



MARYLAND FFA ASSOCIATION

PREMIER LEADERSHIP, PERSONAL GROWTH, CAREER SUCCESS

Maryland FFA Association, Inc. Official Constitution

(Adopted in April 29, 2005, amended May 20, 2013 and June 26, 2014)

Article I. Name

The name of this Association shall be: The Maryland FFA Association Inc.; an affiliate of the National FFA Organization.

Article II. Objectives of the Organization

1. To develop competent and assertive agricultural leadership.
2. To develop an awareness of the global importance of agriculture and its contribution to our well-being.
3. To strengthen the confidence of agriculture students in themselves and their work. To promote the intelligent choice and establishment of an agricultural career.
4. To stimulate development and encourage achievement in individual agricultural experience programs.
5. To improve the economic, environmental, recreational and human resources of the community.
6. To develop competencies in communications, human relations and social abilities. To develop character, train for useful citizenship, and foster patriotism. To build cooperative attitudes among agriculture students. To encourage wise management of resources.
7. To encourage improvement in scholarship. To provide organized recreational activities for agriculture students.

Article III. Organization

Section A

The Maryland FFA Association, Inc. is a State Association.

Section B

It shall consist of four or more local chapters in schools where classes in agricultural career and technology education are offered. Such chapters shall operate as an integral part of the instructional program of agricultural education.



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Section C

Local chapters may be organized in such schools by students under the direction of their agriculture teacher in agricultural education programs, by adopting a Constitution in harmony with the State FFA Constitution, electing officers, setting up a Program of Activities Budget, making an application to the State Association for chapter charter and paying the prescribed dues.

Section D

A chapter shall be in good standing with the Maryland State Association when the following conditions are met:

1. Annual, state and national dues have been paid by the date determined by the state association.
2. Financial obligations are met prior to participation in state/national events.
3. Reports have been submitted as requested by the state association.
4. Provisions of the chapter constitution do not conflict with the State or National FFA Constitutions and chapter activities are in harmony with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization.

The governing body of the Maryland State Association shall have the power to suspend the charter of any chapter that violates the state or National FFA Constitution and Bylaws. A report on all suspensions shall be presented to the delegates at the next succeeding state convention. In the event a chapter is not in good standing with the state association at the time of the opening of a state convention, the delegates in session at that state convention shall have the power, upon recommendation of the state association governing body, to withdraw the charter and refuse such chapter official representation at the state convention. When such action is taken, the chapter in question and members thereof shall be denied the privileges of membership in the state association. Upon meeting the requirements for good standing, a chapter may be reinstated by action of the Maryland State Association governing body.

In the event a local department of agricultural education is discontinued, its chartered FFA chapter may officially operate for a period not to exceed three years (36 months) from the date of discontinuance, provided proper supervision is given by a person having the approval of the local school administrator and the Maryland State FFA Advisor. The chapter's charter must be surrendered to the state advisor at the end of the three-year period if a local department of agricultural education is not in operation in the school at that time.



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Article IV. Membership

Section A

Membership in the Maryland State FFA Association shall be of four kinds: active, alumni, collegiate and honorary.

Section B

Active Membership – To be eligible for active membership in a chartered FFA chapter, a student must be enrolled in a secondary agricultural education program. Maryland FFA Association may consider “secondary agricultural education programs” to be grades seventh-12th.

To become an active member and retain membership, a student must:

1. While in school, be enrolled in at least one agricultural education course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study; either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is preparation for an agricultural career.
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the organization by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current state and national dues by the date determined by the chapter.
4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization.

A member may retain active membership until November 30, following the fourth national FFA convention after graduation from high school. A member in good standing at the time of induction into the armed forces of the United States of America or into the FFA international program shall be in good standing during the period of active service without further payment of dues or attendance at meetings. Time spent in the armed forces or FFA international program shall not be considered as elapsed time in determining the maximum period of four conventions following graduation from high school or leaving high school. Members using this waiver of service time for the purpose of maintaining active membership for application for advanced degrees of membership must resume active participation within six months after having been honorably discharged from military service or completing their FFA international program and indicate such a desire by paying dues and attending meetings. Members participating in a six-month armed services program or participating in the FFA international program for six months shall be eligible for one full year of extended membership. No individual may retain active membership beyond his or her 23rd birthday.



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Section C

Alumni Membership – Membership shall be open to former active members, collegiate and honorary members, present and former professional agricultural educators, parents of members and others interested in and supportive of the FFA.

1. Annual Membership- members receive the National FFA Alumni New Visions newsletter, the opportunity to subscribe to FFA New Horizons magazine for and a voice in alumni business.
2. Lifetime Membership-A one-time payment, members receive a membership card, a membership certificate, a lifetime subscription to the New Visions newsletter and a lifetime subscription to FFA New Horizons magazine, and a voice in alumni business.
3. Collegiate Membership- Dues-paying Collegiate FFA members are eligible for a discounted annual membership fee. They receive all the benefits of a regular annual membership.
4. Associate Membership-Effective 2012/2013 membership year-The delegate body adopted an Associate membership for graduating high school FFA members at no cost to the member for a 5 year period.

Section D

Collegiate Membership – Collegiate membership shall be open to students who are enrolled in agricultural courses or who are pursuing career objectives in the industry of agriculture or have an interest in the future welfare of agriculture at a two- or four-year postsecondary institution having a collegiate FFA chapter.

Section E

Honorary Membership – Farmers, school superintendents, principals, members of boards of education, chapter advisors, teachers, staff members in agricultural education, business people and others who are helping to advance agricultural education and FFA and who have rendered outstanding service, may be elected to honorary membership by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting or convention.

Honorary membership shall be limited to the Honorary Chapter FFA Degree in the local chapter, Honorary State FFA Degree in the state association and the Honorary American FFA Degree in the national organization.



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Article V. Degrees and Privileges of Active Membership

Section A. Degrees

There shall be five degrees of active membership based on individual achievement. These are the Discovery FFA Degree, Greenhand FFA Degree, the Chapter FFA Degree, the State FFA Degree and the American FFA Degree. The national organization shall set the minimum qualifications for each degree. The Discovery FFA Degree is intended for use in state associations and local chapters where middle school membership is offered. Receipt of this degree is not necessary in order to obtain the Greenhand FFA Degree or subsequent degrees.

Section B. Discovery FFA Degree

To be eligible to receive the Discovery FFA Degree from a chapter, the member must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Be enrolled in agricultural education class for at least a portion of the school year while in grades seventh – eighth.
2. Have become a dues-paying member of the FFA at local, state and national levels.
3. Participate in at least one local FFA chapter activity outside of scheduled class time.
4. Have knowledge of agriculturally related career, ownership and entrepreneurial opportunities.
5. Be familiar with the local FFA chapter program of activities.
6. Submit written application for the degree.

Section C. Greenhand FFA Degree

To be eligible to receive the Greenhand FFA Degree from the chapter, the member must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Be enrolled in agricultural education and have satisfactory plans for a supervised agricultural experience program.
2. Learn and explain the FFA Creed, motto, salute and FFA Mission Statement.
3. Describe and explain the meaning of the FFA emblem and colors.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the FFA Code of Ethics and the proper use of the FFA jacket.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the history of the organization, the chapter Constitution and Bylaws and the chapter Program of Activities.
6. Personally own or have access to the *Official FFA Manual* and the *FFA Student Handbook*.



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7. Submit written application for the Greenhand FFA Degree.

Section D Chapter FFA Degree

To be eligible to receive the Chapter FFA Degree from the chapter, the member must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Must have received the Greenhand FFA Degree.
2. Must have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least 180 hours of systematic school instruction in agricultural education at or above the ninth grade level, have in operation an approved supervised agricultural experience program and be enrolled in an agricultural education course.
3. Have participated in the planning and conducting of at least three official functions in the chapter Program of Activities.
4. Have earned and productively invested at least \$150 by the member's own efforts or worked at least 45 hours in excess of scheduled class time or a combination thereof and have developed plans for continued growth and improvement in a supervised agricultural experience program.
5. Have effectively led a group discussion for 15 minutes.
6. Have demonstrated five procedures of parliamentary law.
7. Show progress toward individual achievement in FFA award programs.
8. Have a satisfactory scholastic record.
9. Have participated in at least 10 hours of community service activities. These hours are in addition to and cannot be duplicated as paid or unpaid supervised agricultural experience hours.
10. Submit a written application for the Chapter FFA Degree.

Other requirements may be established by the chapter and/or the state FFA association.

Section E State FFA Degree

To be eligible to receive the State FFA Degree from the state association, the member must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Have received the Chapter FFA Degree.
2. Have been an active FFA member for at least two years (24 months) at the time of receiving the State FFA Degree.
3. While in school, have completed the equivalent of at least two years (360 hours) of systematic school instruction in agricultural education at or above the ninth grade level, which includes a supervised agricultural experience program.
4. Have earned and productively invested at least \$1,000 or worked at least 300 hours in excess of scheduled class time, or a combination thereof, in a



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- supervised agricultural experience program.
5. Demonstrate leadership ability by:
 - a. Performing 10 procedures of parliamentary law.
 - b. Giving a six-minute speech on a topic relating to agriculture or FFA.
 - c. Serving as an officer, committee chairperson or participating member of a chapter committee.
 6. Have a satisfactory scholastic record as certified by the local agricultural education instructor and the principal or superintendent.
 7. Have participated in the planning and completion of the chapter Program of Activities.
 8. Have participated in at least five different FFA activities above the chapter level.
 9. Have participated in at least 25 hours of community service, within at least two different community service activities. These hours are in addition to and cannot be duplicated as paid or unpaid supervised agricultural experience hours.

Written records of achievement of all requirements, verified by the chapter FFA advisor, shall be submitted to the state association by March 15th of the year in which the State FFA Degree is to be received. The state executive director shall provide for review of the records and submit a recommendation to the state association governing body, which shall nominate at the state FFA convention the candidates who have been found worthy to receive the honor. The State FFA Degree will be conferred upon the candidates subject to approval by the delegates at the state convention.

Section F American FFA Degree

To be eligible to receive the American FFA Degree from the National FFA Organization, the member must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Have received the State FFA Degree, have been an active member for the past three years (36 months) and have a record of satisfactory participation in the activities on the chapter and state levels.
2. Have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of at least three years (540 hours) of systematic secondary school instruction in an agricultural education program or to have completed at least the equivalent of 360 hours of systematic secondary school instruction in agricultural education and one full year of enrollment in a postsecondary agricultural program or have completed the program of agricultural education offered in the secondary school last attended.
3. Have graduated from high school at least 12 months prior to the national convention at which the degree is to be granted.



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4. Have in operation and have maintained records to substantiate an outstanding supervised agricultural experience program through which a member has exhibited comprehensive planning, managerial and financial expertise.
5. A student after entering agricultural education must have:
 - a. earned at least \$10,000 and productively invested at least \$7,500 or
 - b. earned and productively invested \$2,000 and worked 2,250 hours in excess of scheduled class time. Any combination of hours, times a factor of 3.56, plus actual dollars earned and productively invested must be equal to or greater than the number 10,000. Hours used for the purpose of producing earnings reported as productively invested income shall not be duplicated as hours of credit to meet the minimum requirements for the degree.
6. Have a record of outstanding leadership abilities and community involvement and have achieved a high school scholastic record of “C” or better as certified by the principal or superintendent.
7. Have participated in at least 50 hours of community service, within at least three different community service activities. These hours are in addition to and cannot be duplicated as paid or unpaid supervised agricultural experience hours.

Article VI. State Officers and Procedures for Election

Section A

The officers of the Maryland FFA Association shall be a constitutional slate and consist of a: State President, State Vice President, State Secretary, State Reporter, State Treasurer and State Sentinel.

In the case of an officer not being able to fulfill his/her office, the State FFA Board of Directors may appoint another State Agriculturist to take his/her place.

Section B

A qualifying applicant to be a State FFA Officer are members having the State FFA Degree, who have graduated from high school or successful candidates for the State Agriculturist Degree in the current year who will graduate from high school during the current convention year.

Section C

The Nominating Committee shall consist of:

1. FFA members, who are chapter degree recipients obtaining a state degree, representing each of the five regions in the state as selected by the



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- Regional Coordinator.
2. Two past state officers who served during different terms.
 3. An agriculture teacher representing the MATA.
 4. A representative from the MD FFA Alumni Association.
 5. The current State FFA President or their designee who is a current State Officer.
 6. Chairman of the FFA Board of Directors or other designated Board member.
 7. The FFA Executive Director –Ex-Officio, non-voting advisory member to the committee.

Section D

This committee shall nominate one person for each of the State Offices and shall report during the State Convention.

Section E

Additional nominations may be made from the floor from those candidates who have been interviewed by the nominating committee.

Section F

All State Officers shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the delegates present at the State Convention.

Section G

A State FFA Officer may not serve more than one term in office. In extenuating circumstances, where there are not enough candidates to fill each available office, the Nominating Committee, in an attempt to fill a complete slate of officers, may call on an eligible past state officer to serve if he/she desires to do so.

Article VII. State Officer Responsibilities and Duties

SECTION A. The officers of the State FFA Associations shall be:

1. President, Vice- President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter and Sentinel.
2. Other officers may be elected as deemed appropriate by the State Executive Director and the state FFA governing body.
3. The State FFA Executive Director shall serve as the State FFA Advisor.
4. An Executive Treasurer and/or other state FFA officials may be named by the State Advisor subject to the approval of the state FFA Board.
5. State FFA officers shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the



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delegates present at any regular convention of the state association.

Section B. Duties of the Officers

1. The State President shall:

- a. Preside over the State FFA Convention and over the meetings of the State Executive Committee. The President shall call at least one State Convention each year on such a date and at such a place as shall be fixed by the State Executive Director. The President shall appoint all committees and may serve as an Ex-Officio member of these committees.
- b. Serve as a voting member of the Maryland FFA Association, Inc. Board of Directors.
- c. Serve as the State FFA Association representative to the State FFA Alumni Association.
- d. Carry out such duties vested in him/her by the State FFA Board of Directors.

2. The Vice President shall:

- a. Perform those duties common to such an office and other duties as directed by the State Executive Director and State FFA Board of Directors.
- b. Be prepared to preside over meetings in the absence of the President.
- c. Serve as a voting member of the Maryland FFA Association, Inc. Board of Directors.

3. The State Secretary Shall:

- a. Perform those duties common to such an office and other duties as directed by the State Executive Director and State FFA Board of Directors.
- b. Have available for each meeting the following:
 - i. Records and minutes of previous meetings.
 - ii. A list of all committees and assignments.
 - iii. A copy of the Maryland FFA Association, Inc. Constitution and the Program of Activities.

4. The State Treasurer shall:

- a. Perform those duties common to such an office and other duties as directed by the State Executive Director, FFA Executive Treasurer



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- and State FFA Board of Directors.
- b. Serve as member of the MD FFA Association Auditing Committee.
5. The State Reporter shall:
- a. Perform those duties common to such an office and other duties as directed by the State Executive Director and State FFA Board of Directors.
 - b. Keep current communications from the State FFA Association through the use of technology including but not limited to e-newsletters, website, face book, twitter, blogs, etc.
 - c. Prepare appropriate news releases for State Association Activities.
 - d. Send articles for consideration to regional and national agricultural publications.
6. The Sentinel shall:
- a. Perform those duties common to such an office and other duties as directed by the State Executive Director and State FFA Board of Directors.
 - b. Prepare the meeting room and care for the State FFA paraphernalia.
 - c. Attend the door and welcome all guests and friends of the FFA.
 - d. Keep the meeting room comfortable.
 - e. Take charge of all candidates and individuals receiving awards of recognition at State Association activities.
7. All State Officers shall:
- a. Act under the direction of the State President and State Staff to care for the welfare of the State Association.
 - b. Be prepared to preside at all meetings in the absence of the President.
 - c. Serve, in rotation, as a voting member of the Maryland FFA Board of Directors.
 - d. Make regular visits to local chapters.
 - e. Attend all regularly scheduled Executive Committee meetings, special Executive Committee meetings, and all other state activities required of them.
 - f. Read, agree to, sign and submit to the Executive Director the Code of Ethics form before being considered for serving as a Maryland FFA State officer.



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SECTION C. Dismissal from Office

The Board of Directors shall have the right and the responsibility to ask for and/or remove any State Officer from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors present, on the following basis:

1. An officer missing two (2) Officer meetings without good reason.
2. Violation of any provision of the National FFA members or State Officer Code of Ethics.
3. Not performing adequately the duties of the office.
4. Missing statewide activities which State Officers are expected to attend.
5. For any reason agreed upon by all members of the Board of Directors

Article VIII. Executive Director and Executive Treasurer

SECTION A. The State FFA Executive Director shall:

1. maintain an office for the State Association and perform the duties of the State Association in consultation with the State FFA Board of Directors.
2. work with the Executive Treasurer to keep accurate records of receipts and disbursements for the State Association.
3. Send notice to members of the FFA Board of Directors of the upcoming meeting at least two weeks in advance of the quarterly meetings.
(Feb, May, Aug, Oct)
4. Contact and secure business and industry representatives and FFA regional coordinators to serve on the Board of Directors annually.

SECTION B. The Executive Treasurer shall:

1. be elected by the FFA Board of Directors.
2. work with the Executive Director to keep accurate records of receipts and disbursements for the State Association.
3. prepare a quarterly treasurer's report for the FFA Board of Directors, invoice Chapters for expenses due to the State Association and other duties as specified by the FFA Board of Directors of the current year.



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Article IX. Chapter Officers

Section A. The officers of an FFA chapter shall be:

1. President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter and Sentinel.
2. Other officers may be elected as deemed appropriate by the local advisor and/or governing body.
3. The teacher(s) of agricultural education shall be the FFA advisor(s).
4. Chapter officers shall be elected annually or semi-annually by the members present at any regular meeting of the chapter.

ARTICLE X. Meetings and Conventions

SECTION A. Conventions

1. Except in case of an extreme emergency, a convention of the state FFA association shall be held annually prior to the national convention at a time and place to be determined by the governing body of the state FFA associa.
2. The state association shall determine the number and method of selection of delegates to the state convention.

SECTION B. Delegates

1. Each local chapter may designate two qualified delegates to represent the chapter at the annual State Convention.
2. All members of the Association are invited to attend but official action will be restricted to authorized delegates.

SECTION C. Official representation

1. The State President and State Vice-President will attend the National FFA Convention as voting delegates for the state. In an event that the State President and/or State Vice-President cannot attend the National Convention, the delegate(s) will be selected by the State FFA Executive Director from the State Officer Team.

Article XII. Dues

SECTION A. National Dues

1. Annual membership dues of the National FFA Organization shall be established by a majority vote of the delegates at the national convention.
2. In the event the annual national convention is not held and/or the official delegates fail to set dues, the annual membership dues of the national organization will remain the same as the previous year.



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3. The National FFA Board of Directors shall submit its recommendation concerning dues to each state association at least 45 days prior to the National FFA Convention.

SECTION B. Membership year

The membership year of the National FFA Organization shall be from September 1 to August 31.

SECTION C. State Dues

1. Annual membership dues of a state FFA association shall be established by a majority vote of the delegates present at the state FFA convention.
2. Changes in the amount of dues to the state association must be presented to the local chapters at least 45 days prior to the state convention.

SECTION D. Chapter Dues

The annual membership dues of a chapter shall be established by a majority vote of the members at a regular chapter meeting.

Article XIII. Amendments to the Constitution

SECTION A. Amendments

1. Amendments to the Constitution must be submitted in writing to the FFA Executive Director sixty days prior to the FFA State Convention.
2. Proposed changes shall be posted to the Maryland FFA website and emailed to the chapter advisors within thirty days prior to the State Convention.

SECTION B. Voting

An amendment to the State FFA Constitution may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the official delegates at the State FFA convention.

SECTION C. Alignment

Amendments to the constitution and bylaws must not conflict with the National FFA Constitution and Bylaws.



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ARTICLE XIV. - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SECTION A. Purpose

1. The Board of Directors shall establish operational policy for the organization and to carry forth those responsibilities as prescribe within the State and National FFA Constitution.
2. The Board of Directors shall develop and maintain policies to govern the Maryland FFA Association, Inc. within the State and National FFA Constitution.
3. The Board of Directors shall resolve conflicts of constitutional interpretation of state and national contest rules and regulations.

SECTION B. Structure:

The Maryland FFA Board of Directors shall consist of:

1. Chairperson-Industry representative elected by the Board.
2. State FFA Executive Director- recording secretary (non-voting)
3. Two Current State FFA Officers.
4. One Representative- Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF).
5. One Representative from the University of Maryland or collegiate level.
6. Three MATA Officers as appointed by the MATA President.
7. One Representative from the Maryland FFA Foundation.
8. One FFA Advisor from each of the five Maryland FFA Regions.
9. One Alumni/Life affiliate member.
10. Four representatives from the Agricultural Industry.

SECTION C. Quorum- The status of the quorum will be the majority of members present at the meeting. This is not affected by the absence of state officers or regional representatives.

SECTION D. Term in office and selection of representative members:

1. The term of service for the chairperson, alumni representative, and industry representatives, shall be two years.
2. Each individual is limited to two consecutive terms for each positions.
3. The aforementioned representatives shall be selected by a majority of the Maryland FFA Board of Directors.
4. The collegiate representative shall be selected by the University staff and shall not be limited in their length of service.
5. No individual shall serve in concurrent positions within the Maryland



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FFA Board of Directors.