COSPLAY PERFORMANCE SHOWCASE 2026

The METROCON Cosplay Performance Showcase will be a showcase of entertainment and performance in cosplay! Contestants are encouraged to submit any kind of performance, and will be judged on performance alone with no craftsmanship requirements.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

The contest will take place on **Friday, July 31** at the Tampa Bay Convention Center.

All contestants must have a valid pass for **Friday** of METROCON.

All entrants must fill out an online application form on the METROCON website to be considered. You must use your legal name and information on the application (preferred name will be used onstage). There will be NO onsite applications available at the convention.

Contestants must be age 13+ (please refer to the Junior Cosplay Showcase for entrants 12 and under). Contestants under 18 must be accompanied to the show by a legal adult that is their responsible party (Parent, Guardian, Sibling, Cousin, Teacher, Friend etc.).

Applications will close **May 15, 2026 at 11:59 PM.** Applications are not "first come, first served" but reviewed by a juried process and contestants notified of acceptance or denial by **May 30, 2025.** At this time, applications may reopen if there is still room.

Contest will be limited to 10 participants.

Applications will be accepted based on whether contestants adhere to the rules, costume has been proven to either exist or will exist (to prevent drop-outs) and proven quality for competition.

Costumes and Performance material may not exceed a PG13 rating (at the discretion of the cosplay leadership). Costumes may not be historically or culturally offensive. Please reach out to cosplay@metroconventions.com with questions regarding this policy.

All props must comply with METROCON prop policy and must be checked for safety prior to entering the convention.

Contestants may not throw anything into the audience or enter the audience during the contest.

All contestants must arrive to check-in **90 minutes** prior to the contest start for a brief rehearsal and technical checks. All contestants must arrive in costume and ready to perform.

If a contestant requires assistance getting on a stage with stairs, please notify cosplay staff in the application so that reasonable accommodations may be made.

While cosplay performances will be pre-screened by our METROCON cosplay staff, they will not be seen by our Cosplay Special Guest judges until performance.

Performances that have won any 'Best of' awards in any previous contests at any convention are not permitted, regardless of upgrades or modifications. Contestants MUST compete with the performance chosen by the jury at application UNLESS it has won a Best in Show award after acceptance into the contest and prior to the convention, or there are other extenuating circumstances evaluated by the Cosplay Department.

The results of our judges are binding and final. Harassment of Judges or Cosplay Staff over disagreement of awards will not be tolerated and may result in being banned from future METROCON contests. If feedback is desired from judges, please request this after the contest via email to cosplay@metroconventions.com.

METROCON staff reserves the right to disqualify a contestant for misconduct or any reason at their sole discretion.

By submitting an entry, contestants confirm that they have read and agree to all of the rules and regulations of the METROCON Cosplay Performance Showcase, which can be modified until the day of the contest according to the needs of the organization.

PERFORMANCE

Contestants are not required to have finished their skit (costumes, props, recording) at the time of application, but will be required to submit supplemental materials to be considered.

Materials MUST include:

- Photos of WIP or completed costumes AND/OR references of costumes to be made/purchased.
- Rough draft or completed version of your entire performance script and/or outline of all stage blocking.
- Photos/references/explanations of props or set pieces to be used (if any).
- Recorded audio or planned music selections.

Optional materials:

- Recorded video of the planned performance in or out of costume.
- Videos of previous performances.

A recorded video of the planned performance will be required after acceptance and before the convention to ensure content complies with METROCON policies. This can simply be a rehearsal video/performance. Videos must be submitted by **July 5, 11:59PM.**

Performance skits must be between 30 seconds and 2:30 minutes in run length. Up to 30 seconds will be given for stage set-up and 30 seconds for clearing.

Performers may have assistance setting up and clearing with prior notification (please submit this information with file submission) but no METROCON staff or volunteers can be on stage during your performance to assist you.

Solo or group performances are allowed a **maximum group size of 6**, including stagehands.

It is prohibited to have the following onstage: fire/pyrotechnics, water or other liquids, food of any kind, anything that creates a big mess or will otherwise be difficult to clean up, may impede other contestants, or may affect other contestants' costumes (confetti, glitter, silly string etc.) Physical movement such as acrobatics and stage combat which may pose a safety concern will be evaluated during application screening.

ALL music, dialogue, and video files must be pre-recorded and submitted to cosplay@metroconventions.com by **July 5, 2026 by 11:59 PM**. There will be no live singing, speaking, or sound effects allowed beyond reasonable sounds made during acting.

You MUST adhere to the following guidelines for file submission:

Video: MP4 (h.264 or h.256 codec), 1920x1080 pixels, standard 16:9 aspect ratio (**PLEASE NOTE:** due to our main events setup, the bottom 20% of your video will NOT be viewable. Please do not put anything important in that area of your video).

Audio: MP3 or WAV, at least 44.1 hz sample rate. For MP3's, 192 kbps bitrate or higher.

If you have a still image background and audio, please combine into a video file.

Audio/dialogue must not contain inappropriate or offensive language.

You MUST use the following naming convention for your files:
stagename.video.showcase26

PERFORMANCE JUDGING CRITERIA

- Cleanliness - Is it well rehearsed?
- Composition - Does it tell a whole story and make sense to someone who doesn't know the source material?
- Movement - Is it interesting, emotional, dynamic, and well performed?
- Sound and Visual - Does the movement and/or lip synching match up to the sound? Do the additional visuals enhance the performance? Do the props and/or scenic elements enhance the performance?
- Overall Presentation

AWARDS

Prizes for awards **can** include but are **not limited to**: cash prizes, medals, trophies, METROCON merch, METROCON weekend passes for 2026, vendors room swag, professional

photoshoots, and donations of gift cards by sponsors for wigs, makeup, cosplay supplies, and more!

- Best In Show
- First Runner Up
- Second Runner Up