

Colorado 4-H Youth Development Policies 2011-12

This publication is a summary of state level policies for the Colorado 4-H Youth Development Program. This publication will be reviewed annually by the Colorado 4-H Roundtable.

This policy manual addresses topics usually associated with delivery of 4-H programs in the organized club setting. However, many items may also pertain to other 4-H delivery methods. The seven 4-H delivery methods include organized clubs, school enrichment, special interest/short term programs, school-aged child care, camping, instructional television/web and individual study. More information can be found on our web site at:

<http://www.4h.colostate.edu/>.

These policies are minimum requirements that apply to all 4-H programs. Counties may have stricter policies.

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Colorado 4-H Vision

A world in which youth and adults learn, grow, and work together.

Colorado 4-H Mission

4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential by working and learning in partnership with caring adults.

Organization and Administration

The Cooperative Extension System (CES) was established when the U.S. Congress passed the Smith-Lever Act in 1914. CES educational programs are centered in the land-grant university in each state. Major program areas are agriculture, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, natural resources, and community development. Colorado State University is the land-grant institution responsible for the administration of the Extension program in Colorado. The State Extension director is ultimately responsible for the administration of all Extension programs. Administration of the 4-H program is delegated to the State 4-H Program Leader. Funding for CSU Extension faculty and support staff is provided by federal, state, and county sources.

4-H Membership/Age

4-H age is the age of the individual on December 31 of the current 4-H year. The 4-H years runs from October 1 to September 30.

- Cloverbud: 5-7 years old
- Junior member: 8-10 years old
- Intermediate member: 11-13 years old
- Senior member: 14-18 years old

Requirements to Join 4-H

- Be of the appropriate age as listed previously
- Complete 4-H member enrollment form
- Enroll in at least one 4-H project per year
- Sign a 4-H member Code of Conduct form
- Pay state and local 4-H fees (scholarships may be available based on need)

4-H Project Completion Requirements

- Participate in a demonstration or other speech-arts presentation
- Participate in a community service activity
- Complete any county level requirements such as a record book, exhibit, etc.

Requirements for 4-H Clubs

- Club consists of at least five members
- Have a local leader guide the club
- Clubs must have officers, a constitution, and bylaws
- Have a written plan of activities
- Hold regular meetings
- Conduct or participate in an achievement event
- Apply for and receive a club charter

Additional Requirements for 4-H Clubs and Associated Organizations

- All 4-H groups with any type of bank account will receive and report the Employee Identification Number (EIN) associated with those accounts to the county Extension office.
- All 4-H clubs, councils, associations, foundations, etc. that use the 4-H name and emblem, will complete a Colorado 4-H Organization Financial Report and submit it to the county Extension office on an annual basis.

- Will comply with federal, state, and local requirements for non-profit, educational program status.
- All 4-H groups are required by law to submit an annual Affirmative Action report and be open for membership to all youth of eligible age regardless of race, color, gender, national origin or disability.
- All 4-H groups which dissolve will disperse remaining funds to a recognized 4-H organization.

4-H Events/Chaperons

- All participants at overnight 4-H events must have a current health form and code of conduct.
- Staffing (adult chaperons, agents, etc.) of events will meet the following ratios:

Age of Youth	# of youth	Minimum # of adults
6 - 7	6	1
8 - 10	8	1
11 - 13	10	1
14+	12	1

Child Protection

- Extension staff and adult and youth volunteers are expected to report suspected or observed child abuse or neglect. The person who has observed the behavior makes the report.
- When there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect, it must be reported within 24 hours.
- Individuals reporting in good faith are provided immunity from civil or criminal liability.

Alcohol

- The Colorado 4-H Youth Development Program has no tolerance for the possession or use of alcohol or other illegal drugs at youth events. 4-H prohibits the unlawful distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of controlled substances, illegal drugs, and alcohol by youth or adults.

- Searches of personal rooms, vehicles and belongings may occur and law enforcement will be called if necessary.

4-H Driving Policy

- Youth may not drive passengers to out-of-county events without written permission from the parents of the driver and passengers.
- Youth who drive to an event must receive permission from the 4-H agent or adult in charge to continue use of the vehicle during the event.
- All drivers must be in compliance with State of Colorado laws, including but not limited to: a valid driver's license, adequate insurance and seat belt use. Furthermore, it is expected that any vehicle used to transport 4-H members is maintained so that it is "safe and reliable" for the conditions, weather and distance in which it is to be driven.

4-H Member in Good Standing

- Participation in certain county, state regional and national events is limited to those members who are in "good standing" with their local 4-H club and county. This includes abiding by the 4-H Code of Conduct, meeting deadlines, attending a majority of club and project meetings, and complete at least one project.

Regional and National 4-H Events

- Youth may attend a regional or national 4-H event/conference/contest only once per qualifying activity.
- Youth must be members in good standing.
- Participants must be certified as official participants by the State 4-H office.

4-H Name and Emblem

Only 4-H clubs, enrolled 4-H members and leaders may use the 4-H name and emblem (the 4-H Clover).

Other uses must be authorized by the State 4-H Program Leader.

Volunteers

The volunteer leader is the heart of the 4-H program. A leader serves in a multitude of roles. These range from working at the club level to supervising other volunteers at the county, regional, or state level. Formally organized groups of volunteers and Extension agents serve in advisory roles to administrators. Their counsel is sought in determining priorities and content for program development. They assist with carrying out the 4-H mission.

The purpose of the 4-H program is positive youth development. All decisions and actions carried out on behalf of the 4-H program should keep this goal in mind at all times. Negative or abusive treatment of youth, by staff or volunteers, will not be tolerated. Even though adult volunteers are an essential part of the 4-H program, the focus of the program is at all times on positive youth development.

All 4-H Volunteers will:

- fill out a volunteer application form, including references.
- undergo a national background check.
- complete and sign a 4-H leader enrollment form on an annual basis.
- complete a face-to-face, on-line or self-study orientation to 4-H.
- comply with federal, state, and local reporting and accountability requirements, including 501(c)3 non-profit, fiscal, EEO/Affirmative Action, etc.
- serve at the request of CSU Extension and that request can be withdrawn at anytime for any or no reason.
- All volunteers absent from 4-H for one year or longer will be required to re-apply and complete all new volunteer requirements.
- All volunteers will comply with the 4-H Code of Conduct.
- Authorized volunteers are protected from liability under the Governmental Immunity Act (24-10-101CRS et seq) and the Risk Management Act (24-30-1502CRS et seq). Liability protection is provided only for actions within the scope of responsibility

and as long as such actions are not willful and wanton. The performance of any “job” or in any position must be for the benefit of, at the request of, and under the supervision of the state.

- Transfer of a volunteer leader from one county to another requires approval from both counties.

Independent Membership

The 4-H Youth Development Program is an opportunity for CSU Extension to provide an educational environment for the positive development of diverse youth to enable them to realize their full potential. The 4-H club is the foundation for this environment, and potential members are strongly encouraged to use all of their resources in an attempt to find a club compatible to their educational needs, life-skill development and family situation. However, this may not always be possible. Therefore, the following set of criteria is used to determine candidacy of individual youth for independent membership in county 4-H Youth Development programs. Each request for independent membership will be reviewed on an individual basis by professional staff members of the local CSU Extension office and/or by the appropriate county committee. Also, county level 4-H programs can opt to not allow any independent memberships. Reasons for independent membership include but are not limited to:

- living outside a 25-mile (one-way) driving distance of an existing 4-H club
- lack of transportation to 4-H club meetings due to personal circumstances (including parental health or the work schedules of parent(s) or guardian(s))
- personal safety or health of potential member
- irreconcilable conflicts with available 4-H clubs

Requirements for county 4-H independent members:

- Submit application and written plan of work including learning objectives of what the member is to accomplish in his/her project work. The plan of work must include a community service project.
- Written reports will be required from the member on specific dates as set by the county program.
- An on-site visit may be conducted by a local CSU Extension agent with proper notification of the independent member.
- The independent member and his/her family will abide by all county and state 4-H Youth Development policies and rules applicable to members of the 4-H Youth Development organization.
- Independent memberships will be reviewed annually to determine whether conditions still exist to qualify the members for this membership classification.
- Members or families not abiding by these policies will forfeit the opportunity to participate as independent members in the specific county 4-H Youth Development program.
- A parent or guardian must enroll as a 4-H Youth Development leader and participate in the county leader qualification program.
- Written approval by the county Extension offices in both counties is required to facilitate the transfer.
- When a situation exists that necessitates change of residence in mid-year, state and local 4-H fees will be assessed in both counties.
- Should a county Extension program close, 4-H members residing in that county will not be allowed to join 4-H in another county unless they have been enrolled in another county's 4-H program prior to the closure of the Extension office in the county of their residence.

Cloverbuds

It is neither the intent nor the objective of the 4-H Cloverbuds program to duplicate the 4-H member experiences that are designed for other youth, nor to create a "mini-4-H" concept. While the 4-H Cloverbuds program is a component of the overall 4-H Youth Development program and 4-H Cloverbud members are recognized as 4-H members for the purposes of enrollment, they are considered to be in a special membership category with regard to program and policy. As a result, the 4-H Cloverbuds program is fundamentally different than general membership in 4-H.

Purpose of the 4-H Cloverbuds Program:

The overall purpose of the 4-H Cloverbuds program is to foster the development of life skills that are essential for the cognitive, social, emotional and physical maturation of Kindergarten through 3rd graders by providing a unique educational opportunity. Children in these grades are a distinct audience for 4-H, with unique learning characteristics and developmental needs that are different from older children and youth served through 4-H membership. As a result, the 4-H Cloverbuds program is designed with specific educational objectives and program policies focused on the 5- to 7-year old child.

Participation, safety, personal development, learning and fun are the highest priorities in

4-H Membership in a County Other than the County of Residence

Youth participate in 4-H by belonging to a 4-H club, or any recognized unit of 4-H participation, usually in his or her county of residence. The following policy is observed when this is not the case:

- Youth may join and enroll in projects in only one county at a time.
- Youth may participate as a 4-H member in only one county fair per enrollment year, and exhibit a given project in only one county per enrollment year.
- Membership can be transferred from one county to another when the family moves, when the 4-H member lives part of the year in one county and part of the year in another county, or as other situations arise.

providing 4-H Cloverbuds programs. The policies, guidelines for the Cloverbuds program outlined in this document seek to ensure that 4-H Cloverbuds members remain safe and have positive, developmentally appropriate experiences in 4-H. State and county programs that offer the 4-H Cloverbuds program are expected to utilize age appropriate programmatic goals, policies, curriculum and cooperation-based methods to give feedback and recognition.

Components of the Cloverbuds Program

4-H Cloverbuds programs are activity-focused and not project-focused and built on cooperative learning, rather than competitive activities. 4-H Cloverbuds members participate in occasional, non-competitive, sampler-type, age-appropriate, properly supervised events or activities sponsored or conducted by 4-H groups. 4-H Cloverbuds members do not participate in the ongoing, planned series of activities.

The primary difference between a 4-H Cloverbuds activity and a 4-H project is that a Cloverbuds member engages in varied activities which focus on developing a specific skill or concept utilized in completing the activity rather than focusing on a long-term planned course of study in a specific project (subject) area. As a result, 4-H Cloverbuds members should not have ongoing projects, of any kind – including animal projects – nor should they participate as competitive exhibitors with animals – large or small, because within the 4-H program, exhibits are intended to showcase the culmination of a long-term project.

In general, the handling of animals (large or small) requires discipline and motor skills that have yet to be fully developed in most children in the K-2 age range and when coupled with the unpredictable behavior of animals, does not provide the optimal safe educational environment.

4-H Cloverbuds members that have engaged in a group activity may *exhibit or showcase* in a noncompetitive event, or can feature other items from their group activities. However, 4-H Cloverbuds members are not eligible to receive premium funds as a result of exhibition. 4-H

Cloverbuds members may receive participatory ribbons but may not receive regular competitive purple, blue, red or white 4-H ribbons.

In addition to the educational focus, 4-H Cloverbuds programs also require additional adult supervision, and do not conduct formal business meetings or elect officers. 4-H Cloverbuds clubs handle their finances differently than clubs or older children, with the majority of funding issues handled by the adults.

Animal Project Related Policies

Please note that violation of these requirements may result in disqualification of all livestock projects for that year.

- **Premises Registration of 4-H Livestock Projects** – Colorado 4-H policy on premises registration with the Colorado Department of Agriculture is as follows:

All 4-H members with livestock and horse projects will be required to have a completed, signed, and approved “Animal Care and Housing Form for Colorado 4-H Livestock Projects” on file at their county Extension office at time of enrollment. It is highly recommended that Colorado 4-H livestock project animals (beef and dairy cattle, sheep, swine, goat, poultry, llama and horse) have a premises registration with the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

- **Helmet Policy for 4-H Horse Projects** A certified equestrian helmet with safety harness fastened in place is required in over fences classes and gymkhana events, activities and practice sessions. Gymkhana generally refers to horseback speed events (timed or un-timed) that do not use livestock. Events that usually fall in this category of events include, but are not limited to: barrel racing, pole bending, keyhole race, stake race, rescue race, pony express race, etc. Events that are not

intended to be included in the new policy are events such as calf roping, team roping, goat tying, and team penning that may be timed but use livestock.

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian of the 4-H member to see that the headgear worn complies with such standards and is in good condition. The State 4-H office encourages the use of ASTM certified/SEI approved safety helmets in all equine events. Protective headgear may be used in all classes and shall not be discriminated against.

Helmet use is encouraged in all 4-H horse activities. Counties may establish more stringent policies regarding helmet use.

- **Colorado Animal Tampering Laws** – Compliance with all Colorado laws prohibiting tampering with or drugging of livestock and/or sale of adulterated meat is mandatory for any 4-H member and/or family member enrolled in a 4-H livestock project. If legal charges are brought against any 4-H member, the member will be suspended from participation in all 4-H livestock activities, pending resolution of those charges. If found guilty, the 4-H member will be prohibited from all livestock projects by CSU Extension 4-H Youth Development for one year.
- **MQA Training Requirements** – 4-H members enrolled in market and/or breeding livestock projects who are ages eight to 14, or a first year 4-H member, must attend a *Meat Quality Assurance (MQA) program*. This means that a 4-H member who attends the program as a junior must attend the program again when he/she becomes a senior member. Those members not attending the program (for example, a 10 year old) are encouraged to complete a Quality Assurance Checklist. This is strictly a tool to review and improve the overall management of the 4-H project. 4-H members will be required to attend MQA training twice during the course of

their 4-H career – once as a junior and again as a senior.

4-H members enrolled in market and/or breeding livestock projects will sign a statement, via the Wholesome Meat Act Quality Assurance form, indicating their understanding of and compliance with the *Wholesome Meat Act* and that they have complied with the Ten Good Production Practices. Additionally, consequences for failing to comply with the Wholesome Meat Act/Rules of Competition/4-H Code of Conduct may result in removal from all 4-H livestock projects for the member/family. This statement must be filed every time the member signs up for a market livestock project. The MQA program suggests that records be kept on file for twelve months following the sale of the livestock.

The above mentioned guidelines are minimum standards, and agents or livestock committees may require more trainings as needed.

- **Animal Identification** – All market animals that are 4-H projects must be *individually identified*; i.e., ear tags or other identification.
- **4-H Humane Animal Care Guidelines** will be reviewed and practiced by every person enrolled in or participating in 4-H livestock projects.
- **Primary Care of 4-H Animal Projects** 4-H members will provide the primary and continuous care of their project animals from project beginning to completion (ownership period). Market swine and market sheep projects recommend a minimum 60 day ownership period, and market steers a minimum 120 day ownership period. Random checks are recommended regarding care and feeding of project animals during the ownership period. “Primary” care means that there may be rare circumstances when the youth may not be able to provide the necessary care for the animal at a particular time, as in illness,

short vacations, etc. On such occasions, another individual may be called upon to provide “secondary” care. Members are required to complete the animal care and housing document.

- **Live Animal Selection for “Catch-it” Contests** – Colorado 4-H will not conduct any selection/qualification process involving live animals related to catch-it contests.
- **Certified Entries for Livestock Projects at State or National Livestock Shows** – 4-H members exhibiting animals at state or national livestock shows must be enrolled and be in good standing in the project at the county level.

Judging Team Related Policies

- **Combining Teams from More than One County** - Combining Sr. team members from more than one county to form a judging team is not allowed at any state level contest EXCEPT as stated below:
 - a) 4-H members from a county with no viable judging program may combine with a county with a viable program. A viable judging program is defined as one with a leader or coach willing to instruct and supervise judging participants.
 - b) Counties with viable judging programs with fewer than four senior participants may combine teams provided that no more than two team members are from one county.
 - c) A “Declaration of Intent to Combine” must be presented to, and be approved by, the appropriate Colorado State University 4-H Youth Specialist by April 15 of the current year. Counties will not be allowed to combine if declaration has not been presented and approved by the deadline.
 - d) All coaches and 4-H agents of counties involved must approve and sign the “Declaration of Intent to Combine.”

e) Only contiguous counties or counties in defined cluster groups may combine teams.

- **Substitution for National Contests** - Winning teams participating in a national contest must include at least two of the original qualifying team members.

Colorado 4-H Shooting Sports Policies

- **Colorado 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor Certification** - A county 4-H shooting sports instructor is an individual who has completed a 15-hour, State 4-H sanctioned shooting sports training and certification workshop. County instructors are eligible to conduct county level 4-H Shooting Sports programs in the discipline in which they have been trained. The Colorado 4-H Shooting Sports Program requires the use of trained and certified 4-H instructors at the county level to operate a live-fire range or to conduct any class in which firearms or archery equipment are handled. In order to be certified as a 4-H shooting sports instructor in any discipline (rifle, shotgun, pistol, muzzleloader/black-powder, archery, outdoor skills, and reloading) the following requirements must be met:
 - **Age Requirement**
 - **Instructor:** must be at least 21 years old
 - **Assistant Instructor:** must be at least 18 years old, a 4-H member in a shooting sports discipline for a minimum of one year, and have attended a state training. They can only instruct youth under the direct supervision of an instructor and only if the instructor is present during the instruction.
 - **Teen Leader:** must be at least 14 years old, has leader approval, and has attended a state instructor training. Teen

leaders only function under direct supervision of, and request of, a certified instructor who is present during the instruction. A teen leader is not to be in charge of a live-fire range.

- **Volunteers/Parents:** May be allowed to assist on the firing line with individual approval from both the county Extension agent and with approval of and under the direct supervision of a certified instructor in charge of the firing line at the time of instruction. Must be registered as a current adult 4-H leader in the county in which they are instructing.
- **County Level 4-H Leader Screening and Training -** Instructors and Assistant Instructors older than 4-H age must be screened, trained, and appointed as a current 4-H leader through the local county Extension office before attending a State 4-H Shooting Sports workshop.
- **Certification at a State 4-H Shooting Sports Workshop**
 - Instructors must successfully complete a 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor Training session administered by and/or sanctioned through the State 4-H office.
 - Training will consist of a minimum of 15 hours of instruction in the use of National 4-H Shooting Sports curriculum, discipline instruction (rifle, shotgun, pistol, muzzleloader/blackpowder, archery, outdoor skills, and coordinator), safety, risk management, teaching methods, and 4-H program management.
- **State Team 4-H Shooting Sports Instructors**
 - 4-H Shooting Sports instructors must be trained and certified in the discipline that they are teaching at the county level.
 - State Team members must be trained and certified at a National 4-H Shooting Sports workshop in the discipline they are teaching.
- **State Shooting Sports Committee Membership** – membership on the state shooting sports committee is subject to approval by the state 4-H shooting sports coordinator and the Colorado State 4-H director.
- **Maintaining State 4-H Shooting Sports Certification** - To maintain certification an instructor/leader must be active two out of three consecutive years. If inactive for two consecutive years re-certification is required.
- **A State Team Member** is an individual who has completed a 40-hour National 4-H Shooting Sports workshop. State Team Member Shooting Sports Instructors are eligible to conduct 4-H Shooting Sports programs at the county level as well as train and certify instructors as part of the State Team.
- **State Contest Responsibilities** – Proposed rule and event changes will be reviewed by the State Team and adopted during the State Team meeting. Any changes will be approved by the Assistant Director, 4-H Youth Development and/or his designee. The Assistant Director, 4-H Youth Development will appoint the state contest superintendent. The state contest superintendent will conduct the state contest in accordance with the current Colorado State Fair Exhibit Requirements, utilizing assistance as needed from State Team members and volunteers.
- **Attendance at National Invitational -** Only senior 4-H members in good standing participating in the state qualifying match are eligible to attend the National 4-H Invitational Shoot. Participants must also be enrolled in 4-H and the discipline they are competing in the year they participate at the National 4-H Shooting Sports Invitational. They also must not have reached their 19th birthday before January 1 of the year the national event is held. State team members

for each discipline will be determined at the state competition. Each team will be made up of the top 4 places with the 5th place as alternate. An individual may participate only once at the National level in any one discipline.

The coach of the invitational team will be a certified instructor in the discipline in which they are coaching. The coach of the 1st place participant is eligible to be coach. If they decline the position moves down the placing until the position is filled. The Assistant Director, 4-H Youth Development or designee must certify all state teams, individuals, or groups attending regional or national 4-H events.