



STATE OF FLORIDA

JAMES UTHMEIER
ATTORNEY GENERAL

April 10, 2026

Robin Fleming
Chief Executive Officer
Miss America IP, Inc.
11924 Forest Hill Boulevard, Suite 10A, #176
Wellington, Florida 33414

Keith Williams
Executive Director
Miss Florida Scholarship Program, Inc.
2401 Carolina Avenue
Lakeland, Florida 33803

Dear Ms. Fleming:

I have learned that your organization, Miss America IP, Inc. (“Miss America”), along with its state affiliate, Miss Florida Scholarship Program, Inc. (“Miss Florida”), stripped Kayleigh Bush of her title as Miss North Florida 2025, as well as her scholarship, and barred her from moving to the next stage of competition for refusing to sign a contract that would require her to compete against men. Despite advertising that Miss America and Miss Florida are beauty competitions open only to female competitors, your organizations misled Kayleigh and the public by allowing certain men to compete as well. This bait-and-switch tactic may violate Florida’s Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act (“FDUTPA”).

In early 2024, Kayleigh set a goal of becoming Miss Florida. Before competing for Miss Florida, she needed to win the Miss Freedom USA Pageant, a required preliminary qualifier for Miss Florida. To compete in Miss Florida, a competitor must first become a member of Miss America, and then she can register for Miss Florida.¹ Miss America’s and Miss Florida’s websites advertise that to be eligible for their competitions, contestants must “be a female.”² Additionally, the Miss Freedom USA Pageant’s 2024 pageant rules required that delegates

¹ *Compete for the Title of Miss Florida & Miss Florida’s Teen*, missflorida.org/compete (last visited Apr. 9, 2026) (“To register with the Miss America organization, which is required before competing in programs throughout the state of Florida, click the link below.”).

² *Check Eligibility First*, Miss America, missamerica.org/signup/ (last visited Apr. 9, 2026) (explaining that “to compete as an at-large, local or state participant for ... Miss America” a contestant must, among other things, “be a female”); *Compete for the title of Miss Florida & Miss Florida’s Teen*, Miss Florida, missflorida.org/compete (last visited Apr. 9, 2026) (same).

“[b]e a female” and that “[d]elegates will consist of girls and women, ages 4 and up.”³ Nothing in these public-facing representations defined “girls,” “women,” or “female” as anything other than biological females. Nor was there any public indication that males (or a subset of males) would be allowed to compete.

In relying on these representations, Kayleigh prepared for the competitions by hiring coaches, taking dance lessons, purchasing a formal gown and custom-made patriotic wear, and obtaining a pageant-headshot photograph. In late 2024, her hard work paid off when she won the Miss Freedom USA Pageant and was crowned Miss North Florida and received a \$500 scholarship. But her joy was short-lived. Miss Florida quickly informed her that despite its earlier representations, she would now need to sign a contract that allowed men to compete against her by defining “female” to include “an individual who has fully completed sex reassignment surgery via vaginoplasty (from male to female) with supporting medical documentation and records.”⁴

Kayleigh refused to sign this contract, citing the fact that Miss America and Miss Florida led her to believe that their competitions only include females. Her refusal led to Miss Florida stripping Kayleigh of her title and scholarship and barring her from further competition. By misrepresenting their competitions to Kayleigh, Miss America and Miss Florida may have violated Florida law.

Under FDUTPA, section 501.204(1), Florida Statutes, prohibits “[u]nfair methods of competition, unconscionable acts or practices, and unfair or deceptive acts or practices in the conduct of any trade or commerce.” A “representation or omission” that is “likely to deceive a consumer acting reasonably in the same circumstances” constitutes an unfair trade practice.⁵ Because FDUTPA “is designed to protect not only the rights of litigants, but also the rights of the consuming public at large,” “a party asserting a deceptive trade practice claim need not show actual reliance on the representation or omission at issue.”⁶ An “advertisement is considered deceptive if it has the capacity to convey misleading impressions to consumers even though nonmisleading interpretations may be possible.”⁷

Here, Miss America and Miss Florida made false and misleading representations about their beauty competitions. Both organizations made statements advertising that only females can compete, when in fact men are apparently also permitted to compete. Nowhere on either organizations’ websites are there any disclosures that men may compete.⁸

³ Miss Freedom USA, *Policies and Guidelines*, (2024). It appears that the Miss Freedom USA Pageant removed the requirement that delegates “be a female”; however, the pageant still advertises that “[d]elegates will consist of girls and women, ages 4 and up.” See *Pageant Rules*, Miss Freedom USA, <https://www.missfreedomusa.com/pageant/rules/> (last visited Apr. 9, 2026).

⁴ *Delegate Agreement*, Miss America <https://lc.org/PDFs/Attachments2PRsLAs/2025/2025-MAO-Contract-KB-Amendments.pdf> (last visited Apr. 9, 2026).

⁵ *Davis v. Powertel, Inc.*, 776 So. 2d 971, 974 (Fla. 1st DCA 2000).

⁶ *State, Off. of Atty. Gen., Dep’t of Legal Affs. v. Wyndham Int’l, Inc.*, 869 So. 2d 592, 598 (Fla. 1st DCA 2004) (citing *Davis*, 776 So. 2d at 973).

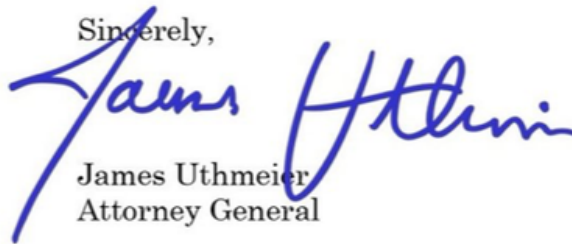
⁷ *Dep’t of Legal Affs. v. Father & Son Moving & Storage, Inc.*, 643 So. 2d 22, 26 (Fla. 4th DCA 1994) (citing *Chrysler Corp. v. F.T.C.*, 561 F.2d 357 (D.C. Cir. 1977)).

⁸ Not even Miss Florida’s diversity website page discloses any indication that men are allowed to compete. See *Our Mission*, Miss Florida, missflorida.org/our-mission (last visited Apr. 9, 2026).

In fact, Miss America and Miss Florida go above and beyond to represent that their organizations are only for women. For example, Miss America's website states that "Miss America is more than a competition—it's the nation's most iconic platform for *women* to rise, lead, and inspire."⁹ Similarly, Miss Florida's website proudly declares that the "Miss Florida crown fits every great *woman*, because every great *woman* fits the Miss Florida crown."¹⁰ Consequently, by promoting their competitions as female-only and then surreptitiously allowing certain men to compete, Miss America and Miss Florida are engaging in a wrongful bait-and-switch advertising scheme targeting young women.

By misleading Kayleigh and other Florida women, Miss America and Miss Florida undermine the values they claim to advance—female well-being. Both organizations should disallow men from competing in their pageants. These organizations cannot operate under the false and misleading title of "Miss" if indeed they are open to male participants. Failure to take corrective steps may result in enforcement action. No later than May 1, 2026, please specify what corrective actions your organizations have taken to make clear to the public whether your pageants are for females only or are also open to males (or a subset of males who identify as female).

Sincerely,



James Uthmeier
Attorney General

⁹ *Miss America Opportunity*, Miss America, missamerica.org/ (last visited Apr. 9, 2026) (emphasis added).

¹⁰ *Home*, Miss Florida, missflorida.org/ (last visited Apr. 9, 2026) (emphasis added).