WEST VIRGINIA 4-H VOLUNTEER AND YOUNG ADULT 4-H MEMBER (AGES 18 to 21) CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT

This Code of Conduct is the behavior standard accepted by adult volunteers and young adult 4-H members ages 18 to 21 who commit to the West Virginia 4-H program and all programs serving youth sponsored by WVUES. The West Virginia 4-H program provides quality educational programs accessible to all West Virginia youths. The primary purpose of the Code of Conduct is to ensure the safety and well-being of all 4-H participants (members, their parents and families, professionals and volunteers).

WEST VIRGINIA 4-H VOLUNTEER AND YOUNG ADULT 4-H MEMBER (AGES 18-21) CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT HEREAFTER REFERRED TO AS “CODE OF CONDUCT” AFFIDAVITS

1. I accept my responsibility as a West Virginia University Extension Service 4-H Youth Development volunteer or young adult 4-H member. I will uphold the standards of the 4-H pledge and motto. I will refrain from behavior that negatively represents upon myself, my family, my community, the 4-H program, other members/volunteers, WVUES or West Virginia University. I will obey the laws of the locality, county, state and nation.

2. I will accept the responsibility to represent my individual county 4-H program and the West Virginia 4-H program with dignity and pride by being a positive mentor for the youths with whom I work.

3. I will respect, adhere to and enforce the rules, policies and guidelines established by my individual county 4-H program, the West Virginia 4-H program and the West Virginia University Extension Service.

4. I will adhere to all policies as outlined by West Virginia University and WVUES. These include but are not limited to Policy 49, Children on Campus, West Virginia University Policy 44 and the WVUES Above Suspicion Policy. I will report any violation of these polices as trained to the office of WVU Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: https://wvuequityassurance.wufoo.com/forms/m1d8q521kt83yo/.

5. I acknowledge that the 4-H program utilizes competition, such as project work, exhibits, animal shows and market sales, as tools for learning. I will demonstrate good sportsmanship and encourage that same behavior in program participants and other volunteers. I will not allow unsportsmanlike conduct to detract from the youths’ learning experience. I will not let my personal desire to win overshadow the needs of the group or violate positive youth development principles. I will not obstruct or disrupt any 4-H program or encourage others to engage in such conduct. I understand that a judge’s decision is final. I will act in a respectful and responsible manner during all 4-H programs. I will comply with directions of 4-H officials, including but not limited to program assistants, agents, specialists and directors, as they perform their duties.

6. I accept my responsibility to be informed and follow the policies, rules and deadlines established by WVUES 4-H. I will not cheat, lie, knowingly furnish false information, deceive or otherwise engage in dishonest, unethical or illegal behaviors. I will not encourage others to disregard or intentionally violate conditions of WVUES 4-H participation.

7. I will promote a spirit of inclusion and welcome participation of individuals from all backgrounds. I will encourage youths in decision making. I will practice fair-mindedness by being open to ideas and opinions of others. I will comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws. I will not participate in behaviors that discriminate against other people. I will promote a welcoming environment by fostering a climate based on social justice.

8. I will not abuse any 4-H participant by physical or verbal means and will report such abuse if observed to the faculty member in charge of my county, who will then report to WVUES officials. I will abstain from harassment or bullying of another participant, volunteer or staff member (either in person or face-to-face or through social media or other communication venues). I will also refrain from gossip, innuendo and rumors.

9. I will ensure a safe environment for myself and others involved in the 4-H programs that I am leading, attending or in which I am participating. I will not act in an irresponsible or potentially hazardous manner. I will access and operate machinery, vehicles and other equipment in compliance with laws, rules of the 4-H program, general safety practices and the guidelines as established by the manufacturer. I will handle animals in a responsible manner so as to avoid potential harm to myself, youths, other volunteers and parents and all present.

10. I will model healthy choices. I will not offer alcohol, tobacco products or illegal substances to youths. I will not possess or use illegal substances. I will not possess or use tobacco products, including smokeless or vapor, or alcohol products during a 4-H program or while on the grounds of a 4-H event. I will not attend 4-H programs under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substance. I will not bring or show any type of pornography to youths or other volunteers.

11. I will be courteous and respectful of other individuals and their property. I will dress in a manner that is appropriate: tasteful and respectful for youth and others at the event. I will not use, abuse, or take another individual’s personal belongings. I will respect facilities used by the 4-H program in which I am involved. I will not damage facilities or furnishings nor will I allow others to do so.

12. I will communicate (oral, written and electronic) in an honest, respectful manner in all situations involving the 4-H program. I will refrain from communication that is negative, offensive destructive or harmful to others. I will not engage in or tolerate slander, put-downs, insults, taunting, name-calling, yelling, profane language, sexual innuendos and other comments or hostile behaviors that may be offensive, hurtful or set a bad example. If I witness this behavior, I will contact a WVUES official. If the situation is escalating such that it is unsafe for me or others, I will contact authorities. I will report immediately any threats my or others’ emotional or physical well-being to a WVUES professional.

13. I will not have sexual contact/intercourse or a dating relationship with a 4-H member. I will not use physical punishment or discipline. If I have reason to believe that a member is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, I will make an immediate report as trained as a Mandated Reporter. I will abide by the WVU policy on the safety of minors.

14. I will use appropriate channels within West Virginia University Extension to address concerns and conflicts. I will accept the decision of the individual and/or group that has the leadership and authority to make decisions, even if the decision is not the one I personally desire.
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Code of Conduct

I have read and understand the Code of Conduct. I understand and agree that any action on my part that contradicts any portion of this Code Of Conduct is grounds for the suspension and/or dismissal of my volunteer or member status with the West Virginia University 4-H Program. I have read and understand the WVUES Procedures for Dealing with Volunteer Issues. ☐ Yes ☐ No

Non-Discrimination

Programs and activities offered by the West Virginia University Extension Service are available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, political beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, and marital or family status. If selected or retained as a volunteer or as a young adult member, do you agree to abide by and uphold these policies? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Background Check

A criminal background check will be conducted every three years and a check of the National Sexual Predator Website will be conducted on years when the full background check is not conducted. I give my permission for these checks to be conducted. ☐ Yes ☐ No

Criminal Record

Have you ever been convicted of a crime, other than a minor traffic offense? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, explain: (include charge, disposition, date and location)

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(No: a prior conviction is not an automatic bar to volunteering. The type of conviction and when it occurred will be evaluated prior to any final decision being made.)

Title IX Policy

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) is a federal law which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Since Cooperative Extension 4-H Programs receive federal financial assistance for educational programs, they must adhere to United States Department of Agriculture regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex. West Virginia University Board of Governors Policy #44 prohibits discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic misconduct, stalking, and retaliation that occurs on WVU property (including WVU Jackson’s Mill) or during a WVU sponsored activity (which includes any 4-H event). As a part of this policy, all persons are expected to engage in conduct that meets professional standards, take appropriate action to prevent prohibited conduct, and avoid behavior that a reasonable person would construe as prohibited conduct.

I agree that, if selected or retained as a 4-H volunteer or as a 4-H young adult member, I will abide by all Title IX policies and all policies and regulations related to the prohibition of discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic misconduct, stalking, and retaliation. I also understand that I may be required, at any time, to take part in training related to these policies in order to continue with the 4-H program. Additionally, I agree that I will report any Title IX violation as trained. ☐ Yes ☐ No

Children on Campus Policy

West Virginia University Board of Governors Policy 49 describes the rules and regulations to protect any person under the age of 18 attending a WVU program (including any 4-H program or event) on WVU property. This policy mirrors West Virginia Code §49-6A-1 to -11 by reiterating that all volunteers are mandated to report any suspected child abuse or neglect, including physical abuse or neglect, to the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Child Protective Services, the WVU Title IX Coordinator and local police. The policy also mandates training for all employees and volunteers who will have direct contact with children.

I agree that, if selected as a 4-H volunteer, I will be a Mandated Reporter as defined by West Virginia Code §49-6A-1 to -11; that I will abide by all laws and regulations regarding the protection of persons under the age of 18; and that I must participate in training related to these policies prior to serving as a volunteer. ☐ Yes ☐ No

I understand that the information that I have provided may be verified by contacting persons or organizations named in this application and I hereby release from liability any person or organization that provides information concerning me to the representatives of West Virginia University Extension 4-H Youth Development. In signing this application, I affirm that the information I have given herein is true and correct. If selected as a volunteer, I understand I serve at the request of the West Virginia University Extension Service. That request can be withdrawn for any reason or no reason at any time. I will be required to undergo a background check. A criminal record will not necessarily bar me as a volunteer or 4-H young adult member, but will be considered as it relates to the specifics of the volunteer position for which I have applied. I also affirm that I will disclose to West Virginia University Extension Service if my status changes after the background check. I will immediately disclose any and all pending charges or criminal convictions. I also understand that I will be required to undergo mandatory training prior to and during my service as a volunteer.

By signing this document you agree that you have read, understand and agree to the volunteer code of conduct guidelines and procedures listed in detail at employees.extension.wvu.edu/volunteer-policies

__________________________

Signature

Extension Professional Signature

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Date

Return to: Your local WVU Extension Service office. Contact the state office at 304-293-2694 or 4lyouthdev@mail.wvu.edu if you have any questions or would like further information. Thank you!

**The information asked for in this form will be used solely to determine how you can best fit into West Virginia University Extension Service 4-H Youth Development programs. It is understood that no discrimination is implied.

WVU is an EEO/Affirmative Action Employer. Underrepresented class members are encouraged to apply. This includes: minorities, females, individuals with disabilities and veterans.

The WVU Board of Governors is the governing body of WVU. The Higher Education Policy Commission in West Virginia is responsible for developing, establishing and overseeing the implementation of public four-year colleges and universities.

Reasonable accommodations will be made to provide this content in alternate formats upon request. Contact the WVU Extension Service Office of Communications at 304-293-4222.

West Virginia University Extension Service 4-H Youth Development