



## QUALIFICATIONS AND PROCEDURES

### **I. CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. Must be classified as a high school sophomore or junior as of February 1, 2026, and not eligible for a high school diploma before May/June 2027.
2. Must be the son, daughter, or legal ward of a residential member of North Central Electric Cooperative, and living in a home served by the cooperative.
3. Must be willing to submit a health and medical authorization form, along with a parental permission form, if declared a winner.

### **II. SELECTION PROCEDURES:**

1. Youth Tour winners are selected by evaluation of the information included on the application form and in the written essay. The 2026 application can be downloaded and completed from the cooperative website [www.ncelec.org/youth-tour](http://www.ncelec.org/youth-tour).  
**Applications and materials must be received in the North Central Electric Cooperative office by 4 p.m. on February 13, 2026.**
2. Candidates will be evaluated on the following:
  - Personal Achievement and School & Community Activities
  - Demonstrated Leadership (activities, offices held, etc.)
  - Cooperative Knowledge & Written Essay
3. Up to two candidates will be selected to represent North Central Electric Cooperative on the **Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., June 14-20, 2026**. Find more information on this all-expenses-paid trip at [www.ncelec.org/youth-tour](http://www.ncelec.org/youth-tour).
4. Candidate(s) representing North Central Electric Cooperative are strongly encouraged to compete during the Youth Tour for election to represent Ohio on the National Rural Electric Association (NRECA) Youth Leadership Council. Well-qualified, well-prepared candidates who are friendly, outgoing, and positive have an excellent chance of being selected by their fellow students for this additional honor. Only one representative from each state is elected to the council.



# YOUTH TOUR ESSAY

## **DISCOVERING THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE**

### **What is the Cooperative Difference?**

Think about how your local electric cooperative differs from other businesses, especially other utilities, in its structure, philosophy, and community involvement.

### **Some things to think about are:**

- Who owns the business?
- How are important business decisions made, and who makes them?
- How do the owners voice their concerns and opinions?
- Who benefits from the service?
- Who benefits financially from any excess revenue?
- What are the principles that make cooperatives unique?
- What is the primary mission of electric cooperative utilities?

Youth Tour winners are selected by evaluation of the information included in the application and the essay. Essays are judged on how clearly the opinions and ideas are expressed in the applicant's own words. The Online Orientation course located at [www.ohioec.org/orientation](http://www.ohioec.org/orientation) and the North Central Electric website may be used as resource tools for essays.

### **In a one page or more essay, answer one of the following questions:**

1. What are the biggest energy issues that your generation will face?
2. How would you expect to benefit from the Youth Tour experience in your future?
3. What cooperative core value can improve your community the most?
4. How has your electric cooperative improved the living conditions in your home, or in your life?
5. What do you perceive as the greatest problem facing the electric utility industry today?



## **APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

- ✓ **COMPLETED APPLICATION**
- ✓ **ONE PAGE ESSAY**
- ✓ **COPY OF OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT**
- ✓ **SIGNED LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

**Applications must be received in the NCE office by 4 p.m. Monday, February 13, 2026.**

**Please mail or deliver to the cooperative at:  
Attn: Youth Tour Program  
North Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
350 Stump Pike Road, P.O. Box 475  
Attica, Ohio 44807**