

## Iowa Degree Review Process (Revised 2014)

### Local Advisor/Member Responsibilities

1. As a courtesy, each local advisor and applicant should use REVIEW SHEETS contained in this file to review their own application(s) **prior** to the District Review  
**Review Applications LOCALLY FIRST: Do NOT use the district review process as a way to "review your candidate's application for next year" or "figure out what's wrong with the application."**
2. All applicants must be entered in the Iowa FFA On-Line System 48 hours prior to the District Review.
3. Deliver one copy of each Iowa Degree application, with each applicant's records, to the District Advisor by the district-determined due date. (Do NOT mail to the FFA Enrichment Center)
4. **Star Candidate Applications** -- Mail 3 copies of each Star Candidate Application to the FFA Enrichment Center by February 1st (postmark).
5. FFA Chapters are highly encouraged to establish a local application deadline approximately one week prior to the district review date.

### District Review Process

#### Attention District Advisors: Print "Review Sheets" and copy as needed.

**NOTE:** The District Review Process is a District Advisor responsibility. However, the District Advisor can appoint another advisor within the district to facilitate the District Review and Appeal Process.

1. Print a check in form from the Iowa FFA On-line System to confirm that all entered Iowa FFA Degree applications are received.
2. Iowa Degree Applications and their corresponding SAE record books shall be divided by subdistrict.  
**NOTE:** To balance the number of applications per subdistrict review committee, advisors may evaluate applications from their own subdistrict. Advisors may NOT evaluate applications from their own chapters.
3. Each subdistrict will have a review committee of at least three people.
4. To the degree possible, subdistrict committees are encouraged to review applicants from subdistricts other than their own. (Advisors may not review their own members.)
5. Use one set of Iowa Degree Review Sheets (3 pages per set) for each applicant.
6. **Unapproved applications** (receive a "NO" on the last review page) will be reviewed and confirmed by a **second** subdistrict review committee.
7. Upon completion of the review, **attach** the **review sheets** to the front of the Iowa Degree application.
8. **Unapproved applications** are to be **returned** to the respective chapters **immediately**. These applicants are responsible for initiating the appeal process if so desired.
9. **Approved applications** may be returned at or prior to district contests.
10. **Within 48 hours of the District Review, each district advisor shall** submit a list of applications reviewed via the Iowa FFA On-Line System. Each application must be identified as District Approved or Not Approved: Correctable Errors, Interview Required, or District Denied.
11. For applications that are approved following an appeal, submit an updated list indicating the applicant's name, chapter, and indicate as APPROVED (Done via the Iowa FFA On-Line System).

### Processing Applications Following the District Review

1. **Copy** the review sheets and applications of all **unapproved** applications. The District Advisor/Designated Appeals Advisor retains the original review sheet **and** the application. The unapproved applicant receives the copy of the review sheet and a copy of the degree application.
2. **Attach** the "Iowa Degree District Review" sheets to the front of the candidate's application and retain until the presentation of the Iowa FFA Degree at State FFA Convention. The applications can be brought to State Convention and stuffed in the respective chapter packets.
3. Candidates that **DO NOT** meet all qualifications are allowed to utilize the **District Appeal Process**.
4. The results of the District Review can be viewed on the Iowa FFA On-Line System. Barring any unforeseen circumstances, candidates that **MEET** all qualifications will receive the Iowa FFA Degree.
5. Applications **and** the attached review sheets of **unapproved** applicants will be **returned to the local advisor immediately after the district review**.

**NOTE:** It shall be the responsibility of the local advisor and candidate to make arrangements to retrieve the applications and review sheets from the district review. The local advisor and candidate will be responsible for initiating the appeal process. The local advisor and candidate must respond with the intent to appeal or correction within **one week** of the District Review.

### Special Notes for Star Candidate Applications

1. If a Star Candidate's application is required to utilize the Appeal Process, please expedite this process to assure that the state association has the corrected applications and approval by February 15th.
2. Revised Star Candidate Applications in the event of an appeal: It is the local advisor's responsibility to mail 3 revised copies of the Star Candidate(s) application(s) to the FFA Enrichment Center by February 15th (postmark).

### District Appeal Process: Applicant Tips

1. Candidate's wishing to appeal **must notify the district advisor** (or designee) of their intent to appeal within **one week** of the district review date. Appeals will not be granted to individuals that do not notify the district advisor (or designee) of their intent to appeal.
2. **If indicated**, on the district review sheet, the candidate **must be present** at the appeal (**Check the bottom of page 3** to verify if the applicant must be present at the appeal).
3. Appeal applicants that present sloppy or disorganized records will be denied. It is the applicant's responsibility to be organized so the appeal review may be completed quickly. The reviewer may discontinue the appeal at any time.
4. The **original** Iowa FFA Degree application with the **attached Iowa Degree District Review sheets** **must** be **brought to the appeal**.
5. **Bring all supporting SAE records and activity records to the appeal!**
6. The District Appeal Reviewer will make a formal recommendation to the District Advisor. The recommendation will be reflected in the update of the applicant status in the Iowa FFA On-Line System.
7. **Be prepared and courteous.** A majority denied applications are were denied because of mistakes or missing information. As an Iowa Degree candidate, please remember that you are being given the opportunity to correct mistakes and/or explain unusual circumstances. In most cases, the appeal could have been prevented if the applicant had prepared more thoroughly for the **original** application review. The Iowa Degree is both a degree and an honor. You are not owed the degree. You must earn the degree. Treat the appeal reviewer with the respect that they deserve. They are giving of their time to you to help you earn this honor.

### District Advisor (or Designee) Tips:

Is the applicant required to attend the appeal?

#### Rule of Thumb:

- NO**, if only simple additions or corrections are needed (clerical errors).
  - Example: Missing proficiency area; missing ag skills; missing signature
- YES**, if unique situations or record book scenarios must be explained.
  - Example: Significant changes to the SAE dollar values; trade-for-labor.

### When should the district appeal be conducted? Who should conduct the appeal?

Conducting the district appeal during the district contests or other meeting(s) that will minimize extra travel is recommended, but not required.

Select 2 to 3 advisors, with expertise in reviewing Iowa or American Degrees to conduct the reviews.

**Remember:** The **goal** is to help applicants, that qualify, earn the degree. Often students with the most complicated records and multiple SAE projects make the most mistakes. Pick advisors that will help qualified candidates prove their qualifications.

**Caution:** It is not the reviewer's role to judge whether or not the records are believable. This is an objective review, therefore the goal is to show that the written records support the application.