



# NATIONAL FFA OFFICER HANDBOOK

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# Introduction

Becoming a National FFA Officer is one of the most prestigious and life changing FFA member can obtain. National Officers serve all members, advisors, parents, partners, and other stakeholders by frequently delivering workshops and keynotes, representing the student voice on the National FFA Board of Directors, building relationships, and embodying what it means to be a servant leader.

Officers spend extensive amounts of time away from their homes, families, friends, and everyday lives. The job of being an officer is strenuous, challenging, and will stretch and grow an individual in ways previously thought impossible. Before a prospective national FFA officer decides if this path in life is for them, they should truly reflect and consider the depth of the role and their personal purpose for running. When going through the process of preparing to be an officer, we encourage prospective candidates to review this handbook in depth to truly prepare to **be** an officer. Running for office is only a very small part of the process, if one does not prepare for the role itself—they will inevitably struggle to find success.

This handbook is designed to answer some of the questions you may have during your candidacy for and/or service as a national officer and to provide information that is important for you to know. During your candidacy for and/or service as a national officer, you are not deemed to be an employee of the National FFA, and this handbook does not represent a contract of employment, nor is it an offer, statement, or confirmation of any guaranteed terms or conditions of your candidacy for and/or service as a national officer. External conditions, laws, and organizational needs change, and the policies and benefits addressed in this handbook may be discontinued or changed at any time at National FFA's discretion.

## Disclaimer:

It is important for you to also know that, as you review and consult this handbook, the matters it contains are important but are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all of National FFA's policies and rules that are applicable to your candidacy and/or service as a national officer. Each candidate for national officer and each national officer is required to comply with the policies and rules discussed in this handbook, as well as others adopted by National FFA. In addition, a violation of any of the policies, rules, or procedures of National FFA may result in corrective action at the discretion of National FFA, up to and including termination of an individual's candidacy for or service as national officer. An individual's status as a candidate for national office or as a national officer is at-will, meaning that either you or National FFA may terminate your candidacy for or service as a national officer for any reason at any time. This at-will status cannot be modified.

# National Officer Job Description

## Overview

Since 1928, the National FFA Organization has been a student-led organization, with students at the forefront of many major milestones that have led to tremendous growth in the organization. A cornerstone of this leadership model is the role of officers at all levels of the organization, including nationally. Each year, a committee of nine students selected by the retiring national officer team interviews and selects six FFA members to serve as National FFA Officers. This selection process is arduous, extensive, and thorough. Once elected and approved by official delegates at the National FFA Convention & Expo, these six FFA members become the National FFA Officers and enter a year of service for the organization. During this year, officers will travel over 100,000 miles individually visiting schools, conventions, partners, alumni, and other stakeholders. They'll deliver personal messages of leadership

across the country, serve on the National FFA Board of Directors, and make their unique mark on the organization. The role of a National FFA Officer is extremely difficult, but also extremely rewarding for the individual—truly helping them achieve premier leadership, personal growth, and career success.

### Core Functions and Responsibilities

If elected, the responsibilities of a National FFA Officer include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Serve as a positive role model for all FFA members, advisors, and stakeholders through their interpersonal communications, workshops, speeches, and their conduct on social media.
- Travel the country to visit camps, conventions, schools, sponsors, banquets, and other requests received of National FFA Officers.
- Represent the student voice on the National FFA Board of Directors, leading and participating in all National FFA Board of Directors meetings.
- Amidst the six officers, visit every state FFA convention (schedules permitting) and meet the needs of the state association, which could include delivering multiple workshops, speeches, greetings, and interacting with participants.
- Practice effective self-management through successful booking of all travel, reconciling of company credit card by the deadline, and prompt and clear communication with stakeholders in planning events.
- Advocate for agriculture, agricultural education, and FFA to legislative leaders at the national, state, and local level.
- Express positivity and a collaborative spirit as a member of National FFA Staff both in and out of the National FFA Center, helping staff members solve challenges when asked and assisting with informing members of programmatic opportunities.
- Exercise critical thinking skills in solving challenging problems both logistically and otherwise.
- Continuously research and expand knowledge on major topics in agriculture, agricultural education, and FFA and articulate facts relating to these areas.
- Assist in the creation and delivery of the State FFA Officer Summit.
- Maintain responsible spending and be a good steward of organizational funding.
- Create engaging, informative, and educational leadership workshops and speeches to be delivered to schools, conventions, camps, and other venues throughout year of service.
- Select the National FFA Officer Nominating Committee through an application review and interview process.
- Participate in extensive officer training in the areas of character development, team dynamics, speech and workshop development, storytelling, the National FFA Board of Directors, communications, and more.
- Demonstrate humble coachability in both giving and receiving feedback from management staff, National FFA Staff, mentors, state staff, teachers, partners, and others you meet.
- Consistently manage competing tasks and deadlines, including logistical tasks, workshops and speeches, TV interviews, thank you notes, and other necessary correspondence.
- Participate in regular coaching and feedback sessions with National FFA Staff.
- Assist in content creation and delivery of the National FFA Convention & Expo.
- Execute national FFA officer requests as assigned based on the parameters of the request.

## National Officer Expectations

As mentioned above, if you want to be successful as a National FFA Officer, you should be preparing to **be** a national officer, not preparing to run for office. Throughout the National Officer Selection Process, candidates are evaluated on hundreds of areas of competency. However, competency is one piece of the puzzle. Attitudes and behaviors are what truly make an officer successful. Regardless of an

individual's natural talent, without the necessary attitudes and behaviors—the talent will only take them so far. Prospective officers should expect to embody and rise to the following behaviors and expectations throughout their year of service:

### **Humility**

The odds are good you have probably witnessed a national officer living in the limelight. Maybe they were on TV doing an interview, maybe it was a photo on social media after they met with the president of a fortune 500 company, or maybe it was on stage, underneath the spotlight as they spoke to an arena filled with thousands. However, for each of those highlight reel moments you see, there are many more where the officer plays a behind the scenes role. One where they are taking a red-eye flight to get to a convention on time, one where they are reading over documents to prepare for a Board of Directors Meeting, or even one where they find themselves alone in a hotel room again after being away from their family and friends for more than a month. If you are choosing to run for office based off how fun it looks to be an officer, you are only seeing a very small part of the duties a national officer fulfills.

National Officers who make a true impact are those who run for office because of a deep desire to serve others. A successful year as an officer demands the utmost humility and a willingness to selflessly serve those around you. The role of a national officer is not to use their position to shine a light on themselves, but use the experiences they're given to shine a light on others and help others achieve their potential. A self-serving attitude or a desire to constantly be in the spotlight will leave you feeling disappointed and burnt out once you quickly realize that is not what the year is made up of. If you are running, you should know now, the position of national office is one of service. One where you will very often have to lay your personal desires and wants down for the good of others. There will be many people who desire your time and your energy throughout the year, including members, teammates, staff, and other stakeholders. If you are driven by the giving of yourself to serve others though, you will see the reward in the sacrifice. The year is a year of giving of yourself so others may benefit. If your reason for running is anything other than serving others, it is time to re-evaluate your motives and whether or not serving as an officer is the correct next step for you.

### **High Expectations**

As an officer, you will have many expectations put upon you for how to conduct yourself and how to work. It requires unquestionable integrity, consummate professionalism, and an immense amount of responsibility. The odds are very good that you have never experienced a workload quite as demanding as the one you will face as an officer. There will be many items requiring your attention all at the same time. Fulfilling the numerous demands of you can take a toll physically, mentally, emotionally, and relationally. Great national officers work hard while making it look easy. A strong work ethic and wherewithal are must haves for those wishing to serve as an officer.

The work you will do will be constant and comes with incredibly high expectations. You will engage with more than 100 professional National FFA Staff members as you work with them to fulfill the work of our organization. You will be working with state staff who will expect prompt and thorough responses from you to assist with the planning and organizing of their conventions and other state events. You will be expected to follow up with FFA members and supporters through written communication. You will be expected to manage your expenses and budgetary responsibilities in a timely and effective manner. You will be expected to develop creative and impactful speeches and workshops; then to deliver them in an engaging and educational manner. All these duties and more will have to be completed simultaneously and with excellence. In addition to all the hard work, you will also be serving as the face of our organization, which means how you look and present yourself will always be on display. High expectations will be held for you on your appearance, behavior, and communication.

If it sounds demanding, that is because it is. The position comes with many responsibilities and high expectations. If elected, be prepared to grind, and show your grit. However, also know you will have a dedicated team to equip, encourage, and empower you each step of the way.

### **Growth**

If you are running for national office, it is fair to assume personal growth has been a contributor in your FFA career. Undoubtedly, you are not the same person today that you were when you first joined this organization. At every level, you have grown, and the same will be true for you if you are elected to national office. The year of an officer is one marked by incredible personal growth. You will be pushed, challenged, and stretched far beyond your comfort zone. You will be expected to become your absolute best, as you strive to serve our organization and its members. Becoming a national officer is much different than becoming the best national officer you can be. One requires you to be selected by the nominating committee and the other requires a commitment to continuously improve for an entire year. When serving as a national officer there will be no time or room for resting on your laurels.

While the staff at National FFA will provide immense training and opportunities for growth, the individual officer is the gatekeeper of their own growth. Choosing to push yourself towards constant growth as a person and as an officer will allow you to better serve our members and the organization. Officers become incredible leaders and influencers when they choose to never be satisfied or complacent in their personal development. Remaining humble and coachable will allow you to take your already impressive skill set to the next level as you impact members and stakeholders across the country. Continuously improving requires a willingness to be coached, self-evaluation, reflection, and goal setting. It is much easier to just perform and not care about how it went or getting better. Not having a growth mindset will only allow you to cheat yourself and to cheat others.

As a candidate, you should be having a growth mindset and working to continuously get better. This should not be to get elected, rather to be the very best version of yourself you can be. If each candidate does this it allows the nominating committee to make the best decision possible. The growth mindset you possess now will be just as valuable to you if elected. As an officer, it will be your duty to constantly get better to best serve members and to set for them an example of a true leader.

Serving as a national officer is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. If blessed with this opportunity, you will find the year to be a remarkable one with many unforgettable moments. While your year has the potential to be many things, there are three things it must be for you to get the most out of it. It must be a year of service, a year of meeting and exceeding high expectations, and a year of growth. Among many other expectations, these three will remain constant.

## **National Officer Competencies**

The following is a listing of the essential competencies required for serving as a national officer. The officer selection process is designed to screen candidates to find those who demonstrate these competencies consistently. It is expected that officers continue to demonstrate these and also work to develop and refine their skill set in each area throughout their year of service. The competencies are listed in no particular order.

### **Communication**

Demonstrates the effective use of various forms of communication, i.e., nonverbal, listening, written, speaking and facilitation to convey a message in both large group and one-on-one settings.

## Team Player

Demonstrates the ability to work in a team setting, values diversity of opinion, works to be inclusive in the process and is willing to put others above self.

## Areas of Knowledge

Demonstrates the ability to articulate the systemic nature of food, fiber, agricultural and natural resources issues, FFA, educational issues and all respective current issues.

## Character

Displays a disposition that is authentic, inclusive, responsible, honest, mature, confident, and respectful.

## Influence

Demonstrates the ability to influence others through modeling expectations, building relationships, and growing.

# National Officer Policies and Procedures

As an officer, there are many guiding principles, policies, and procedures that must be followed. Candidates are required to sign acknowledgement and agreement to these procedures as part of the application process.

### Policies and Procedures Guiding National Officer Responsibilities

The following is excerpted from the Official Board Policies for the National FFA Organization and apply to your candidacy as a national officer and to your service in that capacity.

1. The practice of soliciting support for a candidate for national office is not permitted.
2. A state may recommend only one candidate for national office each year. The nomination shall be made by the designated state staff person.
3. Each national officer candidate shall be an active FFA member and eligible to retain active membership in the organization until the member completes the term of office.
4. No FFA member who has been employed by the National FFA Organization will be eligible to run for national office.
5. Nominating committee members shall be submitted to the FFA Governing Board for review.
6. The National FFA Organization will pay actual expenses for national officers on official travel, as assigned by the Program and Events division.
7. The National FFA Organization shall provide accident and health insurance for national officers during their term of office.
8. The National FFA Organization will provide scholarships to national officers in an amount to be set annually by the board of directors.
9. The parents of national officers shall be partially reimbursed for expenses to attend the national FFA convention in accordance with the budget established by the National FFA Organization.
10. The Board of National FFA Officers shall review and act on all items of business brought before the board of directors, with the board of directors serving as a counseling and review body without giving up its legal authority and responsibility. The national officers shall be given public recognition for joint decisions.
11. An immediate past national officer will serve as consultant to the board of directors for the January meeting of the board. The officer selected to serve will be recommended in cooperation

- with the national officer team and national FFA advisor following the National FFA Convention by Dec. 1. Funding will be provided by the National FFA Organization. (July 17, 1991)
12. National officers will not be scheduled for chapter activities in a chapter where a national officer has been the previous year. National officers will be scheduled for national activities and state conventions in December. All other state activities must be confirmed three months prior to the activity date, and all activities below the state level must be confirmed 60 days prior to the event. Exceptions may be approved by the chief executive officer. (July 1992)
  13. The National Officer Business and Industry Tour shall be sponsored annually by the National FFA Organization for the primary purpose of informing agriculture, business, industry, government and the general public of the mission, strategies and activities of the total program of career and technical education in agriculture and FFA. The objectives of the tour shall be part of the annual Program of Activities.
  14. In the event a national officer conducts themselves in a manner inconsistent with the ideals, principles, or policies of the National FFA Organization, the Chief Executive Officer shall have the authority to remove the officer from office.
  15. National officers will forego all alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances while involved in official or unofficial FFA activities from the day the officer is selected until they install a new national officer. (This is interpreted by the National FFA Board of Directors to mean 24 hours a day, seven days a week for the full period of service.) (July 17, 1991)

### **National Officer Code of Ethics & Conduct**

A commitment form is to be reviewed and signed by all candidates who apply for national FFA office. The national officer manager, with support from FFA staff, has responsibility for ensuring adherence to the expectations outlined on the form. This form is built into the application process.

Being elected to national FFA office means making a commitment to volunteer service that is unique to most student organizations. If elected, in addition to serving and representing all FFA members, you will represent the image and direction of the National FFA Organization to teachers, state staff, teacher educators, agriculture industry executives, government leaders, the media and the general public. You will also be a teammate to five other officers, and you will have the support of more than 100 National FFA staff members.

The following items are commitments required of all National FFA Officers.

1. Be dedicated and committed to FFA and the total program of education in agriculture/agribusiness.
2. Forego the possession or use of all alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substances at all times.
3. Hold myself to and adhere to the highest standards of integrity and honesty.
4. Avoid places or activities that in any way could raise questions as to my moral character or conduct.
5. Refrain from conduct that could harm the FFA or those associated with it.
6. Refrain from conduct that may be detrimental or embarrassing to my personal reputation or the reputation of the FFA.
7. Use wholesome and appropriate language in all speeches, presentations, and informal conversations.
8. Maintain proper dress and good grooming for all occasions.
9. Be willing to take and follow instructions as directed by those responsible for National FFA Officers and state and national FFA programs.
10. Maintain and protect my health.
11. Regularly, and on time, write all letters, thank-you notes, emails and other correspondence which are necessary and desirable.



12. Adhere to all policies in the National Officer Handbook, including but not limited to, the social media policy.
13. Treat all FFA members equally by not favoring one over another.
14. Be actively and enthusiastically supportive of National FFA policies and programs including, but not limited to, its diversity and inclusion initiatives.
15. Conduct myself in a manner that commands respect without any display of superiority.
16. Maintain dignity while being personable, concerned and interested in contacts with others.
17. Accept and seek out constructive criticism and evaluation of my total performance.
18. Through preparation and practice, develop into an effective public speaker and project a desirable image of FFA at all times.
19. Commit the entire year to national officer activities.
20. Travel while serving as National FFA Officer.
21. Consider my FFA National Officer activities to be my primary responsibility.
22. Strive to improve my ability to carry on meaningful and enjoyable conversations with individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life.
23. Periodically evaluate my personality and attitudes, while making every effort to improve.
24. Serve as a member of the team, always maintaining a cooperative attitude.
25. Work in harmony with fellow FFA officers, and not knowingly engage in conversations detrimental to other FFA members, officers, or adults associated with FFA.
26. Become knowledgeable of agriculture, of education in agriculture/agribusiness and of FFA.
27. Keep myself up to date on current events.

### **Social Media Policy**

The National FFA Organization acknowledges that social media and the Internet provide important and effective means of communication. As a national officer, you are always expected to demonstrate common sense and good judgment when using any form of social media (private, personal, and/or public accounts) and the Internet.

Examples including but not limited to sites, apps, and technologies covered by this policy are the following:

- Snapchat
- Instagram
- TikTok
- Twitter
- Facebook
- WhatsApp
- Pinterest
- Tumblr
- Houseparty
- Zoom
- LinkedIn
- Google+
- Reddit
- WeChat
- Wikis
- Text messaging
- Personal blogs and websites

As a national officer, in using social media and the Internet, the following guidelines should be observed:

- Maintain proper decorum, honesty, and respect for all others.
- Do not make derogatory comments about others.
- Do not make comments that reflect any bias or animus toward any group. Remember that among your personal commitments is your commitment to be actively and enthusiastically supportive of National FFA's diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- Do not make inaccurate, distasteful, threatening, or offensive comments.
- Do not make comments anonymously.
- Do not post confidential information regarding other national officers, members, or the National FFA Organization and those associated with it.
- Apply a "good judgment" test for everything that you post, including reposts and items you Favorited and/or Like. For example, if you are posting information about the FFA, has it been reviewed and approved in advance by the appropriate internal FFA staff member?
- Another "rule of thumb" is to ask yourself whether you would be comfortable with your post or comment appearing in your local newspaper and attributed to you personally.
- When in doubt as to whether you should post anything, it is best to err on the side of caution. Remember that everything that is posted on a website or social media channel will become a permanent electronic record. Social media sites make inaccurate claims regarding the privacy of posted material. You should assume that nothing will be confidential even if you attempt to delete posted material.
- Comments about political or public matters should adhere to the guidelines in this policy. If you make such comments, you should not identify yourself as a national FFA officer and you should be explicit that your views reflect your personal views and/or opinion. You may not make any comment that may create an inference that you are speaking on behalf of the National FFA Organization unless your comment has been reviewed and approved in advance by the appropriate internal FFA staff member.
- Be mindful of your personal commitments as a national FFA officer and adhere to them.
- Do not respond to media posts or make any comment to the media on behalf of National FFA Organization unless it has been reviewed and approved in advance by the appropriate internal FFA staff member.
- Any social media communication must follow standards of ethical behavior regarding the use of copyrighted material, including, without limitation, proper attribution for previously published content.

In the event the National FFA Organization determines that inappropriate content was posted by a national officer, you must delete that material if requested by the National FFA Organization.

### **Policy on Scheduling of National Officers**

The Program and Events division will have the primary responsibility for arranging and coordinating the schedule of activities for the National FFA Officers. In doing so, the Program and Events division will arrange an exciting year of activities. The overall objective of officer scheduling is to represent FFA at local, state, national and international activities. This will be done in a way that will inform, motivate and inspire FFA members, advisors, state staff, teacher educators, sponsors and others in government, business and industry to achieve the mission, strategies, values and core goals of FFA. In scheduling officers for events and activities, the Program and Events division shall observe the following prioritized list in determining what potential activities should take precedence in scheduling national officers' time:

1. Orientation, training, and experiences to prepare national officers for the demands of their year of service.

- Provide adequate team time and preparation time to put on quality events
2. Official national FFA meetings, conferences, and state conventions.
    - National meetings including: FFA Board of Directors, Foundation Board of Trustees, State Officer Summit, National FFA Convention & Expo and other meetings mandated by the National FFA Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, or bylaws and constitution of the National FFA Organization.
    - Attend state FFA conventions—one national officer will be assigned to at least one day of each state convention annually as requested.
  3. Public relations activities for FFA:
    - Attend national and international meetings that would be beneficial to the National FFA Organization (e.g., American Association of School Administrators, National School Board Association, National Association of Guidance Counselors, etc.).
    - Attend annual meetings and/or conventions of National FFA Foundation sponsors.
    - Participate in FFA Week.
  4. Business and industry visits:
    - Visits scheduled specifically for this purpose.
    - When national officers are traveling to state conventions and/or other meetings, utilize travel proximity to schedule other business and industry visits as may be helpful to the organization.
  5. Planned "down time/home time" adequately spaced throughout the year.
    - National officer manager will ensure down time is scheduled as event scheduling allows.
  6. Planned "work time" adequately spaced throughout the year.
  7. Schedule requests from states and chapters for chapter visits and state conferences. These would be assigned after all the above have been completed, on a first-come, first-served basis.

### Officer Experience At-A-Glance

The following activities will consume the workload of the national officers' year of service. Adequate time will be provided for training, preparation, evaluation, self-improvement, relationships, rejuvenation, and team building.

Task	Month(s)	Time
National Officer Orientation	November	4 days
National Officer Training	December + January	5 weeks
January Board of Directors Meeting	January	4 days
International Experience	January	10 days
Experience Week	February	3 days
Business and Industry Visits	February-May	On-going
FFA Week	February	1 week
Winter Work Week	March	1 week
State Conventions	March-July	4-6 weeks
Camps, Conferences, Fairs & Events	March-September	3-5 weeks
Nominating Committee Selection	August	5 days
State Officer Summit (& Preparation)	July	14 days
Convention Planning Week #1	September	1 week

Convention Planning Week #2	September	1 week
Final Convention Prep	October	2 weeks
National FFA Convention	October	1 week

### Officer Correspondence

Trip reports on all chapter, regional and state activities are to be submitted via the appropriate channel within one week of the event close. National officers are to report on national noteworthy programs, activities, concerns, general comments, and information that will be helpful for the next team of national officers in preparing for the event.

The national officer manager will confirm or decline requests made by individuals, groups, businesses, chapters, and states for a national officer visit. Such assignment of officers and subsequent notification will take place prior to approving an event. The national officer manager will also request specific details from the personnel in charge of the event or activity per the official request form. These details will be shared with the national officer(s) assigned to the activity. From that point, all follow-up correspondence and communication regarding the event will become the responsibility of the national officer(s) assigned. Prompt reply to correspondence to both the national and state staff is a must.

Follow-up notes of congratulations and encouragement are a must. Officers should note names and addresses of FFA members, advisors, sponsors, and others with whom he/she wishes to follow up. Officers should be generous in this endeavor and send out notes frequently. A system should be maintained for keeping and remembering the names of those to whom correspondence is sent. The officers will check their FFA voicemail and email daily.

### Technology/Supplies

FFA will make available to each officer the appropriate computer hardware (size and composition suitable for easy traveling), software and email accessibility to allow for electronic communication with each other and FFA staff. This system can be utilized by national officers and FFA staff as a quick and efficient means of getting messages to officers at times when tracking them down by telephone may be difficult.

Each national officer is provided an FFA-issued computer and smart phone with all expenses covered. The officer is responsible for any loss or damage to the Surface and/or phone. The FFA-issued Surface and phone must be returned at the end of their year.

These systems will also be used by national officers to communicate with FFA staff, particularly about executing the procedures outlined under Officer Correspondence.

### Health Insurance

Each national officer may request full reimbursement for health insurance for a full 12 months (January – December). The amount of reimbursement will vary depending on the cost each officer must pay to retain health insurance benefits for the year as a non-student. Each officer will provide the national officer manager with a copy of the invoice for payment for the insurance by Dec. 31, after election. The amount on the invoice will be automatically deposited for the officer monthly. The last deposit will be made in December following retirement from office.

### Travel Expenses

A national officer will find that many requests will be made of them to travel and participate in activities. It is important that the officer understand the difference between various types of travel.

**FUNDED BY NATIONAL FFA** is travel authorized by the National FFA Organization and generally includes participation in FFA activities on a state, regional or national level. This travel is assigned, thus funded by the National FFA Organization. The National FFA Organization will also pay for a national officer to stay in a location between events when the layover time is 48 hours or less. The National FFA Organization does not fund the time officers spend at home or at a location away from home when the layover time is greater than 48 hours (for example, to see friends or sightsee).

**FUNDED BY OTHER THAN NATIONAL FFA** is travel assigned or approved by the National FFA Organization. This travel, most likely in-state, generally includes state activities, leadership conferences, and banquets below the state level, field days, contests, fairs, school visits or camps. These are events usually requested by state staff or chapter advisors other than state conventions.

When a national officer has official travel, but expenses are not to be paid by the National FFA Organization, it is important to have a complete understanding between the party paying the expenses and national FFA staff. The suggested procedure is to have the third-party cover as many expenses as possible on site. For those expenses, the third-party does not cover on site, national FFA staff will invoice the other entity for its share (after the officer reports the expense on an expense report). The officer should not be responsible for collecting these funds.

### **Corporate Credit Card**

The National FFA Organization (FFA) will issue each officer a credit card in their name to pay for incurred business expenses throughout the year including travel, lodging, meals, supplies and personal living expenses as outlined below.

- A credit limit of \$5,000 each is established for this card.
- The officer will be responsible for reconciling all purchases on the monthly statement by submitting a report with all receipts by the 25th of each month.
- FFA will cancel the credit card immediately following the National FFA Convention & Expo when the officer retires.

The following are items to be charged to the FFA issued credit card:

- **Meals** - No more than \$40 per day may be claimed for meals. Tips left for servers are to be included in the amount claimed for meals and should not exceed 20%. This also includes any snacks.
- **Lodging** - Most overnight accommodations will be provided by the hosting party. On occasion officers will need to book a hotel room independently. Officers can book hotel rooms through applicable and reputable travel websites or via Concur. Good judgement should be used when choosing a hotel. The hotel should be something safe but not costly.
- **Car transportation** - Rental cars, gas for rental cars, Uber rides and taxi/Metro expenses should be paid for with the FFA credit card. If an officer uses their personal vehicle, mileage can be expensed. Information regarding that process is detailed below.

### **Personal Living Expenses**

Each national officer is allotted \$6,000/year as a personal living allowance. This living allowance will be issued monthly at the amount of \$500 to the debt or bank account of their choice. It is expected that officers will use good judgment and thrift when spending FFA funds.

Examples of items that should be purchased with the living expenses allowance include:

- Toiletries
- Personal Care – Haircuts, makeup, manicures, etc.

- Motivational/educational books
- Entertainment activities
- Clothing, shoes
- Personal items that relate to service as a national officer

### **Expense reimbursement by the National FFA Organization**

- The credit card issued by FFA is to be used for all business-related activities and the national officer should only use a personal credit card or cash as payment when the FFA-issued credit card is not accepted. If a purchase is made with payment other than the FFA credit card, the officer can receive compensation by completing an expense reimbursement report.
- The reports must be submitted by the 25th of each month and should include expenses for that month, as well as be accurate and complete. FFA staff will review all expense reports, discuss items of concern with the individual officer and make adjustments if necessary. If the report must be substantially re-done, it will be returned to the officer to be done correctly and re-submitted.
- Receipts must be attached to each report to substantiate all expenditures. When applicable, a receipt must accompany every expense that is recorded on the report except for mileage. If a receipt does not accompany the expense, the expense may not be reimbursed.
- Mileage will be reimbursed at \$0.575 per mile (or the current federal mileage rate). This includes official use of an officer's privately owned automobile to travel to and from the airport or to drive to official events within driving distance of the officer's home.

### **Airline Travel Procedures**

- Officers will book all airline tickets through the National FFA Organization's online travel system. Email confirmations of ticket itinerary will be sent to the officer and the national officer manager. All tickets for air travel must be secured at least 21 days prior to the travel (except when extenuating circumstances make this impossible). The officer must book the lowest fare ticket available within the officer's time restraints for travel.
- All airline tickets obtained for national officer travel will be direct billed to the National FFA Organization. National officers will not directly purchase their own tickets for official travel except in extreme emergencies.
- National officers will not fly in non-commercial planes while on official business unless approval is granted by FFA's integrated management team (IMT) and/or the board.
- All six national officers may not travel together on one plane without IMT and/or board approval. The National President and the 1st Vice President should not travel together in one plane when possible.
- Air miles accumulated under "frequent flyer" or similar programs that are accumulated as a result of national FFA officer travel may be credited to the account of the officer and may be used at their discretion as long as the reward travel does not interfere with official travel.

### **National FFA Convention & Expo**

- Each national officer will provide a list of individuals, a maximum of 12 for complimentary registration to the national FFA convention and expo. This list must be submitted to the national officer manager in August.
- Dependent on the convention arena budget, each national officer family will receive a stipend to help defray expenses to the national convention and expo. This money may be applied to the cost of hotel rooms at convention, flights, meals, etc. Receipts must be turned in with an expense report to the national officer manager for accounting purposes.

- Each national officer family will have three rooms held in a block at the hotel where the national officers stay during convention. These rooms are at the expense of the national officer family. Not all three rooms must be used by the family—any rooms not reserved will become available to the other national officer families.

## Training, Coaching, and Development

As an officer, you will receive extensive training in a number of areas that can help you excel at the role you've been elected for. This training comes in the form of direct instruction, relationships, and experience.

### Training Experience

From November to February, national officers experience extensive training and professional development in a variety of areas. These include but are not limited to:

- Responsibilities of National Officers
- Attitudes and Behaviors of Officers
- Expectations & Goal Setting
- Effective Workshop Development and Delivery
- Storytelling
- Team Dynamics, Conflict Management, and Personality Assessments
- Marketing Training
- Foundation/Partnership Visits Training
- Advocacy & Literacy Training

The **Center for Creative Leadership's 70-20-10 model** tells us that while 10% of our learning and development comes from direct instruction, 70% comes from real-life experience and 20% through peer and mentor relationships. With this in mind, national officers are given opportunities to apply knowledge gained and receive feedback on their performance. Utilizing [Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning](#), officers continue to improve and refine their skills through repeated experiences, reflection, analysis, and application. Some examples of this include:

- Visits to local FFA chapters after writing and practicing workshops and speeches immediately after their development.
- Consistently delivering TV and radio interviews following marketing training.
- Mock and real-life partnership visits immediately following visit training.
- Multiple days in Washington, D.C. visiting with legislators and other agriculture related organizations.
- Three days in a state association (experience week) visiting multiple FFA chapters each day, delivering speeches and workshops with reflection and feedback each night to apply the next day.
- FFA week visits with a National FFA Staff member

In addition to these planned experiences, officers gain extensive experience throughout their year and are encouraged to continually follow Kolb's model to improve for their next experience.

### Coaching and Development

Part of the National Officer Management team is a staff member dedicated to focusing on officers coaching, training, and overall development as an officer. This is in addition to the numerous staff members you'll be able to work with that will assist in your development as well.

Officers will work with their coach regularly to reflect on their experiences, discuss performance, expectations, and receive feedback on what is going well and where they can improve. Their coach will both make direct observations and review feedback from various events to assist officers in becoming the best versions of themselves possible. In addition to performance-based coaching, the entire national officer management team is dedicated to preparing officers for life after office, including becoming better self-managers, career preparation, employability, and simply serving as a life coach. This team is dedicated to the officers and are people the team can rely on in challenging situations. Beyond their direct managers, officers will meet an extensive number of mentors, peers, and other individuals they'll work with that will they'll glean skills and attitudes from that will benefit them in their officer year and beyond. The entire National FFA Organization is dedicated to supporting, growing, and assisting the national officer team and helping them reach their full potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success—just as the officers do for countless FFA members.

## Management Staff Contact Information

Choosing to seek a position on the National FFA Officer team is one that should not be taken lightly, and one we hope you'll dedicate an extensive amount of thought and purposeful reflection to. The national officer management team is deeply committed to the role national officers serve and truly want to support both current and prospective officers, if you have questions about this role or what your life could look like as an officer, we encourage you to reach out to a member of the national officer management team, listed below.

### **National Officer Management Team**

Cindy Hefner & Eric Duarte

[chefner@ffa.org](mailto:chefner@ffa.org)

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