



## 2017 National Scholarship Rules and Regulations

The Miss America Foundation (MAF) and the Miss America Scholarship Fund at the Community Foundation of New Jersey (CFNJ) will award scholarships under the following circumstances:

### 1) SCHOLARSHIP USAGE:

Scholarship funds may be applied to tuition, textbooks, and other appropriate mandatory educational expenses. All unusual or questionable items of expense must be referred to The Miss America Foundation (MAF) and the Community Foundation of New Jersey (CFNJ) with as much information as possible, and far enough in advance, for consideration of approval. Amounts received as scholarship payments are taxable income to the extent that they exceed "Qualified Tuition and Related Expenses." Qualified Tuition and Related Expenses are defined as tuition and fees required for a student's enrollment or attendance at an educational organization, including: tuition, fees, books, supplies, and equipment required of all students in the particular course of instruction.

Payments for on-campus room and board will be made directly to the educational institution. All such requests must be accompanied by appropriate documentation from the educational institution evidencing the charges for same. In order to qualify, contestants must maintain at least twelve (12) credit hours as a full-time student, nine (9) credit hours as a part-time student, or nine (9) credit hours as a graduate student. Payments do not cover key fees or deposits. Utilities (electric, gas, cable, phone, etc.) are also not covered.

Payment of all approved expenditures must be made directly to the college, university, or other accredited institution of higher learning as recognized by the US Department of Education upon receipt of a detailed current tuition statement reflecting a balance due to the school, unless extenuating circumstances exist (with the exception of computer or musical equipment expenses outlined in Paragraph 2 below). Payment to any non-domestic institution of higher learning must have a U.S. federal tax identification number. Personal reimbursements to scholarship recipients will not be honored. Please note, the amount requested may not exceed the amount due. When requesting an award, it is the student's responsibility to ensure proper planning and time allotment to process the scholarship request in order to meet all deadlines. The MAF and the CFNJ suggest allowing a minimum of thirty (30) days to process a scholarship request.

*Please note, it is each contestant's obligation to determine whether the scholarship, in whole or part, is includable in gross taxable income, regardless of whether a Form 1099 has been issued by either The Miss America Foundation or the CFNJ. Contestants are encouraged to consult a tax advisor regarding the taxability of the scholarship payments.*

### 2) REQUESTING USAGE:

Requests for scholarships are initially processed by The Miss America Foundation and then forwarded to the Community Foundation of New Jersey for its review and approval. Requests are processed upon written receipt of statements from colleges and schools or from the contestant for other educational expenses. All statements and invoices must be accompanied by a cover letter from the contestant.

Requests for computer or musical equipment will only be considered if the college or school states in writing that it is a mandatory requirement in order for the contestant to complete the coursework. The contestant may be reimbursed for this expense, provided the contestant submits either a letter from the school stating the mandatory requirements and a list of course requirements. However, there is a Two Thousand (\$2,000.00) Dollar cap on computer equipment, and this type of expense will only be reimbursed once. Computer software is not a reimbursable expense. If a contestant still has state or local funds available to her, then a letter from the State Executive Director stating

that they do not reimburse or pay for computers is required. The original bill of sale must be submitted, as well as the original credit card receipt or a copy of the canceled check. All credit card accounts and banking accounts must be in the name of the contestant in order to be considered.

### **3) PRIORITY OF LEVEL IN USAGE:**

Contestants must utilize and exhaust all scholarship funds awarded at the state and local level before requesting funds awarded at the national level. Verification must be submitted in writing from the State Executive Director that all local scholarship funds have been exhausted. Excluding requests for computer equipment as discussed in Paragraph 2, exceptions to this rule may be granted for payment of room and board expenses that do not fall within the guidelines for disbursement at the local level. The request for an exception must be submitted in writing to MAF and CFNJ for consideration. Scholarship funds must be paid directly to the educational institution.

### **4) STUDENT LOANS:**

Scholarships may be utilized to cover outstanding student loan obligations, provided the contestant has satisfactorily completed the coursework for which the loan was obtained. In all cases, requests must include a current bill from a bona fide third party lending institution as recognized by the US Department of Education, which must include: (1) a repayment address, (2) student account number and amount due, (3) a copy of the promissory note reflecting that the contestant is the primary responsible payer of the obligation, and (4) an official transcript reflecting completion of the coursework. Payment must be made directly to the lending institution and credited to the student's account.

### **5) USAGE FOR FUTURE EXPENSES AND FORFEITURES:**

The Award Date is the date upon which the scholarship was initially awarded (the "Award Date"). Scholarships may be utilized for future educational expenses; however, contestants must begin utilizing their scholarship funds within four (4) years of the Award Date (five (5) years for Miss America) (the "Anniversary Date"). If a contestant fails to submit a written request to MAF to utilize her scholarship funds prior to the Anniversary Date, then her scholarship funds will be forfeited. Prior to forfeiture, reasonable attempts will be made by MAF to notify the contestant of impending forfeiture. Please note, if a contestant forfeits any scholarship funds awarded at the state level, then her scholarship funds awarded at the national level will automatically be forfeited.

5A) Once a contestant begins utilizing her scholarship funds as prescribed above, she will then have ten (10) years from the Award Date to utilize her remaining scholarship funds (the "Expiration Date"). Contestants are required to show continuous activity in requesting and utilizing scholarship funds. If there occurs a continuous, uninterrupted two (2) year period in which there is no activity in the account, then the remaining balance will be forfeited. Please note, any scholarship balance remaining after the Expiration Date will automatically be forfeited.

5B) An exception to the time limits described in Paragraph 5A above may be considered if the contestant, prior to the Expiration Date, submits a written appeal to the MAF citing compelling reasons why the time period should be extended. An extension will generally be permitted when the contestant has local awards remaining within the prescribed time limits above or if the contestant wins the state title. However, the contestant must still submit a written request for extension. MAF will review the request and determine whether an extension is warranted within thirty (30) days of receipt. Consistent with the rules and regulations, the decision of the MAF shall be final and binding.

THE MISS AMERICA FOUNDATION (MAF) AND THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF NEW JERSEY (CFNJ) RESERVE THE RIGHT TO AMEND OR MODIFY THE FOREGOING SCHOLARSHIP RULES AND REGULATIONS AT ANY TIME WITHOUT NOTICE.