



NATIONAL 4-H
COUNCIL



YOUTH EVENTS CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

National 4-H Council is committed to providing a safe environment for all youth participating in events offered by and through National 4-H Council. Attending National 4-H Council events is a privilege. All youth are expected to read and sign National 4-H Council's Code of Conduct before attending a National 4-H Council event. Continued participation is based on individuals meeting the requirements of the event and following National 4-H Council's Code of Conduct.

Adults attending, participating in, or chaperoning 4-H events are expected to conduct themselves according to the Code of Conduct, the Adult Behavior Standards guide and to support youth adherence to the Code of Conduct.

This National 4-H Council Code of Conduct **will be in effect at all times** while participating in or attending a National 4-H Council sponsored event, including during travel.

Code of Conduct

Youth attendees commit to the following:

- **Trustworthiness:** Youth attendees are worthy of trust, honor and confidence, modeling integrity under all circumstances. Youth are honest in all activities and keep commitments by attending and being punctual for sessions of events.
- **Respectfulness:** Youth treat all people (including themselves, their peers, adults and authorities) with respect, courtesy, and consideration, with an appreciation for diversity in gender, ethnicity, interests and ability. Youth accept differences, peacefully resolve conflicts, and treat all property with respect. Youth speak respectfully about all people and all 4-H organizations in written and verbal communication, including social media. Because 4-H is a non-partisan, non-political organization, 4-H'ers will refrain from wearing or displaying items or apparel of a political nature while participating in a 4-H event.
- **Responsibility:** Youth are responsible, accountable, and self-disciplined. Youth are on time for program events. Youth are held to high expectations to fulfill responsibilities assigned and accept responsibility for personal choices and actions. Youth are responsible for any consequences of damage or misconduct that occurs during their participation.
- **Fairness:** Youth treat all people with fairness and approach others with an open mind. Youth follow all rules, do not take advantage of others, nor ask for special favors. Youth accurately depict their personal stories, roles, and projects and avoid misrepresenting their work or experiences.
- **Caring:** Youth are kind, caring and compassionate toward others, treating others as they want to be treated. Youth show appreciation to others and aim to provide an inclusive experience for all. Youth show empathy and behave charitably.
- **Citizenship:** Youth are law-abiding citizens, contributing to the greater good.

Youth attendees commit to the following practices for using social media & electronic communications:

- Include or copy at least two adults on all electronic communications (if under 18). Two adults may include, for example, a National 4-H Council employee and a parent or 4-H leader.
- Use social media in a manner that is respectful, courteous and considerate of all people and all 4-H organizations.
- Refrain from the inappropriate or disparaging use of photography, video, audio, and/or digital devices.
- Only record images, video or audio in public/common areas and not in areas where privacy is expected.

The following are not permitted at National 4-H Council Events:

- Possession and/or consumption of alcohol or tobacco products.
- Distribution of alcohol or tobacco products.
- Possession, consumption or distribution of illegal drugs.
- Violence, including sexual abuse; sexual harassment; physical, verbal, emotional or mental abuse of another person
- Sexual misconduct
- Being found in someone else's lodging room or lodging area (if underage) during 4-H travel/events without adults being present.
- Cheating, plagiarizing or misrepresenting work
- Theft, destruction or abuse of property
- Violation of an established curfew at a 4-H event
- Unauthorized absence from 4-H program site
- Bullying of any kind including verbal, physical and cyber bullying (social media, texting, snapchat, etc.)
- Unethical or inhumane treatment of animals
- Possession or use of a firearm during 4-H travel/events (Does not refer to use in authorized shooting sports.)
- Possession or use of a harmful object with the intent to hurt or intimidate others
- Reckless behavior
- Other conduct deemed inappropriate for the youth development program by a program coordinator, event chair, or other National 4-H Council associate, adult, or 4-H volunteer

The 4-H name and emblem should always be used appropriately to promote 4-H and is not permitted for use for personal gain.

Consequences for Infractions:

Infractions to the National 4-H Council Code of Conduct will be addressed and may result in consequences based on National 4-H Council's discretion. Because 4-H is a safe place for youth and adults to learn, minor disruptive or inappropriate behavior will first be addressed through redirection and coaching. When the nature of the offense is more severe or there is a pattern of disruptive or inappropriate behavior, violations of the Code of Conduct and Behavior Standards will result in more serious consequences. Consequences may range from but are not limited to the loss of privileges (e.g., participation at the event or future events, forfeiture of awards or other forms of recognition, forfeiture of positions of leadership, limitation on responsibilities) to full removal from the event and ineligibility to participate in future activities of this sort at the local, state, or national levels. Youth will assume financial responsibility for any damages caused. Youth removed from the event may be sent home early and will be responsible for paying any costs incurred for this transportation and may also be asked to return all funds expended on their behalf for their involvement in this event.

If youth are found in violation of local or federal laws, appropriate law enforcement or other legal authorities may be notified and may lead the review and consequences related to the incident.

Breaches of the National 4-H Code of Conduct will be communicated with the 4-H'er's state & local 4-H leadership as well as the parent/guardian (if youth is a minor).

Code of Conduct Agreement

My parent/guardian (if applicable) and I have read and discussed the entire National 4-H Council Youth Code of Conduct. I understand that the expectations apply throughout my National 4-H Council event attendance. I understand that infractions to this Code of Conduct will result in consequences and that these consequences apply throughout National 4-H Council and may carry consequences within my state 4-H program, and I agree to accept those consequences.

YOUTH SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____
(IF YOUTH IS A MINOR)