

6. Acts should meet with the show coordinator or emcee a minimum of 45 minutes to an hour prior to the show to get checked in.
7. Acts will need name, complete address, birth date, age, phone number (include area code), email and type of talent. Multiple acts need one member to act as a contact person with all information going through them. Additional members of the act need only birth date, age, and town. **DO NOT PROVIDE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS TO LOCAL SHOW COORDINATORS.**

Please only provide contact information for the act themselves or their parent/guardian to Iowa State Fair staff. DO NOT provide information for a coach or instructor, we prefer to work directly with the parent or guardian.

8. Acts are asked to not dance onto or off the stage. After introductions, you may take any position you wish to begin your performance.
9. Vocalists can perform with an accompanist or prerecorded track on a USB flash drive. Prerecorded tracks should be instrumental only. Any prerecorded track with backing vocals is not allowed, and the act will be disqualified.
10. Looping (typically seen in vocal or instrumental performances) is allowed as part of an act as long as each loop is performed live on stage. Previously recorded loops will not be allowed. Looping equipment must be provided by the contestant.
11. Foul language is not allowed in the Bill Riley Talent Search. Acts performing to or singing pieces with inappropriate lyrics will be disqualified and the show coordinator should encourage performers to compete with a different song.
12. Contestants may only appear once in any given show. This applies to qualifying shows as well as the competition at the Iowa State Fair. They may not perform "solo" and then return in the same show in a duet or trio. Contestants are allowed to perform in different acts in different shows, but they may only qualify for the State Fair Show with one act. Once a performer has qualified for the State Fair they are not allowed to perform in local shows as part of another act. They may keep competing in local shows with the qualifying performance.
13. Only one qualifier from each division (Sprout and Senior) of a local show is permitted to advance to the Iowa State Fair. **NO TIES** are permitted in all placing.
14. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of Iowa State Fair staff or Bill Riley Jr.

Competition at the Iowa State Fair

- Preliminary rounds: First 7 days
- Semi finals: Days 8, 9, and 10
- Championship show: Day 11

Semi-Finalists: Semi-finalists from the 2025 Iowa State Fair Bill Riley Talent Search are automatically qualified for the 2026 Iowa State Fair competition. You do not have to re-qualify by winning at the local level show, but you are encouraged to compete at local shows. If you win at the local level show, you are entitled to the prize money, but you must inform the emcee that you have already qualified for the State Fair. The second place winner will then be able to advance to the State Fair competition.

Birthdays and Semi-Finalists: 2025 semi-finalists returning in 2026 will perform in the division for their current age as of the last day of the 2026 Iowa State Fair.

Iowa State Fair Championship Show:

Sprout Division Champions: There will be 6 Sprout Champions showcased in the Championship Show. Sprout Champions in the Sprout division must sit out one year of competition. They also must re-qualify when returning after the one-year absence, and be 12 years old or less to compete in the Sprout division. Sprouts may compete the next year IF they have aged up to the Senior Division. In order to do this, they MUST requalify at a local show.

Senior Division Championship: There will be 9 finalists in competition. All finalists in the Senior division must sit out one year - they cannot perform as an individual or in a group during the next year. They also must re-qualify when returning after the one-year absence, and be 21 years old or less. The "Grand Champion" of the Senior division is no longer allowed to compete in the Bill Riley Talent Search at the local or Iowa State Fair level.

Tonya Cook, Bill Riley Jr.

Please email any questions to rileytalentsearch@gmail.com or call 515-262-3111.