

GEORGIA 4-H LEADERSHIP IN ACTION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Youth volunteers are a growing trend. Youth provide enthusiasm, energy, and excitement for projects when asked to provide leadership for community endeavors. In turn, the youth are able to develop valuable life skills including planning, conducting, implementing, and evaluating projects. In some community projects, youth may discover future career avenues and gain experience in these fields.

The Georgia 4-H Leadership in Action award program is designed to recognize the work Junior (7th and 8th grade) and Senior (9th – 12th grade) 4-H'ers do as leaders in their communities. The program is designed to motivate and encourage youth to become active and engaged in local issues and initiatives. Unlike many competitive events, each 4-H'er who meets the requirements of the local or state level will be recognized with a certificate. If a 4-H'er meets requirements for both the local and state level then he/she will receive both certificates.

In this annual program 4-H'ers may receive recognition each year they apply. Senior State Leadership in Action Competition Winners are ineligible to apply for the competition phase (Part II) again. However, previous State Leadership in Action Competition Winners may complete projects for the recognition certificate level (Level 1).

All 4-H'ers are capable of completing requirements for their age level. However, activities should be developmentally appropriate. Junior 4-H'ers will serve in a more limited capacity than Senior 4-H'ers. Emphasis is placed on the 4-H'er's leadership role in the project in both Junior and Senior levels of the program. 4-H'ers should be able to identify not only the need met but also their key role as a leader in the project.

4-H'ers have a choice of applying for local recognition and state recognition. Both levels require the same application, however, state recognition requires additional documentation. Please read the specific requirements for each level in the pages that follow. Brief descriptions of the levels are listed below:

- **Local Level Recognition (Part I)** recipients must participate in at least one project involving the community, environment, or agriculture. Youth will be asked to document the planning, conducting, implementing, and evaluating of their projects. This project is designed so that teens may confront issues in their community. Youth are able to select an area of interest and plan activities to teach others. Youth must take a full leadership role in planning and conducting these activities. The award is designed to recognize the leadership process.
- **State Level Recognition (Part II)** requires additional documentation of the youth's involvement in the community. Additionally, senior 4-H'ers may seek recognition as a state winner in the competitive phase and will participate in an application screening and interview process.



Certificates will be given for each level of the program if requirements are met. State level recognition includes competitive programs with winners receiving additional recognition. Each 4-H'er should be recognized for the work he/she has done - regardless of the outstanding, unique, or creative characteristics of their project.

OVERVIEW OF DATES AND DEADLINES

For specific dates and deadlines, please review the State 4-H Master Calendar.

Early April	Names of applicants submitted online via 4-H Event Registration. Online registration is required. Applications should be submitted online via Qualtrics link provided in 4-H Event Registration and in the Event Letter.
Late April	Senior Leadership in Action competition applications interview by district. Junior Leadership in Action applications screened and “Outstanding Community Leaders” announced.
Late April	Certificates mailed to County Extension offices by the State 4-H Office for all applicants.
June	Junior State Leadership in Action <u>Winners</u> (8 th grade at application time) will be recognized at State Council.
July	Senior State Leadership in Action Competition is held on the opening day of State 4-H Congress. All state <u>finalists</u> are recognized during the Leadership Banquet with two State <u>Winners</u> announced during the banquet program.
Fall	Junior State Leadership in Action <u>Winners</u> (7 th grade at application time) will be recognized at Junior Conference.
January/February	4-H Day at the Capitol: Senior State Leadership in Action <u>Winners</u> are recognized.
March-April	Senior State Leadership in Action winners participate in National 4-H Conference if they chose the award trip instead of the scholarship.



GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

1. Leadership in Action is an award program of the Georgia 4-H program. Therefore, please consult the program's Rules and Objectives for the most recent policies, procedures and rules of Georgia 4-H. They may be found on the Georgia 4-H Leadership in Action webpage.
2. Applications for local and state recognition can be found on the Leadership in Action webpage at <https://georgia4h.org/programs/focus-areas/citizenship/community-global-affairs/leadership-in-action/>. Examples of past project ideas for both the junior and senior level are also available on the webpage.
3. County registration of applications must be completed by the deadline (usually the first week in April) via the Georgia 4-H Online Event Registration Site. 4-H'ers not registered online may be disqualified from competition.
4. All applications must be received electronically on or before the deadline noted in the event letter. Late applications may not be accepted.
5. All applications must be certified with the agent signature. Your signature indicates that, to the best of your knowledge, the 4-H'er has accurately represented his or her work. Unsigned applications will not be awarded certificates.
6. Applications should reflect a 4-H'er's work over the past year, from January 1 of the prior year through March 1 of the current year in which the application is due.
7. In order to receive local recognition, a 4-H'er must complete Part I of the application. State recognition may be earned with the completion of Parts I and II of the application.
8. Applications may be handwritten or typed. Applicants should use the official cover page and attach the appropriate responses for Part I and II while adhering to word and page limits. The application is an opportunity for the 4-H'er to "tell the story" of their work. From a leadership perspective, it is very important that the 4-H'ers role in the work is conveyed.
9. Checklist for Submission
 - Application Cover Page signed by the 4-H'er and Extension Agent
 - Part I (required for local and state recognition applications)
 - Part II (required in addition to Part I for state recognition applications only)
 - Registration of the applicant through the 4-H Event Registration Site
 - Upload the digital application as one file through the UGA Qualtrics link found within 4-H Event Registration / Event Letter
 - Keep the original application on file in the event it is needed later.



THE APPLICATION

Each application should be submitted electronically via the Qualtrics link provided. The application includes the standard cover sheet and the additional sheets per the instructions listed below. Applications may be handwritten or typed in black ink on 8 ½ x 11 white paper. Colored paper and ink is allowed for part II (state recognition) of the application.

Part I (required for local recognition)

Include the following information in the written document. Please title each section as indicated and be aware of word limits. There are not a minimum number of words, instead there are a maximum number of words for each section. However, 4-H'ers should be sure they have described each section in detail. (There is not a page limit for section I but there are limits on the number of words for each section.)

Situation: Describe the community, environmental, or agricultural issue in which you have chosen to get involved. (Limit 100 words)

Response: Describe how you have been a community leader by becoming involved in the issue. (Limit 600 words) Questions to address:

- How have you built relationships/partnerships to get involved?
 - How many other organizations or groups have participated in your project? Please list them.
- How have you influenced or educated others to become involved?
 - How many youth helped in some way with your project?
 - How many adults helped in some way with your project?
- How did you target special needs/at risk audiences?
- How have you promoted the issue and 4-H?
- What have you done to improve the situation (public relations, activities, clubs, etc...)? Include the role you played in these activities.
- List your involvement throughout the year on a timeline.

Impact: Describe how your involvement has improved or influenced the local situation.

- Describe who benefitted from your project.
- Provide your best estimate of how many people benefitted. (Limit 350 words)

Evaluation: Describe your experience in terms of lessons learned, ideas for improvement, and next steps. (Limit 300 words)

Part II (required for state recognition)

In addition to Part I, 4-H'ers may attach the following items and receive state recognition.

- No more than two 8 ½ x 11 pages of supporting documentation. This may include but is not limited to photos, news clippings, brochures and programs. Documentation must lay flat and cannot have foldouts for additional space. Paper may be any color and documentation may be labeled in any color ink.
- One letter of recommendation from a community leader who is aware of the 4-H'ers work. This recommendation should not come from an Extension agent or family member.



Local Recognition:

4-H'ers who gain local recognition status (completing Part I) will be rewarded with a certificate. Certificates will be mailed to the County Extension Office usually at the first of May.

Junior State Recognition (must submit Part I and II):

Juniors meeting the criteria for state level recognition will receive a state recognition certificate. Additionally, juniors will be selected as "Outstanding Community Leaders" and will be recognized with a plaque during State Council (if awarded as an 8th grader) or Jr. Conference (if awarded as a 7th grader).

Senior State Recognition (must submit Part I and II):

Seniors meeting the criteria for state level recognition will receive a state recognition certificate. 4-H'ers may opt to receive the certificate only and not participate in the competition phase.

Youth who indicated their desire to participate in the competition phase will have their application screened and may be selected for a district interview. Candidates in each district will be notified to participate in the district interview process. Through the district interview process, senior 4-H'ers winning the district competition will advance to the state interview competition held at State Congress. 4-H'ers are eligible to receive this award more than once; although if they are one of the top TWO State Recognition winners, they may no longer compete in this area because they gain Master 4-H'er status. The two 4-H'ers selected as state winners will individually select EITHER a trip to National 4-H Conference or a \$500 scholarship.



Purpose

Senior interviews are a formal interview experience for competitors. 4-H'ers are judged on presence, ease, ability to answer questions as well as quality of the application and the work the 4-H'er has done. 4-H'ers should be able to easily answer questions concerning their project activities as well as questions pertaining to their overall experiences.

Objectives of Leadership in Action Recognition Program

4-H'ers participating in the program will:

- Identify a need in the community and develop skills in planning and conducting projects to meet those needs
- Motivate and encourage youth to become active and engaged in local issues and initiatives.
- Express themselves in written and oral forms.
- Practice skills that develop self-esteem.
- Exhibit characteristics and competencies of a leader.

Interview Questions

4-H'ers will be asked questions directly from their application as well as questions that require their transfer of knowledge to other areas.

Please keep in mind that the interview section is interview only and 4-H'ers WILL NOT be allowed to bring props, scrapbooks, or other items to share with the judges. Judges will have the application with the attached documentation.

Scoring

Scores are assigned individually by both interview judges and averaged. Scores are designated based on the applications and the answers given by the 4-H'ers in the interview session.

Service	40 points
Leadership	40 points
Completeness/Neatness	10 points
Presentation Skills	10 points

Keep in mind that strong activities:

- are initiated by the 4-H'er
- are coordinated by the 4-H'er
- are planned and conducted by the 4-H'er
- take place for a longer period of time
- have an impact

Each district will select first and second place participants to advance to state competition during State 4-H Congress. In case of a tie, the tie will be broken by the high Leadership score in odd years, and by the high Service score in even years. Sweepstakes guidelines do not apply to this event.



We have a community project in my county that all my 4-H'ers work with. Can more than one 4-H'er use the same activity?

Yes and no. 4-H'ers should have key leadership roles in the program. If your 4-H'ers coordinated a pop tab drive at the local elementary school to add to the tabs collected for Junior Conference it may be an activity that more than one had a leadership role in. One 4-H'er could have been in charge of publicity. He or she planned posters, announcements, website blurbs, and/or information promoting the project. One 4-H'er could be in charge of teacher relations. That 4-H'er may have met with the teachers, come up with prizes for top classes; collected containers to collect the tabs. Both 4-H'ers, in this example, have key leadership roles in meeting a need. Consider, though, if the 4-H'ers role had been just to bring in pop tabs. If that was all the 4-H'ers did, then no, everyone could not use it as a project.

Can a 4-H'er sit on an advisory board and report his/her work? Yes, if the 4-H'er has a key leadership role and in most cases, he/she would. If the 4-H'er is meeting a need in the community—he/she is by being the youth voice and can answer all the questions on the application.

Isn't this hard for Junior 4-H'ers? Developmentally a junior's project should look different from a senior's. A junior will probably have a project that is smaller in size and scope. For example, a junior may realize that his school library does not have a good book selection. He could meet with his librarian. Determine what kinds of books are needed and approach a local bookstore about making a donation. He could then help the librarian inventory and shelve the books. It's a small project that meets a need. A senior noting the same need for library books may work on a fundraising project to buy books, recruit others to do some fundraising, look for lots of groups for donations. The senior's project would be larger in scope.

A Junior earns one of the eight state competition awards is in the seventh grade. Can the 4-H'er enter again in the eighth grade? Yes. Of course, since it's a yearly project the junior would do a new project but he/she is eligible to compete again.

If a Senior 4-H'er is a district winner and advances to state competition but is not one of the two state winners, can the 4-H'er enter again? Yes. A senior 4-H can enter in following years. Senior 4-H'ers are ineligible for state competition once he/she has been named one of two state winners. However, even when a senior 4-H has won the state competition, he/she may complete projects for the recognition certificates but may not compete in the interview phase again.

Can a leader plan service projects for my 4-H'ers to complete for this recognition? A central concept of this program is for 4-H'ers to identify issues and/or needs in their community. Once needs are identified, a 4-H'er should look toward what he or she can do to make a difference. Leaders can help 4-H'ers brainstorm for issues, identify and research needs, come up with solutions or ideas for creating awareness. However, this program is not designed for 4-H'ers to report activities that have been planned completely by the 4-H leader.

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