

2017-2021



CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT HANDBOOK

TEXAS FFA ASSOCIATION
614 EAST 12TH STREET
AUSTIN, TX 78701

Section 25.5 General CDE Rules

1. Each participant must be a bona fide dues-paying FFA member in good standing with the local chapter, state association and the national organization, be listed on the state roster, AND be under the age of 21 at the time of the national FFA event. All entries shall be verified upon entry to state event. Substitutes must be submitted to event providers to be verified by the Texas FFA Association.
2. Each participant must be enrolled in an agriculture, food and natural resources course at the time of the event or have completed an agriculture, food and natural resources course during the current academic year. Enrollment will be verified in case of a protest regarding eligibility. All national qualifying teams will verify enrollment prior to certification for national competition.
3. A member who has participated previously in a career development event at the national level shall NOT be eligible for the same event (excluding tractor technician, forestry and range). A student who has previously participated on a state-winning team shall not be eligible for future competition in that CDE in a state contest or in a contest that leads to qualification for the state competition in that event. **See specific rules for each contest.**
4. If a student who is ineligible for any reason, including, but not limited to academic failure, FFA membership, courses enrollment or participation on a national or state winning team, the student's score shall be nullified and the team's score shall be recalculated. If the event is a team activity or includes a team activity, the team with the ineligible team member shall be disqualified. If it is determined that a teacher or other school representative has knowingly entered an ineligible student, the provisions of general rule 21 shall be applied.
5. Area coordinators will certify all teams eligible to participate in the state events.
6. A chapter may enter one team in each event at the appropriate level: area for elimination events and state for events for which there is not a qualifying event. **In case of exceptions, contest rules will take precedence over the general rules.**
7. Team members must be from the same chapter. If a four-member team is entered, in events where allowed, the three highest individual scores are used to calculate the team score, with the exception of Food Science in which scores from all four members will be used. However, all four members are eligible for individual awards. The fourth member of a team placing first shall not be eligible for the same event in future years. Two-member teams are not eligible for team recognition or qualification for state competition. Teams that have more active participants than are allowed in a given event shall be disqualified once it is verified by event officials that the additional members are from the chapter in question. Event providers may opt to create a separate group rotation for alternates and tabulate at-large alternate scores.
8. Each event will be limited to a minimum of five teams or a maximum of 15 percent or major fraction thereof of the number of fully eligible teams (see TX FFA policy handbook 25.5(f)) participating with exception of the following:
 - (1) Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems - limited to three teams from each area;
 - (2) Tractor Technician - limited to three teams from each area

With the exception of Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems, teams with the same team score for the last qualifying state berth shall be certified for state competition by the area coordinators. In CDE's in which an area has not reached its maximum number for qualification, teams from other areas may be certified for state competitions. At large qualifiers will be based upon total number of non-qualifying teams in an area compared to the places that are available to reach the

number that an event provider has determined to be a maximum capacity for the facility.

9. There is no limit on the number of teams from each area that may participate in the following events: agricultural communications, agricultural sales, agronomy, cotton, environmental and natural resources, food science, forage evaluation, home site evaluation, marketing plan and range plant identification.
10. Students may use their notes made during the event for all events in which questions will be asked concerning the classes. No notes may be used in the written exams.
11. Scoring and tabulating are completed as quickly as possible in order that results can be announced and awards presented to winning teams. Announced results will not be official until 5:00 p.m. the second working day following the event. Incorrect results will be corrected and the verified state winner will represent Texas in national competition. Individual scores by team members will be made available on the day of the event and/or posted on judgincard.com. Awards will be presented as results are announced. Plaques and banners will be ordered based on the previous year's participation numbers. Ten teams will receive plaques or banners in events in which participation exceeds ten entries. In other events, the number of awards shall be the number of teams entered, with additional awards ordered as needed and mailed if necessary. Official FFA jackets are required for pictures to be published in the Texas FFA News Online.
12. The State CDE Chairman shall appoint scoring monitors for each event and provide a list of monitors to the event site general superintendent. Scoring monitors shall examine scores and determine if any wide-spread aberration exists. Scores shall not be announced until verified by a scoring monitor.
13. Dress code for CDE participation is official FFA dress (for events requiring official dress) or closed-toed shoes, full length pants or slacks, collared shirts with sleeves. The only logos permissible on shirts are clothing brand, school or organizational logos. (Clothing brands logos may not promote alcohol, tobacco or any other brand not consistent with the ideals and principles of the Texas FFA). Shirt collars must be full, folded collars. Capri-type pants shall be deemed to be shorts, not pants or slacks. Contestants not in dress code compliance shall be given an opportunity to remedy the non-compliant apparel. Contestants found in the contest in violation of the dress code shall be disqualified. A teacher committee appointed by the state CDE committee chair shall enforce dress code standards.
14. Individual contestants are responsible for providing accurate scoring information on each scan sheet including team number. Contest officials will not correct, enter or change scan sheet marks or errors. Individual scores will not be tabulated without the correct team number.
15. Neither team advisors nor team members of a state qualifying team are to visit the State CDE site for an event for which they have qualified. The intent of this rule is to prohibit teams from gaining a possible competitive advantage from being at the facility where contest animals or materials are housed. This prohibition begins on the day following area events hosted on that site. Violation will result in disqualification. Competing onsite as a bona fide 4-H member does not constitute violation of this rule.
16. Contestants will be sorted by the provider into groups which do not include members from the same team. Leaving the assigned group to join a group not assigned may result in disqualification. Contestants who leave the assigned group to join a fellow team member shall be disqualified along with the team member whose group was joined as a result of the unauthorized move.
17. Any communication, verbal or nonverbal, between participants during an event will be sufficient cause to eliminate the team. *All communication devices (cell phone, tablets, etc.) shall be turned off or*

placed on airplane mode and shall not be visible or used in any capacity during the duration of the contest. Programmable calculators will not be allowed. Violators shall be disqualified.

18. Students may not bring pictures, printed material, or any items that have not been issued or authorized. Where non-programmable calculators are permitted (see individual events), the memory must be clear before entering the event location. **Team members must provide their own compliant* clipboard and/or clean folder with the following items: scan sheet, and/or copy of the scan sheet, optional Texas FFA CDE drop sheet, and/or 2 sheets of lined or unlined blank paper.** A teacher committee will be responsible for ensuring compliance of this rule. *Violation of these rules will result in team disqualification.* ***Compliant clipboards should be: free of all current or recycled label contest stickers; must be sticker free (excluding school logos, which were applied when the clipboard was manufactured), ruler free, free of all marks. (Please refer to CDE Team Chart at the end of the general rules and/or individual event rules)**
19. The section leaders will call for scan sheets. Once scan sheets are submitted to a section leader, they will not be returned to the student.
20. During any event, students are not permitted to leave the event area unless accompanied by an event official. Event materials are not to be taken from the site.
21. Teachers should notify contest officials concerning students with physical disabilities at the time of entry. Requests for special consideration will be determined on a case by case basis. Assistance will be provided by a contest official and shall not constitute an advantage for that student or a disadvantage for other contestants. Additional time cannot be provided for completion of events.
22. If any cause for disqualification is considered a willful act of defiance and the act has the approval of the teacher, the school the student represents will be barred from participation in state events until reinstated by the state executive board. Any advisor found guilty of willfully entering ineligible members in any FFA event will have the school where he/she serves barred from participation until reinstated by the state executive board.
23. Teachers are expected to maintain the highest standards of professionalism, and students should adhere to the highest standards of sportsmanship and integrity. Faculty member/ contest superintendents may ask teachers to leave a contest area if the code of professionalism is broken. Students who violate the tenets of sportsmanship during an event may be removed by a facility event superintendent or the general contest superintendent.
24. General and contest superintendents, assistants, and section leaders will exercise every effort to enforce all contest rules. Event superintendents shall notify the general superintendent for that event site of all disqualifications and the circumstances surrounding incidents meriting disqualification. The state FFA office shall be notified of all such disqualifications.
25. **ENTRY FEE:** The entry fee is \$60 per team; except Agricultural Mechanics which is \$90 per team. All registration is electronic via <http://www.judgingcard.com>. Entry fees must be paid in accordance to state FFA policies regarding payment of entries and payment policies of the events entry management provider. No refund can be made for teams which do not participate. Entries not made on [judgingcard.com](http://www.judgingcard.com) on or before the deadline established by the event providers risk disqualification or may be charged a late fee. If the event qualification dates do not allow for compliance to established timelines, providers shall accept these entries and waive late fees. Teachers must notify providers of such circumstances.
26. Institutional providers will be responsible for selecting qualified personnel for conducting each event.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. Appeals concerning interpretation and enforcement of rules shall be handled directly by the event site general superintendent. Appeals concerning district and area standings for recognition and awards shall be resolved by officials at the corresponding levels of competition.
2. The state CDE process is a tournament concept that begins at the district level and culminates at the state event. Unresolved district-level disputes concerning qualification for area competition may be appealed to the respective area executive committee only after the district committee has heard and ruled on the matter in question. Teachers may request a state level review of any such ruling. The state executive committee shall overturn only those decisions that are ruled to be arbitrary or in conflict with state policy.
3. Appeals of area-level decisions concerning state qualification or state event decisions must be filed in writing with the Texas FFA Association executive director no later than 5:00 p.m. on the working day following the decision under appeal. All appeals shall be considered by the executive board.
4. Persons whose judgment may be influenced by a vested interest or a pre-existing relationship that may impair their ability to be fair and impartial must excuse themselves from all deliberations concerning appeals.

Subjective qualitative judgments inherent in evaluating event performances may not be appealed.

CDE TEAM CHART

Event	Team Members	Clipboard Requirements	Dress Code	Area Qualifying Event	National Qualifying Event?
Agronomy	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	No	Yes
Ag Communications	4	Not allowed	Official Dress	No	Yes
Agricultural Mechanics	3 or 4	Transparent	Standard	Yes – Max 3 teams per area	Yes
Agricultural Sales	3 or 4	Not allowed	Official Dress	YES**	Yes
Cotton	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	No	No
Dairy Cattle Evaluation	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Entomology	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	No
Environmental & Natural Res.	3 or 4	Transparent	Standard	No	Yes
Farm Business Management	3 or 4	Compliant	Official Dress	Yes **	Yes
Floriculture	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Food Science & Technology	4	Compliant	Official Dress	No	Yes
Forage Evaluation	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	No	No
Forestry*	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Homesite Evaluation	3 or 4	Transparent	Standard	YES**	Yes
Horse Evaluation	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Land Evaluation	3 or 4	Transparent	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Livestock Evaluation	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Marketing Plan	3	Compliant	Official Dress	No	Yes
Meats Evaluation	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Milk Quality and Products	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Nursery/Landscape	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Poultry Evaluation	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Pasture Plant ID	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	No	No
Range	3 or 4	Transparent	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Tractor Technician	3	Compliant	Standard	Yes – Max 3 teams per area	No
Vet Tech.	3 or 4	Transparent	OD or Medical Scrubs according to event rules	Yes **	Yes
Wool	3 or 4	Compliant	Standard	Yes **	Yes
Wildlife & Recreation	3 or 4	Transparent	Standard	Yes **	No

* Forestry can qualify through area qualifier OR through the Soil and Water Conservation District

**Minimum of 5 per area or Max 15% of eligible teams

27. Texas FFA Association Inclement Weather Policy:

Inclement Weather

For state events, the state executive director shall work proactively with providers to assess potential weather and road hazards which could create travel risks for students and teachers. Should inclement weather pose a potential travel risk for groups from any part of the state, the executive director shall consult the state executive board and appropriate experts (such as but not limited to National Weather Service forecasters) to assess potential hazards and consider options for amending event start times or participation schedules to facilitate safer travels, event postponement or cancellation. The Texas FFA Association shall make student safety the top priority in all such decisions.

If possible, the executive director or his or her designee shall notify teachers via e-mail and/or the emergency text messaging system of any impending event decisions regarding inclement weather.

District and area associations are to work with their respective executive committees in assessing weather-related travel risks. The state executive director shall work with area event coordinators in adjusting state entry and material submission deadlines for area events postponed due to inclement weather.

Lightning Safety

Lightning may be the most frequently encountered severe storm hazard endangering physically active people each year. Millions of lightning flashes strike the ground annually in the United States, causing nearly 100 deaths and 400 injuries. Three quarters of all lightning casualties occur between May and September, and nearly four fifths occur between 10:00 am and 7:00 pm, which coincides with the hours for most career development events held in field conditions.

Providers should postpone or suspend activity if a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during an activity or contest (irrespective of whether lightning is seen or thunder heard) until the hazard has passed. Signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds, and thunder or lightning activity. Student safety must be the first priority. If the provider deems it necessary to collect and hold scan sheets, students must be moved to a safe location before such collections are conducted.

Recommendations for Lightning Safety

1. Establish a chain of command that identifies who is to make the call to remove individuals from the field.
2. Name a designated weather watcher (A person who actively looks for the signs of threatening weather and notifies the chain of command if severe weather becomes dangerous). Lightning meters are recommended but not required. Most athletic departments own these meters.
3. Have a means of monitoring local weather forecasts and warnings.
4. Designate a safe shelter for each venue that can accommodate the anticipated number of contestants. See examples below.
5. Use the Flash-to-Bang count to determine when to go to safety. By the time the flash-to-bang count approaches thirty seconds all individuals should be already inside a safe structure. See method of determining Flash-to-Bang count below.

6. Once activities have been suspended, wait at least thirty minutes following the last sound of thunder or lightning flash prior to resuming an activity or returning outdoors.
7. Avoid being the highest point in an open field, in contact with, or proximity to the highest point, as well as being on the open water. Do not take shelter under or near trees, flagpoles, or light poles.
8. Assume that lightning safe position (crouched on the ground weight on the balls of the feet, feet together, head lowered, and ears covered) for individuals who feel their hair stand on end, skin tingle, or hear "crackling" noises. Do not lie flat on the ground.
9. Observe the following basic first aid procedures in managing victims of a lightning strike:
 - Activate
local EMS
 - Lightning victims do not "carry a charge" and are safe to touch.
 - If necessary, move the victim with care to a safer location.
 - Evaluate airway, breathing, and circulation, and begin CPR if necessary.
 - Evaluate and treat for hypothermia, shock, fractures, and/or burns.
10. All individuals have the right to leave a career development event site in order to seek a safe structure if the person feels in danger of impending lightning activity, without fear of repercussions or penalty from anyone.

Definitions

Safe Shelter:

1. A safe location is any substantial, frequently inhabited building. The building should have four solid walls (not a dug out), electrical and telephone wiring, as well as plumbing, all of which aid in grounding a structure.
2. The secondary choice for a safer location from the lightning hazard is a fully enclosed vehicle, including a school bus, with a metal roof and the windows completely closed. It is important to not touch any part of the metal framework of the vehicle while inside it during ongoing thunderstorms.
3. It is not safe to shower, bathe, or talk on landline phones while inside of a safe shelter during thunderstorms (cell phones are considered safe).

Flash-to-Bang:

To use the flash-to-bang method, begin counting when sighting a lightning flash. Counting is stopped when the associated bang (thunder) is heard. Divide this count by five to determine the distance to the lightning flash (in miles). For example, a

flash-to-bang count of thirty seconds equates to a distance of six miles. Lightning has struck from as far away as 10 miles from the storm center.