

# IOWA FFA DEGREE REVIEW PROCESS

## **I. Local Advisor/Member Responsibilities**

1. Completing the application is the responsibility of the FFA member. Application covers and page protective sheets SHOULD NOT be used. Read, follow, and understand the rules in order to provide correct and accurate information for the district review. Additional pictures or supplemental pages of information (such as news articles) SHOULD NOT be part of the Iowa Degree Application.
2. By rule, the state approved review form posted at <http://www.iowaffa.com/iowadegree.aspx> must be completed at the local level, verified by the local advisor, and included in materials that are delivered to the district review.
3. All applicants must be entered on Iowa FFA On-Line 48 hours prior to the district review.
4. Organize SAE records so information can be verified quickly. This may include a three-ring binder tabbed by year of records.
5. Deliver one copy of each Iowa Degree application, with each applicant's records and a completed and verified review form to the District Advisor by the district-determined due date. (Do NOT mail to the FFA Enrichment Center)
6. Star Candidate Applications—Mail 3 copies of each Star Candidate Application and 3 copies of the approved Iowa FFA Degree application to the FFA Enrichment Center by February 15<sup>th</sup> (postmark).

## **II. District Review Process**

The District Advisor is responsible for the district review process. However, the District Advisor may appoint another advisor within the district to facilitate the district review and appeal process.

1. Print and copy the review forms as needed. A minimum of one per application is needed.
2. Print a check-in form from the Iowa FFA On-line System to confirm that all entered Iowa FFA Degree applications are received.
3. Iowa Degree applications and their corresponding SAE record books and local review forms shall be divided by sub-district.
4. Each sub-district should have a review committee of at least three people.
5. To the extent possible, sub-district committees are encouraged to review applications from sub-districts other than their own.
6. By rule, advisors may evaluate applications from their own sub-district, but advisors SHALL NOT evaluate applications from their own chapters.
7. Use one set of Iowa FFA Degree review forms (3 pages per set) for each applicant.
8. Unapproved applications (receive a "NO" on the last page of the review form) by rule shall be reviewed and confirmed by a second sub-district review committee.
9. Approved applications and corresponding SAE record books may be returned at or prior to district contests. The review forms from the local review and district review should be attached and retained by the District Advisor or designee.
10. Within 48 hours of the district review, the District Advisor or designee 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 and correction process, submit an updated list indicating the applicant's name, chapter, and indicate as APPROVED (Done on Iowa FFA On-Line).

## **III. Processing Applications Following the District Review**

1. Copy the review form (district and local review) and applications of all unapproved applications. The District Advisor/Designated Appeals Advisor retains the original review forms and the application. The unapproved applicant receives the copy of the review forms and a copy of the degree application immediately after the district review.
2. For approved applications, return the application to the applicant. Retain the review forms (district and local review) until the presentation of the Iowa FFA Degree at State FFA Convention. These forms can be destroyed (shredded) following State Convention.
3. Candidates that DO NOT meet all qualifications may utilize the District Appeal Process.

4. The results of the district review can be viewed on Iowa FFA On-Line. Barring any unforeseen circumstances, candidates that MEET all qualifications shall receive the Iowa FFA Degree.
5. 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.

#### **IV. Special Notes for Star Candidate Applications**

1. If a Star Candidate's application is required to utilize the appeal process, it should be expedited to assure that the state association has the corrected applications and approval by February 15<sup>th</sup>.
2. It is the local advisor's responsibility to mail 3 approved copies of the Star Candidate(s) application(s) to the FFA Enrichment Center by February 15<sup>th</sup> (postmark).

#### **V. 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 form, the candidate must be present at the appeal (Check page 3 to verify if the applicant must be present at the appeal).
3. Applicants who appeal 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 FFA Degree review form must be brought to the appeal along with the corrected application.
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 on Iowa FFA On-Line.
7. Be prepared and be courteous. A majority denied applications are denied because of mistakes or missing information. Applicants are 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 at district review. The Iowa FFA Degree is both a degree and an honor. Applicants are not owed the degree. Applicants must earn the degree. Treat the appeal reviewer with respect as they are giving of their time to help the applicant earn this honor.

#### **VI. District Advisor (or Designee) Tips**

1. The District Advisor (or Designee) should consider the following guidance as to when the applicant should attend the appeal.
  - a. No: If only simple additions or corrections are needed (clerical errors). Examples include missing signatures, clarification of community activities, missing skills, missing learning outcomes, etc.
  - b. Yes: If unique situations or record book scenarios must be explained. Examples include significant changes to the SAE dollar values, trade for labor, complicated gift situations, etc.
2. The following factors relative to when an appeal should be conducted and who should conduct the appeal:
  - a. Conducting the appeal during district convention or other meeting(s) that will minimize extra travel is recommended, but not required.
  - b. Select 2 to 3 advisors, with expertise in reviewing Iowa or American Degrees to conduct review of appeals.
  - c. 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. Select advisors that will help qualified candidates prove their qualifications.
  - d. It is not the reviewer's role to evaluate 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.