



Safety Tips for DECA Trips

One of the benefits of DECA membership is the opportunity to travel in professional business style. Here are some tips to ensure a successful trip.

Before You Leave

- > As you prepare for your trip, ask yourself the following questions:
 - > Where am I going?
 - > What is the weather forecast?
 - > What type of conference is it?
 - > Do I have any special responsibilities?
 - > What activities are planned?
 - > How many days will I be there?
- > Only pack necessary items, especially if you will be traveling via airplane. Remember, that you are in effect in school and all school rules still apply.
- > Discuss financial commitments you will have with your chapter advisor. You should discuss a plan for your money with your advisor so you do not have excess cash on hand. Do not flash your cash.
- > Be sure to have photo identification.
- > Provide your parents with the name and phone number of the hotel as well as information from your chapter advisor.

On The Trip

- > Alert your chapter advisor of your whereabouts, and always know your chapter advisor's plans. Always be able to contact your chapter advisor.
- > Keep the name and contact information of another chapter advisor in case of emergency.
- > Keep the hotel's front desk phone number and address with you at all times in case of emergency.
- > Keep your hotel room number a secret. The fewer people that know it, the better.
- > Wear your name badge only for DECA events, and remove your name badge if you leave the hotel or conference area.
- > When using mass transit, go to the middle of the car so other passengers can board.
- > When waiting for an elevator, stand back from doors to allow elevator occupants to debark.
- > Travel in groups. You should travel with an adult after nightfall.
- > Be in your room at curfew. Your advisor will be checking.

Be DECA!

When you're traveling, keep in mind that you are representing DECA.

- > **Promote DECA.**
Be prepared to explain what DECA is with poise and enthusiasm.
- > **Professionalism.**
Behave in a courteous and respectful manner that reflects positively on you, your school, your advisors, and DECA.
- > **Attend and Be On Time.** Remember, your attendance is required at most sessions. Go over your personal schedule with your advisor. Represent Missouri DECA with pride by being on time and staying for the duration of the program.
- > **Dress for Success.**
Be sure that your wardrobe meets the DECA Dress Code.
- > **Tip for Service.**
Remember that the rule of thumb is to tip 15-20% for meals with wait service.

ALWAYS BE ALERT

- > Be aware of your surroundings and use caution. If something seems out of the ordinary, alert your chapter advisor or the authorities immediately.
- > Use common sense and don't put yourselves in danger.
- > Don't socialize with people who are not part of the conference, and especially don't give out any information such as your hotel information.

Conferences present opportunities and challenges for you and your students. You may wish to use the following helpful hints to prepare your students for the conference experience.

BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

- 1. Schedule a meeting with the parents, students, and administrators.**
 - > Provide a conference information sheet with hotel information. Review the Comprehensive Consent Form and Code of Conduct. Discuss consequences.
 - > Review the importance of representing their family, school, and chapter in a professional manner. For parents not able to attend, follow-up with a phone call and a mailing.
 - > Distribute the tentative agenda. Use this opportunity to show how students are kept very busy with educational and fun activities. Talk about the ways the students prepare for the conference.
 - > Explain the dress code.
 - > Let the administration congratulate the students for accepting the opportunity to participate.
- 2. Submit a press release.**
 - > Make this a positive experience for the entire community.
- 3. Invite the principal to come into the classroom.**
 - > He/she should meet the students who will be attending the conference. Let the students present the code of conduct they have signed and will practice at the conference. The principal can help reinforce the importance of professional behavior.
 - > They should also share ways they are preparing for the event.
- 4. Meet one last time before leaving for the conference.**
 - > Review professional expectations. Review the conference program. Answer last minute questions. Reinforce your belief in them and their abilities.
- 5. Discuss emergency procedures and develop a plan with your administrators.**
 - > You never know what's going to happen — and things can happen to anyone. Be sure you have your administrator's contact information and know school policies and procedures.
 - > Bring a copy of your school's activities handbook.
 - > Bring your students' signed Comprehensive Consent Forms.

AT THE CONFERENCE

- 1. Conduct a chapter meeting after registering in your hotel. The agenda should include:**
 - > Collect your students' cell phone numbers.
 - > Hand out programs and conference materials.
 - > Go over the schedule of events. Have each student mark in their program where they are to be throughout the conference. Advise them of your location during the conference.
 - > Go over the physical layout of the hotels.
 - > Review the Code of Conduct and dress code.
 - > Build on their excitement and enthusiasm and reinforce your belief in them. Encourage them to meet delegates from other chapters.
- 2. Establish procedures for students to check in with you during the conference.**
 - > This is vital! You can help eliminate student frustrations. It's important that you ask your students how they are doing. Be positive and supportive. Keep your eyes open for potential problems.
 - > Let your students know where you will be, too!
- 3. Enforce curfew.**
 - > Make sure students are in their own rooms. You have a responsibility to your students and their parents to see that your students are in the correct room. Curfew applies to all students!
- 4. Sit with your students during the general sessions and other special functions.**
 - > Create a "team" spirit for your chapter. Even the "best of students" are capable of "acting up."
- 5. Be visible.**
 - > Drop in and check on your students. "Count heads" at the specials sessions and at curfew. Review the day's activities and what activities are scheduled the next day.
- 6. Meet problems head-on in a positive manner.**
 - > Don't let things get out of hand. Do your part TACTFULLY. They are all of our students!

AFTER THE CONFERENCE

- 1. Congratulate your students for their professionalism and participation at the conference.**
- 2. Send a letter to parents expressing your appreciation for their support.**
- 3. Follow-up with the principal, other administrators and school board members with a student presentation.**
- 4. Submit a follow-up press release with chapter pictures and student comments.**