

North Carolina 4-H Volunteer Standards Of Behavior & Personal Boundaries for Working with Minors

Families and other youth-serving organizations place trust in North Carolina Cooperative Extension to provide quality leadership and care for participants in 4-H programs. The opportunity to work with youth is a privileged position of trust that should only be held by those who are willing to commit to upholding behavior that fulfills this trust. The Program has established standards of behavior for face-to-face and online Programs for all volunteers, guest speakers and third party entities. It is the responsibility of the individual engaging with minors in the Program to review and uphold the Program rules and standards of behavior. Violations will be handled according to University policies and regulations. I will:

1. Not engage in private communications with minors including communications via text messaging, e-mail, phone, internet chat, on-line games, or other forms of social media unless there is an educational or programmatic purpose and the content of the communication is consistent with the mission of the program. Should communication be necessary, I will include a third program staff member.
2. Create an environment where everyone is welcomed and given the opportunity to participate and succeed.
3. Treat all participants with dignity, fairness and respect.
4. Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times.
5. Obey the laws of the applicable locality, state and nation.
6. Keep conversations and interactions focused on the Program goals and objectives.
7. Not share personal information, email, or social media accounts with minor participants.
8. Not share links or passwords for Program meetings or content.
9. Not “friend,” “follow” or “like” minors from the Program on social media.
10. Not record, take screenshots or images, unless directed to do so for Program purposes.
11. Not use Program content, contacts, images or video for personal use outside the scope of the Program.
12. Not share links or passwords for Programs or content unless directed to do so for Program purposes.
13. Dress appropriately.
14. Immediately report any reasonable suspicion or knowledge of abuse of a minor to the Division of Social Services, the NC State Office of Youth Programs and Compliance, and if an immediate intervention is necessary, to the local police.
15. Not touch or speak to a minor in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
16. Avoid one-on-one interaction with minors, but if unavoidable, will only do so in an open, well-illuminated space with windows observable by other program staff, unless the one-on-one interaction is expressly authorized by the program administrator or is being undertaken by a health care provider.
17. Not meet with minors outside of established program locations or outside of established times. Any exceptions require written parental authorization and must include more than one authorized adult or program staff.
18. Not invite minors to my home or other private location or accept their invitations for the same. Any exceptions require authorization by the program administrator and written authorization by a parent/guardian.
19. Not make sexual comments, tell sexual jokes, or allow minors to access sexually explicit materials.
20. Not engage or allow minors to engage me in romantic or sexual conversations.
21. Not accept or give gifts to minors without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.
22. Not inflict any physical or emotional abuse on minors to include, but not limited to, striking, humiliating, ridiculing, or degrading minors.
23. Not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with minors nor allow youth under your supervision to do so.
24. Not provide or knowingly allow minors to possess or consume alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs.
25. Not use profanity, vulgarity, or harassing language in the presence of minors at any time.

26. Not provide transportation to minors unless doing so is an acknowledged component of the program. When transporting minors, more than one volunteer or program staff must be present in the vehicle, except when multiple children/teens will be in the vehicle at all times during the transportation.
27. Make all reasonable efforts to assure that 4-H youth programs are accessible to youth without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, disability or political affiliation.
28. Operate motor vehicles (including machines or equipment) in a safe and reliable manner and only with a valid operator's license and the legally required insurance coverage. Inform county 4-H staff of any arrests or charges of criminal activity. (Temporary suspension pending resolution of the case may be required.)
29. Not require 4-H participants to purchase materials, supplies, equipment, animals or services from any specific vendor.
30. Address problems that are brought to my attention and work with Program staff to resolve issues that may arise.
31. Accept supervision and support from county, district, and state 4-H staff while involved in the 4-H program.
32. Bullying, harassing or using derogatory language towards another person or group of people is prohibited. Hazing of any kind is prohibited. Cyberbullying is prohibited.
33. Violation of Program or university code, policy, or regulation may result in being dismissed from the program.

North Carolina 4-H Volunteer Agreement

Volunteers are asked to carefully consider the following expectations and confirm a willingness to observe these by signing where indicated. In addition, adults serving as volunteers can expect the following from the North Carolina Cooperative Extension (NCCE).

NCCE AGREES TO:

- Provide orientation training for the position.
- Set educational tone and directions.
- Provide job descriptions.
- Provide assistance, support and encouragement.
- Give recognition for time and energy devoted to the job.
- Inform of coming events and activities.
- Make annual evaluations.
- Provide training opportunities and material to develop understanding and management of the volunteer assignments.
- Provide educational materials to be used for project and club organizations.
- Provide timely information on events, programs, and opportunities for youth at the county, state, and national levels.

VOLUNTEER AGREES TO:

- Register and maintain an Active Status in 4-HOnline.
- Complete New 4-H Leader Orientation & Training.
- Be supportive of Extension programs and staff members.
- Participate in County Leader Association meetings and training as appropriate.
- Inform enrolled youth of Extension program opportunities.

- Supply County Extension Office with application updates annually.
- Abide by the North Carolina 4-H Volunteer Standards of Behavior & Personal Boundaries for Working with Minors Form.
- Participate in available training as appropriate to fulfill my duties.
- Required: Minors Regulation Training Video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5hbO7WD8Mo&feature=youtu.be>

_____ **Yes, I agree.**

Printed Name: _____ Signature of Volunteer:

Signature of Parent/Guardian (if volunteer is a minor):

Date: