



GENERAL RULES GOVERNING Leadership Development Events

For complete information regarding Leadership Development Event Policy, please see the Michigan FFA Board of Directors Policy Manual and review the individual contest rules.

ELIGIBILITY

Limited to active, in high school or junior high, FFA members of a chapter in good standing with the Michigan Association of FFA. To be an active member, a student must be enrolled in an approved agricultural education/agriscience course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study for a supervised agriculture experience program. Students must be rostered with the state association prior to participation in district contests to be eligible to compete.

Each contest will be limited to two teams representing each chapter in the district contest. If a chapter has over 75 high school members prior to district contests, they will be allowed to bring three high school contestants to the district competition. If a chapter has over 75 junior high members prior to district contests, they will be allowed to bring three junior high contestants to district competition. A maximum of two teams will be selected to compete at the regional level. Each region will select two teams to represent their region at the state contest.

Team events may list alternates. A team may have multiple alternates but they cannot be on another team. The roster completed and forwarded to the Michigan State FFA Office must include the team members' and alternates' names.

Individuals on state winning teams and/or national participating teams are not eligible for further competition in the same contest.

Substitution of members is not permissible, except to keep the team eligible. For example, if you have a seven-member parliamentary procedure team and one member cannot compete, a team MAY NOT add another member. But, if a five-member parliamentary procedure team loses a member, they now are ineligible because they do not meet the minimum number required. In this

case, the team may substitute any member to maintain the team eligibility requirement. In contests represented by an individual (e.g., public speaking), no substitution can be made.

Chapters having an agricultural issues team, a demonstration team, or a public speaker winning a “gold” award in a regional/state contest during the past four years, must change the title and content to be eligible the following year.

AWARD INFORMATION

Teams and/or contestants will be awarded gold or silver ratings at the district and regional levels. Participants at the state level may be awarded gold, silver, or bronze ratings. The participants that do not make it past the state semi-finals will be awarded a silver or bronze. Participants competing in the state finals will receive a gold or silver. Determinations should be based on the score break of the performance.

One winner and an alternate will be selected in each state contest to enter the respective national contest, where such contests are approved by the Michigan FFA Association.

Announcement of awards at the state level: The state winner and runner-up, as well as, all gold and silver awards are to be announced in descending ranked order. There should be no order given to those earning bronze awards.

Awards are made in the form of certificates, trophies, plaques, or educational tours.

SCORING AND RANKING

Each team shall be judged on the basis of the scoresheet provided. Teams shall be ranked in numerical order by each judge on the basis of the final score, without consultation among judges. *Note: Please review the Parliamentary Procedure, Greenhand Conduct, and Jr. High Conduct Rules for specific exceptions regarding consultation among judges.* The judges' ranking of each team shall then be added and the winner will be the team whose total of the ranking is the lowest (low point ranking score method of selection). Other placings shall be determined in the same manner. In case of a tie, that team which has the highest grand total score shall have a higher rating. *Note: the job interview contest follows a different procedure for scoring and ranking individuals. Please refer to the following documents: Job*

RESULTS

All results are final once announced on stage.

All results will be posted on the Michigan FFA website.

During the district and regional leadership contests, the individual contest chair and general contest chair will review and certify results utilizing a calculator, prior to the announcement of the results. Once the announcement of results is made, no further changes may be made.

CERTIFYING NATIONAL TEAMS

Upon a state winning team being unable to attend, the chapter will notify the State FFA Office of unavailability by August 1. The state association will contact the applicable Runner Up or subsequent teams in the event that the Runner Up is unable to attend.

By the second Friday of August, the State Office must finalize which chapter will take a competing team in the event that a Runner Up chapter is unable to attend.

OFFICIAL DRESS

Unless otherwise stated for a specific contest, all FFA members are expected to observe official dress requirements while competing in Michigan FFA Leadership or Career Development Events.

Official Dress for an FFA member includes:

- An official FFA jacket zipped to the top
- Black slacks and black socks/nylons or black skirt and black nylons
 - *Skirt should be a minimum of knee length*
 - *Slacks should be full length*
- White collared blouse or white collared shirt
- Official FFA tie or official FFA scarf
- Black dress shoes with closed heel and toe

Note: Medical or cultural adjustments to required official dress may be made with prior approval of contest/event chair. Also, appropriate personal protective equipment may be used with Official Dress. Junior

high FFA members are allowed to wear FFA jackets, but it is optional. Participants in junior high contests should not be judged differently for wearing or not wearing a jacket.

If a deduction for non-official dress is warranted it will be determined by the contest chair and provided to the judges. This deduction should be the same on each judge's scorecard and handled in a manner similar to deductions for time.

DISPUTES

Committee

The Dispute Committee for district and regional contests should be formed prior to the contests. District Dispute Committees should consist of three advisors from different chapters. Regional Dispute Committees should consist of three advisors from different districts. The Dispute Committee for the State FFA Leadership Development Events held during the State FFA Convention will be made up of the six members of the FFA Board of Directors representing each of the six FFA regions. Dispute Committees have the power to administer penalties that range from taking point deductions all the way up to disqualify a team or individual. These decisions will need to be agreed upon by a 2/3 vote of the Dispute Committee.

Process

1. Chapter Advisor will speak with Contest Chairperson about dispute item(s) immediately.
2. Contest Chair will contact District or Regional Chair immediately, at the state level contact the State Advisor immediately.
3. For state-level contests, Chapter Advisors must submit a written dispute to the State Advisor utilizing the State Leadership Development Event Dispute Form on the Michigan FFA website.
4. Disputes can only be submitted up to one hour after the contest concludes on either contest date. No disputes can be filed after results are announced.
5. If a dispute is made within the allotted timeframe, the Dispute Committee will convene prior to any announcement of contest results.
6. Results of the dispute will be discussed and shared with Chapter Advisor prior to announcement of contest results.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Any inappropriate communication, verbal or non-verbal, between participants or with non-participating spectators, advisors, parents, coaches, etc., during a leadership or career development event, including communications to members in a holding room and/or prep room, will be sufficient cause for penalty. This penalty can consist of point deductions up to the disqualification of the member and entire team of a team event. This includes, but is not limited to communication via cell phones, smart watches, etc. The only exceptions to this would be:

- a. Communications between team members during the team activity portions of a given leadership or career development event,
- b. The use of pre-approved contest devices required to complete the contest, or
- c. Those devices required for student accommodations, including, but not limited to hearing aids, etc.

If the contest chairperson observes an infraction of this rule, they are required to immediately stop the timekeeper, stop the contest, and remove the person(s) who initiated a blatant rules violation. Any point deduction or disqualification will be determined by the Dispute Committee upon the completion of the last team/individual being judged in that contest.

Teams arriving after the leadership or career development event has begun may be disqualified or penalized at discretion of the contest chair. No member substitutions may be made after the leadership or career development event has begun.

Any assistance given to a team member from any source other than the leadership or career development event officials or assistants will be sufficient cause for penalty. This penalty can consist of point deductions up to the disqualification of the team from the leadership or career development event. Please note the following:

- a. Agricultural Issues can have a maximum of eight people, including team members, involved in set up.
- b. Demonstration can have a maximum of six people, including team members, involved in set up.
- c. Adults may assist as part of the allowable number of people but all team members must do the majority of the set-up and tear-down.

It is permissible for students to use a food product as a **prop** in a presentation, but is not appropriate to distribute the food to the judges or audience for consumption.

Contest Chairs may stop any participant if they deem their manner to be hazardous either to themselves or others. Such stoppage shall deem the individuals disqualified for that section of the leadership or career development event or for the entire event.

REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATION

The Michigan FFA Association is committed to providing equal access to our events and activities for all people. We will consider accommodation requests on a case-by-case basis in consultation with contest chairs while adhering to the integrity and standards of Michigan FFA event rules and policies.

District/Regional Level Contest

To request accommodations for District/Regional Leadership Contests, the completed District/Regional LDE Accommodation Request Form must be sent to the general contest chair (host advisor) and individual contest chair **at least seven days prior to the event.**

If accommodation is requesting adjustments to pre-prepared contest materials (e.g., Item of Business in a large font), the State FFA Office must also be included when the request is submitted to the district/regional chairs mentioned above.

State Level Contest

To request accommodations for State Leadership Contests, chapter advisors must complete the State FFA Event Accommodation Request Form **by the State Convention Registration deadline listed on the [association calendar](#).**

We cannot guarantee accommodations or assistance if a form is received after the registration deadline. If the accommodation is requesting event materials to be provided in a language other than English, requests must be received at least 30 days prior to event.

Once the request has been received, Michigan FFA Staff, along with contest chairs, will review the requested accommodation as quickly as possible. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis considering the following:

- Whether the requested accommodation(s) is reasonable
- Whether the requested accommodation(s) is necessary

- Whether the requested accommodation(s) would fundamentally alter the nature of the competition, either because it would alter an essential aspect of the contest or give the student an unfair advantage over others and, for that reason, fundamentally alter the character of the competition

A response from Michigan FFA Staff will be provided as quickly as possible to the chapter advisor describing the accommodation(s) the association is prepared to meet.

If a student cannot participate in a portion of a contest due to religious or cultural beliefs, the following procedures should be followed:

- Follow the same notification process outlined above.
- No points should be deducted if this procedure is followed.
- The member may not opt out of an entire section of a contest (example: milk flavor test) and still be considered as the state winner.

CONTEST PERSONNEL

Judges

Where judges are to be selected, a guide will be submitted to the contest chairperson.

Judges will seat themselves apart from one another in different sections of the contest room.

Judges packets for contests with a prewritten topic or questions should contain: rules for the contest and the specific abilities, prompts, or questions that will be utilized in that contest. **No items of business, prompts, or questions should be sent in advance.** These will be given to the judges on the day of the contest.

For State Leadership Contests, in the event that a judge can no longer fulfill their commitment last minute, advisors may be utilized as judges. Advisors would not be able to fill in if they have a team/individual competing in that contest. It would be up to the discretion of the State Executive Secretary/State Advisor to determine if an advisor or other judge is suitable to fill in during an emergency circumstance.

Contest Chairs

State leadership contest chairs may not train teams.

General contest chairs (host school advisor) for district and regional contests should avoid being an individual contest chair.

HOLDING ROOM

Holding rooms are to be supervised at all times.

The contest chair should read the following rules to the teams/individuals in the holding room and then post a printed copy of the rules on the door of the holding room:

- No cell phones or other electronic communications devices, including smart watches, are allowed in the holding room. These devices should be given to an advisor or adult chaperone.
 - The only exception would be a device required to meet an approved accommodation request. These devices may only be used at the time and manner specified in the accommodation request.
- Contestants may not leave the holding room except in the case of an emergency or to use the restroom.
- No communication is allowed between contestants and advisors, parents, alumni, or other members except in the case of an emergency.
 - Conversations between contestants in the holding room are allowed.
 - For contests with a preparation period, once contestants move to the prep room, communication between contestants is not allowed. Team members are not to talk to one another from the time their prep time starts until they begin their performance in the contest room.
- After the contest has started, the only individuals allowed in the holding room are contestants and contest personnel.
- Failure to comply with these rules (or any reasonable doubt) will result in the immediate disqualification of a team or individual.

CONTEST ROOM PROCEDURES

Teams/individuals have the right to view the contest room set-up prior to the start of the contest.

At the discretion of the contest chair, students who have already competed in team contests can send no more than one student from their team back into the contest room to watch teams remaining to compete.

Individuals causing a disturbance during leadership or career development

event performances may be asked to leave the contest room by the contest chair who is supervising the contest.

Schools may only record their chapter's performance(s). No flash photography is allowed in the contest room. All technology must be silenced while in the contest room. Contest chairs should remind spectators of this rule.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event that school is cancelled in one of the schools bringing contestants to the district or regional leadership contests, the contest will be postponed. The contest date must be re-scheduled for the next available date which is within one week of the original contest date. The contest chair will communicate the updated contest details with their district/region and the State FFA Office.

CONTEST MATERIALS

All award applications, score sheets, and related materials become the property of the Michigan FFA Association and will be returned at the Michigan FFA State Advisor's and/or State Executive Secretary's discretion.