

## Discipline & Review Procedures

4-H'ers and their parents/guardians sign the Georgia 4-H Code of Conduct prior to participating in 4-H Activities and Events off the 4-H'ers school campus. This document is valid for one year and includes the minimum standard for behavior. As outlined in the Code, 4-H'ers are expected to exhibit positive character and behavior including (but not limited to) trustworthiness, responsibility, respectfulness, caring, citizenship and fairness.

The 4-H Code of Conduct should be reviewed for the entire group prior to the beginning of a 4-H activity or event. This includes not only consequences of misbehavior but also expected behavior.

### VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

If a 4-H'er is suspected of being in violation of the 4-H Code of Conduct, the 4-H event coordinator should be contacted to assist the leaders with the review process. Leaders must insure throughout the process that the rights of the young person are observed. Leaders are not to invade a 4-H'er's right to privacy or due process in determining offenses.

A **4-H Review Board** may be called when an infraction has been noted. The review board serves to:

1. determine whether a violation has occurred
2. if there is a violation, what disciplinary action should be taken

The 4-H event coordinator or Program Development Coordinator will call the review board as necessary or at the request of a 4-H'er. In the case of a county 4-H activity, the county Extension agent or Extension individual coordinating the event may call the board. A review board will consist of one Extension faculty or staff member, two volunteers and three 4-H members. The Extension faculty member coordinating the event will serve as or appoint a Coordinator of the Review Board.

### Orienting & Conducting the Review Board

The Review Board coordinator will:

- inform the Board and those in question of the purpose of the Review Board called
- direct everyone participating in the process to treat the matter as confidential
- appoint a recorder to document the Review Board Proceedings and the discussion of the Board following the proceedings
- advise members of the suspected infraction
- provide opportunity for each person involved to present his/her recollection of the events and allow for additional individuals to be included to the process as needed
- permit Board members to ask questions and call for additional information
- insure that persons not essential are excluded from the review. Witnesses may only be present in the review board room during their own testimony
- complete any necessary paperwork relative to the conclusion of the board

### Reaching a Determination

When all parties have provided their recollection of the events and the Board has no further questions, the Board will work together to determine whether the 4-H'ers are in violation of the Code of Conduct and what disciplinary action, in keeping with the guidelines for the Code of Conduct, should be taken.

Once a determination has been reached through discussion and vote, the Review Board Coordinator and one member of the Board should present to each of the 4-H'ers found in violation the findings of the board as well as any consequences for the actions. Additionally, the Coordinator should discuss the appeal procedures.

Following the review process, the Review Board coordinator will make a written record of the event prior to the proceedings, the proceedings as well as the consequences recommended. The record should be kept on file with the event information and a copy sent to the local staff member coordinating 4-H.

### **The Appeal Process**

If a 4-H'er wishes to appeal the decision of the review board, the 4-H'er must appeal in writing through the County Extension office. Appeals must **be filed within 10 days** of notification of the disciplinary action from the 4-H Review Board. The appeal is sent to the Program Development Coordinator of the 4-H member and the State 4-H Leader. If the district and state 4-H staff cannot resolve the matter, an appeal board will meet within 30 days of the 4-H'ers request. The appeal board will consist of one Extension worker, two volunteers and three 4-H members. Following any disciplinary action from a 4-H Review Board, the person coordinating the activity must provide written notification concerning the action to the 4-H'ers parent/guardian, the county Extension faculty and the 4-H Program Development Coordinator.

**For more information, contact your local UGA Extension office at 1-800-ASK-UGA1.**

**The University of Georgia 4-H program is the largest youth leadership organization in the state.**

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