



STATE 4-H CONGRESS 2024

General Information Packet June 18 – 21, 2024

If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact the State 4-H Office, at 540-231-6372/TDD* during business hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event. *TDD number is (800) 828-1120

 **Virginia Cooperative Extension**
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<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
<u>Congress Mission and Goals</u>	3
<u>2024 Program Information and Highlights</u>	3
<u>Registration Process for Delegates and Adult Chaperones</u>	5
<u>State 4-H Areas of Competition</u>	7
<u>2024 State 4-H Congress Competition Policies and Guidelines</u>	9
<u>Educational Workshops</u>	11
<u>Character Counts! ®</u>	12
<u>Code of Conduct and Dress Code</u>	13

MISSION OF VIRGINIA 4-H STATE CONGRESS

The mission of Virginia 4-H State Congress is to provide competitive and non-competitive educational experiences to Virginia teens and the adults who work with them, helping them to develop life skills and leadership abilities to become contributing citizens in their communities.

GOALS OF VIRGINIA 4-H STATE CONGRESS

1. Provide a high-quality educational experience for 4-H youth ages 14-18;
2. Promote 4-H as a major statewide educational youth program;
3. Provide educational, recreational, and social experiences for youth that would not normally be available at the unit or district level;
4. Enhance skill development through all 4-H Congress activities including Competitions, Hands-on Workshops, and Service Learning projects;
5. Recognize all competition and award winners in front of their peers at a Statewide event;
6. Recognize the support of volunteer adult 4-H leaders that support 4-H Congress;
7. Promote an understanding of the value of diversity among Congress participants;
8. Enhance the delegate's sense of personal and social responsibility through an environment that fosters independence, accountability, decision-making, and time management.

2024 PROGRAM INFORMATION AND HIGHLIGHTS

4-H STATE COMPETITIONS: 4-H members have a chance to compete with their peers from across the state. Please review the policy and guidelines found in this packet. Participants with high scores in each blue-ribbon category will be recognized during the Closing ceremony on Friday, June 21, 2024. Please see the competition information for more details.

PRE-CONGRESS ACTIVITY: Upon arrival, units and their chaperones can participate in a self-guided campus scavenger hunt after settling into the dorms. The State 4-H Office will provide all materials for the scavenger hunt. This will be a great activity to familiarize yourself and your delegation with the areas of campus we will be visiting throughout Congress.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON PICNIC AND FUN: On Tuesday afternoon, you can enjoy an informal welcome picnic, which will be held on the Ag Quad. This picnic and fun time will be hosted by your current State 4-H Cabinet members, along with Meet and Greet by the Congress Cabinet Candidates and 4-H All-Stars. This picnic will consist of music, food, and fellowship designed to allow delegates to mix and mingle and get to know each other in an informal setting.

OPENING SESSION: Featuring Clovers & Co. from Georgia 4-H!

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS: During State 4-H Congress, delegates will have the opportunity to choose from a variety of workshops with hands-on and engaging learning experiences. Congress workshops will consist of two interactive 60-minute sessions on Wednesday morning, followed by a longer 90-minute session on Wednesday afternoon. Participants will be asked to select their top five (5) workshop choices, and final assignments will be made prior to check-in. There is a listing of 2024 workshops in this packet, as well as on the Congress website.

DANCES: Two dances will be held. Wednesday evening's dance will be informal. This is another great opportunity for delegates to mingle and meet other Congress participants. Thursday evening's dance will be a semi-formal dance. Both dances will include a variety of music. Alternate recreation will be available for those delegates who choose not to participate in the dances.

OPPORTUNITY FAIR: At the opportunity fair, participants can discover diverse pathways to participate in 4-H activities, interact with representatives from numerous ambassador groups, and access valuable resources to shape their future endeavors.

COLOR RUN/WALK: join us for our Color Run/Walk on Wednesday evening. This unique paint race celebrates healthiness, happiness, and individuality. Participants will receive a t-shirt and paints to participate in this event. There will be an additional cost of \$15 to participate in this event, and proceeds will help to support the State 4-H Congress.

SERVICE LEARNING: Each delegate will participate in a service learning project that will be held on Thursday morning.

RECOGNITION OF 4-H ALL-STARS: During 4-H Congress, those who will be tapped into the All Stars will be recognized during an opening assembly program, and the tapping ceremony will be held on Thursday afternoon.

ALL-STAR TAPPING: The All-Star tapping will be held in an indoor location on Thursday afternoon (2:00-2:45 PM). **All Congress delegates (youth and adult participants) are expected to attend the All-Star tapping.**

ALL-STAR ORIENTATION: The All-Star orientation will be held on Thursday from 2:45 - 3:45 PM.

STATE AWARDS AND CLOSING CEREMONY: On Friday morning, State 4-H Congress will close out with a special closing ceremony. This closing ceremony will honor all State 4-H Congress award recipients, including competition winners, 2024 National 4-H Congress delegates, Innovative Programming Awards, etc., and installing the 2024-25 State 4-H Cabinet.

CONGRESS DELEGATION PHOTO: The entire Congress delegation will come together for a group photo, and more information will be provided when delegates are on-site. The photos of the Delegation may be purchased for \$5 each. Delegates must pay for photos in advance through the registration system.

UNIT PHOTOGRAPHS: Unit delegation photos are scheduled for Thursday, and more details will follow once delegates arrive on site. Delegates and chaperones will be in semi-formal attire. Each unit will be designated a time slot for their photo. The unit photos may be purchased for \$5 each. Only those participants from the Unit that paid for their photo will be provided a copy.

DIGITAL CONGRESS SLIDESHOW: Do you ever wish you could have a copy to take home of the slideshow produced at Congress? Well, now you can! Digital versions of the 2025 Congress Slideshow can be purchased for \$5 each. Links will be distributed after Congress.

REGISTRATION PROCESS FOR DELEGATES AND ADULTS:

Registration will be online only through 4-H Online. All participants must be enrolled 4-H members or adult volunteers. Registration is available through enrolled member family accounts at <https://v2.4honline.com>. Registration will open on April 1, 2024. Registration will close at 11:59 PM on May 10, 2024.

Registration Structure and Fees:

- ☞ Full Congress Registration - \$285/person
 - For both Youth and Adults
 - Includes
 - Lodging for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights in Air-Conditioned Dorms (double occupancy)
 - 8 meals
 - Breakfast on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
 - Lunch on Wednesday and Thursday
 - Dinner on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
 - Congress T-Shirt
- ☞ One-day Competition Registration - \$65/person
 - For both Youth and Adults
 - Includes:
 - Congress T-Shirt
 - One meal (either lunch or dinner in Dietrick Hall or Wednesday evening)
 - Preference needs to be listed on the registration
- ☞ A La Carte Items
 - Color Fun Run/Walk
 - \$15 to participate; proceeds will help support State 4-H Congress
 - Digital 2024 Congress Slideshow - \$5
 - Digital Congressional Delegation Photo - \$5
 - Digital Unit Photos - \$5

Payments - All youth and adult delegates will be responsible for their Congress registration payments.

After the registration process, each participant will receive an email confirmation that their registration has been submitted. Once the agent approves the registration, the participant will receive a second email with payment information and options. Participants will have to make payments to unit offices.

Refunds – All refund requests should come to the State 4-H Office by June 1, 2024.

- If State 4-H Congress is canceled by the state or federal government or us, fees will be fully refunded.
- Refunds will be provided up until June 1, 2024; however, a \$30.00 processing fee will be assessed for all cancellations up until June 1.
- After June 1st, no refunds will be issued unless:

- Between 2 weeks before (June 4, 2024) and up to the day of arrival at Congress, if for **Medical Reasons**, youth are not admitted into Congress, a refund minus \$30 will be provided.

Need-based Scholarships – There are a limited number of scholarships available. The final amount and number will be determined based on the number of applicants and need. To apply for a scholarship, please complete the short Google form at <https://forms.gle/BkS6SjpYkZzuBpcg9>. Delegates will be required to make a deposit payment of \$185.00 and will receive additional information about the final payment after the selections. If a scholarship is not awarded, the balance of the registration will be required to be paid.

Air Force Youth 4-H Event Scholarships – The Air Force 4-H Military Partnership Outreach & Support Project for Virginia is providing a limited number of 4-H event scholarships for youth ages 5 to 18 of Air Force-Connected families living in Virginia. These scholarships will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Eligible youth may live on or near an installation or live in communities across the state. Scholarships awarded can be used to assist with the cost of participating in Virginia 4-H camping opportunities or State 4-H Congress. The military parent of the youth must currently be serving in one of the following: **Active Duty Air Force, Air Force Reserve, or Air National Guard**. For more information, please contact Louetta Jones - 4-H Military Club Director, at lojones@vt.edu or call 804-712-8467.



STATE 4-H AREAS OF COMPETITION

Held at State 4-H Congress; Congress registration (1 day or 4 days) required

Egg Preparation Demonstration

Extemporaneous Speaking

Discussion Meet

Rules can be found at: <https://www.vafb.com/membership-at-work/farmers-in-action/young-farmers>

Fashion Revue-Constructed Garment

Fashion Revue- Purchased Garment

Presentation – Animal Science – Dairy/Livestock/Poultry/Horse/Camelid/Domestic Food or Fiber Animal

Examples: How to Groom a Horse, Dairy Free Stall Barn Design, How to Shear an Alpaca

Presentation – Animal Science – Pet

Examples: Geckos, Dogs, Cats, Exotic animals

Presentation – Careers, Entrepreneurship, & Economic Education

Examples: How to Start Your Own Business, Careers that Interest Me, How to Budget Money

Presentation – Citizenship and Leadership

Examples: The History of the Constitution, How to Be a Good Citizen in My School, Parliamentary Procedure

Presentation – Food Demonstration (includes food preparation)

Examples: How to Make Chocolate Chip Cookies, How to Preserve Garden Vegetables

Presentation – Food Knowledge

Examples: How to Prevent Foodborne Illness, Cooking Methods for Beef, Gluten Free Recipes

Presentation – Home, Family & Personal Management

Examples: How to Prepare Meals on a Budget, Furniture Upholstery, How to Manage Your Time More Efficiently

Presentation – Natural Resources & Environmental Education –

Examples: Forestry, Wildlife, Conservation, Fisheries, Recycling

Presentation – Nutrition, Health, and/or Fitness

Examples: How to Prepare to Run a 5K, Proper Tooth Care and Hygiene, Vitamins and Minerals

Presentation – Outdoor Adventure, Sports & Recreation

Examples: Fishing, Hunting, Trapping, How to Dribble a Basketball, Safety Gear for Rock Climbing

Presentation – Communications & Performing Arts

Examples: Ballet, Knowledge presentations about instruments (How to Care for your Violin), HAM radio, How to Give a Presentation

Presentation – Plants, Soils, & Entomology

Examples: The Importance of the Honey Bee, establishing a Community Garden, Amending Soil to Grow Fruit Trees, How to Grow a Plant from a Seed, Understanding Invasive Plant Species

Presentation – Shooting Education

Examples: Understanding Shooting Disciplines, Precision and Accuracy for Hitting the Target, Safety Whistle Commands on the Archery Line

Presentation – Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM Topics)

Examples: Minecraft, Coding, Web Page Design, Gravity, The Importance of the Triangle in Designing Structures, How to Use a 3D Printer, How to Create Effective PowerPoint Presentations

Presentation – Visual & Creative & Constructive Arts

Examples: Tie Dye, Friendship Bracelets, How to Make Paper, Duct Tape Art, How to Compose a Photo, Architecture Styles, How to Use a DSLR camera

Public Speaking

Radio Spot/4-H Promotion

Science Fair Presentation & Display Experiments, Research

Share the Fun – Combination

Share the Fun – Dance

Share the Fun - Drama

Share the Fun – Instrumental

Share the Fun – Variety

Share the Fun – Vocal

Table Setting

2024 State 4-H Congress Competition Policies and Guidelines

1. Participants have a responsibility to review the rules, resource documents, and score sheets with their local 4-H Agent.
2. State contests will use the rules, score sheets, etc. posted only on the competition's web page, regardless of how qualifying county and district contests are run. Local units and districts are encouraged to adopt and abide by the state rules out of fairness to youth participants. For contests in which there is a national event, contestants should check the national rules for any differences at that level of competition.
3. 4-H Congress (and therefore state-level competition at Congress) participation is limited to senior 4-H youth, those ages 14-19, as of September 30 of the 4-H year. Mixed-age acts that competed at the unit or district level will be ineligible at the state level. (Example: four young people in a Share-the-Fun act where at least one is age 13 or less would not qualify.)
4. All Congress competitors must have participated in a qualifying event, whether at the unit or district level, depending on the local situation. All units and districts are encouraged to hold contests prior to Congress.
5. A list of sample topics is provided for additional information only. Participants are not limited to subjects but do have to fit into one of the above categories. Contestants should be prepared to show judges the connection/correlation to the category area. Judges' or contest managers' decisions are final.
6. Competition scoring will follow the Danish Awards System (Blue: 90-100; Red: 75-89; White: 74 and below). Overall high score blue ribbon winner in each category will receive a medal. Modifications have been made for competition categories with a total score of over 100 points.
7. A 4-H member can participate in only one competitive event during Congress even if he/she qualified in more than one contest at previous levels of competition. It is difficult when youth are assigned to multiple competitive event locations and to arrange the scheduling of two competitions to accommodate one individual at two different events.
8. At 4-H Congress, the Share-the-Fun contests have limits on the number of acts each unit can send. Each unit may send one act per Share-the-Fun category.
9. A unit may send more than one participant in all competition categories except Share-The-Fun. For example, a unit may send more than one 4-Her to compete in public speaking, fashion revue, presentations, etc. Check specific team contest rules for the number of teams and the number of participants on a team allowed in state competitions.
10. The genre of presentations, demonstrations, public speaking, STF acts, fashion review garments, etc. must remain consistent between unit/district and state competitions. Improvements based on input provided by the last judging panel can be incorporated, but the genre of the work cannot be changed.
11. Once a youth is the overall state winner in a competition category, he/she cannot compete in that category again at the state level. For instance, if a youth is the overall winner in

vocal, he/she cannot compete in vocal again, but could compete in another category such as instrumental, variety, forestry, or foods, etc. State medal winners should not repurpose their act to try to fit into another category in another year.

12. State competition contestants are encouraged to attend 4-H Congress, but are not required to. Competitors may register as one-day participants in order to compete. Pre-registration is required; see Congress information for deadlines.

Educational Workshops

Wednesday– June 19

Delegates will select their workshops in 4-H online this year during registration. Workshops will be first come, first serve, and once a workshop is filled it will no longer be available in 4-H online. Delegates will choose workshops for morning session one, morning session two, and afternoon session (if they are not competing).

Registration on April 1, 2024.

2024 4-H Congress Workshops

Workshop Name	Description	Workshop Time
Flourishing in the Garden, Flourishing in Life	"Join our new program, Flourishing in the Garden! We've created an exciting experience for young people that combines permaculture and yoga principles in a garden setting. Our goal is to help you eat more fruits and vegetables and feel more confident in your gardening skills. After trying our pilot program, participants saw improvements in self-control, teamwork, reduced sugary drink intake, increased physical activity, and improved yoga skills. We'll explore how gardening benefits your health and offer practices like movement, breathing exercises, and meditation to help you stay resilient. This is a great opportunity to learn and have fun while making positive changes for a healthier lifestyle!"	Morning
Healthy Living Mash Up	Take a deep dive into the 4th H: Health! Join us for a workshop where youth will explore various aspects of health through the following 4-H healthy living curriculums: Health Rocks!, Your Thoughts Matter, 4-H Yoga, and Teen Cuisine. Participants will engage in simulations, acquire mindfulness tools, stretch beyond their comfort zones, and delve into healthy eating habits.	Afternoon
Tour of Virginia Tech Helmet Lab	The Helmet Lab at Virginia Tech is world-famous for testing and assessing a wide variety of sports and recreational helmets. Students will receive an overview of the Virginia Tech Helmet Lab, discuss principles of physics in industrial design and application, and participate in a hands-on activity designing and building a helmet.	Afternoon
4-H Spa and Relaxation Body Butter/Tennis Ball Massage	In this workshop, teens will make homemade body butter and compare their product to a store-bought one. While the body butter solidifies, the group will learn different relaxation techniques to simulate a day at the spa.	Afternoon
Horse Genetics: Coat Colors and More!	"In the Horse Genetics workshop, participants will start by observing a stallion collection or a mock collection, depending on availability. They will then examine collected	Afternoon

	<p>samples, including thawed samples or DNA extracted from strawberries under a microscope.</p> <p>Next, participants will engage in an activity focused on genetics. Working in teams with real animals at Smithfield, they will create Punnett squares and predict the color of the foal resulting from the mating of a mare to a certain colored stallion using principles of dominance and recessiveness.</p> <p>If time permits, participants will also explore paperwork on each animal, discussing required genetic testing for diseases and comparing it to coat color genetics."</p>	
STEM in Sports Field Management	In 'STEM in Sports Field Management,' we will highlight the four STEM principles used every day by turfgrass professionals managing athletic fields. The four STEM principle categories will be headlined as: 'Science: Soil, Sand, and Surface Drainage'; 'Technology: What the Tech Is That?!'; 'Engineering: Reels, Rotary, and Rootzones - Why Your Lawn Is Not a Sports Field'; and 'Mathematics: It Really Is a Game of Inches'.	Morning
In search of pollinators; bee hunting and honey bee biology in the field	<p>Pollinators are important; every third bite of food in the US comes from an insect-pollinated crop. But how do they do it? Come to the Hahn Garden, and we will go bee hunting. Bee hunting, or bee lining, is an old practice that allows us to track honey bees in real-time to their parent nest location. This will cover basic honey bee biology, pollinator foraging, and geospatial reasoning. Discussions will include foraging costs, colony-level food handling, honey bee behaviors in the hive, and how they impact foragers in the field.</p> <p>Rainy day alternatives can include hands-on demonstrations of equipment needed for beekeeping and honey tasting.</p>	Morning
Applying to Virginia Tech: A CALS Workshop	This workshop is intended for rising juniors and seniors. We will cover what the Common App and the Virginia Tech application looks like and some tips for completion.	Morning
Leading with Style	<p>The purpose of this interactive workshop is to introduce participants to Adaption-Innovation theory and its personality assessment, Kirton's Adaption-Innovation Inventory or KAI, developed by the late psychologist Michael Kirton. Kirton discovered that advanced teenagers have the competencies required to understand and participate in the KAI. By the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand their own KAI score and its personal implications. • Explain differences in problem-solving styles as defined by Kirton's Adaption-Innovation Theory and its associated inventory. 	Afternoon

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies for leading diverse groups or teams. <p>Presenters will achieve these objectives by guiding participants through various interactive activities that raise awareness of KAI theory and its fundamental principles, contrast different problem-solving styles, help participants understand their own problem-solving style, and explore strategies for providing leadership within diverse groups or teams.</p> <p>For this workshop the instructor highly recommends that students be at least a rising Junior to enroll to enroll in this workshop.</p>	
How Would You Vote? (How Your Personal Values Influence the Decisions You Make)	This workshop is based on an activity from the Mecklenburg 4-H Innovative Leadership Academy. Focusing on local government, participants will discuss the ideal qualities of a leader. We will also explore different leadership styles and how they may be influenced by a person's values. Through a series of activities designed to help participants identify their own values, we will watch a clip of a rather heated debate that occurred during a recent local government meeting. We will analyze this clip to determine if the arguments made may have reflected the council members' personal values. Participants will then share how they would have voted on the issue.	Afternoon
How to find the world's most abundant animals	Since 80% of the animals alive right now are nematodes, but few people have ever seen one, this workshop will demonstrate to participants where to find them and how to extract them from soil and other organic materials.	Morning
Animal x Robot Interactions	Agriculture is becoming increasingly technified, but no one has asked the cows how they feel about it. Our team researches animal and robot interactions, considering strategies for designing robots and integrating them into agriculture to optimize animal comfort and wellbeing. In this workshop, we will demonstrate robot-animal interactions, discuss our strategies for designing robots with animal wellbeing in mind, showcase a virtual-reality-based simulation engine to test such interactions, and provide participants with opportunities to 'drive' an autonomous tractor.	Morning and Afternoon
Biochemistry of methane-producing microbes	Join us for an exciting workshop where we'll explore the fascinating worlds of biochemistry and microbiology! Get ready for an overview of 'what is biochemistry' and 'what is microbiology,' diving into the building blocks of life and the tiny organisms that shape our world. We'll also delve into the critical role of methane in climate change, uncovering how certain microbes contribute to methane emissions and their impact on the environment. Get ready to uncover the	Afternoon

	mysteries of science and learn about the big role microbes play in our planet's health	
Harnessing your strength to lead	Leadership requires collective problem-solving, leveraging the potential of individuals' strengths. This workshop will introduce participants to the strengths-based leadership framework and allow them to experience the concepts through an escape room activity. Participants must crack codes and solve puzzles to successfully access a lockbox of prizes. Get ready; the clock is ticking!	Afternoon
Food Inclusivity Panel Discussion	Join us for a panel discussion of food inclusivity best practices and how to make events more inclusive. Have you ever been at an event where you couldn't - or didn't want to - eat the food? It's difficult to have a good event when people are hungry. This panel will discuss how to meet people's needs, from a variety of perspectives, including adults making decisions about event food and youth leaders working on inclusivity issues.	Morning
Using Canine Science to Improve the Lives of Dogs	Our workshop will focus on teaching 4-Hers about dog behavior and welfare, and how science can help us improve the lives of our dogs. We will teach participants about reading dog behavior so that they can interact better with dogs, as well as how enrichment can improve the welfare of dogs. The participants will get to conduct a preference assessment with a dog to learn what the dog likes, and will get to construct an enrichment item that they can take home to their own dog or donate to a shelter.	Afternoon
Seeing Yourself in the Future: Let's talk about Career Readiness!	This session will allow participants to explore career readiness and leadership skills through hands-on activities and discussion. Topics will include social media presence, job application tips, and soft skills.	Morning
Growing Together: Creating Community Gardens	This workshop is based on an activity from the VSU's AgCulture Club at Petersburg High School. Participants will discover the power of community gardening as they explore the benefits, planning strategies and practical steps to create green spaces in your neighborhood or community. Whether you're a garden enthusiast or community advocate, this workshop offers valuable insights and resources to help you sow the seeds of change in your community. Come learn how to get started, so we can "Grow Together"!	Afternoon
Construction is Cool!	Join our workshop for a hands-on experience with cutting-edge 'smart' technology! Explore wearable exoskeletons, designed to prevent over-lifting and strain in construction work, and dive into the world of AR/VR goggles, allowing you to virtually tour construction sites and manipulate objects. While you wait for your turn with the tech, engage in practical activities using items like Legos and Jenga blocks. These hands-on exercises will help you grasp real-life concepts such as the sequence of building tasks, the impact of supply chain issues, and the importance of just-in-time	Morning

	<p>delivery. Don't miss out on this immersive learning opportunity!</p>	
<p>STEM Majors in Sustainability, Environment, & Conservation</p>	<p>Your text is well-written and free of spelling or grammatical errors. However, I would suggest a few adjustments for clarity and style:</p> <p>"There is a huge demand for STEM graduates worldwide, and students and parents often prioritize securing a 'good' job. However, environmental careers are frequently overlooked when students consider STEM fields. This session aims to shift that mindset by introducing 'other' STEM disciplines for students to explore and showcasing in-demand career fields that are in need of skilled professionals.</p> <p>Virginia Tech, ranked as the #1 natural resources college in the nation, boasts a nearly 100% job placement rate for its graduates, with starting salaries exceeding \$60,000 per year! Students will discover our cutting-edge, high-demand STEM programs and learn how to identify environmentally focused careers and majors that align with their interests.</p> <p>The session will also feature an overview of our holistic academic approach, a fun and interactive careers/major matching quiz activity, and, most importantly, tips on how to gain admission to Virginia Tech!"</p>	



CHARACTER COUNTS!® at Congress

TRUSTWORTHINESS, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, FAIRNESS, CARING, AND CITIZENSHIP — these six core ethical values, which the CHARACTER COUNTS!® program calls "Pillars of Character,"

provides the basis for what Virginia 4-H stands for and what each member, leader and staff member should strive to practice.

These six Pillars should guide all Congress participants' thoughts and conduct. These core beliefs help us to distinguish right from wrong. Additionally, the principles represented by these six pillars act as filters to make decisions. So, being trustworthy is not enough — we must also be caring. Adhering to the letter of the law is not enough — we must accept responsibility for our actions. In holding others to be accountable - we must not forget to be compassionate.

Character really does count! In personal relationships, at school, at the workplace, at 4-H Congress – in life – who you are makes a difference. Character is neither hereditary nor develops automatically; you must consciously develop it.

So, while you are at the State 4-H Congress and even after you leave, put your head, heart, hands, and health into living by the Six Pillars of Character® and the principles they represent.

Trustworthiness

- Be honest
- Keep promises
- Be loyal

Caring

- Be kind
- Express gratitude
- Forgive others

Respect

- Follow the Golden Rule
- Be tolerant of differences
- Deal peacefully with anger, insults, and disagreements

Fairness

- Play by the rules
- Take turns and share
- Be open-minded

Citizenship

- Obey laws and rules
- Respect authority
- Protect the environment

Responsibility

- Do what you are supposed to do
- Pursue excellence
- Be self-disciplined

CHARACTER COUNTS!® is a service mark of the CHARACTER COUNTS!® Coalition, a project of The Robert D. and Billie Ray Center at Drake University.

VIRGINIA 4-H CONGRESS CODE OF CONDUCT

PURPOSE

The purpose of the 4-H program is the positive development of youth. We believe in creating a safe learning environment that encourages the four-fold development of a young person (i.e., Head, Heart, Hands, and Health). We expect all persons involved in 4-H (youth members, parents, teen/adult volunteers) to practice behaviors that foster the total development of youth. Each 4-H member and associated individuals participating in 4-H activities must accept the responsibility of creating a positive image that reflects 4-H ideals. Furthermore, the Virginia 4-H program recognizes that "CHARACTER COUNTS!"[®] All 4-H participants should always strive to uphold the 6 Pillars of Character as described on the previous page. In seeking uniformity in the conduct expected at 4-H programs/events, the following code of conduct has been developed to provide a clear understanding of expectations.

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. For the safety and wellness of all participants, a completed and signed 4-H Health History Report Form is required for participation in 4-H events. Any medication used by delegates and/or adults must comply with the [*Medication Protocol*](#) below for Congress.
2. Participants should attend and be actively involved in all scheduled activities as part of this 4-H program/event (unless under the supervision of a medical staff person.) Curfew is to be followed as specified in the schedule for overnight events. Failure to be in assigned locations may lead to dismissal from the 4-H event. Some areas are off-limits to participants (ex: swimming pool; bodies of water such as lakes and rivers; challenge course, etc.) unless under appropriate instructor supervision. **(For Congress, teen and adult delegates are required to attend all scheduled programs, events, and activities. In addition, Congress delegates must be present for each evening's unit meeting in the dormitory with the supervising agent/volunteer by the time specified in the Congress program.)**
3. Visitors to a 4-H program/event must check in with Congress Headquarters upon arrival.
4. Participants are expected to remain at Congress through its scheduled conclusion. In the event that a delegate must leave early, they may not leave until released through Congress Headquarters according to its procedures. Delegate's chaperones and Congress Headquarters must always be involved when a delegate leaves or returns to Congress. Participants may only be picked up from a 4-H program/event by the person designated on the 4-H Health History form. Identification may be requested at the time of pick-up.
5. Participants are expected to follow the directions of 4-H volunteers and paid staff. All 4-H'ers are under the supervision of the Extension Agent, Program Director, or other adult 4-H leader responsible for the 4-H program/event.
6. Participants should respect the property of others and be responsible for themselves. Deliberate destruction or removal of facilities or equipment is not permitted. Financial responsibility for any damages caused by deliberate destruction will be assumed by the participant and/or parents/guardians. The same applies to the property and personal items of other participants.
7. Participants should treat all others and themselves with respect. Aggressive, abusive, vulgar, or violent language and behavior towards others (ex: fighting, threats, insults, cursing, discrimination, etc.) are not permitted.

8. Participants should respect the privacy of others. Girls are not permitted in boys' lodging rooms nor are boys permitted in girls' lodging rooms. **(For Congress, females are not allowed to visit male sleeping rooms or areas designated for male occupancy, and males are not allowed in female sleeping rooms or areas designated for female occupancy.)**
9. Possession, distribution, or use of fireworks, weapons, knives, or other items that can be used as a weapon are not permitted at 4-H programs/events, except under adult supervision in scheduled instructional activities (ex: shooting education class supervised by a certified instructor, etc.).
10. Possession, distribution, or use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, tobacco products, and unauthorized prescription drugs are not allowed at any 4-H sponsored program/event and must be reported to law enforcement. The Virginia 4-H program reserves the right to conduct a search of a participant's outer clothing, luggage, personal belongings, lodging rooms, and furniture being used by a participant(s) if there is "reasonable suspicion" that the participant has drugs, alcohol, or weapons. **As an official 4-H event, the use of any of these products by youth or adults at Congress is strictly prohibited.**
11. Animals and pets are not allowed at 4-H programs/events unless needed to accommodate a disability or as part of an organized program, or through specific authorization from Extension Agent, Program Director, or other adult in charge of the 4-H program/event. Animals that are used as part of a 4-H program/event should always be provided with proper care.
12. Electronic and mechanical devices (ex: cellular phones, pagers, walkie-talkies, video games, radios, CD players, TV's, laptop computers, etc.) are not allowed at 4-H programs/events unless they are needed as part of an organized 4-H program/event, or with authorization from the Extension Agent, Program Director, or other adult in charge of the 4-H program/event. Without authorization, these items will be confiscated and returned to the participant (or the participants' parents/guardians) at the end of the program/event. During State 4-H Congress, youth may be permitted to carry their cellular phones with them, but they must be turned off and not in use during any group sessions.
13. For Congress, teens are not allowed to drive their personal vehicles. All vehicles are to be parked in parking lot(s).
14. Suggestive dancing is NOT appropriate at 4-H Congress

DRESS CODE

Participants are expected to dress appropriately based upon the **Virginia 4-H Congress Dress Code** as outlined below: All delegates will dress neatly and appropriately for the scheduled activities.

Dress Code Examples

- **Sport** - shorts and tee-shirts
- **Casual** – polo shirts, t-shirts, casual shirts, slacks, nice jeans or shorts or skirts.
- **Professional** – shirt and tie, dressy top, khaki or dress pant, skirts, suits, dresses.
- **Semi-formal** – suit or jacket/nice pants, shirt and tie, party dress (long or short), dressy top with dress pants or skirt.

Additional Dress and Appearance Guidelines

- Clothing with negative, indecent language or symbols is prohibited.
- Clothing should not be excessively tight or short. As a guide, mid-thigh length clothing is appropriate.
- Clothing with holes, tears or slashes on the torso area should not be worn (lower pant legs is O.K.)
- All tops must have at minimum 2-inch straps and cover the full torso.
- See through clothing is prohibited.
- Any adornment that could be perceived as or used as a weapon will not be allowed.
- Religious head coverings are the only headwear allowed indoors.

CONSEQUENCES

Unacceptable behavior during a 4-H program/event (as defined within this Code of Conduct or through a review process by 4-H staff/volunteer) will result in consequences to the participant. Consequences may include:

1. Early release from this 4-H program/event without refund, (for Congress, teens and adults who choose not to abide by the 4-H Code of Conduct will be subject to early release from Congress and will be required to return any scholarship money awarded to them),
2. Restitution or repayment of damages,
3. Denial of future participation in the 4-H program/event at the local, district, state and national levels for one or more years (as determined by the unit staff in charge of, or responsible for, the 4-H program/event),
4. Forfeiture of financial support for a 4-H program/event
5. Removal from 4-H offices held (if applicable), and
6. Releasing the youth to the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or the proper authorities.

NOTE: *Any conduct not specifically covered by this Code of Conduct, but deemed inappropriate by those responsible for the 4-H program/event will be viewed as a violation and*

appropriate action will be taken by the Congress Dean. If an infraction occurs, the person in charge of the 4-H program/event will provide appropriate communication to parents/guardians.

Medication Protocol

- Each delegate is responsible for his/her own prescription medications. Prior to attending congress, discuss any medication needs with your 4-H Agent.
- Should delegates need assistance with medication while at Congress, contact the medical staff.
- Over-the-counter medications (acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, etc.) are available at the Medical Station and therefore, not necessary to bring with you. Refrigeration is available at Congress Headquarters for medications (insulin, etc.).