



4-H Code of Conduct and Consequences

The opportunity to participate in or attend 4-H activities is a privilege and not a right. All 4-H participants – youth, families, volunteers, and Extension staff – who participate in or attend any activity or event sponsored by the University of Illinois Extension 4-H Youth Development Program are expected to uphold the values of the Illinois 4-H program and conduct themselves according to the following standards. These standards also apply to online 4-H activity, including social media and internet presence.

1. **Create a Welcoming Environment for All.** Encourage everyone to fully participate in 4-H. Recognize that all people have skills and talents that can help others and improve the community. Though we will not always agree, we must disagree respectfully. When we disagree, try to understand why. Our first priority is to create a safe, inclusive space for learning, sharing and collaboration that is welcoming to people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives. Diversity includes, but is not limited to: race, color, religion, political beliefs, national or ethnic origin, immigration or citizenship status, sex, gender identity and expression, transgender status, sexual orientation, age, marital or family status, educational level, learning style, pregnancy, physical appearance, body size, and individuals with disabilities.
2. **Bring Your Best Self.** Conduct yourself in a manner that reflects honesty, integrity, self-control, and self-direction. Accept the results and outcomes of 4-H contests with grace and empathy for other participants. Accept the final opinions of judges and evaluators. Be open to new ideas, suggestions, and opinions of others.
3. **Obey the Law.** Obey the laws of the locality, state and nation and U of I and Extension policies and guidelines. Commit no illegal acts. Do not possess, offer to others, or use alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco products, which include e-pens, e-pipes, e-hookah, e-cigars, JUULs, vapes, vape pens or other electronic nicotine delivery systems. Do not possess or use weapons or firearms except as expressly permitted as part of supervised 4-H shooting sports programming. Do not attend 4-H activities under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
4. **Honor Diversity – Yours and Others’.** Respect and uphold the rights and dignity of all persons who participate in 4-H programs.
5. **Create a Safe Environment.** Do not carelessly or intentionally harm or intimidate anyone in any way (verbally, mentally, physically, or emotionally). Do not engage in romantic displays or sexual activities in either public or private situations. Adults and Volunteers will not engage in romantic displays or sexual activities in either public or private situations while responsible for youth in 4-H activities nor allow 4-H youth participants under your supervision to do so. Be kind and compassionate toward others. Do not insult, harass, or bully others or engage in other hostile behaviors. Be considerate and courteous of all persons and their property.
6. **Be a Team Player.** Work cooperatively with all individuals involved in 4-H programs and activities. Be responsive to the reasonable requests of the person in charge. Respect the integrity of the group and the group’s decisions.
7. **Humane Treatment of Animals.** Treat animals humanely and teach 4-H youth to provide appropriate animal care.
8. **Participate Fully.** Participate in and contribute to planned programs, be on time and follow through on assigned tasks/responsibilities in a manner that fosters the safety, well-being, and quality of the educational experience for self and others. Have fun!
9. **Watch What You Wear.** Use good judgment. Wear clothing suited for the activity in which you will participate. Dress in a manner that is respectful to yourself and others. Clothing that displays or promotes violence, obscenity, illegal activities, discrimination, or intimidation is prohibited. Do not wear revealing clothing, such as short skirts or shorts, midriff-baring tops, or anything showing undergarments.
10. **Be a Positive Role Model.** Act in a mature, responsible manner, recognizing you are role models for others and that you are representing both yourself and the University of Illinois Extension 4-H Youth Development Program. Be responsible for your behavior, use positive and affirming language, and uphold exemplary standards of conduct at all 4-H activities.



BEHAVIORS THAT MAY RESULT IN REMOVAL FROM ACTIVITY

The University of Illinois Extension reserves the right to restrict participation in future activities for those individuals who have been removed from an activity for any behavior outlined in Category 1 or 2. In all cases, the participant will be responsible for restitution of any damages incurred by his/her actions.

Category 1

- a) Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol and other drugs, and tobacco products which include e-pens, e-pipes, e-hookah, e-cigars, JUULs, vapes, vape pens or other electronic nicotine delivery systems. *Prescription drugs must be listed on an Emergency Medical Information form.
- b) Theft or destruction of public or private property.
- c) Involvement in sexual misconduct or harassment.
- d) Possession or use of dangerous weapons or materials (including fireworks).
- e) Fighting or other acts of violence, actual or implied, that endanger the safety of the participant or others.

Category 2

- a) Willfully breaking curfew.
- b) Unauthorized use of vehicles.
- c) Leaving the site of the event.
- d) Participation in gambling.
- e) Absence from the planned program.
- f) Intentionally interfering with or disrupting the event.
- g) Use of profane or abusive language.
- h) Disregard for public or personal property.
- i) Public displays of affection or inappropriate actions.
- j) Failure to comply with direction of Extension personnel, including designated adults acting within their duties and guidelines.

Category 1 Consequences

- 1. When notified of any of the actions listed under Category 1, the adult in charge will ascertain the relevant facts and, with concurrence from the U of I Extension staff, will notify the affected participant of the action and any supporting evidence. The participant will be allowed an opportunity to answer the allegations and, if necessary, law enforcement officials will be notified. While facts are being verified, the participant will be removed from the 4-H activity/event and be under direct supervision of an adult chaperone.
- 2. The parent or guardian will be notified of the behavior and must make arrangements for removal of the participant from the activity, at the parent's or guardian's expense.
- 3. Documentation must be completed on an "Incident Report Form."

Category 2 Consequences

- 1. When notified of any of the actions listed under Category 2, the adult in charge will ascertain the relevant facts and, with concurrence from the U of I Extension staff, will notify the participant of the action and any supporting evidence. The participant will be allowed an opportunity to answer the allegations and, if necessary, law enforcement officials will be notified. While facts are being verified, the participant will be removed from the 4-H activity/event and be under direct supervision of an adult chaperone.
- 2. The parent or guardian of the participants who violate curfew, use vehicles without authorization, or leave the site of the event (as outlined in Category 2, letters a, b, c) will be notified of the actions by the participant. The parent or guardian must immediately remove the participant from the activity, at the parent's or guardian's expense. Participants who exhibit conduct as described in Category 2, letters d-j, will receive a verbal and written warning (initialed by the adult and the participant). Upon receiving a second warning, the parent or guardian will be notified of the behavior and must make arrangements for removal of the participant from the activity, at the parent's or guardian's expense.

I have read and I understand and agree to comply with the above University of Illinois Extension 4-H Youth Development Code of Conduct. We further understand that failure to do so will result in disciplinary action as outlined above and forfeiture of any participant's fees.

Signature of Participant Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date