

2017 STATE CONFERENCE

January 26–28
Austin, Texas

PRECONFERENCE HANDBOOK



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT*
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



 **TX YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT**

TEXAS YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE

This guide will assist all delegates and adults in preparing to attend the YMCA Texas Youth and Government State Conference. It is expected that all attendees read the handbook. However, the handbook will not address technical questions for program sections. These are answered in Section Manuals and Schedules found online and in the conference brochure, handed out at the conference.

Conference Quick Facts

- High School State Conference is on January 26-28th, 2017 (Thursday-Sunday).
- **Conference Theme is THE 70's. This year marks our 70th Anniversary of Texas Youth and Government**
- **Renaissance Austin Hotel is the official conference hotel. 9721 Arboretum Boulevard, Austin, Texas 78759**
- Conference Staff, key leaders and Student Officers need to arrive on Wednesday, January 25th, 2017. State Officers need **to arrive by 3 PM. Wednesday night stay will be covered by State Office.**
- Each District Director will determine a transportation plan for their delegations (clubs) to Austin, TX.
- Delegations need to arrive between **3:00 PM-5:00 PM** on Thursday. Please note - rooms will most likely not be ready!
- Check-in will open at 3:00 PM in designated rooms per district. It is important that delegates who arrive prior to check-in understand they will need to wait.
- Bus Drivers will need to unload on the side of the hotel (right before the main entrance).
- Luggage rooms/areas will be designated per District. Place your luggage there. Mark your luggage!
- The Renaissance Austin Hotel works hard to have our rooms ready as quickly as they can be made available. **Your patience is appreciated.**
- Delegates-will check-in at their Section Orientation Meetings on Thursday evening (6:45pm) to ensure all team members are present and no changes have been made. (SAF, Judicial and Legislative)
- Dinner is on your own Thursday evening. Delegation leaders need to make dinner plans that will NOT take long. You can order food to be delivered to hotel; however, meals can only be eaten in hotel rooms or the Rio Grande room. However, delegates need to be out of this ballroom by 6:30pm when the Judicial Section Orientation begins.
- Please make sure students eat prior to their section meetings. There is no time to eat after the last meeting.
- Review the Conference Schedule-at-a-Glance.
- Review the Dress Code. All adults and students must follow it.
- Review LIST OF WHAT TO BRING.
- Thursday is Business casual. If you will be arriving late, it is suggested that students & adults come dressed already in this attire. It is not guaranteed that rooms will be ready to change in time; however, it is your responsibility to be in business casual attire by 6:30 PM.
- Friday Night Social - **All delegates must be downstairs by 8:30 PM** for planned activities. Each District has planned a fun activity to choose from, or you may be in the study hall room. Students may not roam back and forth from their hotel room to these activities. ****If you have a planned delegation dinner, hotel curfew on Friday is 9:00pm, but please note Social Activities will begin at 8:30**
- On Sunday, delegations will leave at the time that their District Director indicates.
- All must be out of the hotel rooms by 10 AM on Sunday.

WHAT TO BRING

- Business Casual attire for Thursday evening activities and meetings. **NO JEANS!** Some clubs choose to wear a delegation shirt.
- Business attire for all program activities on Friday and Saturday. **THIS IS MANDATORY!** See Dress Code!
- Red, white and blue Business or Dressy attire for Saturday's Governor's Banquet and Closing ceremony.
- Casual clothes for Friday and Saturday evening activities and Sunday departure.
- Comfortable dress shoes. You will be walking **a lot**. It is not recommended to break-in new shoes or wear high-heeled shoes.
- Band-aids for blisters, if you choose not to heed the shoe recommendation.
- Shampoo/ conditioner and Hairbrush
- Soap, shaving cream, razor, deodorant, any necessary hygiene products
- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- Towel - Hotel rooms will have one large towel, a hand towel and a wash cloth per person. If you need more than this, please bring your own,** additional towels can be requested and picked up in the YG Security Office only.
- Money for food and personal expenses. \$60-75. Friday lunch and Saturday lunch and dinner are the only meals provided, and all other meals are on your own. Pizza and room service is available. For students, room service is cash only. All room service has an 18% charge plus tip.
- Pen and paper
- Pillow/blanket for the bus and room
- Extra hangers for your clothes. The closet has limited hangers.
- Jacket/Coat - expect to wait outside for the bus pickups, regardless of weather
- Backpack/brief case for conference
- Your favorite snacks. To save \$, bring breakfast foods that don't need refrigeration.
- A good attitude!
- Umbrella - look at the weather forecast for Austin ahead of time
- Sleeping bag or air mattress if you don't want to share a bed.
- Mobile phone & charger
- Bring a copy of your bill, State Affairs Forum proposal, appellate brief, judicial materials.
- Review the **Code of Conduct** below that students and adults signed during online registration.

WHAT NOT TO BRING:

- Video games that need to be hooked up to the room TV.
- **Illegal substance or weapons of any kind - If found in your possession, the police will be notified and it will be up to their discretion if you are arrested. Your legal guardian will be notified and will need to come pick you immediately and deal with the authorities.**
- Too many suitcases. Remember there will be other people sharing the room and there will be limited storage space.

**You are responsible for EVERYTHING you bring with you.
The YMCA is NOT responsible for anything lost or stolen.**

HOTEL

The official conference hotel is the [Renaissance Austin Hotel](#), 9721 Arboretum Blvd., Austin, TX 78759. The hotel phone number is (512)-343-2626. It is 30 minutes from the Capitol; however, due to traffic, it can take up to 60 minutes.

Overflow hotel

If needed, there will be an overflow hotel and some groups will be placed there. Hotel rooms will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis determined by when the room lists are submitted. Clubs assigned to the overflow hotel will not miss any of the activities at the main hotel and transportation will be provided to and from the hotels.

ROOMMATES

In order to keep conference rates down, students will be four to a room. Adults will be two to three to a room. **Most will have to share beds or sleep on an air mattress or rollaway** (there are limited number available). Please let your advisor know immediately if you have one bed and 4 students in the room. We try very hard to not have that happen.

Please plan to bring a pillow and blankets if you refuse to share a bed or are in a room that will have an air mattress.

Rooms are **NOT** co-ed unless the room is designated as a parent/child room or a spouse room.

For your security, only you and your roommates are allowed in the room. Adults conduct room checks. Students caught in someone else's room will be sent home! See Code of Conduct.

NO CHANGING ROOM ASSIGNMENTS!

It is imperative that there is no room swapping made by students or adults. There are consequences on the hotel side and the YMCA side when the room list is not abided by. **In serious cases, changing someone from their assigned room during the conference MUST be approved by Angela Castilleja, State Director, once the hotel has checked to make sure it can be done.**

TIPS FOR SHARING

Sharing any small space can be stressful for anyone.

- Communicate kindly and clearly about what space each person will need. Try not to take up more than your own share of the space.
- Everyone is going to run their days differently. The best way to not clash agendas and habits is to discuss each other's schedule. Determine shower schedule, who has to catch a bus first and quiet time preference.
- If someone is sleeping and you are not, be respectful and turn off lights and keep the noise level down.
- Keep the room clean! There are 4 of you in a small space with luggage and other items. Keep your room space and bathroom as neat as possible.
- You don't have to be friends with your roommates, but you can always be friendly. Being kind, honest, and open-minded will show that you deserve respect because you give respect. Be considerate and honest with your roommates. Be welcoming! Someone from another school may be assigned to the room. Welcome them, especially if everyone else in the room knows each other. You may make a new friend!

Things to keep in mind about State Conference

- ☐ Departure time and mode of transportation varies per delegation. Delegations depart Austin Sunday morning as early as 8 AM or as late as 10 AM.
- ☐ It is up to each school if the conference will be an excused absence for students. Make sure notification of absence is communicated with your school's staff.
- ☐ Limit your bags. You may have to carry your bags up several flights of stairs. Bellhop services will not be readily available. You are responsible for all your belongings. Label your items.
- ☐ Lead Advisor or YMCA staff of each delegation will hand out room keys once they have received them from the hotel.
- ☐ For the safety of all participants, posted curfews must be abided by.

There are two types of curfews: **HOTEL CURFEW AND ROOM CURFEW.**

Hotel curfew is the time that all conference participants must be in the hotel. No Conference participants will be able to leave the premises after curfew. Exceptions **MUST** be approved by the **YG Security Office. An After-Curfew Pass will be provided** if approved. Only adults can request this pass.

Room curfew is the time that all student delegates must be in their assigned hotel rooms. Any students out of their room after curfew must be with an adult.

- ☐ All adults are highly encouraged to oversee student behavior and safety regardless of whether students are from their delegation. All adults must report any incidents to YMCA staff in the YG Security Office.
- ☐ **If a student breaks the Code of Conduct in such a way that results in a parent being asked to pick up their child, it is expected that the parent/guardian pick up their child in Austin, regardless of the time of day or night. This will be at their expense.**
- ☐ Students cannot ride a Taxi/bus/personal vehicle unsupervised. Students must stay with designated adults. Exceptions must be cleared. Please clear with District Director or State Director only!
- ☐ No adult can be one on one with a student at ANY time. Please travel in groups.
- ☐ The pool is off limits. The weight room is also off limits because it is located in the pool area. It is a policy of the YMCA that there must be a lifeguard on duty in order to make that area available.
- ☐ If you are a runner and need to train, you must be accompanied by an adult (remember several teens must be going) and you need to sign out and sign back in with the YG Security office.
- ☐ On Friday and Saturday nights, students must stay on the lower level floors designated for evening activities until curfew. If students want to go to their room to rest that is fine, but they must stay in their rooms. We have adults stationed on each level to be available if any issues arise.
- ☐ During the evenings, there will be a room designated for students to use for group practice, studying or homework.
- ☐ Restaurants are crowded. Be VERY patient or make reservations prior to the conference.
- ☐ Parents/relatives/friends are welcome to visit during the day. In the evening, visits must be conducted in the hotel lobby only. If leaving with parent, parents must sign out student with YG Security. Driver's License or ID must be shown.
- ☐ **VISITOR PASSES will NOT allow visitors into evening activities.**
- ☐ On Saturday, there will be a banquet. **This is a mandatory event.** Business or dressy attire is required. Pack accordingly. **If you are not attending the banquet, you MUST notify the State Director by January 20th, 2017.**

Code of Conduct for Youth & Adults

RESPECT FOR OTHER DELEGATES

All delegates are expected to conduct themselves as mature, responsible and cooperative persons at all times. Diversity in ethnic and cultural heritage of delegates is a conference participation goal. Delegates are expected to:

1. Respect the rights and privileges of all delegates;
2. Benefit from the opportunity to participate with delegates from different backgrounds, and
3. Avoid remarks that may be misunderstood or appear insensitive.

As a member of a YMCA sponsored program and in conformity with the basic purpose of the YMCA, I agree with and will observe the following principles as my personal code of conduct while attending the Youth and Government Conference in Austin:

1. I understand that violations of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary actions by the Conference leadership, and/or **appropriate legal authorities** depending on seriousness of the infraction (i.e. drugs, alcohol, shoplifting, etc.).
2. Disciplinary actions may also include expulsion from the program and being sent home at my own expense.
3. I will conduct myself at all times in a way which reflects **good conduct** and **sense of responsibility**, remembering the YMCA core values: respect, responsibility, caring and honesty.
4. Rest is most important for maximum participation; therefore, it is important that I observe all **curfews** as set by the Conference.
5. The use and/or possession of **alcohol, firearms, tobacco (including all e-cigs), or illegal drugs** are against all standards implied in our principles and **are prohibited**. Therefore, I agree not to bring, obtain, possess or use them en-route to, during, or returning home from the Conference.
6. I agree to **help all delegates**, regardless of race, gender, religion, national origin or disability, feel welcome and to protect their rights to full participation.
7. **I agree to avoid violations and violators**. While not always fair, I could be held accountable for the actions of those I am with—often referred to as “guilt by association.”
8. In order to complete our agendas, I will be **present and punctual at all meetings**. Any exceptions should be cleared and documented with my District Director **in advance** of the Conference.
9. My greatest **respect** will be given to the facilities that we use for our Conference.
10. I will **not visit** in other delegates’ lodging **rooms**. Visiting will be done in the Lobby area only.
11. **Adults** - you must have **another authorized adult** with you in order to check rooms.
12. Authorized adult may transport delegate in personal vehicle only if another authorized adult is in the car **AND** prior approval has been obtained from District Director and/or State Director. I understand that the driver’s personal vehicle insurance will be used in case of an accident.
13. I am aware of the **Dress Code** and will abide by it.
14. I will abide by the **Safety and Health Section** of the handbook.

Behavior Policy Statement

The YMCA reserves the right to warn, suspend, dismiss or remove any program participant or member from programs, program locations and facilities upon the following conditions:

- If their behavior poses a threat to themselves or others.
- If they require an inordinate amount of attention from the staff thereby causing inadequate levels of supervision for the remainder of the participants or members.
- If their behavior is determined to be inappropriate within the scope and spirit of the YMCA values.
- For any reason within the discretion of YMCA management.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Advisors will take appropriate steps to assist delegates in understanding and in complying with the code of conduct. Possession and/or use of tobacco, electronic cigarettes, alcohol, firearms or illegal drugs will be handled by promptly sending the delegate home at the parents' expense and/or by contacting appropriate authorities as required by law. Delegates and adults must understand that violations of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary actions by the State Conference leadership, parent/guardian and/or appropriate legal authority. Disciplinary actions may include expulsion from the program. The State Office and YG Security will handle all security situations.

SAFETY AND HEALTH

Safety of all participants is a major concern of the YMCA Texas Youth and Government Board of Management. To provide protection, delegates are expected to remain in designated conference areas and further comply with the following restrictions:

- Delegates will be in their rooms at the designated curfews listed in the program schedule.
- Sixth Street is off limits at all times.
- The Arboretum area is off limits to all delegates after hotel curfew, except when accompanied by an approved advisor.**
- Hotel Curfew and Room curfew must be followed.

For your own protection, please observe the following rules:

- Do not walk alone at any time, but in groups of three or more.
- Always lock your hotel room door when you leave and when you retire.
- Do not leave valuables in your hotel room.
- An adult cannot be one on one with a student at any time.
- An advisor must be with you in order for you to ride in another vehicle that is not the YMCA chartered bus or van. Prior approval from State Director or District Director must be obtained.

YMCA YG SECURITY OFFICE

The YG Security Office will be responsible for first aid, lost and found, incident and accidents, supervision of elevator use and shuttles, and the keeping of records on all incidents. This group will be a mix of YMCA Staff and volunteers. YG Security will be in designated yellow T-Shirts rather than business attire. ****Security leads will visit each delegation meeting on Thursday upon arrival to review rules and answer questions as needed.**

In Case of Illness or Emergency, contact a YMCA staff member and the YG Security office. Attendance is taken at each session and any student not in session must be accounted for. Call 911 in case of an emergency and then contact the Y&G Security Office. Hospital in the Capitol area: BRACKENRIDGE HOSPITAL, 1500 East Avenue (15th & I-35) 512/476-6461. In the Hotel area: SETON NORTHWEST HOSPITAL, 11113 Research Blvd. (Hwy. 183), 512/795-1010 (emergency).

YG STATE CONFERENCE OFFICE

This office is the headquarters for the State Conference. Helpers will be here to assist you if there are any problems that an advisor, District Director or the YG Security Office cannot assist you with.

Please note that for the most part, all questions need to be referred to the Conference or YG Security Office first, not the Hotel Staff. If the issue relates to first aid, lost and found, incident, accidents, and shuttles, please go to the YG Security Office.

PIZZA AND ROOM SERVICE

Need a late night snack? Pizza can be ordered, however the pizza delivery person **must** stay in the lobby area. They will not be allowed up to the rooms. Pizza cannot be delivered after room curfew.

Room service is not available in students room. Adults may receive room service, if they confirm their room with the State Office and provide a credit card on file. All room service has an 18% charge plus tip.

HOTEL TELEPHONE CHARGES

All phones are turned off for making outside calls. Pay-per-view movies are also turned off. Advisors **ONLY** can give a credit card to the front desk to have the phone in their room turned on for making outside calls or to connect to the internet. Outside calls coming in may be received at any time.

CONFERENCE BADGES

Conference identification badges (nametags) will be issued to each delegate and advisor. These are your tickets for admission to all sessions, buildings and hotel(s). Wear it at all times, above the waist, and on the outside of jackets. Name badges are made from the registration list that has been verified by your club advisors. Name badges will not be redone if incorrect. Lost name badges must be replaced.

CARE OF FACILITIES

You and/or your delegation will be held financially responsible for any damage to the facility or equipment. The State of Texas, State Bar of Texas, Court of Criminal Appeals and the Renaissance for many years have been most cooperative in providing the fine facilities for the Youth and Government Program. Over the years, the delegates have shown their appreciation for this privilege through their care for the safety and condition of the facilities. The members of this Conference will want to continue this tradition by being especially careful not to misuse the facilities and equipment.

YOU ARE ON CAMERA

All areas at the Capitol are monitored by security cameras and Capitol Security will observe and listen in. Be aware of your conduct and how you represent yourself, the YMCA and your school.

LIMITATIONS ON USE OF FACILITIES

House and Senate desk telephones are not to be used and papers in or on the desk must not be disturbed. This also applies to the courtrooms. **NO** food, drinks or gum will be allowed in any of the facilities we will use for the conference. Cell phone use is strictly prohibited while in session due to rules at the Capitol. Cell phones will be confiscated if you use them during sessions. **Exceptions will be made in certain Sections due to the nature of the section.**

RECOGNITION OF DELEGATES

Each year, up to 10% of the attendees will be recognized in each Program section of the conference. **Distinguished Delegates that are recognized at the Closing Ceremony will receive bonus points on their application to attend the Conference On National Affairs (CONA) in July.**

CONFERENCE AREAS

Meetings will be held in the State Capitol, Churches, Court Buildings, Renaissance Austin Hotel, and any other areas designated by the State Director. Delegates will be expected to remain in these areas. If a situation should arise that necessitates leaving the conference area temporarily, the delegates will first obtain permission from their Advisor or District Director. Delegates must sign out and in with YG Security.

CONFERENCE MATERIALS

Each delegate will be given conference materials that relate to their area of participation, along with a schedule of activities and events with times and locations provided.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

The YMCA Texas Youth and Government State Conference has a Dress Code that all participants must adhere by. This includes all adults and volunteers. The attire required is based on the session/event/function.

Students and all adults are expected to bring appropriate attire to Youth and Government events. Those not in appropriate attire will be asked to change clothes. Not having any other clothes is not an acceptable excuse for not being compliant to dress code expectations.

Never appropriate outside of assigned hotel room:

- Any clothing with inappropriate language or imagery
- Any see-through or extremely tight-fitting clothing
- Bare midriffs or tank tops
- Tube tops or tube dresses
- Leggings or sweat pants
- Pajamas, slippers or any other sleeping attire
- Flip flops

Keep in mind:

- Hems of dresses/skirts/shorts must be no more than 3" above the knee for all functions – business or casual.
- Undergarments must be worn – by males and females. Visible undergarments are not permitted.
- Hats are only permitted in outdoor settings (for males and females).
- Casual dress and proper footwear is appropriate for most evening activities. T-shirts, tennis shoes and denim are not appropriate during program functions but may be acceptable during evening activities.
- Proper footwear is required outside of assigned hotel room.

CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT ABIDING BY DRESS CODE

One or more of the following can occur:

- Sent back to room to change
- Not able to participate in section
- Evening activities privilege revoked
- Delegation not named Premier Delegation

Dress Code Exception

YMCA YG Security will be the exception to the Dress Code. While on duty, YMCA Staff and volunteers who are part of the YG Security Team are provided a T-shirt to wear that identify them as "Security." YG Security can wear jeans, khakis or shorts with their t-shirt. This only applies while on security duty.

Too much to read? See chart and pictures for what is expected!

DRESSCODE QUICK CHART

| MALE AND FEMALE BUSINESS CASUAL ATTIRE YES | NO |
|---|--|
| <p>FEMALES: Dress, slacks, skirt and a blouse, such as a tennis/polo shirt, with a jacket. Jacket does not have to be coordinated.</p> <p>MALES: a combination of collared shirt, cotton trousers (such as khakis), tie, sports jacket, suit jacket</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extreme hairstyles (Mohawks, large spikes, multicolored hair, etc.) ▪ Visible underwear ▪ T-shirts or jeans ▪ Sleeveless shirts ▪ Denim |
| FEMALE BUSINESS ATTIRE YES | NO |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dress with business blazer ▪ Pant suit-this includes a coordinated jacket ▪ Skirt & blouse with jacket ▪ Length of skirts cannot be more than 3" above the knee ▪ Comfortable business shoes appropriate for the attire ▪ Accessories appropriate for the attire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spaghetti straps or sleeveless dresses ▪ Visible cleavage ▪ Midriff exposed ▪ Sweater sets ▪ Sweater in place of a jacket (unless used with a dress) ▪ Visible underwear ▪ Extreme hairstyles (Mohawks, large spikes, multicolored hair, etc.) |
| MALE AND FEMALE CASUAL ATTIRE YES | NO |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jeans ▪ T-shirts ▪ Skirts ▪ Shorts ▪ Sweaters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visible underwear ▪ Ultra or super miniskirts ▪ T-shirts/shirts/pants with negative messages towards a person or group, promotion of alcohol/drugs or inappropriate messages ▪ Pajamas ▪ Visible cleavage ▪ Midriff exposed |
| FEMALE DRESSY ATTIRE YES | NO |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tailored dress (no jacket needed) ▪ Pant suit-this includes a coordinated jacket ▪ Skirt & blouse ▪ Length of skirts cannot be more than 3" above the knee ▪ Comfortable shoes appropriate for the attire ▪ Accessories appropriate for the attire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spaghetti or sleeveless dress ▪ Ultra or super minis ▪ Visible cleavage ▪ Belly button showing ▪ Visible underwear |
| MALE BUSINESS & DRESSY ATTIRE YES | NO |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Suit jacket, button-down collared shirt, tie, and nice pants (full suits recommended) ▪ Nice pants, hemmed and fitted at the waist ▪ Dark colored socks and dress shoes ▪ Sweater vest, or suit-type vest (must be plain and worn over collared shirt and tie with a jacket) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No jeans or denim of any kind ▪ No athletic shoes ▪ No corduroy pants ▪ No cargo pants ▪ No fleece vests or sweatshirts ▪ No hats of any kind ▪ No bolo or western ties |



Business Casual: dressing professionally, looking relaxed yet neat and pulled together. No jacket or tie is required.



Business Casual



What Not To Wear



Skirt Length

Appropriate skirt length, at ANY TIME, must be no shorter than the width of an index card (or short side of a smart phone) above the knee. Avoid mini-skirts or skirts with deep slits at the front, back, or sides.



Female Business Attire



Additional Dress Code Info

The Right to Bare Arms

Bare arms ARE permitted walking to and fro; they must be covered in court, in business sessions or when anchoring/reporting on camera.

- Shoulder straps must be wide
- No undergarments showing

Covering Bare Arms: Guidelines

- SWEATERS with skirts or dresses
- JACKETS with pants, skirts or dresses



Acceptable Head Cover-up



Acceptable Cover-ups

**Business attire
requires a coordinated
suit jacket.**



Male Business Attire



What Not To Wear



For women, dresses can be cocktail dresses, no more than an inch above the knee, or they can extend to the ankle. You can wear a business suit, just dress it up!



Dressy



What Not To Wear

For men, dressy attire means wearing a full suit, with vest optional. A tie, either bow or straight, should be worn, and the shirt should be a simple button.



Dressy



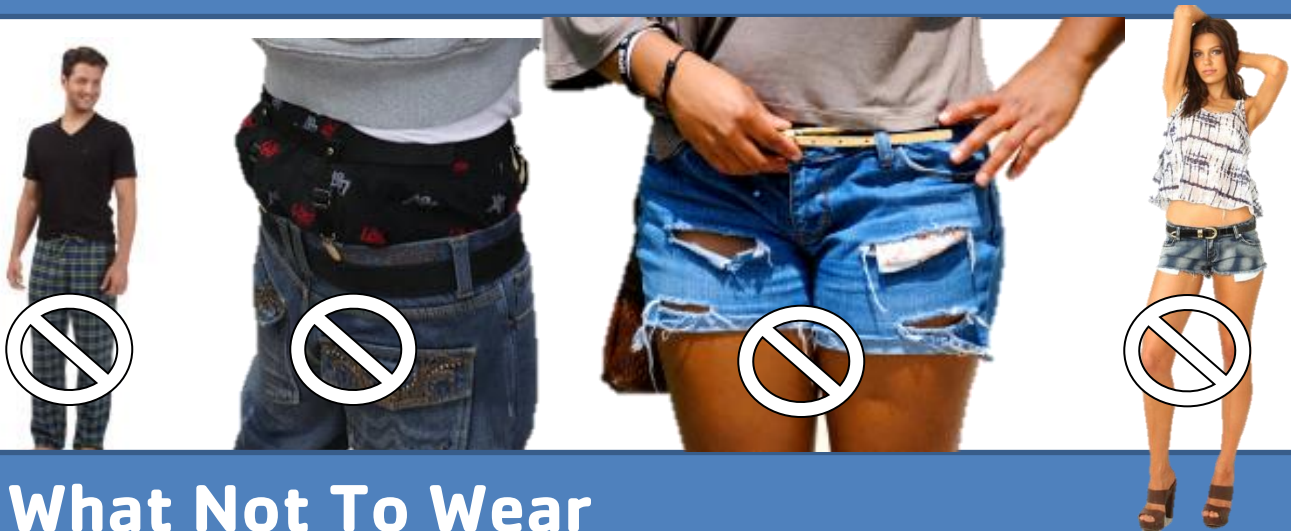
What Not To Wear



For evening or leisure time, appropriate dress will be defined as clothing or attire, which is approved by or acceptable to the local school district for the delegate. T-shirt and jeans is fine. Pajamas or loungewear is NOT appropriate at any event.



Casual for Males and Females



What Not To Wear

SHOES

Casual



Business



Warning! There is a lot of walking. If you choose fashion over comfort, please bring band aids and blister medication.



What Not To Wear