

Constitution and By-Laws of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet

ARTICLE I - NAME AND MISSION

- Section 1 The name of the group shall be the VIRGINIA 4-H CABINET.
- Section 2 All youth members will serve on district committees. Each committee will bear the name of the district that the representatives are from, for example, SOUTHEAST DISTRICT COMMITTEE.
- Section 3 Members will serve on an additional committee as directed by the current Cabinet.
- Section 4 The mission statement of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet is decided upon annually by the newly elected Cabinet at their August meeting.
- Section 5 Henceforth the following terms will mean thus:

1. Virginia 4-H Cabinet shall mean all youth ambassadors, and officers elected to the Cabinet.
2. Adult Advisors shall mean the adult leaders who oversee and direct the Cabinet for their three year term.
3. Youth Mentors shall mean the previous Cabinet members who are selected to mentor the current Cabinet.
4. District Ambassadors shall mean the Cabinet members from any singular given district.
5. 4-H District(s) shall mean the multiple unit areas as they are divided in our four districts, Southwest, Central, Southeast, and Northern, as defined by the State 4-H Faculty and 4-H Staff.
6. 4-H Staff shall mean the professional staff persons of the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service whose responsibility it is to direct the 4-H activities.
7. Senior 4-H'er shall mean a 4-H Club member that is between the ages of 14 and 18 as defined in the Virginia 4-H Eligibility Guidelines.
8. Local 4-H Club shall mean the various 4-H Clubs within the units.
9. State 4-H Faculty shall mean the professional, state level staff of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and Virginia State University who work in state level leadership roles for the Virginia Cooperative Extension/National 4-H Program.
10. State 4-H Leader shall mean the administrator and program leader of the Virginia 4-H Program.
11. Voting delegate shall mean any Congress delegate from any District who casts their votes in the election of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

- Section 1 The purpose of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet is to provide leadership for their Fellow 4-H members, and to serve as a liaison or conduit of communication between 4-H members and state staff, as well as assisting the staff of the Virginia Cooperative Extension.
- Section 2 The Cabinet is responsible for helping to plan, organize, and implement the annual Virginia State 4-H Congress at Virginia Tech, and to additionally assist with the annual Virginia State 4-H Intermediate Congress or iCongress at Virginia State University when needed.
- Section 3 The Cabinet is dedicated to promoting youth/adult partnership, advocating for the Virginia and National 4-H Programs both internally and externally, and upholding the principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP AND ELIGIBILITY

- Section 1 The Virginia 4-H Cabinet shall be comprised of sixteen (16) district-level Ambassadors (four per each Extension district), four (4) state-level Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Reporter/Historian), one Past President (the individual who served as President of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet during the previous year), Youth Mentors (three individuals who previously served as Ambassadors within the State 4-H Cabinet), one All Star Liaison, Extension Agents, Specialists, and/or 4-H Volunteer Adult Advisors, and the State 4-H Office Extension Specialist Advisor.
- Section 2 To be eligible to serve on the Virginia 4-H Cabinet members must be between the ages of 14 and 18 years old. A candidate must be between 14 years of age and no older than 18 years of age by September 30 of the 4-H year.
- Section 3 Virginia 4-H Cabinet members are expected to attend all of the State 4-H Cabinet meetings. There are four sessions during each year-long term. The times and the locations of meetings are subject to change. Cabinet members are required to attend three of four meetings, or will be automatically dismissed.

- Section 4 Virginia 4-H Cabinet Officers are not eligible to compete in any competition at Virginia 4-H Congress. Ambassadors may compete But must ensure that their responsibility to Cabinet is their priority.
- Section 5 All Virginia 4-H Cabinet members will abide by the Code of Conduct of the Virginia 4-H Program at all times.
- Section 6 The State 4-H Office Extension Specialist Advisor, in consultation with at least one other Cabinet Advisor, has the authority to remove Cabinet members for violations of the Virginia 4-H Code of Conduct, failure to carry out job responsibilities, and/or failure to attend at least three of the four Cabinet meetings.

ARTICLE IV - DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS

- Section 1 All Virginia 4-H Cabinet members are required to raise \$250.00 individually to financially support the May meeting regardless of if they are in attendance or not. This money must be raised and turned in to the Virginia 4-H Office prior to the May meeting, with the exact deadline set each year. Fundraising strategies and suggestions will be discussed during the August meeting. Individuals may fundraise as a group, but each must raise \$250.00.
- Section 2 Ambassadors and Officers are required to participate in a minimum of two outreach service opportunities during their term.
- Section 3 All Virginia 4-H Cabinet members must maintain a high standard of personal conduct and should act as positive role models for other 4-H members. They must serve as leaders of the 4-H program at the local, district, and state levels, positively representing the needs and interests of the Virginia 4-H youth. Cabinet members are expected to have accountability and personal responsibility, demonstrating the best that 4-H has to offer through their words, actions, personal appearance, and social media activity.
- Section 4 All Virginia 4-H Cabinet members will be expected to acquire the official Cabinet uniform as approved by the State 4-H Office.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

- Section 1 The goals and duties of the PRESIDENT of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet shall be as follows: provide leadership to the Virginia 4-H Cabinet, attend all Cabinet meetings and arrive on time, maintain an ongoing communication link with all Cabinet subcommittees, preside at all Cabinet meetings, attend Virginia 4-H Congress and iCongress, preside at all selected Congress assemblies, prepare an introductory speech to be given at the first night of Congress, prepare a written message to be included in the Congress program, prepare written reports for the State 4-H Office as needed, abide by all provisions of the Virginia 4-H Code of Conduct and Cabinet expectations, represent and speak on behalf of Virginia 4-H at selected state and national events and conferences, carry out all other assigned duties and responsibilities, and serve in the capacity of PAST PRESIDENT as an advisor to the Cabinet when their term ends.
- Section 2 The goals and duties of the VICE PRESIDENT of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet shall be as follows: be prepared to assume the duties of the PRESIDENT if necessary, attend all Cabinet meetings and arrive on time, work closely with the PRESIDENT on all Cabinet functions, abide by all provisions of the Virginia 4-H Code of Conduct and Cabinet expectations, carry out all other assigned duties and responsibilities, attend Virginia 4-H Congress and iCongress, and be prepared to represent and speak on behalf of Virginia 4-H at selected local, district, state, and possibly out-of-state events.
- Section 3 The goals and duties of the SECRETARY of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet shall be as follows: maintain an accurate set of records of all Cabinet actions, attend all Cabinet meetings and arrive on time, submit to the State 4-H Office Extension Specialist Advisor an accurate set of minutes for each of the Cabinet meetings no later than two weeks after the meeting, coordinate correspondence for the Cabinet, assist the REPORTER/HISTORIAN in maintaining a Congress Scrapbook, abide by all provisions of the Virginia 4-H Code of Conduct and Cabinet expectations, carry out all other assigned duties and responsibilities, attend Virginia 4-H Congress and iCongress, and represent and speak on behalf of Virginia 4-H at local, district, state, and possibly out-of-state events.
- Section 4 The goals and duties of the REPORTER/HISTORIAN of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet shall be as follows: provide leadership for all Cabinet information

and record keeping activities, maintain a Cabinet Scrapbook containing pictures, newspaper clippings, narrative material, audio tapes, video tapes, etc., of the Cabinet's meetings and activities throughout the term, chair the Congress Public Relations Committee by promoting Congress and Virginia 4-H through a variety of media outlets, abide by all provisions of the Virginia 4-H Code of Conduct and Cabinet expectations, carry out all other assigned duties and responsibilities, attend Virginia 4-H Congress and iCongress, and represent and speak on behalf of Virginia 4-H at local, district, state, and possibly out-of-state events.

ARTICLE VI - ELECTION OF THE VIRGINIA 4-H CABINET

- Section 1 Candidates for the position of AMBASSADOR must have at least one full year of experience as a 4-H member, documented formal leadership training (examples include: 4-H, FFA, Student Council, DECA, FBLA, church, NHS, Beta Club, etc.), sufficient and appropriate training, experiences, attitudes and skills as documented in the Virginia 4-H Cabinet Application and Consent Form.
- Section 2 Candidates for an officer position must have at least one full term as an AMBASSADOR on the Virginia 4-H Cabinet, previous experience serving as an officer in an organization, association, school group, or church group, and is strongly encouraged to have previously attended a national level conference related to any of the following: 4-H, youth development, leadership, youth/adult partnerships, or education.
- Section 3 Each unit (county or city) is allowed to send an unlimited number of applicants forward for an officer position, and/or ambassador positions, provided all requirements are met by the individual candidates. In the event that there are no applicants and/or open spots still remain for an officer and/or ambassador position, the State Elections Chairperson reserves the right to extend the deadline for those positions. If insufficient numbers of candidates run for office, the Elections Chair is empowered to allow those running for one office to switch to another.
- Section 4 The election process first requires candidates to prepare and submit a two-minute campaign video addressing why they want to be a Cabinet member and what they plan to do if they are elected. These videos must not contain copyrighted music or content of any kind.

- Section 5 Candidates may not switch to another office after original application forms have been received without express permission from the State Elections Chairperson and the State 4-H Office.
- Section 6 Write-in candidates are not allowed.
- Section 7 Ambassador and Officer candidates are expected to be present (during an in-person Congress) and deliver their own district ambassador or state-officer two-minute campaign speech. If a candidate is unable to be present and/or unable to deliver their speech, then each situation will be addressed on a case-by-case basis by the Extension Specialist Cabinet Advisor and the State Elections Chair. The campaign speech must be approved prior to delivery by the candidates Extension Agent.
- Section 8 Officer candidates will give their campaign speeches at the Opening Assembly of the Virginia 4-H Congress, and ambassador candidates will give their campaign speeches at their district meetings, immediately before delegates cast their ballots.
- Section 9 During district meetings at in-person Congress, or during a designated time in the event of a virtual Congress, delegates will vote for one candidate per officer position and up to four District Ambassadors for their respective districts. The Virginia 4-H Cabinet will be elected through popular vote.
- Section 10 Officer and Ambassador positions will be elected based on a weighted process involving three tiers, application, interview, and popular vote. The application and interview tiers will be worth a max of 50 points each and the popular voting tier will be worth a max of 70 points. The application and interview will be evaluated based on the rubrics shared within this packet. The application and interview will be completed, conducted, and evaluated prior to the start of Congress. Candidates will receive points based on the percentage of votes they received. As an example, for those running for a District Ambassador position, if 100 votes were received from a district and Candidate A received 80 votes from that district, they will receive 80% or 56 points of the available 70 points for the voting tier.
- Section 11 During Congress, candidates will be voted on by their peers. Only youth who attend Congress will be allowed to vote, and voting results will be based on popular vote. The total points received from each tier

(application, interview, and voting) will be tallied and the top four District Ambassador Candidates for each district, receiving the highest total, would be elected. For the Officer positions, it will be the same process if the position has competition. If there is no competition in either Ambassador or Officer positions, the youth who applied will automatically be elected, but will still need to complete all three tiers.

Section 12 If a unit is not represented at State 4-H Congress (no youth delegates in attendance), they forfeit their vote. There will be no absentee voting.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS

Section 1 There shall be at least four annual Virginia 4-H Cabinet business meetings during the term of the State Cabinet. Meeting dates will be decided prior to the release of the State Cabinet elections packet.

Section 2 The Cabinet shall have the authority to schedule other regular meetings as may be necessary. The President, Advisors, or any cabinet officer may call special meetings when deemed necessary.

Section 3 The agenda for the four annual meetings shall be planned by the Cabinet advisors and the officers of the Cabinet.

Section 4 The annual meetings shall include an agenda and a recording of the minutes.

Section 5 Any meetings of the Cabinet, or any of its committees or sub-groups, may be conducted by electronic or telephonic means when deemed necessary or expedient, according to such standards and guidelines as may be established by the Cabinet and/or the State 4-H Office.

Section 6 A quorum will be decided on annually for the four regular meetings as approved by the officers and the Cabinet advisors. If the Cabinet can not reach the decided amount of attendance for business during a meeting, the Cabinet advisors will advise for closing the meeting and/or rescheduling. An officer of the Cabinet may move for a vote for closing the meeting.

Section 7 In the event of an emergency, as determined by Virginia Cooperative Extension, provisions of this constitution may be altered on an interim

basis. Any interim alteration should be presented to the voting members of the Cabinet for approval. Once approved, interim alterations will take effect when approved by the State 4-H Leader. Any interim alterations which are approved shall expire at the conclusion of the 4-H year unless adopted as an amendment or amendments according to the regular procedure set forth in this Constitution.

Section 8 The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Cabinet in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution, the policies of Virginia 4-H or Virginia Cooperative Extension, and any special rules of order the Cabinet may adopt.

ARTICLE VIII - RATIFICATION AND AMENDMENT

Section 1 This Constitution shall go into effect upon approval by 2/3 of the voting members of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet at an annual business meeting, ratification of the State 4-H Leader, approval of the majority of delegates present and voting at Virginia 4-H Congress.

Section 2 This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Cabinet at an annual business meeting of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet and signature of the Virginia 4-H Cabinet President.

Section 3 Any adopted amendment will go into effect immediately.

Section 4 Notice of proposed ratification or adoption of amendment will be emailed at least 14 days prior to the meeting of the Cabinet at which it will be voted upon.