

Lee County 4-H Code of Conduct Discipline Policy

Section I. In seeking uniformity in the conduct expected of youth in the Lee County 4-H program, the following guidelines have been developed and revised by the Lee County 4-H Advisory Board to become effective September 1, 2009 for County activities. State and National 4-H Code of Conducts will be required for out of county events. The guidelines will be reviewed periodically and may be amended or revised.

- The Code of Conduct will be provided and discussed with leaders, parents/guardians, and members at the beginning of each 4-H year. The original signed copy of the Code of Conduct will be kept on file at the Extension Office.
- 4-H members are under the supervision of Extension workers or the adult volunteer assigned to chaperone the 4-H event. When representing 4-H at an event, such as a fair, youth are responsible for following the rules of the event and 4-H's rules.
- Decisions to review situations for possible disciplinary action rest with the 4-H Agent and/or 4-H volunteer assigned to chaperone.
- Youth charged with a criminal offense will not be allowed to represent Lee County 4-H at out of club activities which includes but not limited to all fairs, district, and state level 4-H events, etc. until innocence or guilt is determined.
- Youth ages 5-18 (as of September 1 of the current year or not having graduated from high school) are eligible to be 4-H members in Florida per 4-HS FS101.6. Youth, parents, and leaders are to notify the Extension office if youth do not meet this criteria.

Section II. 4-H members, leaders, and parents are expected to abide by county, state, and federal laws at any 4-H sponsored function, or while traveling to or from any 4-H sponsored function. 4-H members, leaders, and parents are expected to abide by county, state, and federal laws at any event where you are representing 4-H such as but not limited to, Lee County Southwest Florida Fair, State Fair, community service events, etc.

4-H members, leaders or parents **will be required to appear before a review board** assembled by the 4-H Agent if accused of the following, but not limited to:

- **Illegal drugs, alcohol, intoxicants, or drug paraphernalia:**
use, possession, or being "under the influence" of any illegal drugs, alcohol, intoxicants, or possession or furnishing of any drug paraphernalia
- **Sale of Illegal Drugs, Alcohol, Intoxicants:**
selling, offering, arranging to sell, negotiating to sell, or furnishing any illegal drugs/alcohol/intoxicants (including look a likes) or possessing quantities of same large enough to indicate a sale
- **Theft, misuse or abuse of public or personal property**
- **Reckless endangerment; endangering the health, safety, or welfare of yourself or others**
- **Sexual misconduct or harassment:**

This can consist of sexual advances, request for sexual favors, other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in all 4-H settings. Other forms of sexual harassment include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

Verbal harassment, such as derogatory comments, jokes, or slurs

Physical harassment such as unnecessary or offensive touching, impeding, or blocking movement

Visual harassment such as derogatory or offensive posters, cards, calendars, cartoon, graffiti, drawings, text messages and pictures of a sexual nature or gestures

- Possession of firearms, knives, or dangerous objects (not applicable to 4-H shooting sports programs) Weapons shall include, but not limited to zappers (stun guns), guns, look-alike weapons, knives, martial arts tools, razor blades, mace pepper spray, or any deemed dangerous by the review board.
- Possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing an illegal firearm
- Unauthorized absence from the premises of the event
- Assault or personal harm or threat of assault or personal harm
- Other offenses as warranted

If the accused 4-H member, leader or parent is found in violation of the above as determined by the review board, they may be permanently expelled, or suspended from participation in all 4-H activities for a period of up to 12 months with a probationary period following suspension during which the 4-H'er may not hold office. Second offenses from Section II may result in permanent expulsion if found in violation of the above by the review board.

Section III: 4-H members, leaders, or parents accused of any of the following may be required to appear before the review board;

- Breaking curfew or disturbing the peace
- Use of abusive language
- Unexcused absence from the activities of the event
- Unauthorized use of a vehicle during the event
- Use of tobacco and nicotine products by members is strictly prohibited at all Lee County 4-H functions

If the accused 4-H member, leader, or parent is found in violation of the above, he or she may be suspended from participation in all 4-H activities for a period of up to 6 months with a probationary period following suspension during which the 4-H'er may not hold office.

Section IV: Youth charged with a felony criminal offense will not be allowed to represent Lee County at out of club activities until guilt or innocence is determined. Out of club activities include but not limited to the Southwest Florida Fair, District Events, Legislature, Camp Cloverleaf, etc. A guilty determination may result in permanent expulsion.

Section V: Realizing these guidelines are not "all inclusive", the Lee County Extension Service reserves the right to make adjustments to these policies. Final

interpretation of the Code of Conduct is at the discretion of the Lee County Extension Service.

Section VI: If a 4-H member is accused of being in violation of the Code and is to be sent home, the person in charge of the event will notify the parent and the 4-H office. Parents or legal guardians will be responsible for their child's transportation home.

Grievance Procedure

Section VII. 4-H Advisory Review Board

1. When a member, parent, or volunteer has a complaint the first step is to inform the 4-H Organizational Leader.
2. If the 4-H Organizational Leader cannot resolve the issue, then it should be reported to the County 4-H Agent.
3. If the County 4-H Agent cannot resolve the issue then it should be brought to the County Extension Director, (the issue should be written before presented to the CED)
4. If the County Extension Director cannot resolve the issue then it should be referred to the Review Board. Review Board decisions are final.

The Lee County 4-H Agent will assemble a small committee of leaders, youth members, volunteers and staff, (by random selection) to serve as a Review Board to assist with issues that cannot be quickly resolved within the 4-H office. 4-H members and volunteers may appeal to this Review Board but be aware that the Review Board's decisions are *final*. The final decision of the Board will be mailed. Unless issues are illegal or involve discrimination, they are to be handled at the County level.

As a condition of participation in the 4-H program, we agree to be bound by the terms of the 4-H Code of Conduct.

4-H Member/Leader Name _____
Last First Middle

4-H Member/Leader Signature _____ Date _____

Parent or Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

(Note: Failure to have this form with the two bonafide signatures above on file in the County Extension office shall be sufficient reason to disqualify a member from participation in the Lee County 4-H program)