



CONFERENCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

2025-2026

The purpose of this document is to outline the policies and procedures pertaining to participation in California DECA. The items outlined in this document are applicable to ALL California DECA Conferences, Events, and Activities. A conference “Registration Guide” will be provided for each respective conference which will contain the specific dates, deadlines, and information relevant to that conference.

Table of Contents

REGISTRATION INFORMATION	1
Eligibility	1
Due Date Requirements	1
Conference Registration	1
Hotel Registration	2
Hotel Policy	2
Hotel Overflow	3
Conference Payments	3
Registration Changes	3
Refunds	4
Advisor/Chaperone to Student Ratio	4
Alumni	4
Internet	5
Parking	5
Testing	5
Security	5
Voting Delegates	5
Substitute Advisor Policy	6
Scoring Concerns/Grievances Procedure	6
Score Factoring	7
INTERNATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE	8
ICDC Eligibility	8
ICDC Qualifiers	8
Intent to Compete Process	8
ICDC Team Substitutions	8
MEMBERSHIP	9
Initial Roster Deadline	9
Members Deadline for Conference Eligibility	9
Final Membership Deadline	9
Membership Invoicing	9
ONLINE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS	10
ADVISOR DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES	15
STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN CHAPTER ADMINISTRATION	15
CTE PATHWAY REQUIREMENT	15
LOCAL CHAPTERS PLANNING EVENTS	15
USE OF POOLS AND FITNESS FACILITIES	16
PREPARED EVENTS - ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PRIOR WORK USE POLICY	16
PREPARED EVENTS – COMPLETION	17
GRIEVANCE REPORT	18
SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE	19

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Eligibility

- To participate in a conference, students and Advisors of eligible DECA Chapters (see below) must be included on the chapter roster and the roster must be submitted to DECA Inc. through the online Membership Portal (deca.org/register). If a student or Advisor is not included on the official roster you will not be able to register them for the conference. The online membership system and conference registration systems are two separate systems. Students and Advisors must be registered in both systems.
- To be eligible to attend ICDC (as a competitor, candidate, campaign staff member, leadership academy participant, etc.); students must have attended the State Career Development Conference held in the same year. The only exception to this policy is in the case of online events as noted further below.

Requirements to be a DECA Chapter

Each chapter must meet the following requirements from the California Department of Education:

- The high school must offer a CTE program or pathway (consisting of a minimum of two courses) that is aligned with the ideals and standards of DECA - for students interested in marketing, finance, hospitality, management, and entrepreneurship.
- Every DECA chapter must have a Credentialed CTE Instructor (or an instructor with a Single Subject Credential in Business or Home Economics) who serves as an advisor for the chapter, is actively involved in the management of the DECA chapter, and teaches in the CTE program or pathway used for DECA affiliation. The CTE credential requirement applies to all schools including private schools.
- All students participating in California DECA must be enrolled in a pathway (or have taken all of the courses available in the pathway) in one of the following Career and Technical Education (CTE) areas: Marketing, Business Management and Administration, Hospitality and Tourism and Finance.

Due Date Requirements

- All materials must be submitted by the due date for the respective conference. See the specific Conference Registration Guide for deadlines.
- Be sure to carefully review the registration checklist in the Conference Registration Guide to see which forms are required and which forms are optional.
- Online registration must be completed by the specified due date.
- Conference registration checks and checks for hotel rooms (two separate checks) must be postmarked by the due date.
- If a chapter has not previously submitted registration, they are not allowed to register after the due date.
- There is a \$10 late fee for any additions to existing registrations after the due date.
- There is a \$10 change fee for any changes made after the online registration is closed or changes that have to be manually processed.

Conference Registration

- All registrations will be completed online. Please use the link provided in the Conference Registration Guide. There is a different online system for each conference so be sure to read the title at the top of the webpage to confirm that you are using the right system for the conference.

- If paying by check please note that only **school and Advisor checks** are accepted, no purchase orders or student checks. Registration payment must be submitted in one check for the full amount. Do not send multiple checks. Some conferences will offer the option to pay by credit card.

Hotel Registration

- **All participants (students, Advisors, chaperone, and alumni) are required stay at the official conference hotel for the duration of the conference. No exceptions.**
- If paying the hotel by credit card, please use the Credit Card Authorization Form that is provided with the Conference Registration Guide for the respective conference.
- **Double/Double rooms are limited** and given on a first come basis. There is no guarantee that a room will have two beds. It may have a bed and a rollaway, pullout couch or inflatable bed.
- As a reminder: Advisors, alumni, or chaperones MAY NOT share sleeping rooms with DECA students. This includes alumni who have recently graduated from high school. Student rooms are for students only. **Alumni and chaperone must be in separate sleeping rooms from students.**
- Hotels have a limited number of rooms with more than one bed. Because of this rooms with more than one bed will be assigned in the following order of priority:
 1. Rooms with four students
 2. Rooms with two adults
 3. Rooms with three students
- If there are not enough rooms with more than one bed to go around the following may occur: A room with two adults may only have one bed. A room with two or three students may only have one bed. Chapters should plan accordingly.

Hotel Policy

All participants (students, Advisors, chaperone, and alumni) are required stay at the official conference hotel for the duration of the conference. No exceptions. We have provided some of the background and rationale related to this policy below:

- We are concerned about students coming and going from the conference and the liability this creates for the school, the chapter, and California DECA and the risk it poses to the students. It creates challenges with providing adequate supervision for students as they are transporting between the school site and the hotel, hotel to school site, home to hotel, hotel to home, and any other origins or destinations in between (work, sporting events, etc.). It becomes challenging to keep track of when students arrive and depart and who is responsible for the students at which times and when that responsibility begins and ends. It is safer to know that students are arriving on site at the start of the conference and departing at the conclusion of the conference and will be in the advisor's care for the time in between. We are concerned about students traveling in private vehicles and students traveling unchaperoned and the increased risk of accident/injury that comes with all the back and forth.
- Our conference programming is dynamic and extensive. We have events and activities which start early in the morning and wrap up late in the evening. We are concerned about students traveling when it is dark outside and when they may be tired which can create hazardous driving conditions for the students or those transporting them to/from the event.
- We negotiate contracts with the hotels based on an overall package. Part of that package includes consideration of the revenue the hotel generates for sleeping room nights. Without that revenue the hotel would charge a fee for the use of the conference facilities, and we would need to significantly raise conference registration fees. With the hotel room nights, we do not pay rental fees for the use of

the meeting space where all the conference functions are held. Chapters would essentially be looking at the same per student cost, but instead of paying those costs as registration fees and sleeping room fees they would be paid as larger registration fees.

- We do believe that the student engagement afforded by being onsite and able to interact with their peers rather than coming and going from the event is part of the overall conference experience and an integral element of the conference.

Hotel Overflow

As our conferences continue to grow, it is sometimes necessary to utilize overflow hotel properties when the primary hotel reaches capacity. Rooming lists are submitted by school, and we work diligently to place chapters in the main hotel whenever possible.

Chapters will be prioritized for placement in the main hotel based on the order in which their conference registration is finalized (with no further changes) and submitted to California DECA. However, several additional factors are also considered to ensure a smooth and equitable rooming process. These include:

- Special accommodations or accessibility needs noted at registration
- Shared chaperoning responsibilities between schools
- Rooming configurations and overall group size relative to available room types

Once the main hotel is full, any additional chapters will automatically be assigned to an overflow hotel and bus shuttle logistics will be coordinated (as needed). We will notify affected chapters as soon as possible and provide all necessary details to ensure a seamless experience across all properties.

Our goal is to make the housing process as fair and efficient as possible while meeting the needs of all attending students and advisors.

Conference Payments

- Once you have completed registration, you will receive an *estimated* invoice. Do NOT make payment from this invoice. This is for your planning purposes only. After the registration deadline closes, you will receive your *official* invoice via QuickBooks.
- Conference check payments and remittances are as following:
 - NorCal District Career Development Conference (NorCal CDC)
NorCal DECA / PO Box 1440 / Owasso, OK 74055
 - Silicon Valley District Career Development Conference (SV CDC)
SV DECA / PO Box 1440 / Owasso, OK 74055
 - SoCal District Career Development Conference (SoCal CDC)
SoCal DECA / PO Box 1440 / Owasso, OK 74055
 - State Career Development Conference (SCDC)
California DECA / PO Box 1440 / Owasso, OK 74055
 - International Career Development Conference (ICDC)
California DECA / PO Box 1440 / Owasso, OK 74055

Registration Changes

- No changes/corrections/additions will be allowed after the change deadline for the respective conference. This is a firm deadline. If a student drops out after this date a student may be substituted

for them in the exact same event(s), but no other changes will be allowed. See the respective Conference Registration Guide for the change deadline.

- No on-site changes will be allowed, only substitutions (in same events). Note that this policy only applies to District CDC's and the State CDC. On-site changes are not allowed for ICDC.
- Any changes, including drops, made after the online registration system closes or that must be manually processed will be subject to a \$10.00 fee.

Refunds

- California DECA maintains a strict NO REFUND policy. Substitutions are allowed.
- Your chapter will be responsible to pay for the number of students you register.
- If students drop out after registration is submitted, the chapter will still need to pay for those students.

Advisor/Chaperone to Student Ratio

- The adult/student ratio set by the California DECA Board of Directors for all in state events is one adult to every fifteen (15) students.
- The ratio for the International Career Development Conference is one adult to every eight (8) students.
- In both cases the first adult MUST be the designated DECA Advisor for the chapter. Additional chaperones must meet the Chaperone Requirements noted below.

Chaperone Requirements

Each chapter is required to have a designated DECA Advisor who will serve as the primary adult responsible for the chapter throughout the event. This individual must be listed as the first adult on the rooming list and must be an official representative of the school.

Any additional chaperones must meet the following requirements:

- Be 21 years of age or older
- Be approved by the school administration to serve in a supervisory capacity
- Be in compliance with all policies and procedures established by their local school or school district

California operates under a local control model in public education, which means that individual school districts have the authority to establish and enforce their own policies regarding student supervision, travel, and participation in extracurricular activities. As such, it is the responsibility of each chapter advisor to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place for student safety, that all adult chaperones are properly vetted and approved, and that the chapter is in full compliance with their school district or ROP requirements.

DECA does not set or enforce local school or district policy related to edibility of chaperones but relies on chapters to ensure they are meeting their own school's expectations. Chapters that fail to meet their district's supervisory requirements may be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from the event.

Our priority is to maintain a safe and supportive environment for all participants. We appreciate the collaboration of chapter advisors in upholding this responsibility.

Alumni

- Chapters attending District Conferences may be required to provide alumni based on the number of members attending. See the specific registration guide for each conference for additional information.

- Chapters attending SCDC are requested to provide alumni to assist with conference operations. Lodging will be provided to alumni approved by the local Advisor and State Management Team to assist. In order to have lodging covered the alumni must complete the required Alumni Registration that is provided by California DECA and distributed to Chapter Advisors, and they must register by the stated deadline.
- Please note that due to the nature of the International Career Development Conference (ICDC); alumni are not needed. If a chapter wants to bring alumni to ICDC to assist with their chapter operations they may do so, subject to the registration procedures outlined in the conference registration packet and at the respective chapter's sole cost. California DECA does not cover any costs (registration, lodging or otherwise) for alumni attending ICDC.

Internet

- While there may be internet and WiFi available within the hotel, convention center, and other areas of the conference; any cost associated with connecting will be at the responsibility of the individual or chapter.
- Most hotel properties provide free wireless internet access within the lobby and most common areas.
- Please note that the hotel may not have the ability to prevent internet charges like other incidentals. Any cost incurred will be billed directly to the chapter. Advisors are encouraged to discuss this with their students and carefully review hotel bills each day of the conference.

Parking

- Parking at conference venues may come at a cost. Chapters should plan and budget accordingly for your chapter's parking as needed (buses, chaperones, alumni). Parking charges are not covered by California DECA.

Testing

- There will be no makeup testing provided for competitive event conferences. Please plan your travel accordingly to ensure that students arrive in time to test at their scheduled time.

Security

- For security reasons, attendees are required to wear the provided lanyards and name badges at all times while attending any CA DECA event. When provided, wristband must also be worn on the wrist for the entirety of the event.
- Access to any dances or social functions will be limited to those who are wearing the required lanyards, name badges, and wrist bands.

Voting Delegates

- Each chapter must identify the names of the two voting delegates who will represent their chapter for State Officer Elections. Voting Delegates will need to be identified for the District CDC's and the State CDC as elections will be held at each of these conferences.
- Please register your Voting Delegates in the online registration system. The Voting Delegate will be a participant type selection. You must select 2 student members.
- Voting Delegates are required to arrive on time to maintain voting privileges, and to stay for the duration for the Annual Business Meeting.

- If your Voting Delegates do not show up by the time the annual business meeting begins at SCDC, your chapter will lose the ability to vote. Voting Delegates must be on time to this meeting.

Substitute Advisor Policy

In rare and limited circumstances where the designated advisor for a chapter is unable to attend a conference with the students from their chapter there are two available options for the chapter. These options are listed below and are the ONLY options available. The Substitute Advisor option should only be used in rare circumstances and cannot be enlisted as the standard approach for conference attendance (e.g. a chapter utilizing the Substitute Advisor Policy for one conference would be acceptable while a chapter attempting to use this policy for all, or a majority, of the conferences they attend would not be acceptable). This policy will be strictly enforced.

- Option 1: If the designated DECA advisor is unable to attend a conference another currently employed and certificated faculty member from the same school may serve as the Substitute Advisor.
- Option 2: If the designated DECA advisor is unable to attend a conference then a substitute advisor from another DECA chapter who is attending the conference can serve as the Substitute Advisor, but only if the substituting advisor is a certificated district employee from the SAME School District and/or ROP. In addition, the advisor of the chapter requesting that a substitute advisor go in their place must certify that doing so does not conflict with their school/district policies/procedures regarding chaperoning of students and will not exceed the required Adult to Student ratio (1 to 15 for in state events and 1 to 8 for out of state).

Scoring Concerns/Grievances Procedure

- Grievances should only be submitted where there has been a perceived error in the scoring process (i.e. a missing score, a judge transcription error, etc.). This process is not intended to address a differing of opinions, a dislike for a judge's personality, comparisons to past results, placement from other conferences, or observations of other competitors.
 - We rely on volunteer judges to assist in our competitive events process. As is the case in our interactions with individuals of all walks of life, we encounter a variety of personalities, opinions, and perspectives amongst our judges. Judging, by its very nature, is a subjective process. Each judge approaches the role based on their own life experience, professional background, and educational perspective.
 - We recognize that this invites variability in how scores are assessed from judge to judge and for that reason we enlist a score factoring model which is explained in greater detail in our Conference Policies & Procedures (see page 6 in the attached).
- All concerns/grievances regarding scoring or competitive events MUST be submitted no later than 7:00 p.m. on the date that is two days after the close of the Conference. For example, if the conference ends on a Sunday, then grievances MUST be submitted by 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday.
- Concerns/grievances should be addressed to the State Director in writing via the Grievance Reporting Form provided in this packet.
- After the grievance reporting deadline outlined in the previous bullet all competitive event outcomes and scores become final and concerns/grievances will not be considered.
- Only grievances submitted by the official Advisor of the chapter will be accepted. Grievances from students, parents, alumni, or others will not be accepted.

- Scanned copies or images of the items of concern (e.g., score sheet, pages of a written project, picture of a presentation board, etc.) must accompany the grievance form.

Score Factoring

- Because we enlist the volunteer support of a variety of judges in our competitive events it is important that chapters, Advisors, and students understand how scoring works in our competitive events program. In most events, because of the quantity of students competing, we need multiple judges to assess student performance and complete a score sheet. To help ensure that there is a fair playing field for all students competing in the event, regardless of which judge they see, we apply statistical factoring to normalize student scores.

Prior to factoring, students who had the “easy” judge - a judge that tends to give high scores - would all end up at the top of their event and therefore be called on stage and receive the awards. Not always necessarily because they were the top students in the event, but because they were scored by the judge that allocated the highest scores. While judges are carefully trained, each judge brings to the competition their own opinions and perceptions on what a certain score means. For some a 75 is a very good and solid score and for others awarding a 95 is how they identify the best students.

After looking at multiple years of scores and winners and comparing the outcomes of the scoring process it was decided, by the Board of Directors, to use statistical analysis and formulas to try to factor out the subjective nature of human scoring. This has been in place in California since 2010. This mathematical factoring of scores to level the playing field has proven effective in normalizing the differences in judge scoring. The student scores, as awarded by their judge, are entered into a computer program. The program works by finding out where on the scale of 0 through 100 a judge tends to score and comparing that with how all judges together tend to score. This then provides the program the information needed to apply a mathematical factoring formula and adjust each student’s individual raw score (normalizing). This adjustment then produces the student's factored score which becomes their official score. Because of this, you can potentially see two different scores on the score reports depending on what report you are viewing. One is the raw score and the other the factored score. It is the factored score that is used to determine winners and bring the students up to the stage.

INTERNATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

ICDC Eligibility

- The top-ranking individuals and teams from the State Career Development Conference will have first choice in competing at ICDC. If those individuals or teams choose not to participate, the competitive seat will be offered to the next ranking competitor/team.
- Students must have attended SCDC (in the same year) to be eligible to attend ICDC in any capacity (competitor, candidate, campaign staff member, leadership academy participant, etc.).
 - ICDC qualifiers in online events (SMG, VBC, challenges, scholarships, SBE) do not have to attend SCDC to be eligible for ICDC.
- Students may only participate in one event at ICDC (and that include leadership academies). If a student qualifies to compete in more than one event, he/she must choose which event he/she will compete in and notify California DECA, using the Intent to Compete Form.

ICDC Qualifiers

- California DECA is allotted six (6) competitive event spots for series events and five (5) competitive event spots for prepared events:
 - Principles of Business Administration Events – 6 per event
 - Team Decision Making Events – 6 teams per event
 - Individual Series Events – 6 per event
 - Personal Financial Literacy – 6 per event
 - Business Operations Research Events – 5 teams per event
 - Project Management Events – 5 teams per event
 - Entrepreneurship Events – 5 teams/individuals (depending on the event) per event
 - Integrated Marketing Campaign – 5 per event
 - Professional Selling Events – 5 per event

Intent to Compete Process

- **The ICDC Intent to Compete process is a binding process.** This is the process whereby Chapter Advisors notify California DECA who, among the qualifiers at the State Conference, will go on to represent California DECA at the International Career Development Conference (ICDC).
- Chapter Advisors should only include on their Intent to Compete form those students who are ready, willing, and able to attend ICDC. Do not place students on this form who “think they want to go to ICDC.” Only place on the Intent to Compete form the names of those students are committed to attending ICDC.
- Chapters who drop students after the Intent to Compete Deadline, but before the Registration Deadline for ICDC, prevent students from having the ICDC experience by holding a slot that is later left vacant. This must not happen. Please plan accordingly and be sure that your students who are on your Intent to Compete form for ICDC are fully committed to attending the conference and will not drop out at a later date.

ICDC Team Substitutions

- For Team Decision and Prepared events: adjustments to teams will be permitted as long as one original team member that competed on the team at SCDC stays on the team for ICDC, (i.e., chapters can add/drop/substitute the rest of the team ... but at least one original team member must remain)

- For VBC and SMG: chapters may drop members of the team as long as at least one original member remains. Chapters cannot add or substitute members of the team.

MEMBERSHIP

Initial Roster Deadline

- The Initial Roster Deadline is November 15th each year. This is the date that your initial membership roster needs to be submitted in the online membership system. Don't forget to "submit" the roster to DECA once you've completed it. This is a common oversight. Many will enter the students into the system but forget to go back and submit their membership.

Members Deadline for Conference Eligibility

- You can continue to add members after the Initial Roster Deadline. As you add members, please note:
 - Don't forget to keep track of where you are in the membership tiers. For example, if you have 24 students and 1 Advisor (Advisors count the same as students for purposes of total membership count) you are in the 1-25 membership tier. If you add another student, you'll have a total of 26 members (25 students and 1 Advisor) which will bump you up to the 26-50 membership tier.
 - A student must be in the membership system and the roster submitted to DECA prior to the registration deadline for any conference they will be attending. For example, if they are going to the District Conference, they need to be a registered member by the District Conference deadline. If they are going to the State Conference, they need to be a registered member by the State Conference deadline.
 - For ICDC, all attending Advisors and students must be **paid** with a visible green "Member" next to their name in the Membership Portal no later than February 15th of the current year. Failure to do so by the California DECA ICDC registration deadline will prevent a chapter from selecting them in the registration system and could result in the student being ineligible to attend ICDC.

Final Membership Deadline

- February 15th of each year is the final membership deadline. Any and all members should be entered into the memberships system and rosters submitted no later than this date each year.

Membership Invoicing

- If members are not entered into the Membership Portal all at once, please be mindful that additional invoices will be generated as you submit and level up to another tier. Chapters will be responsible for each respective invoice.
 - In many instances, an Advisor may unknowingly initially submit themselves when logging in, this will automatically place them in the 1-25 membership tier (\$500), and invoice accordingly for \$500.
 - If the following day, they enter 20 students, they will remain in the same tier with no additional invoice.
 - If the following day, they enter 60 students, that will bump them to the 51-75 membership tier (\$1,500) and generate another invoice for \$1,000; the difference from the first invoice.
- Chapter Affiliation and school site licensing payments are to be paid directly to DECA Inc.

- Checks can be made out and sent to: DECA Inc. / attn: DECA Membership / 1908 Association Drive / Reston, VA 20191
- Payment through credit card can be made directly only on the Membership Portal, under the “Invoice History” tab, and then the red “Pay Invoices” button.
- Once submitted, individuals cannot be deleted, and chapters will be responsible financially for the affiliation tier based on total members.

ONLINE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

LOGGING IN

To access the online registration site, visit www.myctso.com/ca/deca. Log in using the username and password provided to you by California DECA. If you have forgotten your username and/or password, reach out to registration@californiadeca.org for assistance. The first time you login and start a conference registration, the system will prompt you to answer a few onboarding questions. Follow the onscreen steps to complete this one-time setup. After you are finished you will be redirected to your chapter’s registration home page.

SELECT MEMBERS

To get started, you first need to select members from the National DECA membership system. After getting to the registration home page, click **REGISTRATION** at the top. Then on the left click **SELECT MEMBERS**. From this screen you will see all National DECA members assigned to your chapter who have not yet been registered as an attendee.

To register a member, click the checkbox to the left of their name. A dropdown will then appear for you to assign a default role to this person. In some cases, you may be asked to update their T-Shirt size if those will be provided at the conference.

For large chapters, it is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** to save the progress as you select members. If you navigate away from this page without saving, your changes will be lost. At the bottom right click on the **SAVE PROGRESS** button. This action will register all selected members as attendees.

Once done selecting members, click **SAVE & RETURN TO DASHBORD** or **SAVE & EDIT EVENTS** depending on which step you would like to advance to.

EDIT ATTENDEE DETAILS

After selecting members to attend the conference, you can now edit additional details, like registering them in an event. To do this, click **REGISTRATION** at the top and then **EDIT ATTENDEES** on the left. From here click **EDIT** next to an attendee to reveal additional details. It’s here you will add events and conference add-ons.

To register an attendee in an event, click **ADD** under the “Registered Events” section. This will reveal a pop-up where you can select an event. If it’s a team event, you can build one in this same window by selecting other attendees.

To remove an attendee from your registration, you first need to remove all events they are registered in. Then, click the **DELETE** button to the right of their name.

ASSIGN ATTENDEES TO HOUSING

If you are attending a conference that requires housing be submitted through the online registration site, you can click on **HOUSING** at the top.

To add a room, click **ADD ROOM**. In the pop-up, fill in the values and then add attendees who will be assigned to the same room. If a combination is not valid an error message will show.

Each chapter must select one advisor to serve as the primary hotel contact. This individual will be the first point of contact as questions or issues come in from the hotel or security. To select this individual, click **PRIMARY CONTACT** on the left and then select a person from the dropdown. Fill out any contact details that are missing.

If you want to see any attendees who have not been assigned to a room, click on **UNASSIGNED ATTENDEES** on the left.

VALIDATE & SUBMIT REGISTRATION

After you have completed registration and are ready to submit, click on **REGISTRATION** at the top and then **VALIDATE & SUBMIT** on the left. From this screen, run validation by clicking **VALIDATE REGISTRATION** to confirm all rules pass. If any areas need attention, the page will display an error message. Click on each error to see more details to resolve the issue.

If all validations pass, click **SUBMIT REGISTRATION**. You will receive an email confirmation after everything has been submitted successfully.

If you need an invoice or want to see a list of all events that students are registered in, click on **REPORTS** at the top.

CALIFORNIA DECA EVENT LIMITATIONS

Please carefully review the event listings. The “Series Events” are listed first in this document and then the “Prepared Events”. Students may choose one event from each. Students may only participate in a total of two events (one Series Event and one Prepared Event).

If both events that the student is competing in require an exam it is best that they choose two events that take the same exam. This will make the conference experience much easier for them. However, if they have strong desires to do so they can choose events that take tests from different clusters. We ask that you limit this as much as possible.

Series Events – Principles of Business Administration

These events include a 100-question multiple choice exam and one role play. These are individual events.

Students may participate in 1 (one) Series Event at the District or State Conference.

EVENT	EXAM	CODE
Principles of Business Management and Administration	Business Administration Core Exam	PBM
Principles of Entrepreneurship	Business Administration Core Exam	PEN
Principles of Finance	Business Administration Core Exam	PFN
Principles of Hospitality and Tourism	Business Administration Core Exam	PHT
Principles of Marketing	Business Administration Core Exam	PMK

Series Events - Individual

These events include a 100-question multiple choice exam and two role plays. These are individual events.

Students may participate in 1 (one) Series Event at the District or State Conference.

EVENT	EXAM	CODE
Accounting Applications	Finance Cluster Exam	ACT
Apparel & Accessories Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam	AAM
Automotive Services Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam	ASM
Business Finance	Finance Cluster Exam	BFS
Business Services Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam	BSM
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship Exam	ENT
Food Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam	FMS
Hotel & Lodging Management	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam	HLM
Human Resources Management	Business Management and Administration Cluster Exam	HRM
Marketing Communications	Marketing Cluster Exam	MCS
Quick Serve Restaurant Management	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam	QSRM
Restaurant & Food Service Management	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam	RFSM
Retail Merchandising	Marketing Cluster Exam	RMS
Sports and Entertainment Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam	SEM

Series Events - Team Decision Making

These events all require 2 people. There is a 100-question multiple choice exam and one 15-minute case study. For the District and State Conference these events are considered Series events.

Students may participate in 1 (one) Series Event at the District or State Conference.

EVENT	EXAM	CODE
Business Law & Ethics	Business Management and Administration Cluster Exam	BLTDM
Buying & Merchandising	Marketing Cluster Exam	BTDM
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship Exam	ETDM
Financial Services	Finance Cluster Exam	FTDM
Hospitality Services	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam	HTDM
Marketing Management	Marketing Cluster Exam	MTDM
Sports & Entertainment Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam	STDM
Travel & Tourism	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam	TTDM

Series Events – Personal Financial Literacy

This event includes a 100-question multiple choice exam and one role-play scenario. This is an individual event.

Students may participate in 1 (one) Series Event at the District or State Conference.

EVENT	EXAM	CODE
Personal Financial Literacy	Financial Literacy Exam	PFL

Prepared Events - Integrated Marketing Campaigns

These events are team events (1-3 members) and include a 100-question multiple choice exam, 20 page pitch deck, and a presentation.

Students are allowed to participate in 1 (one) Prepared Event at the District or State Conference, and it may be paired with a Series Event (e.g., students may only do a total of two events)

EVENT	EXAM	CODE
Integrated Marketing Campaign - Product	Marketing Cluster Exam	IMCP
Integrated Marketing Campaign - Service	Marketing Cluster Exam	IMCS
Integrated Marketing Campaign – Event	Marketing Cluster Exam	IMCE

Prepared Events - Professional Selling Events

These events are individual events (1 student) and include a 100-question multiple choice exam and a presentation.

Students are allowed to participate in 1 (one) Prepared Event at the District or State Conference, and it may be paired with a Series Event (e.g., students may only do a total of two events)

EVENT	EXAM	CODE
Financial Consulting Event	Finance Cluster Exam	FCE
Hospitality and Tourism Professional Selling	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam	HTPS
Professional Selling	Marketing Cluster Exam	PSE

Prepared Events - Entrepreneurship Events

These events are team events (1-3 members) and include a written entry or pitch deck (check guidelines).
Students are allowed to participate in 1 (one) Prepared Event at the District or State Conference, and it may be paired with a Series Event (e.g., students may only do a total of two events)

EVENT	CODE
Innovation Plan	EIP
Start-Up Business Plan	ESB
Franchise Business Plan	EFB
Independent Business Plan	EIB
Business Growth Plan	EBG
International Business Plan	IBP

Prepared Events - Business Operations Research Events

These events are team events (1-3 members) and include a written entry.
Students are allowed to participate in 1 (one) Prepared Event at the District or State Conference, and it may be paired with a Series Event (e.g., students may only do a total of two events)

EVENT	CODE
Business Services	BOR
Buying and Merchandising	BMOR
Finance	FOR
Hospitality and Tourism	HTOR
Sports and Entertainment	SEOR

NOTE: PROJECT MANAGEMENT EVENTS - NOT OFFERED AT DISTRICT CDCs

Prepared Events - Project Management Events (SCDC Only)

These events are team events (1-3 members) and include a written entry.
Students are allowed to participate in 1 (one) Prepared Event at the District or State Conference, and it may be paired with a Series Event (e.g., students may only do a total of two events)

EVENT	CODE
Business Solution Project	PMBS
Career Development Project	PMCD
Community Awareness Project	PMCA
Community Giving Project	PMCG
Financial Literacy Project	PMFL
Sales Project	PMSP

ADVISOR DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES

As leaders and teachers of young professionals it is important that we prepare our students and set the proper tone and standard for their participation in any DECA event. Please carefully review the California DECA School Site License Agreement (separate document). This document covers all of the Advisor roles and duties and in signing and submitting, you agree that you will abide by those guidelines at all conferences you and your chapter attend.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN CHAPTER ADMINISTRATION

Due to the size and structure of California DECA administrative requests will only be accepted from the registered Chapter Advisor. Students (whether a Chapter Officer or otherwise) should not contact California DECA or DECA Inc. to address administrative matters. This includes, but is not limited to, administrative items such as: registering for a conference, submitting hotel registration or working with hotels, paying registration fees or hotel fees, adding/dropping a student or changing an event for a student, changes to the DECA Inc. membership system, payment questions and follow-up, concerns regarding State Officer Elections, etc. Students must work through their Chapter Advisor for all administrative needs. Only requests from the registered Chapter Advisor will be accepted by California DECA state staff and DECA, Inc. staff. If students do contact these parties for administrative purposes, they will be directed back to their registered Chapter Advisor.

CTE PATHWAY REQUIREMENT

The California Department of Education (CDE) requires that all students participating in California DECA must be enrolled in a pathway (or have taken all of the courses available in the pathway) in one of the following Career and Technical Education (CTE) areas: Marketing, Business Management and Administration, Hospitality and Tourism and Finance. All chapters must abide by this policy.

A CTE class includes coursework that is aligned to the Anchor and Career Pathway standards of the California Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards. The California State Plan for Career Technical Education specifically states the criteria for CTE: curriculum is explicitly designed to prepare students for employment, whether after postsecondary education or training or directly after high school; over 50 percent of the curriculum content is career knowledge and skills; and curriculum is directly informed and validated by industry.

LOCAL CHAPTERS PLANNING EVENTS

If a local DECA Chapter is planning a DECA event that will include other DECA chapters or participation by attendees outside of their local school community, these events must be approved in writing by California DECA. Any request for approval must come from the local Chapter Advisor. Students cannot submit requests for approval. Because these events trigger insurance, liability, and other important considerations they must be preapproved. This policy is applicable to any local/regional/statewide events that involve two (2) or more DECA Chapters.

USE OF POOLS AND FITNESS FACILITIES

California DECA recognizes that individual schools and school districts maintain their own policies regarding student use of hotel swimming pools and fitness centers. As a local control state, California places responsibility for such decisions with each participating school. Accordingly, California DECA does not regulate or supervise student use of hotel pools or fitness facilities during conferences.

Chapter advisors are responsible for knowing and enforcing their school or district policies related to these amenities, including but not limited to adult supervision requirements, restrictions on usage, lifeguard presence, and the collection of signed parent/guardian permission slips. If a school permits its students to use these facilities, it is the advisor's duty to ensure that all necessary precautions, permissions, and supervision protocols are in place in accordance with their local guidelines.

By attending a California DECA event, each chapter agrees that its advisor(s) will communicate their school's policies to students and ensure that those policies are followed. California DECA assumes no responsibility or liability for student use of hotel amenities outside of scheduled conference programming.

PREPARED EVENTS - ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PRIOR WORK USE POLICY

All competitors in Prepared Events must thoroughly review and adhere to the Written Event Statement of Assurances and Academic Integrity Form as outlined in the DECA Guide. In particular, please note:

- Item 1: The contents of this entry are the result of my work or, in the case of a team project, the work of current members of this DECA chapter.
- Item 2: No part of this entry has previously been entered in competition.

To maintain fairness and uphold academic integrity, California DECA and DECA Inc. strictly prohibit the wholesale reuse of work submitted for competition in prior years. While it may not be practical to define every possible example of reused content, the following guidelines are intended to help clarify how this policy should be interpreted and applied.

Prohibited practices include:

- Copying or minimally editing text, paragraphs, tables, or other written content from a previous year's entry and presenting it as new work
- Using a prior entry as a "template" by updating only facts, data, or names, but leaving the majority of the written intact and unchanged
- Relying heavily on prior entries without meaningful revision, new research, or updated analysis

Acceptable practices include:

- Drawing general inspiration from past projects (e.g., topic selection or formatting ideas)
- Expanding upon a written project within the same academic year, by the same competitor(s), as they advance from one level of competition to the next
- Conducting new research and original writing on a similar topic

Chapter Advisors are responsible for establishing appropriate safeguards to ensure student work meets ethical and competitive standards. Chapter advisors must verify that each submission is original and complies fully with DECA's integrity requirements.

Violations of this policy may result in significant penalties, including disqualification from competition.

PREPARED EVENTS – COMPLETION

Students competing in Prepared Events can only compete at the District CDC if their written entry is substantially complete (meaning it should be at least 80% complete in terms of content, quality, and depth). While we recognize that students are still working on their written entries at the time of the District Conferences, it is imperative that we respect the time and expertise of our judges and present to them for review/judging content that is of a reasonable quality. Therefore, written entries that are submitted for competition which are not substantially complete will not be judged and the students will be removed from the event. Please work with your students to ensure that their written entries are substantially complete.

GRIEVANCE REPORT

Concerns about event management, judging or competition results can only be communicated by the registered DECA Advisor to the State Director using this form. All concerns/grievances regarding scoring or competitive events MUST be submitted no later than 7:00 p.m. on the date that is two days after the close of the Conference. (For example; if the conference ends on a Sunday, then grievances MUST be submitted by 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday.) The Board of Directors and State Director have the final say and right to deny the grievance or obtain more information about the grievance from any source. After the grievance reporting deadline outlined in the previous bullet all competitive event outcomes and scores become final and concerns/grievances will not be considered.

To process a grievance all of the following must be done:

1. Grievances should only be submitted where there has been a perceived error in the scoring process (i.e. a missing score, a transcription error, etc.). This process is not intended to address a differing of opinions, a dislike for a judge’s personality, comparisons to past results, placement from other conferences, or observations of other competitors.
2. Those in question or involved in the grievance may not be approached directly by the Advisor, student or anyone connected to the chapter (i.e.: a parent, Advisor, chaperone, or student should never approach a judge to confront them about a result, process, or score).
3. Do not approach a student from another school regarding the grievance.
4. Remain professional in your actions and words involving the grievance.
5. Actions and/or conduct which are unprofessional or not in keeping with the conference code of conduct are grounds for dismissal of the grievance.
6. The grievance must be submitted to the State Director by the registered Chapter Advisor. Grievances submitted by students, parents, judges, or anyone else will not be accepted.
7. Scanned copies or images of the items of concern (e.g., score sheet, pages of a written project, picture of a presentation board, etc.) must accompany this grievance form.

Date: _____

Chapter Name: _____

Event: _____

Contestant’s Name: _____

Person Filing Grievance: _____

Describe the incident in question and your preference for action to be taken. Please be specific.

Chapter Advisor Signature

Date

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Insert Date]

CONTACT:

[Name of Chapter Advisor or Public Relations Officer]

[Phone Number] | [Email Address]

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[Name of High School] Students Selected to Attend [Name of Conference]

[City, State] — Students from [Name of High School] will represent their community at the upcoming [Name of Conference], to be held in [City/Location] on [Conference Dates]. The following students have earned the opportunity to attend: [List student names].

The conference is part of DECA, an international student organization that prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management. With more than 290,000 members worldwide, DECA connects classroom learning to real-world business experiences while promoting leadership, civic responsibility, and career readiness.

At this year's [Conference Name], students will compete in a variety of events designed to simulate real business challenges. Competitions include role-plays, presentations, and case studies evaluated by industry professionals who volunteer as judges. These events give students the chance to showcase their knowledge, apply critical thinking skills, and gain valuable feedback from business leaders.

"[Insert quote from Advisor or Student, e.g., We are proud of our students for their dedication and the hard work they've put into preparing for this conference. This experience allows them to grow as leaders and represent our school on a larger stage.]"

DECA's competitive events program directly supports the organization's mission to prepare students for college and careers. By engaging in authentic business scenarios and competitions, students develop the confidence, skills, and experiences needed for success beyond high school.

For more information about [Name of High School] DECA, or to learn how you can support the chapter, please contact [Advisor's Name] at [School Phone Number] or visit [School Website if available].