



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

September 2012

Welcome to the Volunteer Staff of California YMCA Youth & Government!

Being a volunteer staff member for our organization is important and rewarding. I appreciate your willingness to accept this role. Youth & Government's successful track record is due to volunteers like you!

While we rely on our local YMCA branches to provide advisors to supervise youth participants we rely on YOU to create the experiential learning activities in which they participate. Our reputation in this area is unmatched. And many of the other 38 states that have YMCA Youth & Government programs look to California as the model.

Our commitment, as a Core Staff, is to provide you with program area goals, needed materials, and facility space in which to meet. We will create a staff team environment that makes it fun for you to be with us and proud of our organization's accomplishments. We will attempt to minimize the personal expense of volunteering by supporting travel and housing costs to the extent possible.

California YMCA Youth & Government has a unique and wonderful culture. It is a culture that we value and one that keeps people returning to us year after year as delegates, advisors, staff, donors and board members. But it is a culture that takes work, and it does not happen by accident. We are emphasizing this culture, and all that we have to do to maintain it, by committing ourselves to "The Y&G Way." I ask you to commit to this list of the best practices of our culture as you work with our participants and volunteers. Engaging in this culture is a way to insure that California YMCA Youth & Government is here for at least another 64 years!

Thank you for your commitment. I look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

Steve Willmont
President & CEO

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Contact Information

Y&G is overseen by a small group of paid Staff. They are the primary contacts and resources for program questions. For all inquiries, contact the program office during regular business hours. For a detailed list of the following staff members' responsibilities, visit www.calymca.org/staff.

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The Y&G Way: An Introduction to Volunteering

California YMCA Youth & Government (Y&G) creates and fosters an environment where all participants, volunteers, and staff feel represented, included, respected and supported. Y&G Board of Directors values diverse family structures and demographics as it makes policy decisions related to participation in programs.

You are part of a large and impressive volunteer force of professionals who are instrumental in enhancing the lives of teenagers throughout the state. Because of your involvement, California YMCA Youth & Government is able to better meet its important mission. Thank You!

Y&G staff strives to embody the following concepts and ideas:

1. Everything we do will be guided by the values we hold: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship.
2. We strive for excellence, without being obsessed with perfection.
3. Decisions we make will always be measured and supported by the goals of the organization's Strategic Plan.
4. All people have worth and value, are basically good, want to do their best, and can learn, change, and grow. All people will be treated with dignity and respect.
5. California YMCA Youth & Government exists to give people the opportunity to succeed and reach their highest potential. We emphasize participation over competition.
6. We will make our programs widely available to people in our communities.
7. Staff members and volunteers are our most valuable resource. Our decisions and programs are most effective when accomplished through our staff-volunteer-delegation partnership.
8. We will constantly check for participant, volunteer, and staff satisfaction with our programs, services and operating methods and immediately correct any deficiencies that we find.
9. We will provide programs that are safe for participants, volunteers, and staff.
10. We will operate Y&G in a fiscally responsible manner, thoroughly monitoring expenses and building adequate financial reserves to allow for adverse times or unexpected situations.
11. We will require the highest standards of behavior from our participants, volunteers, and staff. Our enforcement of these standards will be strict, but caring and calm, and will keep the dignity of the people involved at the highest level of importance.
12. The behavior requirements of our organization are the same for the staff and volunteers as they are for the participants. There are no double standards.
13. Our fund raising efforts will be "donor-centric." The intentions and needs of the donor will receive the highest priority.
14. We want everyone who is involved with us to enjoy and be personally rewarded by his or her involvement.

A copy of this 'Youth & Government Volunteer Handbook' is made available to each new volunteer. Program specific handbooks are also available. All volunteers are required to read the information contained within and are responsible for complying with the policies, practices, procedures and operational standards of Y&G. Reference copies and all policies, practices and guidelines are available upon request from the Youth & Government office.

Youth & Government Program Overview

California YMCA Youth & Government (Y&G) is an umbrella organization which operates the following programs: Model Legislature & Court (ML/C), Spring Conference, Conference On National Affairs (CONA), and National Mock Trial Court all for high school students (grades 9-12), and the Model United Nations (MUN) for middle school students (grades 6-8).

Mission

"We build values-based leadership and civic engagement in California's youth to strengthen our democracy."

Motto

"Democracy Must Be Learned By Each Generation."

Core Values

All of California YMCA Youth & Government programs shall uphold and model the Core Values of Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship.

Strategic Themes

The Youth & Government Board of Directors has adopted the following strategic themes to guide the growth and development of the organization:

1. Strengthen organizational capacity and infrastructure to become a world class YMCA organization.
2. Engage, involve, and inspire more youth to participate, reflecting and integrating the economic, racial and cultural diversity of the youth population of our state.
3. Protect, promote, and honor The California YMCA Youth & Government brand as the best experiential, values-driven youth leadership program.
4. Build and sustain a strong Youth & Government community of students, alumni, parents, volunteers, and stakeholders by creating high levels of involvement and satisfaction.

Program Background

California YMCA Youth & Government oversees a series of statewide youth educational programs, involving more than 2,600 Junior and Senior high school aged students in an extended "hands-on" government experience. Since its inception in 1948, the program has used a variety of activities to build, encourage, and strengthen character traits that help youth become civic-minded adults who are active members of their communities. High-quality experiential and educational simulation, based on California's state government and the programs of the United Nations, provide the foundation. Through a widely diverse cultural experience we are developing an informed and participating electorate.

These comprehensive programs have a dramatic impact on youth participants by teaching values of democracy and creating citizen leaders from a cross-section of the state's Junior and Senior high school population. Through all of the Y&G programs, teens are provided with the opportunity to experience state and world government first hand and learn how to solve community problems through the democratic process. These programs also help develop within teens an attitude of self-help and self-confidence.

Adult Involvement

In the background of all of our Y&G Programs is the significant involvement of a large number of dedicated volunteer adults (many of whom were once participants themselves). Volunteers give time and expertise to teach, coach, and support young people in their program experience. Specific opportunities are available for 17-21 year olds (See Program Supplements).

This adult involvement includes a Statewide Board of Directors consisting of highly-qualified individuals and youth representatives, and an Advisory Board made up of state legislators, constitutional officers, commissioners, and corporate business leaders.

On the local level, this involvement includes YMCA CEOs and Program Directors, educators, parents, government officials, business owners, and college students. On the program operational level, more than 400 local delegation Advisors and over 200 Volunteer staff from throughout the state work to prepare and deliver the statewide programs.

Recognition of all our Volunteers is a high priority. Y&G gives special awards for the purpose of recognizing outstanding individuals.

Fundraising Efforts

California YMCA Youth & Government is a not for profit organization. Keeping participant fees as reasonable as possible is a priority. \$400,000 is raised annually in contributed support. In addition to giving of time and talent, Volunteers are encouraged to participate in fundraising activities.

Governor Deukmejian Endowment Fund

In an effort to allow Y&G programs to remain available to all interested youth regardless of their ability to pay and to ensure that all Y&G programs continue for generations, the Governor Deukmejian Endowment Fund was created. In 1980, Governor George Deukmejian was instrumental in developing the Endowment Fund which provides scholarship assistance to young people so they may participate in Y&G programs. A percentage of the earnings are directed into the Scholarship Fund annually for distribution by the Y&G Scholarship Committee.

Grants & Foundations

Each year Y&G receives over \$30,000 in grant funding. The majority of our grant funding happens because of relationships that you, our Volunteer Staff, Board Members and Core Staff have with funding Foundations and Businesses.

Future Leaders Campaign

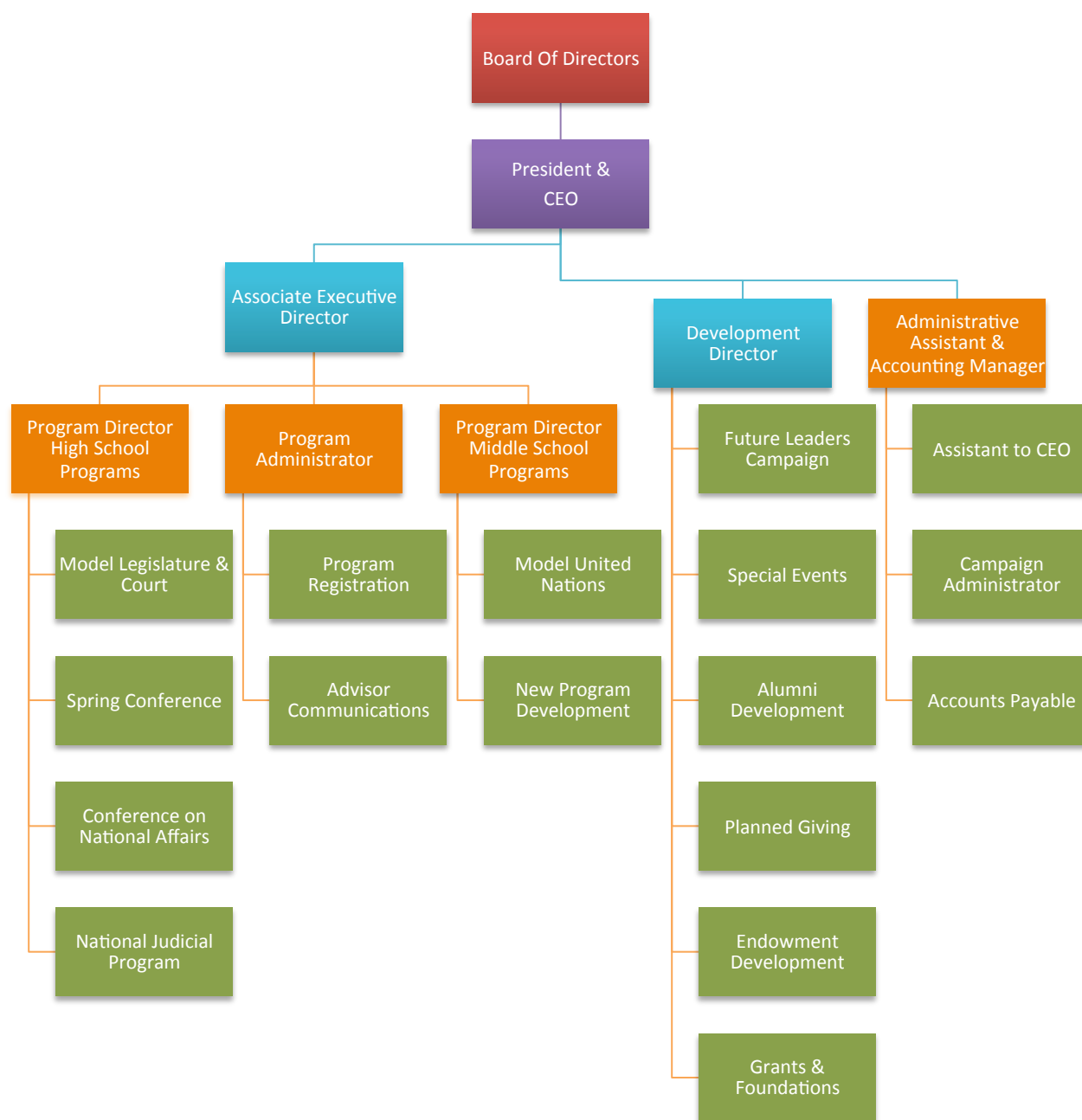
Each year, Y&G conducts a campaign to raise funds to offset program costs and provide additional scholarship assistance. The Y&G Campaign Steering Committee manages over 300 volunteer campaigners who are made up of Volunteer Staff, Advisors, Alumni, YMCA CEOs, Youth Participants and friends of the program. They solicit donations from individuals, businesses, corporations and YMCAs. All donations, whether for \$25 or \$10,000 are recognized and appreciated.

Special Events

Each year Y&G puts on fund raising events. These include our Annual Golf Classic and Legislators' Family Feud. These events not only give us an opportunity to raise funds needed for the organization, they also provide an opportunity to share the Y&G Story with potential donors and stakeholders.

Organization Diagram

This diagram outlines the Youth & Government Core Staff structure and division of responsibilities.



Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities

The following has been adapted from the YMCA Exchange website. It does not negate the at will relationship between any volunteer and California YMCA Youth & Government.

Y&G Volunteers Have a Right to:

- Be treated as a partner and coworker, not as free help.
- A meaningful assignment, with consideration for your individual interests, skills, and life experience.
- Be kept in the know about the YMCA's programs, policies, and people through frequent communications that may include conversations, meetings, e-mails and messages.
- Receive orientation and training for the job that is thoughtfully planned and effectively presented.
- Sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced, well informed, patient, and thoughtful, and who has the time to invest.
- Accurate recordkeeping that includes hours of service, recognitions received, and contributions and accomplishments.
- Be treated respectfully and to be given equal consideration for all volunteer assignments (see Nondiscrimination Statement).
- Be heard, have a part in planning, feel free to make suggestions, and have respect shown for an honest opinion.
- Recognition in the form of promotion, awards, and simple day-by-day expressions of appreciation and respect from coworkers.

Y&G Volunteers Have a Responsibility to:

- Understand the YMCA's mission and goals, realizing that Youth & Government has accepted your voluntary service and participation in order to achieve those goals.
- Adhere to the Y&G Code of Conduct at all conferences.
- Abide by the commitments you make, doing what you say you will, when you say you will do it.
- Accept supervision by Lead Program Volunteers and Core Staff.
- Speak up, asking questions and sharing ideas, enthusiasm, and concerns.
- Continue to grow and to learn more about the job, Y&G and the YMCA way.
- Deliver high quality programs and recognize that YMCA Core Staff and Volunteers have talents and gifts to exchange with each other.
- Act as a responsible member of our Y&G family, understanding that flexibility is necessary for the common good.
- Treat all people with kindness and open communication (see Nondiscrimination Statement).
- Offer criticism constructively, seeking to understand before judging.
- Become a voice for Youth & Government in the community.
- Be aware that outside of Y&G events, volunteers are held accountable if any conduct reflects negatively on Y&G.
- Seek joy in volunteer service and have fun.

Volunteer Eligibility & Selection

To help ensure the highest quality program, Youth & Government seeks bright, mature and committed people to serve as Volunteer Staff. Volunteers must be 21 years of age to participate in Model Legislature & Court and at least 17 years of age for Model United Nations.

Persons wishing to serve as Volunteer Program Staff are required to submit the following:

- Volunteer Staff Application
- Volunteer Staff Medical Release and Contact Form
- Signature Agreement Form (Code of Conduct, Dress Code, Emergency Procedures, Medical Release)
- Fingerprints for a comprehensive background check (taken by us)
- Verification of harassment and abuse prevention training (provided on line)
- Acknowledgment of Receipt of Volunteer Handbook

The items listed above will be provided to you by Core Staff and are to be completed and submitted prior to the first conference a Volunteer attends.

Program Volunteer Requirements

To effectively serve as a Volunteer for Youth & Government, Volunteers must:

- Be personable, energetic, organized, creative, and articulate.
- Possess strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Be able to effectively facilitate youth and adult teambuilding activities.
- Have demonstrated the ability to effectively mentor youth participants.
- Be able to interact in a positive manner with participants, the general public, and other Volunteers.
- Possess the ability to recognize and respond to any hazards related to program operation.
- Be able to attend program related conferences, events and meetings.
- Take, submit and pass the Y&G background check.
- Provide their own transportation to and from all Volunteer-related events.
- Be approved by the CEO prior to serving in any position.

Equal Volunteer Opportunity

Youth & Government selects Volunteers solely on the basis of their qualifications (see Nondiscrimination Statement). Volunteers have the right to terminate their duties at any time with or without cause and without notice. Y&G, likewise, has the right to terminate Volunteers at any time with or without cause and with or without notice.

Volunteer Program Staff Responsibilities

Program Volunteer and Lead Program Volunteer Expectations

- Demonstrate and promote the mission of California YMCA Youth & Government.
- Demonstrate and promote Y&G's Core Values of Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship, in all dealings with participants, Advisors, guests, Volunteers and fellow Staff.
- Adhere to and promote adherence to all Youth & Government policies and procedures.
- Adhere to established methods to keep the physical space of their Program Area in neat, efficient and safe condition at all times.
- Communicate regularly with the Core Staff and other Volunteers to ensure a high degree of coordination of efforts between program areas.

Program Volunteer Responsibilities

- Works with the Volunteer Lead Staff to deliver Program Curriculum.
- Attends, actively participates in, and prepares for conferences and events.
- Attends and actively participates in program volunteer meetings and orientations.
- Welcomes all attendees upon arrival at program area.
- Assures all attendees are participating and assists them when needed.
- Attends all conferences and events as possible.
- Arrives early to Program Area and assures all materials are present and technology equipment is in place and working properly.
- Takes an active leadership role in Program Area.
- Submits all Y&G documentation and completes all required training.

Lead Program Volunteer Responsibilities

- With Core Staff approval, identifies and recruits the appropriate number of Volunteers necessary to run a specific Program Area.
- Trains, acts as a resource for, directly supervises and evaluates Program Area Volunteers to effectively deliver the Program.
- Appropriately acknowledges Program Area Volunteers after each conference or event.
- Provides to the awards committee the names of outstanding Volunteers and their qualifications for receiving program-wide recognition to the awards committee.
- Distributes applicable information from Staff meetings to Volunteer Program Staff.
- Actively leads Program Area.
- Develops materials for Delegates and Staff, submitting duplication and program supply requests to the Y&G office no later than 14 days prior to the applicable event.
- Cares for all supplies and technology equipment by checking equipment in and out at events, monitoring its status and reporting malfunctions in equipment to Core Staff.
- Attends and actively participates in Program Staff meetings, retreats and orientations.
- Establishes Program Area curriculum and goals with the Core Staff.
- Develops curriculum for each conference or event.

Policies, Practices and Guidelines

Any and all of the policies, practices, guidelines, and handbooks referred to in this document are available online (www.calymca.org) or by contacting the Y&G office. This includes ML/C, MUN, CONA, Spring Conference, and National Mock Trial Court supplements to this handbook. This section provides an annotated list of the policies available online.

Code of Conduct

Essential to Y&G is the concern of each participant for the rights of every individual. Being responsible for one's own behavior at all times is a necessary part of self-government. It is critical that all Delegates, Advisors, Staff and Program Volunteers act responsibly to ensure that their own conduct and attitude is beneficial not only to themselves and others, but also to ensure the continuation of Y&G's programs. The Code of Conduct is to be observed by both youth and adults - there are no double standards. Each participant is accountable for preserving the reputation and high standard of Y&G.

Dress Code

The purpose of the Dress Code is to provide a safe and professional atmosphere for participants. Experience has shown that proper business attire lends significantly to the professional atmosphere of the place and event. The Dress Code applies to all participants attending Y&G events. The dress code is reviewed on an annual basis. (See Dress Codes in each program Volunteer Guidelines supplement)

Controlled Substances

If there is reasonable evidence that any person at a Y&G conference is involved with the use, sale, manufacturing, dispensing or possession of controlled substances, illicit drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products, that person will be separated from service, and/or reported to local law enforcement. Y&G is a tobacco-free environment. All tobacco products are prohibited at events where youth participants are in attendance. Additionally, Y&G has the right and obligation to conduct a search for said substances (see Search and Seizure Policy).

Search & Seizure Guidelines

The safety and well being of all participants is the primary concern of Y&G. The CEO, or his/her designee, has the right to call for a search of any person, luggage, locker, bag, room or vehicle at any time in conjunction with a Y&G event. Y&G provides temporary living space, desks, cabinets, computers, computer memory, communication equipment, and office supplies for Volunteer-related use. These and other equipment and fixtures remain sole property of Y&G and must be available for inspection at all times.

Safety

Safety is a vital concern at offices and event locations of Y&G. It is one of your most important responsibilities. If you see an unsafe condition, you must report it to a Core Staff Member. You must also report all accidents, no matter how minor, as well as know emergency phone numbers and learn the location of the nearest first aid kit and fire extinguishers. Y&G requires that all equipment and machinery be in proper working order and safe to work with at all times. Report any equipment breakdown as soon as it happens.

Driving for Youth & Government

Within the programs of Y&G there may be the necessity for Volunteer Staff to drive rental and oversized vehicles. If you are asked to drive a rental vehicle that is used in conjunction with Y&G duties, you will be trained in the proper use and control of said vehicle. It is understood that this is refresher/reminder training, not a California State Certified Training course. Volunteer Staff are never to drive youth participants except for an emergency or a special exception approved by the CEO or Associate Executive Director/Operations.

Violence-Free Worksite

Y&G is committed to providing a safe, violence-free worksite and strictly prohibits employees, volunteers, visitors, or anyone else attending a Y&G related activity from behaving in a violent or threatening manner. Retaliation against anyone who reports worksite *violence will not be tolerated*.

Harassment

Y&G Policy on Harassment states that all employees and volunteers have the right to work in an environment free from harassment (see non-discrimination statement and refer to the online training class materials regarding harassment).

Volunteer-Related Injuries

Any volunteer who is involved in a program-related incident, which results in personal injury or illness, must submit an Incident Report to Y&G Core Staff. The program's designated Worker Compensation provider may see Volunteer's records, and a doctor's release may be required prior to returning to service. Contact the CEO for further information on program-related injuries.

Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention

Any suspected or reported child abuse will be treated in accordance with applicable laws and approved policies. All Volunteers are expected to read and sign the Child Abuse Prevention Policy prior to volunteering. (Please refer to on line training class materials regarding child abuse).

All Volunteers working with youth will be given instructions on how to log on to an Internet training course about harassment and child abuse prevention training. Each training course takes approximately 90 minutes and is required to be completed before volunteering begins.

Controversial and Political Issues

Y&G is a non-partisan nonprofit organization that must remain politically neutral at all times. We encourage all youth participants to develop their own opinions. Volunteers are free to exercise their full liberties as citizens (including the right to express their personal convictions on social, religious, economic, and political issues). Staff and Volunteers are expected to refrain from strongly advocating political views, instead creating an environment where the free exchange of ideas is welcome. YMCA symbols, emblems and stationery are not to be used for personal gain or opinions. Solicitation for any non-Y&G cause or organization must be pre-approved by the CEO.

The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997

In 1997, Congress passed the federal Volunteer Protection Act (VPA). When the VPA was adopted, every state had a law limiting the liability of certain volunteers. The VPA does not take precedence over a state law that provides additional protection from liability for volunteers.

American Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) Accommodation

Youth & Government complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and will provide, upon request, reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with a disability.

Non-discrimination Statement

California YMCA Youth & Government operates all programs without regard to race, color, ancestry, religious or political beliefs, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, domestic partnership status, veteran status, physical or mental disability, medical condition (including genetic characteristics), or any other consideration made lawful by federal, state or local laws.

Reimbursement of Expenses

Expenses incurred while serving Y&G are reimbursable when approved by a Core Staff member.

Examples of approved expenses include:

- Travel to and from Youth & Government events. This includes:
 - Mileage calculation or car rental and gas (whichever is less).
 - Plane flights scheduled through the Y&G office (at least two weeks prior to the departure date).
- Destination parking fees, when parking vouchers are not available.
- Overnight accommodations in approved Y&G facilities.
- Program supply expenses (with prior approval).

Reimbursement Procedure:

1. You must complete and sign a Volunteer Expense Report.
2. Make copies of the original receipts to keep for your records.
3. Submit original receipts and expense report directly to the Y&G within 30 days. Submission of expense reports after the 30-day submission period may result in non-payment of your expenditures.
4. Any expense item beyond those listed above must have the approval of a Core Staff person prior to purchasing.
5. A reimbursement check will be sent within two weeks.

Volunteers can visit the IRS website at www.irs.gov to learn about deductions they can take off their U.S. Taxes. The website has a publication titled Publication 526, *Charitable Contributions* that gives further information.

Complaint Procedures

Y&G welcomes constructive criticism of policies, programs or operational decisions in order to improve its programs. Anyone within Y&G having a complaint and seeking a specific redress is asked to follow the procedures outlined in the Complaint Policy. The procedures outlined are responsive, fair, encourage thoughtful deliberation, and make clear avenues of appeal.

Whistleblower Guidelines

Youth & Government Ethical Practices Policy requires Directors, Officers, employees and Volunteers to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As representatives of the Organization, we must all practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Disciplinary Action

The CEO has the authority to interpret the Code of Conduct and administer any disciplinary action deemed necessary. S/he also has the authority to delegate disciplinary powers to any staff person deemed appropriate. All expenses and arrangements related to any disciplinary action are the sole responsibility of the participant.