

AGENTS' GUIDE TO COUNTY ORIENTATION/LEGISLATIVE VISITS FOR STATE 4-H CONGRESS

In addition to attending your regional Congress Readiness Day, it is recommended an orientation session be conducted with the delegates and volunteer leader prior to their arrival in Nashville. You should discuss the following items in order to make the "Congress experience" more meaningful to your delegates and to ensure a well-informed delegation.

1. Go over the purposes of State 4-H Congress. They can be found at <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/4H/stcong/generalinfo/purposes.htm>.
2. Make the delegates aware of who represents them in the legislature. The Tennessee Blue Book is a good reference for this and is available online at <http://www.state.tn.us/sos/bluebook/online/bbonline.htm>. The information can also be found on Tennessee General Assembly web page at <http://www.legislature.state.tn.us/>.
3. The "Know Your Government" program is an important part of State 4-H Congress. Please discuss the bills and resolutions with your delegates. Make them aware of the opportunity to present their views regarding the bills and resolutions regardless of whether or not they are assigned to participate in the program. Information on Know Your Government is available from <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/4H/stcong/nourgov/>.
4. Conduct: Make your delegates aware of the fact they are representing not only their county 4-H program, but also the region and state. Caution them to be on time for all Congress activities; to listen attentively at all assemblies and meal events; to dress appropriately; and to always go in a group when they are walking in downtown Nashville. Go over Form 600A with them. Discuss general safety precautions (i.e. double lock hotel room doors, do not open their door to strangers, do not go outside the hotel alone, etc.).
5. Discuss expectations for what your delegates can do when they return (i.e. thank you notes, news articles, radio programs, speeches to other 4-H'ers, civic groups, etc.). You may want to suggest your group prepare a report that can be shared with their teachers and school administrators.
6. Let your delegates know there is an election at Congress. To be eligible to run they *must be approved by the state 4-H office for Honor Club membership*. Let them know that each candidate can have one banner (not to exceed 4' X 8') to be hung in the hotel. All other material should be something that can be handed out or pinned on their supporters. *Candidates will not be allowed to put campaign material on dining tables!* Election information can be found at <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/4H/stcong/election/>.
7. Encourage your delegates to bring comfortable shoes and an umbrella/raincoat. Assemblies will be near the hotel, but delegates should be prepared for a short walks in damp, spring weather.

We also strongly recommend an appointment be made for your volunteer leaders and Congress delegates to visit your legislator during free time on Monday afternoon. The afternoon assembly will be over at approximately 3:30 p.m. You could schedule an appointment between 4:00 and 8:00 p.m. Please visit with your leader and delegates about the visit during your orientation session. Your delegates might want to present a 4-H memento or gift made by one of the delegates related to their project work. **Be sure your leader knows where the visit it to take place and the correct time.** This is a great opportunity for 4-H to be seen in Nashville, but **it is imperative the 4-H'ers be prepared to make a positive impression!**

There will be no group meal event on Monday evening. There are several restaurants in the immediate vicinity of the hotel. The evening assembly will be at 8:30 p.m. so delegates may choose to visit the observation area of the House or Senate chambers prior to that time if sessions are in progress.

Thank you for your advance preparation. With your help, Tennessee 4-H Congress will be a rewarding, educational experience for the more than 500 Tennessee teens and volunteers in attendance.