



ALASKA STATE OFFICER CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

Revised for 2024

11/10/23

Dear Alaska FFA State Officer Candidate:

Welcome to the Alaska FFA State Officer Selection Process. Congratulations on reaching this point in your FFA career. The path to becoming a state officer is full of challenges but can be endlessly valuable and rewarding. Through your preparation to run for state office, you will develop further as a leader and communicator. In this process, we are seeking dedicated, hardworking, and growth-minded individuals willing to spend a year of service.

Becoming a state FFA officer provides unique opportunities and training, which will help you prepare for future careers, educational opportunities, and lifelong leadership roles. State officers serve Alaska FFA members, supporters, and advisors at different levels and exist to make a positive difference in the lives of all they interact with.

This guide is here to serve as a reference point for all things “State FFA Officer Selection” as well as to provide a basic understanding of the responsibilities of a state officer. Included here is an outline of the selection process as well as expectations if you are to serve as an officer. Please thoroughly review the entire guide but remember- this guide is just the beginning! As a state officer, you should study Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (AFNR), Education, SAE, FFA history and information, agricultural issues and current events, and develop presentation skills. This book is only a resource to help start your own journey of learning and preparation.

Remember to prioritize the events you take part in at State Convention. I recommend only participating in one CDE/LDE each day of convention to not stretch yourself too thin during that week. This is not to discourage you from being a well-rounded FFA member, but to help with the prioritization of the events that you take part in. Throughout the year of state office you will often be expected to coordinate and prioritize the activities and events that you do and this convention will be a good opportunity to practice that.

I wish you good luck as you prepare to run for state office. If you have questions about the responsibilities of state officers, the selection process, or nominating committees, feel free to contact me: taylor.nelson@alaska.gov or 907-761-3884

Best wishes,



Taylor Nelson

Alaksa FFA State Advisor

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State Officer Job Description

The primary responsibility of a State FFA Officer is to serve the Alaska FFA Association in local, state, and national activities in a way that informs and inspires the member, advisors, teachers, and supporters of Alaska FFA. FFA is a student-led organization at its core and State FFA Officers are there to help achieve the mission, strategies, and core goals of the organization.

State officers serve under the supervision of the State FFA Advisor/Executive Director and State FFA Board of Directors in accordance with official policies and budget.

Responsibilities include:

- Adhering to the State FFA Officer policies and following through with those activities agreed to on the application.
- Participating in training, orientation, continual self-improvement and evaluation of activities as directed by State FFA Staff.
- Balancing and prioritizing officer duties with personal and academic time.
- Developing a positive relationship with FFA members, advisors, staff, sponsors, and the public.
- Staying up to date on the agriculture, natural resources agribusiness, and agricultural education facts and issues.
- Planning, preparing, reading, studying, listening, and practicing to continually improve public speaking, facilitation, and leadership skills.
- Planning, preparing, and conducting visits to chapters, districts, and state convention.
- Participating in local chapter banquets and activities as invited by local chapter advisors and approved by State FFA Staff.
- Preparing and submitting expense reports on time.
- Chairing and co-chairing meetings effectively using parliamentary procedure.
- Communicating via email and keeping up-to-date on correspondence.
- Developing and exercising an awareness and sensitivity to inclusion of all in regards to FFA membership and the general student population.
- Being a servant leaders, working well with a team, and striving to improve our organization.
- Performing other duties as instructed.

Key Components of State Office

State Officers commit their time, energy, and passion toward learning, living, and modeling keys of success. They have the opportunity to move toward excellence personally and professionally and act as an example to members of the association. These are some of the key components of service as a state officer.

Represent

Officers are first and foremost representatives that uphold the FFA brand, vision, and mission to others as well as communicating key messages. This means that officers should be in their role 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for the whole 365 days of their service. They should project a professional image, using proper etiquette, interacting positively with the media, and promoting diversity and inclusion.

Balance

State officers must balance personal health, wellness, stress management, and their many responsibilities. Officers should care for themselves, mentally and emotionally, to be in the best position to fully serve members. Key aspects of this are flexibility/adaptability, personal reflection and growth, maintaining relationships with family and friends, keeping a realistic view of self, and preparing to transition out of state office at the end of their year.

Learning for Life

Hold a positive attitude toward learning, feedback and growth. Officers receive coaching through their duties throughout the year and should strive to always improve. They should become knowledgeable in agriculture, education, agribusiness, and FFA and stay up-to-date on current events. Growing your knowledge of yourself and team members will allow the team to be most efficient and effective.

Pay it Forward

1. Strive to make meaningful connections with individuals of all ages and walks of life.
2. Focus on the future value of the work done within the year of service.
3. Conduct yourself in a manner that command respect without displaying superiority.
4. Be personable, concerned, and interested in contacts with others.

Be in the Loop

Over communicate. Communication is crucial to success. Officers should know what is going on with state staff, the officer team, agricultural educators, stakeholders, and students .

1. Keep up with resources such as Gmail, Google Calendar, the website, etc.
2. Respond to all correspondence in a timely manner.
3. Keep the State FFA staff informed of situations and changes.
4. Keep all social media sites professional and respectable, as you are a face of the association during your year.

Official Dress Guidelines

1. Proper official dress according to most recent Official FFA Handbook.
2. Pants and skirts black, not faded.
3. Skirts to knee or below, fitting straight/not too fitted, no ruffles, etc.
4. Slacks to ankle bone or longer, not too tightly-fitted.
5. Nylons need to be black and matched for team.
6. Shoes should be black and clean. Lace up men's-style loafer with slacks, black dress socks. Heels worn with skirt unless flats are approved by advisor.
7. Men's white shirts with pointed collar work best with ties and scarves. They are less likely to bunch up under them.
8. Neat haircut and styles to portray professional appearance.
9. No facial hair.
10. Jewelry and accessories in moderation, should be plain to not be distracting from the officer.
11. Office pin and degree pin always worn in official dress.
12. Clothing wrinkle and lint free.

** Overall, please be aware of your appearance. Make sure shirts are tucked in, scarved & ties are in place, jackets are zipped, etc. You are representing the image of Alaska FFA.

Items Needed/ Items Supplied

These items should be supplied by the state officer:

If an officer cannot find the resources to purchase these items, please notify the state FFA staff so they may help.

Needed:

One pair of black dress shoes for men or one pair of plain black dress heels for women

Two black pairs slacks or skirts

Three white collared shirts (men's shirts measured to the neck work best for everyone)

One pair of khaki pants

State degree charm

After election, the following items will be provided to each officer:

Supplied:

Official FFA Association jacket

Officer Pin – new ones can be provided in the event your first one breaks

One official FFA tie or scarf, as needed.

Supply of stationary & envelopes

Official letterhead for correspondence

At least one business casual shirt

** Other things (coats, dress shirts, etc.) may be provided depending on the year and partnerships within the Alaska FFA Foundation.

Responsibilities & Commitments

State officers travel many miles through the year, not just within the state of Alaska, but to represent outside the state as well. They spend hours preparing for workshops and speeches, receive training from State and National FFA staff to develop their leadership and personal skills so that they can provide hands-on experience and education to other young people across the state.

While there are many events that are scheduled in advance, it's important to note that extra events may arise throughout the year. Communication is key to ensure that other local events, meetings, and more don't fall through the cracks.

Specific Activity Descriptions

Base Camp – *May* – Shortly after election, officers will come together for a training to focus on personal growth and the basics of being a state officer. Includes time spent in training and in other relevant meetings.

Checkpoint 1 – *June or July* – Continuation of State Officer Programs training with a facilitator from National FFA.

State Officer Summit – *July* – A five-day long seminar for state officers acting as delegates and advocates for Alaska FFA. Engaging in advocacy, team and leadership training with state officers from across the country in Washington D.C.

Business & Industry Visits (B & I) – *Anytime of year* – Throughout the year, officers will work with State Staff to attend visits with key businesses and businesspeople to build and keep up good relationships with stakeholders.

Alaska State Fair – August-September – 3-5 days of advocacy and engagement for FFA members from across the state and for members of the public with interest in FFA, SAE, and livestock.

CTSO State Officer Training – *Fall* – A 1-2 day training for all state officers involved in Career and Technical student organizations.

District Leadership Conferences – *Fall* – Officers hold workshops to develop leadership for FFA members within each district. They may also be asked to present personal workshops or to assist with other workshop types.

National FFA Convention – *October-November* – Two of the state officers will serve as voting delegates at National Convention. As delegates, they will represent Alaska on issues concerning FFA at the national level. The remaining officers will attend to other activities, such as state get-togethers, Flag Bearing, round tables, and other activities assigned to them.

Chapter Visits – *November-January* – Officers will set up and attend chapter visits. Visits will entail multiple workshops per day on topics such as leadership, teamwork, and FFA opportunities.

Winter Retreat – *January or February* – State officers will spend time with state staff and volunteers writing scripts and planning other items for Convention. This may be held in-person, remotely, or in conjunction with other events.

Checkpoint 2 – *January* – A facilitator from National FFA will come to work on some of the final pieces of training leading up to convention and the end of their officer year.

Legislative Visit – *February* – Officers will travel with State Staff to Juneau to meet with legislators, stakeholders, and students to foster partnerships that will support and build Alaska FFA and Alaskan agriculture.

Spring CDEs – *February- March* – District CDEs happen in each district to create competition and hold qualifying events for state convention. Officers help to hold the events and may be asked to judge, host workshops, or more.

Chapter Banquets – *March-June* – Officers may receive requests to address FFA banquets. The officer’s duties may vary from bringing “Greetings” to being a keynote speaker. It’s important for officers to meet and interact with parents, school officials, sponsors, and FFA members.

Convention Preparation – *March* – Rehearsals of all elements of convention, recording audio and video pieces, and any other additional prep work.

State FFA Convention – *April* – State officers assist in planning, preparing, and conducting this event and are crucial to its success. Planning and preparation can start as early as December.

Other Responsibilities throughout the year:

Thank you letters – Correspondence with sponsors and advisors is vital to the longevity of Alaska FFA.

Social Media – Officers will be responsible for posting about their experiences, travels, and opportunities throughout the year. It will be a priority to post about the members of Alaska FFA as well. These posts will be seen by members, advisors, parents, and others who support or are curious about agriculture in Alaska and should be kept professional and appropriate.

Meetings – Weekly meetings between State Officers, State FFA Staff, and guests to help the team be prepared for events and to provide leadership and speaking training.

Officers should be prepared for day-to-day work of being a state FFA officer. While major activities and events come up throughout the year, they will also be required to keep up with correspondence with state advisor and others. They will need to keep up with their own schedule and on top of the prompt planning of assigned activities. They need to be able to communicate with teammates on a regular basis to ensure progress is being made for planning workshops and events. If attending school, grades should be kept up in order to attend events as it is a privilege to represent Alaska FFA.

Officer Calendar of Events (2024-2025)

Bold Items Require Attendance By ALL State Officers. Dates include travel days.

Some items are listed for informational purposes ie. Fairs, state officers are not required to attend but it would be rewarding to participate.

April 20	New Officer Orientation Meeting	Palmer
May 16-18	Base Camp Officer Training	Fairbanks
June 1	Nenana Ag Day	Nenana
June 7-9	State Officer Checkpoint 1 Training	Palmer
May- March	State Officer Sponsorship Visits	TBD
July 22-26	State Officers Summit Conference	Washington D.C.
July 29-Aug 9	Tanana Fair	Fairbanks
August	Agriculture Farm Tour	TBD
Aug 14-19	Alaska State Fair	Palmer
Sep-Oct	Interior District Leadership Training	TBD
Sep-Oct	Kenai District Leadership Training	TBD
Sep-Oct	Southcentral District Leadership Training	TBD
October 23-26	National FFA Convention	Indianapolis, IN
November	Farm & Food Festival	Anchorage

2025

January 17-19	State Officer Checkpoint 2 Training	TBD
February	Alaska Grown Legislative Visit	Juneau
February 16-22	National FFA Week	Nationwide
Feb-Mar	Kenai District Leadership & CDEs	TBD
Feb-Mar	Matsu District Leadership & CDEs	TBD
Feb-Mar	Interior District Leadership & CDEs	TBD
March	State Convention Planning Meeting	TBD
April 15-19	State Convention	Palmer

** Many locations and dates are TBD, if elected- officers will have access to a calendar with more accurate dates and locations.

Eligibility & Application

Eligibility:

- Obtained state FFA degree or in process of receiving it during state convention where running.
- Schedule to attend and participate in entire convention while running.
- Compete in **no more** than 3 events during convention, while going through the selection process (about 1/day).
- Each candidate must submit an application by or before deadline listed to Taylor Nelson at taylor.nelson@alaska.gov

Application Procedure

- Confirm candidacy for state degree, if not already obtained
- Complete state officer application.
- Obtain all signatures, recommendations, & other required information.
- Submit all documents as required.
- Attend selection process as outlined by state staff and nominating committee coordinator.

Selection Process

Competency areas

These are some of the competency areas that the nominating committee will be evaluating. These areas are evaluated to ensure that candidates will be able to demonstrate skills and abilities in each of these areas. The scores candidates receive are used for the nominating committee to refer to during discussion and deliberation when determining a candidate's ability to represent the Alaska FFA Association.

- Communication – Demonstrates the ability to use various forms of communication. Ex: non-verbal, listening, written, speaking, and facilitation.
- Teamwork – Shows ability to work in a team setting, values diverse opinions, works to be inclusive and is willing to put others above self.
- Knowledge Areas – Can articulate the nature of food, fiber, and natural resources, along with FFA, educational issues, and other current events. Knowledge and ability to run a meeting efficiently and competently.
- Organization – Can see the big picture, break large projects into smaller tasks, appropriately prioritizes multiple demands and uses time management and organizational tools to produce quality results.
- Character – Is genuine, responsible, honest, mature, confident, respectful, and positive in nature.
- Passion for Success – Displays a passion for agriculture, a desire to do work well, and contagious enthusiasm for our growing organization.
- Influence – Shows how to model expectations, build relationships, and growing the organization.
- Critical Thinking – Demonstrates the ability to seek solutions and resources when finding information.

Possible interview formats

Written Knowledge Exam - A test consisting of FFA knowledge, Alaska history, agricultural education knowledge, Alaska agriculture/natural resource information, parliamentary procedure, a writing prompt, and more. This is similar to the test given during the national officer selection process.

Stakeholder - Three individuals, including one agricultural business leader, agricultural education, and government professional, or FFA member, shall comprise the interview scenarios. Each candidate will mimic real-life scenarios and conversations designed to evaluate each candidate's knowledge of Alaskan agriculture, agricultural and natural resource education, and FFA structure and operations, as well as their personal qualifications and character.

Phone/Zoom Interview - Candidates will be placed in a room with a phone, paper, writing utensil, and no other materials. They will receive a call from panel of two interviewers consisting of Alaska FFA Chapter advisors and two judging nominating committee members, who will be located in a separate room. The candidate will be interviewed using a set of questions and scoring rubric designed to evaluate the candidates poise, demeanor, professionalism, knowledge of FFA, and ability to advocate for the organization. The candidate should treat this interview as if they were working to develop a relationship with an FFA sponsor or business partner, and act accordingly.

Flag Raising - Candidates will be expected to work together to create and present the flag raising on a designated morning at convention. Each candidate will be expected to speak 2-3 minutes.

Facilitation Activity - Candidates will be expected to work together to create and facilitate an activity for the Alaska FFA members to participate in. They will be scored on their participation in planning, holding the activity, and their presence.

Personal Round - State officer candidates will be interviewed by the nominating committee panel. The purpose of the interview will be to allow the nominating committee members to get to know the candidate. These interviews will be supervised by a member of the state staff (the nominating committee coordinator).

One-on-One Interview - Candidates will meet with each nominating committee individually. This allows the nominating committee to evaluate candidates more personally.

Stand & Deliver - Candidates will be expected to give an extemporaneous speech about agriculture, agricultural education, or FFA. Possible prompts will be provided to the candidates before the start of state convention.

Tips for Preparation

Below is a list of things that can help you prepare for the selection process. This is not an exhaustive list, so reach out to others that have had the experience and also do your own research and discover information outside of this guide.

- Start preparing early. The earlier you start, the more you will be able to prepare for interviews and will help you grow as an individual.
- Thoroughly read all information & directions given by state advisor and nominating committee coordinator.
- Prepare for interviews by practicing in mock interviews beforehand to practice interview skills.
- Review FFA history and information found on the Alaska FFA website (AlaskaFFA.org).
- Browse National FFA website & read through national officer candidate materials (ffa.org).
- Seek constructive feedback from varying sources. Teachers, coaches, advisors, past state officers, and many others can help you to better prepare for interviews.
- Don't compare yourself to others. Every individual has their own journey to becoming a strong leader. Determine your expectations for growth, personal development, and leadership and measure yourself to them.
- Seek a coach or mentor to meet with regularly leading up to the selection process. This person will be the key to your accountability and help you to stay on track. Here are a few things to keep in mind when choosing someone for this role.
 - o Find a person who has time to meet with you on a regular basis.
 - o Find someone who you know well or is willing to get to know you.
 - o Find a person who cares about your growth and development.

***Items below will be signed in your application but are important for your review.*

State Officer Policy of Service

IF ELECTED TO A STATE OFFICE, I AGREE TO:

1. Conscientiously serve the Association and assist FFA members and chapters.
2. Seek and accept constructive criticism and evaluation of my total performance.
3. Set a positive example for members of the Alaska FFA Association as a student, a speaker, a responsible and courteous person, and a good citizen.
4. Be neat in dress and personal appearance, always wearing FFA official dress on proper occasions.
5. Refrain from use of all tobacco, vaping, alcohol, illegal substances, and drugs/medications not prescribed by a doctor.
6. Not be involved in unsafe, irresponsible, unhealthy and/or illegal conduct; including places/activities that would raise concerns as to my moral character.
7. Memorize my parts to all ceremonies, compose thank-you letters, emails and other correspondence promptly, as advised by state FFA staff.
8. Represent the Alaska FFA Association creditably at chapter banquets, meetings and other gatherings as needed.
9. Keep up to date with activities, maintain contact with chapters, members and friends of the FFA, and strive to educate about FFA and agriculture whenever possible.
10. Thoroughly familiarize myself with the Official FFA Manual, State and National Constitutions, Parliamentary Procedure, the Alaska FFA Association Program of Activities, agricultural and natural resources in Alaska, and the total agricultural education programs.
11. Encourage FFA members to take an active part in FFA, Supervised Agricultural Experiences, school and community affairs.
12. Maintain a minimum of a 2.5 GPA in school, if actively attending.
13. Make FFA my #1 priority – which may require putting in additional work to maintain academic or work endeavors.
14. Be a servant leader on my team, always fostering cooperation and open communication. I will not knowingly engage in conversations detrimental to other FFA members, officers, and adults.
15. Not enter a dating relationship with another FFA member during my year of service. Refrain from any public displays of affection if dating.
16. Use social media responsibly and in a manner that will reflect positively on the image of FFA and agriculture in Alaska.
17. Behave and present myself in a manner always becoming of a state FFA officer. Be enthusiastic, punctual, well-spoken, and responsible.

By signature below, I acknowledge that I have read this State Officer Personal Conduct Agreement, understand the behavioral expectations of the office, agree to these behavioral expectations, and pledge to abide by them. Any infractions of this conduct agreement could result in limitations being set on my role as a state officer or possible removal from office by the State FFA Board of Directors.