance at meetings, reminds members of special meetings, he or she makes sure each member knows when and where the next meeting will be.
- *Treasurer* - The treasurer is responsible for handling the organizations money, receives all money, keeps a record of the amount, puts the money in the organization's bank account, pays out money only when approved by the organization, records the amount paid, reports at organization meetings on money received, money paid out, and the amount of money on hand and gives the new treasurer complete and accurate records when he or she takes office.
- *National Director* – see list of requirements at the beginning of this guide.
- *Other Offices* - The above offices are mandatory in any organization; additional offices can be created if needed.

Addendum C * Conducting a State Pageant

State Rulebook | See the Miss Rodeo America Pageant Rulebook for guidance be sure that the age requirements for your pageant adhere to the age specified for competition at Miss Rodeo America Pageant. An electronic copy is available online in the Member's Only area. State titleholders who do not meet the age requirement will not be allowed to participate in the Miss Rodeo America Pageant without exception. "Holdover programs" should be especially careful when calculating their state pageant age range to ensure a qualified winner to participate in the MRA Pageant the following year.

A Disciplinary Matrix should be included in the state rulebook or as a separate document and included as part of entry documents. Your states' rulebook and disciplinary matrix must be submitted to MRA by Dec. 31st.

Recruiting Contestants | Contestants for your pageant won't always come to you. It's important to promote your pageant in a variety of ways. It may even take someone personally contacting girls to compete. Good places to look for contestants are saddle clubs, college equestrian teams, local rodeo associations, recent titleholders for local rodeos and more. Also, if you have a website, be sure to have information readily available.

State Entry application | Provide all potential contestants with an application it should include:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Address, phone numbers, e-mail
- Parent's contact information
- Questions similar to a resume, See Miss Rodeo America

A sample application can be obtained by contacting the MRAI Office

- Consider asking for all their social media "handles" so judges can check their personal image.

State Entry Fee | This is up to the organization to determine, states that offer a lot to their contestants may charge more. On average state pageants are charging \$100-\$400 for an entry fee, depending on whether accommodations are included and other expense factors. You may want to require that contestants pay with a money order or a cashier's check.

State Liability Waiver | Each participant should sign a waiver before entering the pageant. See Example

Judged Categories | The Miss Rodeo America Pageant judges on the categories below:

- Horsemanship
- Appearance
- Personality
- Knowledge & Presentation

State Judges | Judges should be selected carefully with consideration of various skills and knowledge of public speaking, appearance, western fashion, rodeo, horses and pageants. Be sure they are in no way related to the contestants nor are they personal friends. Also, many states provide some financial support to judges to help with travel expenses to and from your pageant.

State Scoring | Judges should be provided with scoring sheets for all events. Scores should be tallied by a certified public accountant, **not** a pageant committee member. Each state organization is encouraged to establish a set of written guidelines for judges. This will help the judges know what to expect when they arrive to judge your pageant. State pageant scoring must be submitted to MRA by Dec. 31st.

State Pageant Personnel | Personnel that you may consider for your pageant are chaperones, drivers for your contestants and judges, entertainers willing to donate their time and a rodeo announcer for the pageant.

State Prizes | This is up to your committee to decide. Your state's budget and the availability of sponsors that are willing to donate will determine what you will be able to give.

Category Prizes | States often split them differently. Many give items for each event, while others only award the highest scores in each judged category. Below are the category awards MRAP gives with prize suggestions. Scholarships are always a good idea if funds allow.

- Appearance | Jewelry, gift certificates for boots, hats, or cosmetics.
- Personality | Jewelry, purse, or gift certificates.
- Horsemanship | tack/saddle, tooled saddle blanket, spurs or belt buckle.
- Speech | Jewelry, purse, or gift certificates.
- Congeniality | Plaque, jewelry, or crystal award.
- Winner | Saddle, Buckle, Traveling Crown to wear for the year, chaps, a scholarship and various other sponsored items.

State Titleholder Contract | This document should clearly outline your expectations of the winner and consequences if not abiding by the signed contract, i.e., if failing to complete reign all prizes, scholarships and monies will be turned over or returned to the organization. Be sure the winner signs shortly after being crowned. It is recommended that you send a copy of your contract to all contestants prior to your contest, so that they are clear, before competing, about what the expectations are.

A copy of the MRA contract can be obtained by contacting the MRAI office. ***Make sure to DATE and NOTARIZE the contract.*** Titleholder contract must be submitted to MRA by Dec. 31st.

State Grievance Policy | You should implement a Contestant Agreement, a waiver that explains the process for filing a formal complaint or grievance. A pageant grievance policy and a state organizational grievance policy must be submitted to MRA by Dec. 31st.

Additional State Pageant Considerations

Legal Review | It is recommended that you have your legal advisor check your by-laws, rulebook, liability waiver, and contract, to make sure that they protect you and your organization from possible litigation.

Complaint Process | Grievance Procedures | You may want to implement a Contestant Agreement, a waiver that explains the process for filing a formal complaint or grievance.

Background Checks | Background checks for your contestants may be considered. If you choose to do this, contestants need to sign a release that gives your organization permission to do the check. There is usually a fee associated with this process.

Facebook & other Social Media Pages | Decide whether or not the winner of your contest will be allowed to have a social networking page and include this information in their contract. Pages may be managed year after year by a member of the state board or an appointed volunteer.

Addendum D * Documents Needed for Submissions by Dec. 31st

Upload to state folder at Box.com

1. State Rulebook, including Disciplinary Matrix
2. State By-Laws
3. State Financial Report
4. State Board Member Contact List
5. State Liability Policy
6. State Meeting Minutes (from two meetings during the year)
Must be signed and dated by notetaker.
7. State Scoring System (sep. document from rulebook)
8. State Titleholder Contract
9. State Titleholder Rules
10. State Organization and Pageant Grievance Policy
11. State Board signed Conflict of Interest (due Feb 28)

**MISS RODEO STATE
Sample Meeting Agenda**

Date: _____

Location: _____

City, State: _____

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

NOTICE OF OFFICIAL MEETING VERIFICATION

ROLL CALL

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING

FINANCIAL REPORT

COMMITTEE REPORTS

NEW BUSINESS

- Titleholder General Update
- Titleholder Travel Schedule
- Fundraiser

PAGEANT BUSINESS

- Contestant Lodging
- Fashion Show
- Speech Luncheon
- Category Prizes

OTHER BUSINESS AS MAY BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ADJOURNMENT

**MISS RODEO STATE
Sample Meeting Minutes**

Date: _____

Location: _____

City, State: _____

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at ____ a.m./ p.m., Date, 20____, by Miss Rodeo State President _____.

Official meeting notice sent to members, verified by President _____

ATTENDANCE: Other Executive Board members in attendance included: list officer names and positions.

Board of Directors: President _____ called roll. Anyone holding proxy ballots was asked to acknowledge them at this time.

Jane Doe – City, State

John Doe – City, State

Introduction of Guests: _____

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION: Moved by _____, seconded by, _____ and carried to approve the _____ meeting minutes.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

NEW BUSINESS:

· Item 1 _____ MOTION: Moved by _____, seconded by, _____ and carried to _____

· Etc.

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: Moved by _____, seconded by, _____ and carried to adjourn at _____ a.m./p.m.

Jane Smith
Secretary

John Smith
President

Miss Rodeo America Inc.
PARTICIPANT RELEASE FORM

In consideration of my participation in the Miss Rodeo America Pageant, in accordance with the rules of such pageant, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt of which is acknowledged, I, the undersigned contestant, represent, warrant and agree to the following:

1. **Age; Citizenship.** I state that I am: (a) over 20 years of age currently and will have reached 21 by November 1 of this year and legally authorized to execute this Release, and (b) a citizen or legal resident of the United States of America. I further state that all participant information stated below is true and correct.
2. **Authorization to Use Images.** I authorize Miss Rodeo America Inc. and their licensees, representatives, successors and assigns, (collectively "MRA") to use my name, voice, likeness, images or signature (collectively referred to as "Images") in any manner and in any medium and for any purpose which they choose, including without limitation print, radio, television, audio-visual recording, electronic or magnetic media, computer disks, computer file servers, CD-ROM's, on the Internet, including the World Wide Web, or in any type of computer network or for advertising in or for any of those media. The Images used may include still images, motion pictures, videotape, audio- visual recordings, live or recorded broadcasts. I further waive any right I may have to approve any Image or its use in any future materials. I further grant MRA the right to edit, alter or modify any image in any manner it deems appropriate.
3. **Perpetual Right to Use Images.** This authorization includes a perpetual license to use my Images and to license or permit others to use, post, copy or reproduce such Images. I further authorize MRA or their licensees to alter, edit or modify the appearance of my Images in any manner they deem appropriate for use in such media.
4. **Assignment of Any Rights in Images.** To the extent I may have any rights in the Images, I assign any rights I may have in the images, including copyright, to MRA.
5. **Image Release.** I release and discharge MRA, its licensees, successors, assigns, agents, employees and representatives from any and all claims, demands and liabilities arising out of or related to their use of my Images in any manner reasonably contemplated by this agreement, including without limitation any claims for defamation, libel, slander, invasion of privacy or infringement of the right of publicity.
6. **Indemnity.** I agree to indemnify and hold MRA harmless from any and all claims, demands, actions or causes of action (including attorneys' fees) based upon, arising out of or related to: (a) MRA's use of my Images as described in this agreement, (b) any violation by me of this agreement, and (c) any false or misleading statements made by me in connection with the information I have provided to MRA related to the subject matter of this agreement.
7. **Right to Edit Images.** It shall be within MRA's sole discretion to determine if, where, how and in what manner my Images are used. I grant MRA the right to alter or edit the Images as it may deem necessary or appropriate.
8. **No Additional Compensation.** Except as specifically stated otherwise in a written agreement by MRA, I acknowledge that no additional compensation is due to me for the use of my Images as contemplated by this agreement.
9. **Arbitration.** In the event of a dispute arising out of or related to the subject matter of this agreement, I agree that such matter will be resolved by binding arbitration by an arbitrator to be mutually selected by the parties. In the event that the parties are not able to agree upon an arbitrator one shall be selected in accordance with the rules for commercial arbitration of the American Arbitration Association and the arbitration shall be held in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. Any such arbitration shall be held in the State of Colorado.
10. **Assumption of Risk/Acknowledgment of Inherent Danger:** As part of my participation in the Miss Rodeo America Pageant, I understand that I will be asked to participate in certain rodeo activities, related activities or other activities where horses, livestock and other large animals may be present or involved. I represent and warrant that I am experienced in these and similar activities. These activities are or may be inherently risky, and I know that the risks involved include the risk of potential death or serious bodily injury. I state that I am aware of the risks of being involved in these activities. I further represent and warrant that I am voluntarily participating in these activities, knowing the potential risks involved. I release and discharge MRAI and all of its employees, agents, representatives, volunteers, officers and director from any and all liability of every kind and nature that may be involved in participating in these types of activities.
11. **Background Checks:** Contestant consents to allow MRAI to run a background check prior to their acceptance as a contestant in the Miss Rodeo America Pageant.

Date: _____
Signature of Participant _____

Participant Information

Name Printed _____
Address _____
Telephone Number _____
Date of Birth _____
Citizenship _____