

# West Virginia 4-H Volunteer and Young Adult 4-H Member (Ages 18 to 21) Code of Conduct Agreement

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West Virginia 4-H volunteers and young adult members are expected to function within the guidelines of WVU, WVU Extension, and the West Virginia 4-H program. West Virginia 4-H volunteers and young adult members shall be individuals of personal integrity who are granted the honor and privilege of serving with 4-H programs. A standard of behavior for all individuals involved in the 4-H youth development program is one of the key components for creating a welcoming environment that is physically and emotionally safe. This Code of Conduct establishes expectations that all WVU Extension volunteers and young adults are expected to observe. The primary purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure the safety and well-being of all 4-H participants (members, their parents or guardians, faculty, staff, and volunteers).

A 4-H volunteer is a non-paid representative of the local WVU Extension 4-H unit for which they provide services. A young adult member is 18-21 years of age and is enrolled in 4-H. A fully vetted volunteer or young adult member is an individual who has completed the full volunteer vetting process including application, signed code of conduct, criminal background check, and training (certification) in WVU Board of Governors Rule 1.7 (Child Protection-Mandated Reporter) and WVU Board of Governors Rule 1.6 (Regarding Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Misconduct, Stalking, Retaliation, and Relationships).

The WVU Extension 4-H Code of Conduct applies and will be enforced with 4-H volunteers and young adult 4-H members participating in any 4-H sponsored programs or activities at the county, state, national, or international level.

## Code of Conduct for Volunteers and Young Adult 4-H Members

1. I accept my responsibility as a WVU Extension 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 reflects upon myself, my family, my community, the 4-H program, other members, or West Virginia University. I will obey the laws of the locality, county, state, and nation. I will not cheat, lie, knowingly give false information, deceive, or otherwise engage in dishonest, unethical, or illegal behaviors. I will not encourage others to disregard or intentionally violate the conditions of WVU Extension 4-H participation. I will communicate through oral, written, and electronic means in an honest, respectful manner in all situations involving the 4-H program.
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 or participate with as a young adult 4-H'er. If there are events where I may bring friends, family, or other individuals, I agree that they will also follow the code of conduct and I will take responsibility for their actions.
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 West Virginia University Extension. I accept my responsibility to be informed and follow the policies, rules, and deadlines established by WVU Extension 4-H. I will adhere to all policies as outlined by WVU and WVU Extension. These include but are not limited to WVU BOG Rules 1.6 and 1.7 and the WVU Extension Above Suspicion Policy. I will report any violation of these policies immediately to WVU Extension personnel.

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4. I acknowledge that the 4-H program utilizes competition related to project work as a tool for learning. I will demonstrate good sportsmanship, encourage this behavior in program participants and other volunteers, and not allow unsportsmanlike conduct to detract from the 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 the directions of 4-H officials acting in the performance of their duties.
5. I will welcome all members, guests, and speakers involved in Clubs, Camps, or 4-H activities, and respect any differences in language, nationality, religion, personal background, or lifestyle.
6. I will not use physical punishment or discipline, nor will I abuse any 4-H participant by physical or verbal means, and I will report such abuse if observed. I will abstain from harassment or bullying of another participant, volunteer, or staff member (either in person or through electronic devices and/or social media, cell phones, or other communication venues). I will report immediately any threats to my or another program participant's emotional or physical well-being to a WVU Extension professional. If I have reason to believe that a member is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, I will make an immediate report as a Mandated Reporter.
7. I will ensure a safe environment for myself and others involved in the 4-H programs that I am leading 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, and general safety practices. I will handle animals in a responsible manner. I will wear clothing suited for the activity that I am participating in.
8. I will model healthy choices. I will not use, possess, or offer alcohol, tobacco/tobacco products, marijuana/marijuana products, vaping, e-cigarettes, or illegal drugs/substances when involved in 4-H program activities. I will not attend 4-H programs while impaired.
9. I will be courteous and respectful to other individuals and their property. I will not use, abuse, or take another individual's personal belongings. I will not damage facilities.
10. I will not use technology to create or transmit to youth and/or staff, or willingly receive from youth and/or staff, unacceptable content such as that containing profanity, advocacy of use/possession of alcohol or drugs, violence, sexually explicit content, etc.
11. I will not have sexual contact with a minor and I understand that all sexual contact is expressly prohibited at all 4-H events, activities, and facilities.
12. I will use appropriate channels within WVU Extension to address concerns and conflicts. I will accept the decision of any individual and/or group that has the leadership and authority to make decisions, even if the decision is not the one I personally desire.

## Code of Conduct

I have read and understand the Code of Conduct, WVU Board of Governors [Rule 1.6](#) and [Rule 1.7](#), and WVU Extension [Above Suspicion policy](#). 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 [WVU Extension Procedures for Dealing with Volunteer Issues](#). Further, I agree to stay up to date on any changes to this code of conduct and other relevant policies, procedures, or rules.  Yes  No

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## Non-Discrimination

Programs and activities offered by the West Virginia University Extension 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

## Disclosure

I agree to disclose any arrests, convictions, or indictments within 72 hours of their occurrence. This disclosure will be to the Youth Protection/Compliance Specialist. In the event the specialist cannot be reached, I will disclose to my local WVU Extension faculty member who will report to the proper individuals.  Yes  No

## Title IX Policy

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) is a federal law that 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 education programs, they must adhere to United States Department of Agriculture regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex.

West Virginia University Board of Governors Rule 1.6 prohibits discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic misconduct, stalking and retaliation that occurs on WVU property (including 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 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 further agree that I will report any Title IX violation as trained.  Yes  No

## Children on Campus Policy

West Virginia University Board of Governors Rule 1.7 prescribes 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 & 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.  Yes  No

## Background Check and Training Requirements

I agree to a background check every three years, a check of the national sexual predator database annually, and completion of training modules in Title IX and Child Abuse Prevention every three years. I understand that I will receive an email from *noreply@sterling.app* with an invitation to complete my background check and an email from *ChildrenonCampus@notify.wvu.edu* or *complianceeducation@notify.wvu.edu* with a link to the

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online training modules, which I must complete prior to serving as a volunteer. I have received a copy of “The Vetting Process Explained” containing instructions on how to complete the background check process and how to access the training modules.  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 understand that the information 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. That request can be withdrawn for any reason or no reason at any time.

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Signature

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Date

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Extension Professional Signature

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Date

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

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, WVU is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and reprisal of retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

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