

Ready for 4-H Exploration Days 2026: A Tip Sheet

So you are going to 4-H Exploration Days, what do you need to know?

Before the Event

- Check your email for event communication and bring any items needed for your sessions. Many sessions require closed-toed shoes, long sleeves, athletic clothes or clothes that can get dirty. You will also want to bring items to be ready for all weather (raincoat, umbrella, sweatshirt).
- **Pack:**
 - Casual clothing (shorts, T-shirts, jeans, jacket)
 - Comfortable walking shoes and tennis shoes are recommended! This should be something more sturdy than flip flops.
 - Watch
 - Phone Charger or Alarm clock
 - **Fan (the residence halls run hot and have no air conditioning)**
 - Sports/reusable water bottle with your name on it (to fill up at appropriate areas, not in cafeteria)
 - Wash cloth (if you want one)
 - Hand soap for bathroom sink
 - Bath soap, shampoo, conditioner, personal toiletries, etc.
 - Sunscreen
 - Spending money for souvenirs and/or snacks (smaller bills are necessary due to limited cash back options)
 - Specific items for your session (check your event email for specifics)
 - A small bag or tote to carry items in (optional)
 - Umbrella or rain jacket (optional but highly encouraged)
 - Hangers (optional)

Do not pack:

- Valuables (such as handheld electronics and expensive jewelry) *MSU Extension, Michigan 4-H, and Michigan State University are not responsible for loss or damage to personal items.* * Please take care of your belongings.
- Towels, sheets, pillows – they're provided unless you want your own.
- Large appliances or equipment

During the Event

Key Points:

- Represent yourself, your county, and our program well while on campus. Know and follow the 4-H Code of Conduct and Exploration Days rules and expectations found in the Handbook.
- If you are sick, stay home! If you become sick during your time at the event, a parent/guardian or trusted adult will need to pick you up and take you home.
- Each county has a male and female Lead Chaperone. The Lead Chaperone serves as head chaperone for the county. There are also often other chaperones within a county group. Adults also serve as session and activity hosts and are available to assist you.

- Each youth will be assigned to a specific chaperone to whom they are accountable. Youth participants and the assigned adult chaperone need to keep each other informed of where they will be, when and with whom.
- All chaperones will create a system to ensure all parties know where they are. This could be using Whereabouts Schedules posted on residence hall doors, group texting or another method that all parties choose.
- The event General Headquarters is in West Holmes Lounge. The phone number is **517-432-7611** and is listed at the bottom of the name badges. This number can be used for phone calls or text messages. For night time assistance, contact the West Holmes night receptionist at **517-353-6360** and ask to speak with a 4-H Exploration Days team lead. The night receptionist number can only make phone calls.
- Lose or find an item? Stop by the 4-H Exploration Days Headquarters for the lost and found area.
- The Activity Guide lists where and when everything is being held and includes a campus map with a building index.
 - There are two shuttle busses so space is extremely limited; please walk to your destinations as much as possible. You can view the Activity Guide on-line before the event.
 - Tip: if your destination is on the right side of the centerfold map, you should walk there, if not, ride the shuttle bus!
- You will have an assigned lunch and dinner time (Green or White Group). Please try to honor this to help with food readiness and seating options. However, if you cannot due to a time conflict, make sure you go during open hours.
- An onsite Nurse's Station will be staffed from 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday to 1:00 p.m. on Friday of the event and the residence hall location will be noted in the Activity Guide/Yapp app. This service is available to participants at no charge. If healthcare is needed beyond what the nurse can provide, participants will be taken to a Lansing-area health care facility. The cost of treatment will be billed to the youth, parents or guardians.
- If you are missing basic items during your stay, Sparty's store is open in McDonnell on the 1st floor from 7am-10pm. Please pay with small bills (cash) or credit/debit card.
- Need a quiet moment during the event? The Mindful Minutes room is a space where youth can regroup, relax, and ground themselves before sessions or free time. Ask headquarters, a chaperone, or check the app for the location.
- Download and use the Yapp app for event communication. Visit <http://my.yapp.us/4HEXPO> in your browser and follow the instructions on the page, or scan the code below with your phone's camera to open the link directly.



Check In and Check Out Process:

- Check-in time: Wednesday, 9am to 11am for youth. You will meet your Lead Chaperone on your assigned wing of the residence hall (east, west). You will receive a room key, conference card for meals, Activity Guide, T-shirt, name badge and lanyard. Linen packets (2 sheets, 2 towels & pillow case) will already be in your assigned room. You'll need to put the bedding on your bed so you might want to practice at home if this is new!
- Check-out time is Friday before 1:30 p.m. Be sure you have arranged for your pick-up and transportation home. Youth should plan on staying until at least 11am and must check out with their chaperone before leaving.

Expectations and Meetings with Chaperones:

- Attend all sessions for which you pre-registered, tracks, as well as all county meetings and check-ins with your chaperone.
- Be on time. Session absences (and late arrivals) are reported to the county.
- Inform your chaperone of where you are outside of sessions using whereabouts schedules, texts or phone calls, or whatever you and your chaperone decide. (Follow your county process.)
- Wear your name badge around your neck **at all times** (except while you're sleeping of course!) Your name badge admits you to activities and identifies you as a 4-H Exploration Days participant.
- Keep your key attached to your lanyard and put your conference card inside your name badge holder (or other secure place). Lost fee charges are \$75 for keys and \$20 for conference cards.
- Lock your room whenever you leave it and at night when sleeping.
- Close your blinds when undressing.
- Use of any electric scooters on campus is **forbidden** and could be grounds for dismissal from the event.
- Cell phones are allowed for youth however, they must be silenced and not used during sessions, chaperone meetings, keynote, Team Unity, and free time activities.

- Stay on the grounds of Michigan State University unless with an arranged field trip. The grounds of Michigan State University refers to not crossing Harrison Avenue, Grand River, Hagadorn Road or Service Road.
- County meetings and youth/chaperone huddles will be held during the event. Watch for a posted announcement on your housing floor giving times and locations for the full county huddle. Chaperone huddle times are listed in the Activity Guide. **It is a requirement to check in with your chaperone at the huddle time.**
- Curfew: 10:00 p.m., You must be in your residence hall. By 10:15 p.m., you must be on your assigned residence hall floor for your youth/chaperone county huddle. By 11:00 p.m., you must be in your assigned room. Your Lead Chaperone and chaperones will do a room check each night.

After the Event

- If you lost your conference card and found it after the conclusion of the event, return it to the State 4-H office ASAP. Keys cannot be returned after check-in. If lost, pay the appropriate fees once contacted.
- If you lost an item at the event, contact 4h.expodays@msu.edu to see if your item was found. Unclaimed items will be donated after 1 month.

Sample of residence hall room setup:

