



# Illinois 4-H Code of Conduct

The opportunity to participate in or attend 4-H activities is a privilege and not a right. All 4-H participants – youth, families, volunteers, and Extension staff – who participate in or attend any activity or event sponsored by the University of Illinois Extension

4-H Youth Development Program are expected to uphold the values of the Illinois 4-H program and conduct themselves according to the following standards. These standards also apply to online 4-H activity, including social media and internet presence.

1. **Create a Welcoming Environment for All.** Encourage everyone to fully participate in 4-H. Recognize that all people have skills and talents that can help others and improve the community. Though we will not always agree, we must disagree respectfully. When we disagree, try to understand why. Our first priority is to create a safe, inclusive space for learning, sharing and collaboration that is welcoming to people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives. Diversity includes, but is not limited to: race, color, religion, political beliefs, national or ethnic origin, immigration or citizenship status, sex, gender identity and expression, transgender status, sexual orientation, age, marital or family status, educational level, learning style, pregnancy, physical appearance, body size, and individuals with disabilities.
2. **Bring Your Best Self.** Conduct yourself in a manner that reflects honesty, integrity, self-control, and self-direction. Accept the results and outcomes of 4-H contests with grace and empathy for other participants. Accept the final opinions of judges and evaluators. Be open to new ideas, suggestions, and opinions of others.
3. **Obey the Law.** Obey the laws of the locality, state and nation and U of I and Extension policies and guidelines. Commit no illegal acts. Do not possess, offer to others, or use alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco products, which include e-pens, e-pipes, e-hookah, e-cigars, JUULs, vapes, vape pens or other electronic nicotine delivery systems. Do not possess or use weapons or firearms except as expressly permitted as part of supervised 4-H shooting sports programming. Do not attend 4-H activities under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
4. **Honor Diversity – Yours and Others’.** Respect and uphold the rights and dignity of all persons who participate in 4-H programs.
5. **Create a Safe Environment.** Do not carelessly or intentionally harm or intimidate anyone in any way (verbally, mentally, physically, or emotionally). Do not engage in romantic displays or sexual activities in either public or private situations. Adults and Volunteers will not engage in romantic displays or sexual activities in either public or private situations while responsible for youth in 4-H activities nor allow 4-H youth participants under your supervision to do so. Be kind and compassionate toward others. Do not insult, harass, or bully others or engage in other hostile behaviors. Be considerate and courteous of all persons and their property.
6. **Be a Team Player.** Work cooperatively with all individuals involved in 4-H programs and activities. Be responsive to the reasonable requests of the person in charge. Respect the integrity of the group and the group’s decisions.
7. **Humane Treatment of Animals.** Treat animals humanely and teach 4-H youth to provide appropriate animal care.
8. **Participate Fully.** Participate in and contribute to planned programs, be on time and follow through on assigned tasks/responsibilities in a manner that fosters the safety, well-being, and quality of the educational experience for self and others. Have fun!
9. **Watch What You Wear.** Use good judgment. Wear clothing suited for the activity in which you will participate. Dress in a manner that is respectful to yourself and others. Clothing that displays or promotes violence, obscenity, illegal activities, discrimination, or intimidation is prohibited. Do not wear revealing clothing, such as short skirts or shorts, midriff-baring tops, or anything showing undergarments.
10. **Be a Positive Role Model.** Act in a mature, responsible manner, recognizing you are role models for others and that you are representing both yourself and the University of Illinois Extension 4-H Youth Development Program. Be responsible for your behavior, use positive and affirming language, and uphold exemplary standards of conduct at all 4-H activities.

## CONSEQUENCES

Any of the following may be used, depending on severity of the situation:

1. Participant will receive a verbal warning.
2. Participant may remain at the event/activity, but may be barred from future events.
3. Participant may be asked to leave the event/activity. If the participant is a youth, the parent(s) will be called and the youth will be sent home at family’s expense.

**I have read and I understand and agree to comply with the above University of Illinois Extension 4-H Youth Development Code of Conduct.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of 4-H Youth or Adult

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian (if youth)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date