2026 Hispanic Heritage

Queen, Princess, and Sweetheart Contests

Rules & Regulations

The title of Lea County Hispanic Heritage Queen, Princess, Sweetheart holds a place of honor and prestige. This title represents our culture and the quality of leadership among young women in Lea County.

The objective of the Lea County Hispanic Heritage Royalty Contest is to select a representative for the Lea County Hispanic Heritage Celebration. The Queen will serve as an ambassador of the Lea County Hispanic Heritage Celebration to the general public. She must at all times exhibit good sportsmanship, as well as high moral and ethical standards. The young lady that holds this title must be able to speak intelligently, with authority, and with knowledge of Lea County and the Lea County Hispanic Heritage. She is expected to act, speak, and dress according to the prestige the title deserves at all times during her reign as the Lea County Hispanic Heritage Queen.

The value of winning the Lea County Hispanic Heritage Queen title is limitless and the experience gained will enrich a young woman's life in countless ways. The Lea County Hispanic Heritage Queen is an official representative of the Lea County Hispanic Heritage Celebration and should constantly be aware of the value of her image in the general public and with the Lea County Fair & Rodeo officials.

You must attend the **Meet & Greet** which will be held on

Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 6:00 pm

In the Fair Board Meeting Room, located at 101 S. Commercial St.
on the Lea County Fairgrounds in Lovington, NM.

Completed and notarized entry forms
must be turned in by the contestant
no later than May 15, 2026.

All questions, comments and concerns will be taken during this time as well.

THE HISPANIC HERITAGE QUEEN, PRINCESS, AND SWEETHEART
2026 CONTEST RULES & REGULATIONS

1. Queen contestants must be 17 years old by January 1, 2026, and may not have turned 24 years old before December 31, 2026. Princess contestants must be 13 years old by January 1, 2026, and up to 16 years old by December 31, 2026. Sweetheart Contestants must be 9 years old by January 1, 2026, and up to 12 years old by December 31, 2026.
2. ***Contestant must be bilingual.*** Contestants are responsible for giving their speech to a civic group.
3. The contestant shall be a single girl, never have been married and never to have had a child or minor dependent.
4. The contestant must be enrolled in a Lea County school and/or must prove residency in Lea County for a consecutive period of 12 months prior to the day of the entry deadline. The Hispanic Heritage Committee reserves the right to request proof of residency.
5. A candidate will be chosen to reign as the 2026-2027 Hispanic Heritage Queen, Princess, or Sweetheart. The contestant must understand that if she is currently holding another title and wins the title of Hispanic Heritage Queen, Princess, or Sweetheart, she may continue to hold both titles only if she commits to the Hispanic Heritage Celebration as her first priority.
6. Inappropriate (for example public display of affection with a boyfriend, inappropriate dress, cell phone use) or unsportsmanlike behavior in any public forum including social media such as Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram from a title holder, contestant, parent/guardian, or anyone associated with the contestant before, during, or after the competition is cause for dismissal and relinquishment of all awards at the discretion of the Hispanic Heritage Committee and the Lea County Fair Board. Title Holders and contestants will be expected to represent Lea County and the Fair & Rodeo in a professional manner at all times.
7. At no time before, during, or after any part of the competition will a contestant, parent/guardian, or anyone associated with the contestant be allowed to approach a judge. A judge may approach a contestant after the competition with suggestions concerning areas of improvement.
8. Any discussion on any form of social media site by the contestant, parent/guardian or anyone associated with the contestant will be monitored and if deemed negative is grounds for relinquishment of any and all awards at the discretion of the Hispanic Heritage Committee, Lea County Fair Board and Lea County Board of County Commissioners.
9. Please understand that if selected as Hispanic Heritage Celebration Royalty, winners are responsible for their own transportation, clothing, and expenses incurred while representing the Hispanic Heritage Celebration. Applicants are responsible for selling luncheon tickets at $20 each. The number of tickets required to sell is based on the number of contestants; required luncheon tickets **MUST** be purchased if not sold.
10. No sponsorship donations may be taken in the name of the Hispanic Heritage Royalty Contest without the knowledge and consent of the Lea County Fair Board and the Hispanic Heritage Committee. All donations including money, clothing, etc. received by the contestant must be with the donor's knowledge and understanding that it is for personal benefit.
11. The contestant agrees that the Lea County Fair Board and the Hispanic Heritage Committee shall determine the manner and method of conducting the competition including determining time, method and manner of judging, presentation, and supervision of all awards. The recommended decision of the HH Committee will go to the Lea County Fair Board for approval to judge the various events in any and all matters pertaining to the selection of the winners shall be **FINAL** in all respects.

12. By signing and submitting this application and contract, the contestant agrees that:

- each requirement of eligibility set forth has been met
- all facts and representations presented by the contestant are true and accurate
- the contestant, parents and/or guardians will abide by all rules and regulations of the Lea County Fair Board as set forth by the Hispanic Heritage Committee in the period before and during her year of service
- the contestant has never been convicted of any criminal offense and there are no criminal charges presently pending against the contestant; contestant will not or does not curse, smoke, drink alcoholic beverages, or be under the influence of narcotics or any illegal controlled substance or engage in these type of activities at any time after her application is received by the Hispanic Heritage Committee.
- any unsatisfactory behavior before, during, or after the contest **will be cause for dismissal** of the contestant with relinquishment of her title and all awards
- the Lea County Board of County Commissioners, Lea County Fair Board and the Hispanic Heritage Committee shall have sole discretion in determining whether a contestant may continue to participate in the program in the event that any statement or representation by the contestant found not true and accurate or that any action by the contestant is inconsistent with the rules and regulations of the program

13. The contestant agrees to abide by all rules and regulations, and deadlines set forth by the Lea County Fair Board and the Hispanic Heritage Committee. When signed by the contestant and approved by the Lea County Fair Board, the rules and regulations, together with its attachments, shall solely and exclusively determine the contestant's rights, privileges, and responsibilities to the Lea County Fair Board. No other oral or written statement that is in any way inconsistent with the provisions of the rules and regulations shall be binding upon the contestant, the Lea County Board of County Commissioners, Lea County Fair Board or the Hispanic Heritage Committee.

PARTICIPATION

The elected Queen is required to attend any activities, including the judging, luncheon, and Hispanic Heritage Celebration, as well as attending the following with the newly elected Queen.

Scheduled contest activities will include, but are not limited to the following:

- Luncheons with Civic Groups
- Community Service
- Radio Interviews
- Presentations at Livestock Shows and at the Livestock Sale
- Fair Parade
- Media Activities (including, but not limited to Cinco de Mayo event)
- Prepared Speech
- Impromptu Questioning

JUDGING CRITERIA

The Hispanic Heritage Queen Contest will be judged on the criteria and requirements of this contest. The speech and interview must be given to the judge panel in Spanish & English.
A silent judge may be present to observe the Queen contestants during any given part of the contest. The silent judge's score may be included in the final score as a tie breaker.

PERSONALITY Competition

The personality portion of the contest will consist of the following criteria. Private interviews will be conducted by the judges. Contestants will be judged on:

1. **Appearance**
   - poise – posture, manners, ladylike behavior, and self-confidence
   - fashion –attire that is appropriate and stylish with particular attention given to proper fit, style, color, and coordination
   - general overall appearance, grooming, and cleanliness

2. **Private Interview**
   - conversational ability, intelligence, maturity, and common sense
   - integrity, high moral standards, sincerity, and disposition
   - genuine interest in people and consideration for other

3. **Impromptu Questions**
   - ability to respond quickly and intelligently with poise and self-control
   - ability to use proper grammar, knowledge, and delivery
   - questions may pertain to, but are not limited to the contestant's application, the contestant's speech, Lea County, fair and rodeo, or current events

SPEECH Competition (Queen, Princess & Sweetheart)

The speech portion of the contest will consist of the following criteria. Contestants will be judged on:

- **Time & Delivery (10 pts)** – 3-5 minute speech; clearly spoken, confident, maintains good presence, positive body language, enthusiasm and sincerity
- **Goals & Ambitions (20 pts)** – Clearly explains personal/community goals and how the contestant connect to the Queen's role, demonstrates leadership qualities and a desire to make a difference
- **Fair Theme (20 pts)** – mentions current fair theme by name, explains connection to the fair theme with relevance to Hispanic culture or values, shows understanding of theme's deeper meaning, integrate current theme naturally into message of the speech
- **Family Background (20 pts)** – share a brief family/cultural background story, highlight Hispanic Heritage, traditions, or values that helped shape you, reflect gratitude, humility and pride in your roots
- **Reason for wanting title (20 pts)** – provide clear and heartfelt reason you are seeking the HHC Royalty title, understands being HHC Royalty is about representation, leadership and service and not just wearing a crown, express a genuine desire to uplift the community and celebrate the Hispanic Heritage culture, demonstrate being a role model with respect, integrity and compassion.
- **Overall Impact & Creativity (10 pts)** – be engaging, emotional, authentic and provide the judges with a memorable speech that connects with the judges

SPEECH/INTERVIEW (Little Miss)

The speech/interview portion for the Little Miss contestants will consist of introducing themselves and answering a few questions from the judges.

QUEEN SCHOLARSHIP

A scholarship will be awarded to the elected Queen at the completion of her 1-year reign, and when all expectations have been met, under the PARTICIPATION category. The check will be made out to the school of her choice, with proper documentation provided by the elected Queen.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS, SPONSORS, AND RELATIVES

At no time during the contest will parents/guardians or others associated with the contestant be allowed to interfere with the judges or contest officials. This is cause for dismissal from the contest. The Lea County Fair Board and the Hispanic Heritage Committee welcome and encourage family members, relatives, and friends to attend all events as designated in the agenda. The support and assistance of friends and family during the contest is very important to the confidence and success of each contestant.

TICKET INFORMATION

The contestant's sash will be her ticket for admittance into the events at the Lea County Fair & Rodeo. Parents and chaperones are encouraged to purchase fair and rodeo tickets early. The Fair Office will have Season Passes available for purchase or General Admission tickets can be purchased online at www.leacountyfair.net

CROWNING

The coronation, for Queen, Princess and Sweetheart, will take place on Friday, July 31, 2026, during the Hispanic Heritage Concert performances, time TBD. The Little Miss contestants will be crowned at the luncheon and introduced at the concert on Friday, July 31, 2026, time TBD. All contestants are expected to appear at the coronation where the Queen, Princess and Sweetheart will be crowned. All awards and prizes will be presented during the coronation ceremony. The newly crowned Queen, Princess, Sweetheart and Little Miss contestants, along with their parents or guardians will be expected to meet briefly with the HHC Committee immediately after coronation on Friday, July 31st to sign the Prize and Award Release.

FINALITY OF JUDGES' SCORING

As a condition of entry into the Queen contest, the contestant agrees that the judges' scoring is FINAL in all aspects and not subject to appeal by any person or body; administrative or judicial.

☐ By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the terms and conditions outlined in the rules and regulations and agree to abide by them.

Contestant Signature:_____ Date: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____