



# 4-H and West Virginia University Extension Youth Member Sanctions for Misconduct

(Based on West Virginia 4-H and Youth Member Code of Conduct)

(All individuals attending any 4-H youth event or youth event sponsored by West Virginia University and WVUES must receive and sign a copy of the 4-H and WVUES Youth Member Code of Conduct. Parents of minors must also sign and agree that their child will abide by the code as set forth)

(The proposed sanction is subject to any aggravating or mitigating factors. If for some reason a particular case has a set of facts that would bump a minor toward a more serious offense, based on information gathered, this would be done.)

## Minor Offenses:

- Habitually late to program activities
- Not in room at designated time—Breaking curfew
- Not demonstrating good manners
- Using language that is offensive to others
- Not respecting the rights and privacy of roommates or others attending an activity
- Untruthfulness to chaperones, leaders, event organizers or others in attendance

When a 4-H or youth member is found to have committed a **minor offense**, disciplinary action may range from verbal reprimands to dismissal from the activity in which the individual is participating. The WVU Extension faculty member in charge of the respective county 4-H or WVUES youth program, or in the case of regional or state activities; the WVU Extension faculty member in charge of said activity or event in consultation with the other adults in administrative roles will decide the sanction. The sanction will be reported to the 4-H unit director or WVUES program unit director in charge of youth activity.

## Intermediate Offenses:

- Leaving a 4-H or youth activity without permission of staff member(s) in charge
- Damage to meeting site, sleeping quarters, person(s) or other person's property without malicious intent
- Being disrespectful to the other members, adult volunteers, youth leaders, WVUES faculty and staff, staff serving youth programs, camp staff and others in leadership roles.
- Inappropriate visitation

- Smoking including e- cigarettes or using tobacco products

When a 4-H or youth member is found to have committed an **intermediate offense**, these violations are grounds for immediate dismissal from the activity/event and/or sending the individual home at the parent/guardians expense. If property is damaged, the amount of damage will be assessed and the perpetrator will be required to make restitution to the owner of said property.

Based on the offense, further sanctions from the WVUES State office could be instituted including the following: (1). Suspension from the 4-H or youth program for a period of months not to exceed 6 months; (2) The individual could be denied attendance at the event where the offense occurred for a period of at least one year. All sanctions will be approved with input from the Dean/Director of WVU Extension, Youth Protection Compliance Specialist, WVU legal and other youth development (camping or club) specialists if necessitated.

### **Major Offense:**

- Criminal charges on a local, state or national level
- Intentional damage to meeting site, sleeping quarters, person(s) or other person's property
- Using alcohol or drugs
- Carrying an unauthorized weapon
- Threatening another person with a weapon or bodily harm
- Bullying & Harassment that is severe or pervasive
- Cheating during events such as livestock events (ex. Lamb tail docking)
- Sexual misconduct as defined in WVU Policy 44
- Theft of any kind
- Hazing, pranking and initiations that involve humiliation, embarrassment or targeting individuals.
- Endangerment of another
- Inappropriate use of social media including but not limited to creating, possessing or transferring any images that are illegal or disrespectful towards others of the 4-H program.
- Acting in a manner considered by 4-H leadership to be harmful or potentially harmful to the health or well-being of themselves or others, whether such act occurred within or outside of the 4-H program.
  - These terms are defined more fully in Section 6.2 in the WVU Student Code of Conduct <https://studentconduct.wvu.edu/files/d/f0ae69b9-1461-45cb-81ee-40e48e2d978b/main-campus-revised-final-student-conduct-code-8-21-15c.pdf>.

When a 4-H or youth member is found to have committed a **major offense**, these violations are grounds for immediate dismissal from the activity/event and/or sending the individual home at the parent/guardians expense. If property is damaged, the amount of damage will be assessed and the perpetrator will be required to make restitution to the owner of said property.

Any **major offense** must be immediately reported to the WVUES unit director associated with the program. The unit director will immediately contact the youth protection compliance specialist who in consultation with the Dean of Extension, Program unit specialists (youth and or camping) and WVU legal will prescribe sanctions for the youth member.

***If 4-H'ers or other youth members are found participating in the following actions, law enforcement or other legal authorities including WVU office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion may be notified and may lead the review and consequences related to the incident.***

Cooperative Extension Service  
WVU is and EEO/Affirmative Action Institution – Minority/Female/Disability/Veteran

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.

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.

- *Any Rule 1.6, Title IX issue must be reported through the WVU Title IX reporting system at <https://wvuequityassurance.wufoo.com/forms/m1d8uf521kt83yo/> with all procedures prescribed by the WVU Title IX Director, and WVU Rule 1.6 followed.*

*In these incidents, 4-h'ers or youth members may be removed from the event and terminated from future 4-H participation or participation in WVUES youth activities. These behaviors include but are not restricted to:*

- Possession or use of illegal drugs
- Possession or use of a weapon
- Assault or harassment
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- For every offense, whether minor, intermediate or major, the 4-H or youth member will receive a verbal reprimand. Parents of the 4-H or youth member will be notified if any action is taken beyond a verbal reprimand
- When a 4-H member/youth program participant commits an offense that could result in suspension or dismissal from the program; the parent/guardian of the minor (under 18 years of age) is immediately contacted. The 4-H unit director or unit director associated with the program is immediately notified and a written statement is forwarded.
- If necessary, the event will be investigated by the WVUES Youth Protection & Compliance Specialist; pending results of the investigation the member will be suspended and properly notified.
  - Any offense that is a violation of Policy 44, (Title IX), must be immediately reported through the WVU Diversity Equity and Inclusion website. The address is: <https://wvuequityassurance.wufoo.com/forms/m1d8uf521kt83yo/> with all procedures prescribed by the WVU Title IX Director, and WVU Policy 44 followed.
  - If internet access is not available, call DEI at (304) 293-5600 to make the report.
  - The WVU Unit Director must be contacted as well as the Youth Protection/Compliance Specialist/Title IX Investigator (304) 704-4077

**Within ten days of the offense notification, unless an investigation is in progress, sanctions that are imposed by the state WVUES office and the conduct team, are put in writing and forwarded to the parent/guardian of the offender if a minor. A letter outlining the sanction is mailed certified to the parent/guardian, or member aged 18 and above. The WVU Extension Faculty member where the youth's record is housed, the Dean/Director of WVU Extension Service and the Program Center where the youth is serving is provided copies of the letter.**

- **If this is a Title IX violation, all policies and procedures outlined by WVU Rule 1.6 and WVU Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) are followed. *Disciplinary action is only discussed with those involved, their parent/guardians, and Extension leaders.***

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