



15 STEPS

To Chartering an FFA Chapter in Texas

Texas FFA Constitution, Article III, Section B

Active chapters of the Texas FFA Association/Texas Association of Future Farmers of America shall be chartered only in such schools where recognized systematic instruction in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources is offered under the provisions of the Texas State Plan for Career and Technology Education and the policies of the Texas Education Agency. All chapters, whether they be affiliated with public, charter or private schools must adhere to provisions of the Texas Education Code and Texas Administrative Code related to eligibility for extracurricular or co-curricular participation.

New FFA chapters must have an Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources instructional program pursuant to standards prescribed in the State Plan for Career and Technical Education. These standards include but are not limited to (a) highly qualified, instructor(s), a state approved coherent sequence of State Board of Education-adopted Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources courses and application of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, described in the Texas Administrative Code. Once the instructional program is established and approved, the chartering process may begin. Policies governing the chartering of new chapters are found in Texas FFA Policy Handbook, Section 4 and may be accessed via the Texas FFA website's Org Structure tab. TEA approved Programs of Study may be found on the TEA website.

Chapters in the charter process are either new charters, for new programs on campuses where there has never been an FFA chapter; re-charters, for programs which represent the re-launch of a program which has been discontinued for more than five years; and re-instatements for those chapters for which a charter has lapsed and has been declared discontinued for a period of five years or less.

Any missed deadlines will result in having to request an extension for a second year of the process. Any Second year chapters missing a deadline will result in immediate revocation of the temporary charter.

Step

1

E-mail State FFA Office in August declaring your intent to begin the process of chartering, re-chartering or initiating a reinstatement. Please list school name, proposed chapter name and agricultural science teacher contact information. **Completion target: No later than first week of instruction. (Unless otherwise noted, completion targets in this document are not deadlines, but suggestions to aid the advisor and student leaders in developing a timeline.)**

Step

2

Complete and submit information Sheet and Instructional Program Form. Download an Information Sheet and Instructional Program Form from www.texasffa.org located in the Teachers tab, on the New Chapters page. Complete both forms and email Gwenn Cain at the Texas FFA, gwenn@texasffa.org. Pursuant to Texas FFA Policy, your instructional program must be approved by Texas Education Agency staff as being compliant with the State Plan for Career and Technical Education. **A chapter number cannot be assigned or activated until this step is completed. Completion target: First week of instruction.**

Deadline: September 15.

Step

3

Await assignment of a chapter number and provisional charter. National FFA will process the information sheet and provide a chapter number and membership roster template to the Texas FFA. (This process can take several weeks.) When a chapter number is assigned, the chapter is provided with a provisional charter which will allow participation in FFA events for up to one year while the charter process is completed. If the process is a re-charter or reinstatement, the National FFA Organization may opt to re-activate the chapter's original chapter identification number. If you are chartering in a school district that previously had a program, but on a different campus, you may use the original chapter number. Chapters discontinued prior to 1966 will not have a National FFA ID number in the system. The Texas FFA Membership Coordinator will also facilitate assignment of login credentials for state and national online systems. **Completion target: late-September.**

Step
4

Area, district assignment and Judgingcard.com account. Currently, areas are assigned based on county. The state FFA office will contact your area coordinator to get the FFA district assignment from within the area. Once the new chapter's account is created in the roster management system, a corresponding account will be created in the Judgingcard.com competitive event system. **Completion target: late-September.**

Step
5

Contact a provider of an approved SAE record keeping system. Currently, there is one provider, the Agricultural Experience Tracker (AET). Agricultural education students must have a supervised agricultural experience program to be eligible for FFA membership. Enterprises or activities must be documented in an approved recordkeeping system to be credited as a true SAE. It is important that the SAE documentation be a consistent part of your instructional practices and that record books are started for each student-members or not - as soon as possible in the fall as opposed to waiting until the year is almost complete. When you contact AET, it is important that you state that you are a new chapter and state your chapter number. Frequently, AET will provide your first year at no charge, as their generous contribution to the charter process. ***You will also be required to complete your POA through AET.*** Record books for each student should be started as soon as possible in the fall.

A CHAPTER WILL NOT BE GIVEN A SITE VISIT OR APPROVED WITHOUT 100% RECORD BOOKS FOR ALL AFNR STUDENTS REGARDLESS OF FFA MEMBERSHIP

Completion target: mid-September. Deadline for all students to be entered in AET: November 1

****Record Books will be monitored for progress throughout the Charter Process.***

Step
6

The members of the new chapter should hold an organizational meeting and select temporary officers to develop the chapter's governing documents (constitution and bylaws). An editable model constitution and bylaws is available online for download from the new chapter page or from the chapter toolbox page of the Texas FFA Association's website. A group of mature students with leadership potential should be identified early and recruited for duty in the new chapter's elected steering committee. **Completion target: September 15.**

Step
7

Submit dues and or affiliation fees. **By November 1 the new chapter must submit its roster along with state and national dues or affiliation fee payments to the Texas FFA and district and area dues to respective officers or administrators.** This is a policy-mandated submission date and payments must be postmarked by November 1 to avoid late fees. Payments bearing a postmark after November 1 will incur a \$25.00 late fee. If this date falls on a weekend, the following business day will be the deadline. Additionally, all district and area dues/fees must be paid to remain in good standing with Texas FFA. Keep in mind that some districts and areas have earlier deadlines and may have additional administrative fees. It may be beneficial to discuss the program affiliation fee program with administrators. Federal Carl Perkins funds may be used for this purpose, but not if local funds were expended for this purpose in the previous budget cycle. **Completion target: November 1, for state and national submissions. Be sure to submit requisitions for funds in plenty of time to have them submitted by constitutionally prescribed deadlines. Please note: Texas FFA is NOT a vendor by definition and will not complete any vendor packets. A W-9 will be provided upon request. District, Area and Texas FFA are different entities and cannot process payments sent to each other. Be careful to pay the appropriate entity according to the Pay To information on the invoice itself.**

Step
8

The chapter's constitution and bylaws must be presented to the chapter, adopted by a recorded vote and be reflected in the secretary's minutes. The chapter's governing documents (constitution and bylaws) must meet state guidelines. Additional chapter and departmental policies governing operations and procedures such as, but not limited to officer elections, junior membership and award selection processes are strongly encouraged. Draft copies should be sent to Gwenn at the State office to review prior to adoption in case there are any compliance issues.

Deadline for meeting to occur: December 1.

Step
9

Elect officers. Once the chapter has adopted constitution and bylaws, it may elect its constitutional officers. Elections will not be valid unless the constitution has been adopted. This may be accomplished at the same meeting at which the constitution and bylaws are adopted. If the election process requires a companion policy and procedure, within the constitutional framework, it may be adopted by the chapter in the same meeting. Officers in new chapters are not required to hold the Chapter FFA Degree, but officers in chapters in existence for more than two years must hold the Chapter FFA Degree. It is important for the new officers to memorize opening and closing ceremony parts as soon as possible.

Deadline: December 1.

Step
10

Submit newly adopted constitution and bylaws, minutes of the meeting where adopted and an official letter of application requesting a charter. The letter of application template is in the document box of the New Chapter webpage titled as “Application for Charter.” Texas FFA will review the constitution and bylaws to ensure that there are no conflicts with the state or national constitutions and offer suggestions for improvement. If you would like the state staff team to review the document and offer recommendations before chapter adoption, e-mail it to Gwenn with that request along with a date by which you need the review completed. Minutes must clearly state the number of members present, a clear motion to adopt and by whom and the results of said motion. **Deadline for submission of documentation: December 6.**

Step
11

Sign up for a Jump Start Academy. Jump Start is a specialized one-day leadership workshop designed for new chapters and conducted by state FFA officers. Dates and places are set based on when and where chapters from a particular region can be convened. The program is an introduction to FFA delivered by state officers, with an emphasis on developing the POA and preparing for the state FFA site visit. The program is offered at no charge and lunch is provided. Attendance is not a requirement but highly encouraged. **Completion target: December 10. (Dates and locations for this program will vary based on locations of chapters taking part in the chartering process.)**

Step
12

Create a quality chapter Program of Activities. The officers and other leaders, such as committee chairs must develop a POA which meets all National FFA Quality Standards for Local Chapters. There must be at least once activity in each of the 15 categories complete with Plans, Goals and if the event has occurred, outcomes and review items. This document must be created through the AET, and because it is online, can be accomplished through simultaneous collaboration from multiple computers. It is understood that this document will not only apply to the current year, but also create a long-term strategy for subsequent years. Chapters should begin development of this document immediately in the fall. A PDF report must be generated via the AET and emailed directly to Gwenn. **Completion target: January 1. Deadline: February 1**

Step
13

Complete and submit a New Chapter Grant. Upon completion of the charter process, new chapters are eligible for up to \$1,000 in support from the Texas FFA Foundation. To be eligible for the grant, all required paperwork must be submitted. In some cases, re-chartering FFA chapters may also be eligible for the grant. Grants are frequently used to purchase FFA related supplies or chapter travel. Information on applying for the grant will be provided following the February 1 POA deadline. Any Grants awarded will be paid out in August. **Submission Deadline: June 15.**

Step
14

Develop the student presentation for the state FFA new chapter site visit. An outline/checklist of what is expected in this presentation, as well as a rubric will be provided by state staff. It is important that your students hit all the benchmark points in this presentation and that they have fully prepared. You are encouraged to also have an administrator present. It is also vitally important that your students be in complete official dress for this presentation as well as able to perform opening and closing ceremonies, from memory, at the start and end. There will also be additional supporting materials requested during the presentation, such as meeting minutes from the entire year, as well as a Q&A portion following the presentation. Data from the record keeping system will be checked prior to the visit for all students in Agriculture classes, regardless of FFA Membership. Site visits are generally conducted in March and early April, but must be completed by the first half of May for inclusion in the fourth quarter board of director’s agenda. **All final copies of previously listed documentation, if not already submitted, must be received and AET Record Book activity present for every student by March 1 or 7 days prior to scheduled site visit, whichever comes first, or the visit will be cancelled for the year.**

Step
15

Receipt of charter. After completing all steps, the chapter’s petition for charter will be submitted to the Texas FFA Association Board of Directors in June for approval. New chapters are introduced at the Texas FFA Association’s annual convention, which is held in early to mid-July. It is important to lay the groundwork for approval of summer travel to convention with your administration as early as possible, so your members can participate in the onstage charter presentation. The charter document itself has spaces for the signatures of the chapter’s charter members. Arranging a charter signing and framing ceremony with members, administrators, parents and local media creates memorable experience for everyone. If your chapter is going through a re-charter, it is possible that you may need a new charter document to replace a lost one. In this case, the newly issued charter will bear the original charter date and the re-charter date. **Completion targets: Convention housing: January. Convention pre-registration: mid-May. Charter signing and framing ceremony: Late August or early September, to correspond with kicking off the first school year with a permanent charter.**