

trust tradition

Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association Association des Femmes Cries de Eeyou Istchee

STATEMENT CONCERNING THE NEW ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA OF THE MEEI PAGEANT

In this present statement, we wish to address the new eligibility criteria to enter the 3rd annual 2021 edition of the Miss Eeyou-Eenou Iskwaau (MEEI), formerly known as Miss Eeyou-Eenou Nation (MEEN) pageant. The MEEI pageant aims to empower our young Eeyou/Eenou ladies and give one of them the opportunity of a lifetime to travel and represent our Cree Nation. Originally the MEEI pageant was formed for the winner to compete in the Miss Indian World (MIW) in Alburquerque, NM. Now we have the option for the MEEI to travel to a international or national conference if she does not meet the MIW pageant criteria or desires to travel to a conference as a representative of the Cree Nation.

The MIW eligibility criteria has understandable guidelines, but some of our Cree girls may not meet all the criteria, but still clearly exhibits a role model/princess lifestyle. This was taken into consideration while oraganizing the 3rd edition of MEEI: the committee discussed the subject of the MIW criteria and it was collectively decided that we need to give other Cree girls an opportunity to enter the MEEI pageant as some may not meet the criteria.

While the MIW rules and criteria exclude certain women from participation, it is CWEIA's intent to be more inclusive for our Cree girls. The criteria for MEEI now allows Cree girls to enter the pageant if she has children, and now open to ages 16-35 years old. It is, however, necessary for the candidate who wins the MEEI pageant to travel and speak at various events. Therefore it would make it difficult for those who are pregnant during their reign as MEEI princess; to make it clear the MEEI princess cannot be pregnant during the reign. Please note that CWEIA will not be responsible for child care fees if the MEEI princess has children.

In our traditional views, women are the backbone of our families and nation. It is our mission to value and empower women of all backgrounds as a way to strengthen our communities and our nation. In this case, the MEEI pageant is specifically aimed at the young women in our membership who are seeking experiences that will shape them into stronger, more outspoken leaders.

For more information, please email our Events & Communications Coordinator, Trudy Longchap at ecc@cweia.ca

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