

## Youth Council

# Code of Conduct & Rules of Engagement

We want all young people to participate in the Young Mayors program safely and respectfully, and on an equitable playing field. All young people participating in the Young Mayors program must agree to the Code of Conduct and Rules of Engagement below.

### *Definitions:*

- **Nominee:** Young person nominating to be considered as a candidate to run for Youth Council election
- **Candidate:** Young person selected to run as a candidate for Youth Council election
- **Youth Councillor/Young Mayor:** Young person elected to represent the local government area youth community as a Youth Councillor and/or the Young Mayor. In different regions, there may be alternative terminology to describe these roles.

## Code of Conduct

By submitting your [nomination](#) for the Youth Council, you agree to:

- Participate independently from any political party or ideology. The program is non-partisan and not affiliated with any political party or ideologies. If you're a member of a political party or subscribe to the views of a specific political party or politician, we'll ask you to park that at the door and participate independently of your party.
- Be respectful of all young people and the broader community throughout the program; act with integrity (e.g. honesty, transparent decision-making)

and treat others with kindness / empathy throughout the campaign and the Term in Office, if elected.

- Recognise that everyone brings their own opinions, ideas and lived experience; actively contribute to an open and inclusive space that welcomes diversity and treats all people equally regardless of culture, race, background, gender, sexuality, able-bodiedness, religion or class.
- If elected, work together with your fellow Youth Councillors on joint initiatives that respond to the issues and needs raised by your community.
- Ensure you continue to consult with young people in your community before making assertions and / or decisions about their needs and desires.
- Communicate with the Young Mayors Program team throughout the program, and ask for help if you need support. Some examples of when you could ask for support include:
  - an unpleasant feeling you're having about participating,
  - changes to your school or work schedule that interfere with participating
  - confusion about the program or what you should be doing,
  - challenges with other Youth Council team members
  - what you're enjoying about the program and want to do more of
- Creating a respectful space for young people to thrive in the program: Conversations and content shared in the program is not for sharing elsewhere without explicit permission from the Young Mayors Team. Parents, guardians and champions are asked to respect that it is a space for young people. This means:
  - When young people are in online spaces together, the Young Mayors Team are the primary moderators in facilitating the conversations
  - Young people should be able to discuss their ideas and vision for young people in their community without the influence of adults.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of everyone involved, especially other young people. Make sure you always have permission to share any stories that are not your own experiences.

## Campaign Rules of Engagement

If you are selected as a candidate for election, you agree to:

- Use only the t-shirts, merchandise and budget provided by the Young Mayors program team to create campaign materials.
- Not accept or use any money or in-kind goods or services to campaign, beyond what is provided through the program.
- Report any inappropriate or harmful commentary from other members of the Youth Council, FYA or Council staff, either online or in person, to the Young Mayors Program team immediately.
- Only put up campaign posters on approved buildings/structures.
- Be respectful towards, and about, your fellow candidates. Engage in constructive debate without using negative tactics to bring down other candidates, and do not mislead voters.
- Ensure your campaign supporters are aware of the Campaign Rules of Engagement and agree to abide by them.

## Media and Social Media Rules of Engagement

As a candidate, you are encouraged to find creative ways to connect with your potential voters. Sometimes this may be through social media or local media in your region. You are welcome to do so! But you must follow some rules to make sure everyone is safe and respected.

- Only use social media platforms after seeking the permission of your parent or guardian. Use social media through free platforms only; paid sponsorship or advertising is not permitted. If you decide to create an individual candidate account, keep it separate from your personal one.
- Use social media respectfully and appropriately. This includes making sure you have permission to use any photographs that include people other than yourself, fact-checking the information you share and having posts that reflect positively on yourself and the other candidates.

- We recommend planning ahead for your media engagement e.g. interviews or posts, so you can make sure that they are within the boundaries of the Young Mayors Code of Conduct.
- If you're invited by any local media to share your experience and thoughts or decide to plan your own interviews, please speak to the Young Mayors team first. We can provide you with support or training, which may be helpful for your safety and wellbeing throughout this process. You are welcome to seek publicity through local media (print, radio, television and online); paid sponsorship or advertising is not permitted.

## **If there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct...**

The Young Mayors Team is committed to working with young people to resolve any issues that arise. However, if a young person is found to have breached the Code of Conduct or Rules of Engagement and has not demonstrated a willingness to align with these core requirements, they may be removed from the program.

## **If a young person has a complaint or concern in regards to the program or Young Mayors team members...**

If we have not acted in the right way, it is important we are told about this. Receiving feedback and complaints means we can correct our mistakes, work to improve things we need to do better, and celebrate when we have done something well.

The Young Mayors team will always make themselves available to you or your parents and guardians to discuss any concerns. You can also access FYA's Feedback and Complaints policy [here](#).