



UNIT: \_\_\_\_\_

4-H YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

## VIRGINIA 4-H STANDARDIZED CODE OF CONDUCT FOR 4-H PROGRAMS/EVENTS

### Purpose

The purpose of the 4-H program is the positive development of youth. We believe in creating a safe learning environment that encourages the four-fold development of a young person (i.e., Head, Heart, Hands, and Health). We expect all persons involved in 4-H (youth members, parents, teen/adult volunteers) to practice behaviors that foster the total development of youth. Each 4-H member and associated individuals participating in 4-H activities must accept the responsibility of creating a positive image that reflects 4-H ideals. Furthermore, the Virginia 4-H program recognizes that "CHARACTER COUNTS!" All 4-H participants are representatives of the program and should always strive to uphold the following standards: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. In seeking uniformity in the conduct expected at 4-H programs/events, the following code of conduct has been developed to provide a clear understanding of expectations. Participants and parents/guardians must sign this form in order to participate.

### Code of Conduct

1. For the safety and wellness of all participants, a completed and signed 4-H Health History Report Form is required for participation in 4-H events. In addition, medications and medication forms (for all participants under 18 years old) must be turned in at the registration table upon arrival at the 4-H event (or according to another system outlined in the registration/orientation information).
2. Participants should attend and be actively involved in all scheduled activities as part of this 4-H program/event (unless under the supervision of a medical staff person.) Curfew is to be followed as specified in the schedule for overnight events. Failure to be in assigned locations may lead to dismissal from the 4-H event. Some areas are off-limits to participants (ex: swimming pool; bodies of water such as lakes and rivers; challenge course, etc.) unless under appropriate instructor supervision.
3. Visitors to a 4-H program/event must check-in with the Extension Agent, Program Director, or other adult in charge of the 4-H program/event upon arrival.
4. Participants should remain at a 4-H program/event until the program/event is scheduled to end. Participants may not leave a 4-H program/event without prior permission from Extension Agent, Program Director, or other adult in charge of the 4-H program/event. Participants may only be picked up from a 4-H program/event by the person designated on the 4-H Health History Report Form. Identification may be requested at the time of pick-up.
5. Participants are expected to follow the directions of 4-H volunteers and paid staff. All 4-H'ers are under the supervision of the Extension Agent, Program Director, or other adult 4-H leader responsible for the 4-H program/event.
6. Participants should respect the property of others and be responsible for themselves. Deliberate destruction or removal of facilities or equipment is not permitted. Financial responsibility for any damages caused by deliberate destruction will be assumed by the participant and/or parents/guardians. The same applies to the property and personal items of other participants.
7. Participants should treat all others and themselves with respect. Aggressive, abusive, vulgar, or violent language and behavior towards others (ex: fighting, threats, insults, cursing, discrimination, etc.) are not permitted.
8. Participants should respect the privacy of others. Girls are not permitted in boys' lodging rooms nor are boys permitted in girls' lodging rooms.
9. Participants are expected to dress appropriately based upon the guidelines established by the person in charge of the 4-H program/event.
10. Possession, distribution, or use of fireworks, weapons, knives, or other items that can be used as a weapon are not permitted at 4-H programs/events, except under adult supervision in scheduled instructional activities (ex: shooting education class supervised by a certified instructor, etc.).

11. Possession, distribution, or use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, tobacco products, and unauthorized prescription drugs are not allowed at any 4-H sponsored program/event and must be reported to law enforcement. The Virginia 4-H program reserves the right to conduct a search of a participant's outer clothing, luggage, personal belongings, lodging rooms, and furniture being used by a participant(s) if there is "reasonable suspicion" that the participant has drugs, alcohol, or weapons.
12. Animals and pets are not allowed at 4-H programs/events unless needed to accommodate a disability or as part of an organized program, or through specific authorization from Extension Agent, Program Director, or other adult in charge of the 4-H program/event. Animals that are used as part of a 4-H program/event should always be provided with proper care.
13. Electronic and mechanical devices (ex: cellular phones, pagers, walkie-talkies, video games, radios, CD players, TV's, laptop computers, etc.) are not allowed at 4-H programs/events unless they are needed as part of an organized 4-H program/event, or with authorization from the Extension Agent, Program Director, or other adult in charge of the 4-H program/event. Without authorization, these items will be confiscated and returned to the participant (or the participants' parents/guardians) at the end of the program/event.

**Consequences**

Unacceptable behavior during a 4-H program/event (as defined within this **Virginia 4-H Standardized Code of Conduct** or through a review process by 4-H staff/volunteer) will result in consequences to the participant. Consequences may include:

1. early release from this 4-H program/event without refund,
2. restitution or repayment of damages,
3. denial of future participation in the 4-H program/event at the local, district, state and national levels for one or more years (as determined by the unit staff in charge of, or responsible for, the 4-H program/event),
4. forfeiture of financial support for a 4-H program/event
5. removal from 4-H offices held (if applicable), and
6. releasing the youth to the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or the proper authorities.

NOTE: Any conduct not specifically covered by this **Virginia 4-H Standardized Code of Conduct**, but deemed inappropriate by those responsible for the 4-H program/event will be viewed as a violation and appropriate action will be taken. If an infraction occurs, the person in charge of the 4-H program/event will provide appropriate communication to parents/guardians.

**Signature(s)** (Both signatures are required for participants under 18 years old.)

*I have read and understand the above "Code of Conduct" and will abide by the expectations described in the Code-of-Conduct. I understand that if I act inappropriately I will have to accept responsibility for my actions that may result in the consequences listed above.*

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Participant Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Date

*I have discussed and reviewed this "Code of Conduct" with my child. I understand that failure to abide by this 'Code of Conduct' may result in the consequences listed above which includes no refund. In the event that this code is violated, I agree to come to the 4-H program/event to pick up my child at the request of the adult in charge of the 4-H program/event. I further understand that I refuse to pick up my child, am unavailable, or fail to make timely arrangements to retrieve my child, 4-H program/ event staff may contact law enforcement or social services to provide necessary protection for a child in need of services. I acknowledge responsibility for all fees/charges that may result from said services.*

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Parent/Guardian's Printed Name (for participant under 18 years old)

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Parent/Guardian's Signature (for participant under 18 years old)

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Date