



Maryland 4-H Behavioral Expectations

A goal of the Maryland 4-H program is to provide opportunities for children and youth to build character. Maryland 4-H supports the **CHARACTER COUNTS!**SM **six pillars of character: TRUSTWORTHINESS, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, FAIRNESS, CARING AND CITIZENSHIP.** In order to ensure that Maryland 4-H programs provide positive environments for all individuals to learn and grow, 4-H participants agree to abide by these expectations of behavior:

(CHARACTER COUNTS! is a service mark of the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition, a project of the Josephson Institute of Ethics.)

I will be trustworthy. I will be worthy of trust, honor and confidence. I will be a model of integrity by doing the right thing even when the cost is high. I will be honest in all my activities. I will keep my commitments by attending all sessions of the planned event. If I am not feeling well or have a schedule conflict, I will inform my chaperon or a person in charge. I will be in the assigned area (e.g., club meeting room, building, dorm) at all times. Maryland 4-H does not permit dishonesty by lying, cheating, deception or omission.

I will be respectful. I will show respect, courtesy, and consideration to everyone, including myself, other program participants and those in authority. I will act and speak respectfully. I will treat program areas, lodging areas, and transportation vehicles with respect. I will not use vulgar or abusive language or cause physical harm. I will appreciate diversity in skill, gender, ethnicity and ability. Maryland 4-H does not tolerate statements or acts of discrimination or prejudice.

I will be responsible. I will be responsible, accountable and self-disciplined in the pursuit of excellence. I will live up to high expectations so I can be proud of my work and conduct. I will be on time to all program events. I will be accountable by accepting responsibility for my choices and actions. I will abide by the established program curfew. I will be responsible for any damage, theft or misconduct in which I participate.

I will be fair. I will be just, fair and open. I will participate in events fairly by following the rules, not taking advantage of others and not asking for special exceptions.

I will be caring. I will be caring in my relationships with others. I will be kind and show compassion for others. I will treat others the way I want to be treated. I will show appreciation for the efforts of others. I will help members in my group to have a good experience by striving to include all participants.

I will be a good citizen. I will be a contributing and law-abiding citizen. I will be respectful to the environment and contribute to the greater good. I will not use any illegal substances such as tobacco, alcohol and drugs.



Maryland 4-H Disciplinary Policy and Procedures

I. Maryland 4-H expects youth participating in programs to behave in an acceptable manner and in accordance with the Maryland 4-H Behavioral Expectations outlined on the reverse side of this document. 4-H participants who engage in unacceptable conduct, including the following behaviors, are subject to discipline.

- Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol and/or illegal drugs.
- Possession or use of weapons or dangerous materials.
- Possession or use of tobacco products.
- Misuse of prescription or nonprescription drugs.
- Sexual activity.
- Lying, Cheating, misrepresenting project work or other unethical practices.
- Unauthorized absence from program site.
- Physical, verbal, emotional, or mental abuse of, or threats toward another person.
- Theft, destruction, or abuse of property.

II. A participant in a 4-H program who engages in conduct (including the above behaviors) that, in the discretion of the extension faculty, staff or MCE volunteer in charge, may jeopardize the health or safety of the participant or others, or the integrity of 4-H, will be dismissed immediately from the program (meeting, activity, event, trip, camp, etc.). The participant's parent or guardian will be responsible for providing transportation home for a child if dismissed.

III. Following a program, a participant and his/her parent or guardian will be notified in writing of the nature of any unacceptable conduct for which sanctions (up to and including suspension from one or more 4-H programs or dismissal from (4-H) are being considered. In such cases:

- The extension faculty or staff member with overall responsibility for the program will set up a meeting to hear the 4-H member. The 4-H member's parent or guardian will be permitted to be present at such time. At the discretion of MCE or at the request of the 4-H participant, a committee may be appointed by MCE to review the matter.
- Following the meeting, the 4-H participant and his or her parent/guardian will be notified in writing of the outcome of the meeting and any sanction(s) to be imposed.
- Sanctions may be appealed in writing within seven (7) days after receiving notice of the decision, to the County Extension Director (CED). In the event that the extension faculty in charge also serves as the CED, the appeal will be made to the Regional Extension Director (RED).
- The 4-H participant and his/her parent or guardian will be notified in writing of the decision of the CED (or RED). The decision of the CED (or RED) may be appealed in writing to the State 4-H Leader within seven (7) days after receiving notice of the decision. The decision of the State 4-H Leader will be final.

"I HAVE READ THE MARYLAND 4-H BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND THE MARYLAND 4-H DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURES. I AM AWARE THAT MY ACTIONS AND DECISIONS AFFECT ME AND OTHERS AND MAY RESULT IN LOSS OF PRIVILEGES DURING 4-H PROGRAMS, AND FOR FUTURE PROGRAMS. I WILL ACCEPT THE APPROPRIATE AND LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF MY ACTIONS, AS DETERMINED BY MARYLAND 4-H."

Member Signature _____ Date _____

"AS THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF _____, I HAVE READ THE MARYLAND 4-H BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND THE MARYLAND 4-H DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURES AND WILL SUPPORT THE INDIVIDUAL IN CHARGE IN MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR. I AGREE TO ACCEPT THE APPROPRIATE AND LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF MY CHILD'S ACTIONS AS DETERMINED BY MARYLAND 4-H."

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

"It is the policy of the University of Maryland, Agricultural Experiment Station and Maryland Cooperative Extension, that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, marital or parental status or disability."