Lead. Impact. Advocate. Engage.

New York State Governor's Youth Council Guidance Document for the

2019-2020 Application

PURPOSE

The New York State Governor's Youth Council (Youth Council) provides an effective way to engage youth in state government and creates a platform for their voices to be heard by policymakers. **This is an incredible opportunity for New York's youth to represent their county on a statewide level!** Members of the NYS Governor's Youth Council will offer their solutions to key issues facing young people in NYS to the Governor and other policymakers, including how to have better outreach and communication strategies to young people. Youth voice is recognized through this initiative; if you would like your voice heard apply today!

Important Application Dates: DEADLINES EXTENDED!

County Application Due: December 23, 2019
County Selection Committee Due: January 17, 2020

Online Application at: https://nysylc.secure-platform.com/a/solicitations/home/1

Please Note: Youth must be a New York State resident to apply. You will need to first create a user profile with first name, last name, and email before starting the application.

The NYS Youth Council creates opportunities for youth to participate in regional and state level activities to better inform State government on issues and challenges in the following topic areas:

1. Education and Careers
2. Civic Engagement
3. Women and Girls
4. Juvenile Justice
5. Environmental Justice
6. Youth Violence/Cyberbullying
7. Sexual Assault and Harassment

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About the NYS Governor's Youth Council

COMPOSITION

The Youth Council will be made up of 62 young people ages 13-21, one representing each county to be selected via attached process.

MAIN OBJECTIVES

The Youth Council is youth-run and adult supported; its members will work to identify and prioritize issues that matter to New York State youth.

Give Formal Voice to Youth

The Youth Council provides representation for New York's youth and creates a forum for advocacy. It facilitates ongoing, 2-way communication with policymakers. The Youth Council will assist State and local governments to promote positive youth development throughout initiatives. Youth Council members are expected to develop ways to get regular input from other youth about their ideas and concerns.

Civic Engagement and Education

Youth Council members get first-hand experience with how the democratic process works by becoming involved in government in a practical, hands-on way.

Community Contribution

In addition to representing the needs and interests of youth to policymakers, the Youth Council will assist State and local governments to promote positive youth development throughout initiatives.

This is an excellent opportunity for youth to have their voice heard across New York State!

Youth Council Member COMMITMENTS

Youth must understand the great opportunity offered upon selection and commit to the following if appointed to the NYS Governor's Youth Council:

- Attend statewide training(s) in Albany, NY about government, civic engagement and positive youth development.
- Attend regional meetings via online platforms and in-person
- Work on selecting policy issues to inform local, regional and/or state changes
- Seek out, listen and respect others' opinions and experiences
- Maintain your membership until March 31, 2021

Youth Council members and chaperones may be reimbursed for travel expenses.

NYS Governor's Youth Council Topics

The NYS Governor's Youth Council creates opportunities for youth to participate in regional and state level activities to better inform State government on issues and challenges in the following topic areas:

1. **Education and Careers:** *Process of acquiring knowledge through study or imparting the knowledge by ways of instruction, workforce, vocational training or career development. Education can also mean teaching moral values, positive thinking, attitude of helping, attitude of giving to society and ethical to bring changes in society.*

2. **Civic Engagement:** *Defined as working to make a difference in the civic life of one's community. It also involves developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. Examples include cleaning up a neighborhood park, volunteering in your school, or organizing a community event.*

3. **Women and Girls:** *Gender equality is a human right, but our world faces a persistent gap in access to opportunities and decision-making power for women and men. Globally, women have fewer opportunities for economic participation than men, less access to basic and higher education, greater health and safety risks, and less political representation. Giving women and girls opportunities to reach their full potential is critical not only for attaining gender equality, but also increasing a woman's sense of self-worth, her decision-making power, her access to opportunities and resources, her power and control over her own life inside and outside the home, and her ability to effect change.*

4. **Juvenile Justice:** *Juvenile justice is the area of criminal law applicable to persons not old enough to be held responsible for criminal acts. Juvenile law is mainly governed by state law and most states have enacted a juvenile code. When children commit crimes, whether it's shoplifting or assault and battery, their cases are typically heard in juvenile court, where the emphasis is on counseling and rehabilitation versus hard time. The premise is that juveniles still have a lot of time to mature and become functioning members of society, along with concerns that adult prisons are no place for a minor.*

5. **Environmental Justice:** *Deals explicitly with the distribution of environmental benefits and the burdens people experience, at home, at work, or where they learn, play and spend leisure time. Environmental benefits include attractive and extensive greenspace, clean air and water, and investment in pollution abatement and landscape improvements. Environmental burdens include risks and hazards from industrial, transport-generated and municipal pollution. Environmental justice issues and examples include inadequate access to healthy food, inadequate transportation, air and water pollution, and unsafe homes.*

6. **Youth Violence/Cyberbullying:** *Youth violence refers to violence that occurs among individuals aged 10–29 years who are unrelated and who may or may not know each other. It generally takes place outside of the home. It includes a range of acts from bullying and physical fighting, to more severe sexual and physical assault, to homicide. Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.*

7. **Sexual Assault and Harassment:** *Sexual Assault is an act in which a person intentionally sexually touches another person without that person's consent, or coerces or physically forces a person to engage in a sexual act against their will. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature in the workplace or learning environment. Sexual harassment does not always have to be specifically about sexual behavior or directed at a specific person. For example, negative comments about women as a group may be a form of sexual harassment.*

NYS Governor's Youth Council Selection Process

County Selection Process

Youth between the ages of 13-21 can apply to the NYS Governor's Youth Council; the State and County will work to have a balanced representation on the Youth Council based on age, gender, ethnicity and other factors that make up the diversity of New York's youth. The application will be submitted to a county selection committee comprised of individuals that represent, support or provide youth services. Each county will look to advance the top three candidates to the State selection committee for review.

State Selection Process

The original application will be submitted to the State's selection committee. Applications cannot be changed after the original submission. Judges at the state level will use the scoring framework contained herein. The State selection committee will appoint ONE youth per county to the NYS Governor's Youth Council. *Please note:* Youth advancing to the statewide selection process may have their public social media viewed for appropriateness, including but not limited to public settings of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, blogs, message boards, chat rooms, social networking sites and others.

State and Regional Participation Requirements

- **The NYS Governor's Youth Council members will be required to participate in an in-person 1-1½ day orientation to be held in Albany, NY on a weekend in winter 2020 and potentially an additional in-person event in Albany, 2020/2021 (TBD). Once youth are selected, if costs are incurred by youth or adult chaperones, those costs may be reimbursed.**
- **Youth will be trained in basic civics, effective youth voice, understanding state and local budgets, and other topics to support their work on the Youth Council.**
- **Candidates selected at the state level will participate in regional teams. Youth will be expected to attend regional in-person and web-based meetings on a bi-monthly (every other month) basis. One or more county youth bureau directors will provide coordination and adult partnership.**
- **Each regional team will work on at least two of the seven topic areas: Education and Careers, Civic Engagement, Women and Girls, Juvenile Justice, Environmental Justice, Youth Violence/Cyberbullying, Sexual Assault and Harassment.**
- **If the regional team feels strongly about an additional topic not listed above it may submit a third topic to address.**
- **Youth will make recommendations to the State on how to effectively address concerns regarding the topic area.**
- **Recommendations will include at a minimum a definition of the problem, proposed changes to law, regulation and/or policy and suggested programmatic ideas to address the problem, and if the proposal is local, regional or statewide.**

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Application: Application submissions will only be accepted online at https://nysylc.secure-platform.com/a/solicitations/home/1. Submissions must be received online no later than the due date. Online application submissions may not be altered once submitted. This is a one-time submission, the portions of your application completed online will be available to download after submission and will be use during both the County and State selection process. Please print or save your application for your records.

Age: Youth between the ages of 13-21 can apply to the NYS Governor's Youth Council; the State and County will work to have a balanced representation on the Council be based on age, gender, ethnicity and other factors that make up the diversity of New York's youth. Candidates must be no younger than 13 and no older than 21 years of age on January 31, 2020 to be selected to the Youth Council. This is an incredible opportunity for youth's voice to be heard at the statewide level on issues impacting youth.

Identification: Youth must be a New York State resident to apply. If you move to the State Selection Process an acceptable form of identification must be presented to the youth bureau director which may include: state-issued driver's license or learner's permit, State or New York City non-driver ID card, school ID, birth certificate, U.S. passport, Social Security Card, certificate of citizenship and naturalization, employment authorization number or Native American identification card. **(U.S. citizenship is not required.)**

Attendance: The NYS Governor's Youth Council members will be required to participate in an in-person 1 – 1 ½ day orientation to be held in Albany, NY on a weekend in winter 2020 and potentially an additional in-person event in Albany, 2020/2021 (TBD). Youth must also agree to participate in regional in-person and/or web-based meetings through March 31, 2021.

Travel: Youth traveling from far distances may be eligible for reimbursement for overnight stays; youth that may need chaperones may be eligible for travel expenses. Further information will be provided upon selection to the Youth Council. Limitations or special accommodations for youth with disabilities will not impact the selection process and will be accommodated, if selected. Other costs associated with travel maybe covered and will be dealt with on individual basis determined by the individual's needs.

Cultural Diversity and Inclusion: Members of the NYS Governor's Youth Council serve as volunteers. In order to ensure diverse perspectives - special consideration for membership will be given to members of historically underserved, disadvantaged and marginalized populations. These populations include but are not limited to; people of color, members of the LBGTQ community, rural New Yorkers, immigrants, people with disabilities (including physical), and people who have limited English proficiency.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Who completes the application? Youth should complete the application online at https://nysylc.secure-platform.com/a/solicitations/home/1 however if they need assistance, county youth bureau staff will be assigned to assist the candidate with completion of their application.

How/when are applications submitted? All applications must be submitted on or before the deadline dates (see cover). All applications must be submitted through the NYS Governor's Youth Council portal. Only complete applications will be processed and forwarded to the judges for consideration. County youth bureau staff will be assigned to assist the candidate with completion of this step.

What happens after submission? After the deadline, all completed and approved applications will be forwarded to the judges to be considered, in the judging process. All applicants will be notified if they were or were not selected. Selected candidates will be submitted to the statewide selection committee for review and only one (1) youth per county will be appointed to the NYS Governor's Youth Council. County youth bureau staff will be assigned to assist the candidate with completion of this step.

Video and Photo A photo head shot in high resolution format (PDF, JPG, PNG) must be submitted. Candidates should be prepared to deliver and submit a video speech based on the youth's passion, interest, expertise and/or experience with one or more of the topic areas. All candidates must submit a video no longer than 3 minutes total. County youth bureau staff will be assigned to assist the candidate with completion of this step.

SCORING FRAMEWORK

The three (3) weighted categories below will inform the judging process on the county and state levels. Additional instructions for creating the best possible application are found throughout this document. Please reference the individual forms and sections for guidance.

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	WEIGHT
Candidate Essay	Candidates must write a short essay response (no more than 500 words) supporting three questions (see page 10 for more detail). The essay will be judged for content, clarity and overall quality.	30%
Public Speaking	Candidates should be prepared to deliver and submit a video speech (any video format or URL such as youtube, ted talk, etc. will be accepted). The video should demonstrate the youth's passion, interest, expertise and/or experience in one or more of the topic areas. All candidates must submit a video no longer than 3 minutes total. Candidates will be judged on speech content and delivery.	30%
Overall Application Quality	Judges will use the following criteria to assess each application: clarity, passion, completion of each section and quality of supplemental materials. Candidate's character will be evaluated through demonstrated qualities such as leadership skills, academic achievement, civic engagement, service to the community, work ethic, roles on youth/county/school advisory board, etc. Each area in this section will be weighted the same. For example, a youth who may not have "excellent academic achievement" but may excel in civic engagement/leadership skills will be given equal consideration in scoring.	40%

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Check off each item on this page to ensure that the application packet is complete. All applications must include each item noted below. *Note: Once applications are submitted, they cannot be altered!*

Online Application at: https://nysylc.secure-platform.com/a/solicitations/home/1

Please Note: You will need to first create a user profile with first name, last name, and email before starting the application.

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Check here once all forms are complete and ready for inputting into the portal.

FORMS *All forms should be completed, signed and submitted through the online application.*
☐ A: Applicant Nomination Page ☐ B: Candidate Qualifications
☐ Forms for Emergency Care Release, General Waiver Form & Authorization Form

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ESSAY *Essay instructions are included on page 10 of this kit. The essay should be composed and typed by the candidate on the NYS Governor's Youth Council online application and uploaded to the portal in the appropriate place.*

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TWO RECOMMENDATIONS *At least one (1) letter should highlight the youth's experience or passion in one or more of the topic areas; the other letter can support youth's general character, leadership skills, etc. Letters should be submitted as PDF attachments through the portal.*

Topic Areas:
☐ *Education and Careers* ☐ *Civic Engagement* ☐ *Women and Girls* ☐ *Juvenile Justice*
☐ *Environmental Justice* ☐ *Youth Violence/Cyberbullying* ☐ *Sexual Assault and Harassment*

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Check here once all supporting materials are complete and ready for uploading to the portal.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS *Submitted as attachments through the portal.*

☐ Candidate Photo *A high-resolution PDF, JPG or PNG headshot of the candidate must be submitted as an attachment to the portal.*

☐ Video *Candidates should be prepared to deliver and submit a video speech (any video format or URL such as youtube, ted talk, etc. will be accepted). The video should demonstrate the youth's passion, interest, expertise and/or experience in one or more of the topic areas. All candidates must submit a video no longer than 3 minutes total.*

A. APPLICANT NOMINATION PAGE

Type directly into the online application portal in the space provided to answer each question. Each answer is limited to 125 characters.

1. Applicant Information: name; date of birth; street address including city, state & zip; phone number; email address; social media handles (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram & others); race/ethnicity; gender/gender identity and pronouns

2. Education Information: education experience including current status and degrees (if applicable)

3. Employment Status: current employment status

4. Experience with other boards: other youth boards or leadership positions held by the candidate.

B. CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants should be prepared to answer the following questions when applying through the online application portal. Type directly into the online application portal in the space provided to answer each question. Each answer is limited to 125 characters.

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1) Provide up to three examples that supports your leadership capabilities including but not limited to advanced courses taken, extracurricular activities (sports, STEM, community theater, youth agency/county advisory boards, etc.) recognitions, etc.

2) Provide up to three examples of your service, including community service projects, volunteerism and activism as related to the topic areas.

3) Provide up to three examples of how you support your health and well-being, and/or practice self-care (For example, riding a bicycle, meditation, abstaining from substances, etc.)

ESSAY STRUCTURE

Please respond to each of the following questions with as much thought and clarity as possible. The essay must be typed directly into the space provided in the application portal. Each essay has a character limit of 500 words. (This is roughly the equivalent of two paragraphs). Please note that your essay will be judged based on content, clarity and overall quality.

- What does youth voice mean to you?
- How will you influence a positive impact on your community? (Community can be the applicant's school district, town, village, city, county, region or state)
- What will you offer by becoming a member of the NYS Governor's Youth Council?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Please ask the letter writer to place on official letterhead, as appropriate, and to please include signature, title, e-mail address and physical address. Upload a scanned PDF of letter to the portal. County youth bureau staff will be assigned to assist the candidate and answer any questions.

Letters should support the candidate's suitability to participate on the NYS Governor's Youth Council, with at least one (1) letter placing particular emphasis that demonstrates the youth's passion, interest, expertise and/or experience in one or more of the topic areas: Education and Careers, Civic Engagement, Women and Girls, Juvenile Justice, Environmental Justice, Youth Violence/Cyberbullying and Sexual Assault and Harassment.

The other letter should support youth's general character including but not limited to, leadership skills, academic achievement, civic engagement, service to the community, etc.