



# McCleary Bear Festival Ambassador Program 2024-2025 Contract, Rules, and Information



Applicants Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

Parent/Legal Guardian Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ (able to make medical decisions)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell or Home) Email: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ (2023-2024 Academic Year)

The McCleary Bear Festival is a community service organization founded in 1959 and is operated entirely by volunteers. The ambassadors' role is to represent the community in McCleary and around Western Washington, while continuing the traditions that have been passed on.

The Ambassadors, Bear Festival board/committee members, and volunteers serve as representatives of Bear Festival and the McCleary community. They participate in or co-sponsor community events year-round. All of the events involve a degree of organization and cooperation with Bear Festival committee members, volunteers, and other host organizations.

## SECTION 1: AMBASSADORS

The Ambassador program will consist of:

- 1) One Senior Queen/King
- 2) Up to 4 Senior Princesses/Princes
- 3) One Junior Queen/King
- 4) Up to 4 Junior Princesses/Princes

Bear Festival Board of Directors reserves the right to modify the number of ambassadors depending on the number of applications received.

## SECTION 2: PARTICIPANTS

The program is open to both genders.

Participants must be a resident of Fire District 12 boundaries in Grays Harbor County or attend school in the McCleary School District or the Elma School District.

Participants must be enrolled in school (be it public in McCleary School District or Elma School District, private, or approved homeschool program).

Junior Program (Princess, Prince, Queen, King) – Individual must be 10, 11 or 12 years of age during Bear Festival weekend (July 11-13, 2025)

Senior Program (Princess, Prince, Queen, King) – Individual must be 13, 14, or 15 years of age during Bear Festival weekend (July 11-13, 2025)

Participants MUST maintain a 2.5 grade point average. Check-ins with each Ambassador will occur throughout the school year to ensure the Ambassador is meeting the minimum GPA. If a contestant's GPA drops below 2.5, the participant will be dropped from the competition to permit more time for schoolwork.

Ambassadors must be unmarried, not in a co-habit relationship with a significant other, be pregnant and have no children.

Ambassadors provide their own transportation to and from Bear Festival public appearances. It is the responsibility of the Ambassador and their parent/guardian to ensure the Ambassador is at Bear Festival public appearances on time. Prior notice is required if the

parent/guardian is not available for transportation to a specific event. Every effort will be made to transport the Ambassador with parent/guardian consent.

### SECTION 3: AMBASSADOR SELECTION PROCESS

#### Phase 1

Participants must provide the following items by November 1, 2024 to be reviewed and considered for Phase 2 by selected panel:

1. Fully completed application.
  - a. Please mail to: McCleary Bear Festival, PO Box 408, McCleary, WA 98557 (must be postmarked by November 1, 2024. b. Or scan and email to: [bearfestival@gmail.com](mailto:bearfestival@gmail.com)
2. 200-word (minimum) statement describing what community service means to you. Essay must be written by Ambassador applicant (no parent/guardian participation)
3. Three (3) professional reference letters (i.e., teacher, coach, pastor, school counselor) mailed or emailed with application.

#### Phase 2

Selected participants will be notified on November 4, 2024 and must complete the following tasks:

1. Complete vision board based on instructions provided by Bear Festival Board 2. Present vision board to selected panel on November 15, 2024 (tentative).

Selection panel will make final choices of Ambassadors based on results of Phase 1 and Phase 2 process. Announcement will be made to each individual on November 18, 2024 and will be expected to attend the November Bear Festival meeting (tentative 11/19/24). The first event for the newly selected Ambassadors is December 7th, 2024 for Christmas in McCleary – including Santa Breakfast and Tree Auction, Jingle Bell Trot and Train Lighting (tentative).

### SECTION 4: AMBASSADOR RULES & EXPECTATIONS

To ensure a successful year, everyone (Ambassadors, parents/guardians) must understand and comply with the rules and expectations.

The Ambassadors will follow the rules and procedures:

- 1) Grounds for immediate dismissal from the program by the Ambassador Director and Co-Chairperson are: Public profanity, physical violence, use or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs or tobacco products, illegal activity, marriage, cohabitating with a significant other, children or pregnancy, or suspension from school. The dismissal will be recorded with the Bear Festival Board and the decision is final. Dismissal from the program disqualifies the individual from future participation in program.
- 2) Ambassadors are representatives of McCleary Bear Festival. Behavior and attitude are taken into account throughout the year. Ambassadors are expected to act in a positive, respectful manner throughout the year (both as part of Bear Festival and as a community member) and any complaint from the community regarding Ambassadors or their parent/guardian are taken seriously. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be documented with direct impact to graduating to the next level of Ambassador.
- 3) If the Ambassador does not complete the full reign of office, the Ambassadors unpaid clothing, crown(s), and all other accessories and items provided must be returned to the Ambassador Director within one week of leaving the Bear Festival Program, and forfeit all scholarship, or you will be billed for the items not returned. Full reign of office includes the following MANDATORY activities (at a minimum):
  - Santa Breakfast and Tree Auction – December 7, 2024
  - Silent Auction and Dinner – March 15, 2025
  - McCleary Bear Festival – July 11, 12, 13, 2025
    - Ambassador is expected to attend ALL events pertaining to the Ambassador program including coronation, parade, assisting with stew, and participating in assisting where needed. NO EXCEPTIONS.
  - List of parades, public events, community service, fundraisers are established at the beginning of the year.

- 4) Ambassadors must treat other Ambassadors, board members, community members, and volunteers with respect at all times.
- 5) Use of electronic devices is prohibited while representing Bear Festival. This includes parades, fundraisers, public events, and community service.
- 6) Unless specified, activities on the float while riding are limited to pre-choreographed dance and waving. Ambassadors will not horseplay or allow others on the float. Only assigned volunteers or chaperones are allowed to accompany the float during official parades. Volunteers and chaperones will dress appropriately and will represent Bear Festival in the same manner expected by Ambassadors. Only Ambassadors and float crew accompanying the float are allowed on the float, unless approved by Ambassador Director or Co-Chairperson. Parent/legal guardians accompanying Ambassador to a parade are responsible for the behavior and well-being of the participant.
- 7) Public display of affection (PDA) is strictly prohibited and will be cause for removal from specific event, up to removal from the Ambassador program.
- 8) If an Ambassador has or gets any visible tattoos, hennas, or body piercing, gauges (other than ear piercing), they are asked to try to conceal them or remove them if possible, during appearances or anytime they are representing Bear Festival. All hair color must be preapproved by Ambassador Director PRIOR to making any changes.
- 9) Any Junior Ambassador crowned Queen/King will automatically receive a place in the Bear Festival Senior Ambassador program as a Princess/Prince.
- 10) Ambassadors and parent/legal guardian must adhere to the Bear Festival Social Media Contract.
- 11) Ambassadors and parent/legal guardian, whose name is signed on the contract give permission to McCleary Bear Festival and their licenses to use photographs and video for publicity purposes in connection with the festival.
- 12) Gossip from members, and/or parents pertaining to Bear Festival, other members, (current or previous years), will not be tolerated and is grounds for disciplinary actions or dismissal. If you have a concern of any issue(s) with Bear Festival or an Ambassador, contact the Ambassador Director and Co-Chairperson to discuss the issue to avoid the matter being misconstrued or elevated beyond being reconciled.
- 13) Ambassadors including parents/legal guardians will assist with the float preparations, and set-up and tear-down at parades. Everyone will help and can only be dismissed by the Ambassador Director, Co-Chairperson, or Float Setup Officials when all work is complete. Dismantling of the float must be completed by October 1, 2025 to allow for maintenance and preparation for the next year.
- 14) If selected as an Ambassador, the Senior Royalty will be required to be on the float at all scheduled parades, unless specified by the Ambassador Director. Senior Royalty will conduct practice weekly to learn the dance routines. Preparedness will determine if a member will attend that weekends parade event. The Junior Royalty will not travel with the float unless a Senior Royalty is unable to arrange for another available senior substitute and there is an open stand available. If Junior Royalty is needed, it will be decided by the Ambassador Director on a case-by-case basis and Juniors will be on a rotating basis, so all have an opportunity if one is available. All Royalty will participate in Bear Festival event the second weekend in July.
- 15) Ambassadors must be reliable, on time, well-groomed and dressed appropriately upon arrival for meetings and appearances. All Ambassadors are busy with homework, school activities, their social life, and family activities, however, entering the program as a participant requires commitment from participant and their parent/guardian and must be the top priority at during required events and meetings. Schedules change and availability is especially important. Jobs and other outside activities may need to be put on hold until the end of the season annual commitment. Only serious and unforeseeable events will be acceptable excuses for tardiness or absence. This means that a required scheduled Bear Festival activity that is missed for any other reason, is considered an unexcused absence. It will be determined by the Ambassador Director and Co-Chairperson if an absence or lack of attendance is valid for disqualification from program. Ambassador Director will provide at least a two-week window for all mandatory appearances being added to master schedule throughout the season.
- 16) Parents of Ambassadors are considered representatives of McCleary Bear Festival and City of McCleary. Parents are equally responsible when chaperoning their child to maintain an appropriate attitude and conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Parents are expected to participate in volunteering at the mandatory events, maintain a positive attitude, and dress appropriately for each event they attend.

- 17) Absences (both excused and unexcused) and tardiness (both excused and unexcused) will be documented by the Bear Festival Board. The dismissal of any Ambassador will be recorded with Bear Festival Board and the decision is final. Dismissal from the program disqualifies individual from future participation in program.
- 18) If an Ambassador has an emergency requiring being late or missing a scheduled Bear Festival event or activity, the member must call the Ambassador Director or Board Member leading the activity. Late arrival is 10-minutes past arranged time.
- 19) Using a cell phone/texting during a Bear Festival event or activity is NOT allowed. If you bring out the cell phone during an appearance the Ambassador Director will hold onto the phone until the end of the appearance.
- 20) During all Bear Festival events and activities, the Ambassadors will be chaperoned by Ambassador Director, Co-Chairperson, or Bear Festival Committee approved/assigned member by the Ambassador Director.
- 21) If the Queen/King should resign, the alternate is at the SOLE DISCRETION of the Board. Same rule follows if another Ambassador member should resign.
- 22) Ambassadors crowned Queen/King may not run again. Previous Ambassadors may re-apply, as long as their term was not ended due to a termination recorded by the board.
- 23) Decisions of the Executive Officers of the Bear Festival panel will be final.

## Section 5: APPEARANCES

- 1) Ambassadors and their parent/legal guardians understand that they will be expected to participate and help with functions/events (weekend or otherwise) as requested by the Bear Festival Committee. Some examples include, but are not limited to:
  - Monthly meetings which are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm at the Community Center.
  - Fundraising (dates TBD)
  - Choreography practice (dates TBD pending Queens' song selection and choreography)
  - Parades (draft schedule will be provided in January and is subject to changes)
  - Bear Festival (2nd weekend in July)
    - Ambassadors will be asked to spend time during the festival with various activities throughout the ENTIRE WEEKEND, beginning with Friday morning, July 11, 2025 and concluding on Sunday, July 13, 2025 in the evening. A complete schedule will be provided prior to festival.

## Section 6: SPONSORSHIP

- 1) Ambassadors understand that they are required to obtain a minimum of \$500.00 for Seniors and \$300.00 for Juniors in sponsorships from businesses and/or individuals. Sponsorship letters will be provided to each Ambassador.
- 2) Sponsorship minimums must be met by March 1, 2025, prior to any clothing purchases being made for any Ambassador.
- 3) Ambassadors understand that failure to meet sponsorship requirements is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program by the Ambassador Director and Co-Chairperson.
- 4) Sponsorship solicitation should be completed by the Ambassador. Parent/guardian may assist however, the sponsorship requests must be done by the Ambassador.
- 5) Excess sponsorship money will roll into the Bear Festival general fund to be used toward activities throughout the year (including Bear Festival weekend).

## Section 7: CLOTHING

- 1) Bear Festival will pre-purchase crown and sash for each Ambassador following selection and prior to sponsorship requirements being met.
- 2) Ambassadors and parent/legal guardians understand that they are responsible for providing initial temporary attire items that are to be utilized for appearances and are to be worn only as directed by the Ambassador Director (i.e. pair of jeans, t-shirt, shoes). This will likely include Santa Breakfast.

- 3) Senior Queen/King, with the oversight of Ambassador Director, will choose each Ambassadors official wardrobe and will pay up to \$500.00 for Seniors and \$300.00 for Juniors of the overall cost of the garments that will be worn on the float and at special public appearances. Attire will be purchased following sponsorship commitments being met by March 1, 2025.
- 4) Ambassadors will be responsible to pay the difference of the overall cost or participate in fundraising efforts to cover additional attire expenses voted on by the Ambassadors for that given season.
- 5) Prior to each event each participant will be notified of attire.
- 6) Ambassador is responsible to replace any lost or damaged garments, accessories, or other items provided prior to participating in next appearance. Missed appearances due to lost or damaged garments will count as an unexcused absence. Formal and day wear must be clean, free of tears, and have an overall appearance that represent McCleary Bear Festival.
- 7) If the Ambassador does not complete the full reign of office, the members unpaid clothing, crown(s), and all other accessories and items provided must be returned to the Ambassador Director within one week of leaving the Bear Festival Program, or you will be billed for the items not returned.

## Section 8: BUTTONS

- 1) Ambassadors understand that they are required to sell a minimum of 250 buttons for Juniors and 400 buttons for Seniors, with support provided by Ambassador Director and Co-Chairperson, as well as additional volunteer sign-up opportunities arranged at local McCleary merchant locations.
- 2) Ambassadors understand that they are responsible for all buttons signed out to sell. Ambassadors will be responsible to make weekly deposits at Our Community Credit Union (OCCU). Ambassadors will turn in any unsold buttons and all money collected from their button sales on the July 11, 2025.
- 3) Buttons will be distributed by the Bear Festival Board and will be in the safekeeping of the Board.
- 4) Ambassadors understand that they will receive 10% of their total button sales at the end of October 2025, as long as Ambassador has fulfilled all obligations of their contract.
- 5) While button sales are an important part of Bear Festival, they do not bear any weight on who will be selected as the next Queen or King.
- 6) Ambassadors are expected to do the work. Parents may chaperone, but it is the responsibility of the ambassador to achieve their goal. Parents may not participate in promoting or selling buttons.

## SECTION 9: AWARDS

Directors Award: The Ambassador member who shows the most improvement and commitment, as well as positive attitude (including attendance to scheduled appearances), to Bear Festival during their reign, will receive a special Directors Award, voted on by the Bear Festival Board members and/or selected panel. Criteria for this award includes, but is not limited to:

- Participating in all assigned appearances
- Hair combed, and away from your face
- Wearing assigned clothing and/or jewelry for the event (clean and wrinkle free)
- Arriving to event on time
- Showing up with a cheerful positive attitude
- Phones left in or car or at home
- Follow directions given by Ambassador Director or Co-Chairperson etc. at assigned event
- Be prepared to interact with the public at the assigned event

Senior Queens Award: The Ambassador member who embodies the spirit of Bear Festival will receive a special Queens Award.

## SECTION 10: SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP

All Senior Royalty must complete the full reign (12 Months) of office as Queen/King to receive the scholarship. Resigning or termination of reign will result in forfeiting scholarship.

- 1) \$1,000.00 post High School education/training program scholarship awarded to crowned Senior Queen/King who completes 12month reign.
- 2) The Senior recipients must be enrolled in a post High School education/training program and request scholarship, in writing, to be issued within three years of high school graduation, or all Scholarship monies will be forfeited.
- 3) Scholarship funds can first be requested following the completion of two quarters or one semester by providing proof of enrollment for third quarter or second semester.
- 4) The Senior recipient’s scholarship money will be sent to the education/training program directly upon evidence of enrollment to a post High School education/training program. No funds will be issued directly to an individual.

## SECTION 11: JUDGING

Ambassadors understand that the McCleary Bear Festival Senior Queen/King and Junior Queen/King and will be chosen based on the following criteria:

- 1) Public speaking engagements, community service hours, attendance and participation effort at functions/events, essay, interview, and academics.
  - Public speaking: Scheduled appearances TBD (i.e. Chamber meeting, City Council meeting, etc.).
  - Community Service: All Ambassadors must complete a minimum of 50-hours of community services. Select Ambassador appearances will count toward community service hours. Other organized programs’ community service hours may not be used toward Bear Festival hours.
  - Attendance: Includes monthly meetings, events, and scheduled appearances. The expectation is that the Ambassador and parent/guardian are in attendance for all mandatory events, including monthly meetings. The Ambassador Director will track attendance.
  - Essay: 500-word essay for Seniors and 250-word essay for Juniors and to be written on a day chosen, prior to festival weekend with one board member and Ambassador Director present.
  - Interview: All Ambassadors will complete an interview, prior to festival weekend, with a panel of Bear Festival board members and community members on a chosen day.
  - Academics: Pass/Fail – at any time the Ambassador GPA drops below 2.5 during check ins, the Ambassador will be removed from the program to focus on academics.
- 2) Crowning will take place at coronation ceremony on Friday, July 11, 2025 at 5:00pm. Coronation is not optional. Failure to attend coronation will be considered resigning from the program.
- 3) Ambassadors understand that if they are not crowned Queen/King, they are still obligated to fulfill contract term following coronation. If Ambassador fails to fulfill those obligations through October 2025, they automatically forfeit share of button sales and will no longer be eligible to run for program in the future.

## Section 12: CONCLUSION

Participant and parent/legal guardian, please sign below that you have read and understand the Ambassador Contract, Rules and Information and initial the bottom of each of the previous five (5) required pages.

X \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Guardian Signature    Date

Participant Signature    Date

X \_\_\_\_\_

MBF Ambassador Director Signature    Date