



MICHIGAN FFA STATE OFFICER EXPERIENCE GUIDE

Updated 2024

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A SUCCESSFUL STATE FFA OFFICER

What is a successful State FFA Officer? It certainly is more than surviving a yearlong term in office. A State FFA Officer wears a variety of hats. They are elected officials expected to represent the student membership throughout their year of service. They are teachers of leadership and teamwork to the general membership. They are motivational speakers who will inspire members and non-members to heights they did not think they could achieve. They are communicators and public relations specialists on behalf of the Michigan FFA Association, building positive relationships with each activity. They are teammates to the other seven State FFA Officers and to the staff of the Michigan FFA Association. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, they are learners eager to absorb and grow to the fullest extent possible to fulfill the aforementioned roles of their office.

BEING A STATE FFA OFFICER

The primary responsibility of a state officer is to serve the Michigan FFA Association in local, state, national and international activities in a way that will inform, motivate, and inspire FFA members, advisors, state staff, teachers, and others to achieve the mission, strategies, and core goals of the organization.

Responsibilities

State officers serve under the supervision of state FFA staff of the Michigan FFA Association in accordance with official policy and budget limits. Responsibilities of state officers include (but are not limited to):

1. Participate in training, orientation, continual self-improvement, and evaluation of activities as directed by the Executive Secretary including, but not limited to Base Camp, State Officer Checkpoints, the State Officer Summit and all retreats.
2. Participate in making visits to business and industry as directed by the Executive Secretary working in cooperation with the Michigan FFA Foundation staff.
3. Participate in chapter visits and banquets as directed by the Executive Secretary and as scheduled by state FFA staff.
4. Represent the Michigan FFA Association at other local, state, national and international activities as scheduled by state FFA staff.
5. Participate in the planning and conducting of the State Leadership Conference for Chapter and Regional Officers, working under the direction of the Executive Secretary.

6. Participate in the planning and conducting of sessions and other activities at the Michigan FFA State Convention as assigned by state FFA staff.
7. Keep up to date with all correspondence — written, email, and verbal.
8. Plan, prepare, read, study, listen, review, and practice to continue improving public speaking, facilitation, and communication skills.
9. Stay up to date on facts and issues in FFA; agricultural education; and the agriculture, food, and natural resources industries.
10. Develop positive relationships with FFA members, advisors, staff, sponsors, and the general public.
11. Develop and exercise an awareness and sensitivity for the diverse geographic, ethnic, religious, and cultural groups represented in FFA membership and the general student population.
12. Maintain a positive attitude and enjoy your year of service with members, advisors, staff, sponsors, and others.
13. Follow the spirit and intent of the State Officer Code of Conduct (part of application process).
14. Perform other duties, processes, and procedures as instructed by the Executive Secretary.
15. Attend and participate in all executive meetings held throughout the year.

Policies That Guide State FFA Officer Operations

Webster's College Dictionary defines policy as “a definite course or method of action selected among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions.” The Michigan FFA Association has established policies designed to chart the course of the daily operations of the organization. These policies, reviewed throughout the year, include policies that influence the management of State FFA Officers.

The following policies are excerpted from the **Michigan FFA Association State Officer Code of Conduct**. Please familiarize yourself with all of the policies including the following:

Michigan FFA State officers are committed to upholding a positive and professional image during their entire year of service. This includes communicating and representing the Michigan FFA Association appropriately 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during their time as an officer. To fulfill this role, an officer should strive to project a professional image, proper etiquette, positive media interaction, and promote diversity and inclusivity.

Michigan FFA State Officers will forego all alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substances at all times until June 30th of the following year after their election. The Michigan FFA

Association maintains a zero-tolerance policy on the use of these substances and not adhering to this policy will result in removal from office.

State officers will consider FFA activities to be their primary responsibility.

Attend all required meetings, activities and events as required by the Executive Secretary, State FFA Advisor, state FFA staff and/or Michigan FFA Board of Directors throughout their year of service. In the event an officer is not able to attend a required function due to an emergency or a legitimate, worthwhile conflict as agreed upon by the state officer team and state staff, they have the sole responsibility of contacting the appropriate state staff personnel to receive approval for their absence prior to missing the function.

Avoid inappropriate relationships or contact with other FFA members—including other current state officers or minors within the organization without parental approval.

Avoid places or activities that in any way would raise questions as to one's moral character or conduct.

Use wholesome and appropriate language in all speeches and informal conversations.

Maintain proper dress and be well-kempt for all occasions.

Agree to a social media background check that will be conducted by a third-party entity.

Failure to adhere to the above policies can lead to immediate dismissal from your state officer position and responsibilities. Please refer to your Code of Conduct form for additional rules and regulations.

STATE OFFICER YEAR AT A GLANCE

The following provides an overview of the activities that fill a state officer's year of service.

Please note: Dates are subject to change.

DATES	EVENT	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
March 18, 2025 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.	New State Officer Orientation	Virtual	This orientation is a zoom call to learn about the year ahead. On this call, you will have a chance to meet Michigan FFA State Staff and to have all of your questions about the year answered.
April 11, 2025 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	State FFA Career Development Events (Ag Skills Contests)	MSU	As a newly elected state officer, you are still eligible to compete in State CDE contests. If you are not competing, you will be assigned a contest to assist with during the day, contests range from Agricultural Mechanics to Marketing. All officers will assist with clean up and tabulation after contests end.
April 24-27, 2025	State Officer Base Camp <i>(State Officer Parent/Guardian Meeting – on final day of training)</i>	Lansing, MI	This training sets the foundation for your year of service. You will learn about yourself and your teammates while exploring topics of growth, influence, responsibility, balance, and connection. You will engage in the creative problem solving process and establish the association's annual theme for the year. You will be fitted for business casual and official dress.
June 3-5, 2025	Checkpoint #1 Facilitation Training	Lansing, MI	In this training, you will uncover the importance of experiential learning as the foundation of facilitation. You will gain knowledge and try on skills in workshop development and delivery. During these three days, you will write your curriculum that you will deliver at SLCCO.
June (TBD), 2025	Communications Training	TBD	During this training, you will have the opportunity to work with FFA Foundation staff and stakeholders to polish your skills in storytelling and advocacy. You will

			learn techniques for sponsor engagement and various types of media encounters. You will also discuss branding and social media management.
June 24-26, 2025	State Leadership Conference for Chapter and Regional Officers (SLCCO/SLCRO) Preparation	MSU	This three day training focuses on expanding your knowledge and skills in the area of facilitation, diving deeper into topics of team teaching and classroom management. You will have dedicated time to refine and practice your curriculum you will deliver at the State Leadership Conference for Chapter Officers.
July 9-10, 2025	State Leadership Conference for Chapter and Regional Officers (SLCCO/SLCRO)	Lansing, MI	The first day will offer time to finalize all materials, set up the conference space, and to practice with your facilitation team. The second day is the State Leadership Conference for Chapter and Regional Officers. The goal of this conference is to prepare officers from across the state to lead their chapters and regions in the coming year.
July (TBD), 2025	Foundation Business & Industry Tour	TBD	On this tour, you will build relationships with current and potential sponsors on behalf of the FFA Foundation. You will have the chance to further your understanding of Michigan's agriculture, food, and natural resources (AFNR) industries and to broaden your professional network in AFNR.
July 14-18, 2025	State Officer Summit <i>(President & Vice President)</i>	Washington, D.C.	The State President and State Vice President will represent Michigan by attending the State Officer Summit in Washington, D.C. During this conference you will discover tools to assist you in advocating for FFA and AFNR. This conference also serves as the first step in the National FFA Delegate Process, where you will lend your voice to develop recommendations to the National FFA Organization.
August 13, 2025	State Tractor Driving Contest	St. Johns, MI	Officers will assist with running the state-wide Tractor Driving Contest.

August 14-15, 2025	Chapter Visit Workshop Writing	Virtual	These two days will offer space to be refreshed on the process of workshop development and for the team to design the curriculum you will deliver on your chapter visits throughout the state. At the end of this training, the team will have developed two workshops - one with a focus on FFA and one with a focus on leadership.
August 17-18, 2025	Checkpoint #2 Public Speaking Training & Team Dynamics	Lansing, MI	This training will focus on speech development and delivery tools. You will have the opportunity to try on these techniques by crafting and practicing a banquet speech. This training will also explore areas of team dynamics.
September 6, 2025	Team Chapter Visit Practice	Lansing, MI	This day is focused on preparation for your chapter visits. You will have the opportunity to practice facilitating the curriculum your team designed.
September 11, 2025 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Michigan FFA Association Board of Directors' Meeting	MSU	As a state officer, you will serve as a member of the student board on the Michigan FFA Association Board of Directors. You will represent the student voice and contribute to the creation of policy that sets the direction of the organization.
September 12, 2025 <i>Attend around class schedule</i>	Practice Chapter Visit	Local Chapter - TBD	As you step into a classroom for the first time as a state officer, you will have the opportunity to practice your chapter visit workshops to prepare to travel across the state. Each travel pair is responsible for leading one class period.
October 8-9, 2025 <i>Attend around class schedule</i>	Fall Leadership Conference	Lansing, MI	During this two day event, you will have the opportunity to facilitate a welcome session that kicks off the entire conference and to lead a reflections program in the evening. You will be able to assist National FFA facilitators and industry stakeholders and enjoy time with members at the dance and game night.

October 20-23, 2024 <i>Attend around class schedule</i>	Broiler Contest	Fowlerville, MI	Officers will assist with running the state-wide Broiler Contest. Officers will sign up for time slots to avoid conflicts with their class schedule.
October 26, 2025 - November 1, 2025	National FFA Convention	Indianapolis, IN	During this week in Indianapolis, you will have the option to participate in National Days of Service and Enrichment Sessions alongside state officers from across the nation. Members of the team will serve as delegates representing the voice of Michigan FFA members while conducting business of the National FFA Organization. Throughout the week, you will also be able to enjoy other aspects of convention such as general sessions, the expo, and the FFA mall.
December 4, 2025 <i>4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.</i>	Michigan FFA Association Board of Directors' Meeting	MSU	As a state officer, you will serve as a member of the student board on the Michigan FFA Association Board of Directors. You will represent the student voice and contribute to the creation of policy that sets the direction of the organization.
December 12-14, 2025	State Officer Retreat	South Haven, MI	This three-day retreat will allow time for you to reconnect with your teammates, celebrate your accomplishments thus far, and to chart the course for the rest of the year. The retreat also provides time for intentional feedback and check-ins halfway through the year.
January 28-29, 2026 <i>Sign up to attend at least one contest in this date range</i>	District Leadership Contest	Varies by District	You will have the opportunity to attend at least one District Leadership Contest. Officers will assist the District Contest Chair on site and encourage members as they prepare for contests.
February 11-12, 2026 <i>Sign up to attend at least one contest in this date range</i>	Regional Leadership Contest	Varies by Region	You will have the opportunity to attend at least one Regional Leadership Contest. Officers will assist the Regional Contest Chair and Regional Officers on site and encourage members as they prepare for contests.

February 14-15, 2026	Phase Two - State Officer Interviews & State Convention Practice	Lansing, MI	During the interview process for the next state officer team, you will have the opportunity to join the candidates for meals and for a casual activity. While the candidates are participating in interview rounds, you will work with your team to prepare for state convention.
February 19, 2026 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Michigan FFA Association Board of Directors' Meeting	MSU	As a state officer, you will serve as a member of the student board on the Michigan FFA Association Board of Directors. You will represent the student voice and contribute to the creation of policy that sets the direction of the organization.
February 27, 2026 - March 3, 2026	State Convention Practice	MSU	In these days leading up to state convention, final practices and preparation will occur on the Wharton Center Stage so that you are ready to welcome nearly 2,500 FFA members to campus to celebrate.
March 4-6, 2026	State Convention	MSU	You will host the Michigan FFA annual convention and celebrate the accomplishments of FFA members and supporters from across the state during these three days. This will look like presenting awards, chairing general sessions, delivering your retiring address, and hosting the legislative reception at the Capitol.
April 9, 2026 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Michigan FFA Association Board of Directors' Meeting	MSU	As a state officer, you will serve as a member of the student board on the Michigan FFA Association Board of Directors. You will represent the student voice and contribute to the creation of policy that sets the direction of the organization.
April 16, 2026 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Set Up for State CDEs	MSU	Officers will help set up the MSU Pavilion in preparation to welcome nearly 3,000 students to campus the next day for State Career Development Events.
April 17, 2026	State FFA Career Development Events (Ag Skills Contests)	MSU	You will request a contest to be assigned to that you will assist with during the day, contests range from

			Floriculture to Veterinary Science. Current and incoming state officers will assist with clean up and tabulation after contests end.
May 7-9, 2026	State Officer Capstone	TBD	This experience will allow you to look back at your year of service; look inward at our own values, priorities, and purposes; and look forward to develop an actionable plan for your next steps after state office. You will explore how to communicate your experience as a state officer in professional settings (on your resume and in interviews) as well as learning from past state officers about the transition out of office.

Other activities as required by the State FFA Association, include but are not limited to:

- Officers are expected to participate in monthly virtual team meetings and check-ins with state staff
- Officers are expected to work in the FFA Office a minimum of three hours per week during the school year
- Officers are expected to conduct approximately 10-15 chapter visits throughout the fall semester
- Officers are expected to prepare for state convention by participating in approximately 12 writing workshops and practices that take place on weekends throughout the year (a separate schedule of these dates will be provided)
- Officers are expected to attend other events as requested, including but not limited to banquets, regional camps, and business and industry visits

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT STATE FFA OFFICE

Myth: You need to take a gap year from school in order to serve as a State FFA Officer.

Fact: You do **NOT** need to take a gap year from school in order to serve as a State FFA Officer. Many of our current and past officers have attended university while fulfilling their year of service, averaging 12-15 credit hours per semester.

Myth: You need to study a major related to agriculture, food, or natural resources to be a State FFA Officer.

Fact: You do **NOT** need to study a major related to agriculture, food, or natural resources to be a State FFA Officer. Many of our current and past officers have had a wide variety of majors from Hospitality to Journalism to Engineering. You should still have a strong passion for agriculture, food, and natural resources, but it is not a required major.

Myth: You need to attend Michigan State University to be a State FFA Officer.

Fact: You do **NOT** need to attend Michigan State University to be a State FFA Officer. Many of our current and past officers have attended other institutions such as Aquinas, Northwood, or even chose to work throughout the year.

Myth: You need to have served or currently be serving as a Regional FFA Officer in order to run for State FFA Office.

Fact: While state officers must demonstrate leadership ability, you do **NOT** have to have been or currently be a Regional FFA Officer in order to run for state office.

Myth: You will be responsible for all expenses as a State FFA Officer.

Fact: The Michigan FFA Association pays for your travel during the year. Lodging and food are covered on extended trips such as trainings and conferences. And your Official Dress and business casual dress are provided for you!

PREPARING TO ADAPT YOUR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

Many candidates will be enrolled in high school during their run for office. If elected, the new officers will return home after the conclusion of the Michigan FFA State Convention. All newly elected officers are required to attend trainings prior to July 1. The first mandatory State Officer training, State Officer Base Camp, is scheduled in March/April. The second phase of the training, State Officer Checkpoint #1 and SLCCO/SLCRO prep, will occur in June.

To successfully complete their year of service, State FFA Officers will be encouraged to take a lighter course load for their college studies during their term in office. A recommended course load falls between 12-15 credits per semester. This allows a student to retain full-time status to maintain eligibility for financial aid, student loans, scholarships, and health insurance. When working with academic advisors, it is helpful to share about your role as a state officer and to share the following recommendations with them to assist in designing the best schedule possible that allows you to excel academically and as an officer:

1. Recommended course load: Between 12-15 credits
2. Fall semester: If possible, try to have a day or two in your weekly schedule without classes - this helps to reduce the amount of class missed when scheduling chapter visits
3. Spring semester: If possible, try to avoid scheduling evening classes - this helps to reduce the amount of class missed when attending chapter banquets

The Michigan FFA Association cannot require any university or college to release a newly elected officer from their studies nor require officers to take a year off of college. It is up to each candidate to arrange with their professors to make up any missed class assignments or projects throughout their year of service. That being said, the State FFA Office will provide excuse letters at the beginning of each semester and as needed for events such as National Convention to assist in making this process easier. The best way to make this as easy of a process as possible; however, is to talk to *all* of your professors at the start of the semester. Seek their support and provide additional information about FFA and its mission. Building a relationship with each of your professors prior to beginning a new class will increase the likelihood of them wanting to work cooperatively with you after your election.