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# 4-H LEADS FOR LEADERS

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## THE 4-H CLUB

90501E  
Leader's Guide



The 4-H club provides many opportunities for youth to learn, work and play with others. Most project work can be done alone, but the club provides the opportunity to develop group skills and organizational ability that are important in the social development of young people.

Every 4-H club needs the following:

- A local volunteer adult leader with one or more leaders assisting.
- Interested youth and parents.
- An interesting and educational outline of work (planned, written and carried out by members and leaders). Assistance of parents and others is important in carrying out the program.

### Types of 4-H Clubs

There are many opinions about recommended club size and whether clubs should be project clubs, community clubs, or multi-project clubs. You must select the type that most suits you, your member and community needs.



#### *Project Club*

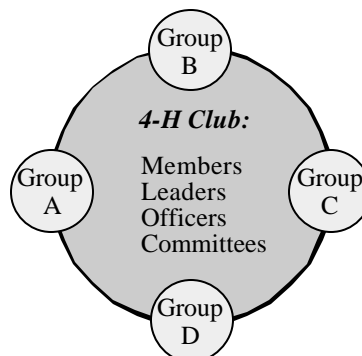
A project club usually offers only one project. It may be a foods and nutrition club, model rocketry club, or horse club, and so forth. Project work and club business are conducted at the same meeting.

*Multi-Project Club*

As the number of members increase or their interests broaden, the club must expand. The basic organizational structure is maintained, but project groups are added.

In the diagram:

- Group A represents members in electricity with their own volunteer leaders, separate meetings for project



work and a meeting with all club members monthly to participate in total 4-H activities.

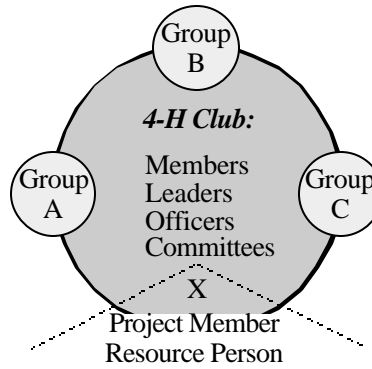
- Group B includes a group of 4-H clothing project members with volunteer leaders, separate project meetings and meeting with the total club group monthly.

- Group C represents a horse group that provides project training outside the total club meeting.

- Group D represents other project areas that might be added.

*Community Club*

Youth living in a geographic area belong to the same community club. It is organized like the multi-project club, except some of the project training is done at the monthly club meetings and there are not separate groups for all projects. Some members may take a project under the guidance of their parents or a resource person they locate rather than a club or project leader.



In the diagram, group D has been replaced with an "X" that represents all members taking projects under the direction of their parents or other resource persons.



## **Organizing a Club**

A group of eligible boys and girls and their parents may start a 4-H club by contacting their local Cooperative Extension agent. An Extension agent or leader will meet with prospective members and their parents to explain the 4-H program. A local person or committee usually makes arrangements for the meeting and calls the group together.

The actual steps in organizing a club vary, but many of the following tasks need to be completed. These may be taken care of in one or more meetings, by personal contact or in other ways.

1. Interest in 4-H is expressed and encouraged.
2. The local Cooperative Extension office is contacted for information, guidance and support.
3. A general information meeting is held for prospective members and their parents.
4. The group decides they want to form a club.
5. Discussion is held on types of projects, local resources and leadership that is available for them.
6. The group will help identify, recruit and select local adult volunteers for organizational and project responsibilities.
7. Enrollment information is distributed.
8. Next meeting date, time and place is set.
9. Explanation is given on how project work will be conducted.
10. Explanation is given on how the club will be organized.
11. If members are well acquainted and ready for leadership roles, officers may be elected. If not, elect officers as soon as practical. Officers usually include the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, plus any others that are needed. Wise officer selection is important to the success of a 4-H club.
12. The club officers or committee meet to plan program of work for the year.
13. Club decides on name.
14. Project training schedule is set up for members and leaders.
15. Volunteers receive training and support.
16. Keep going. Call on the Extension agents and secretaries in the local Extension office for help as needed.

Start project work as soon as possible. Members (young ones particularly) will be eager to start projects as soon as they decide to join 4-H. Delays in starting may cause members to lose interest and drop out before they have a chance to get started.

## **Enrolling Members**

Membership in a 4-H club is entirely voluntary. To be a 4-H club member a person must have a project, attend club meetings and take part in club activities. Membership eligibility in the local club is determined by county guidelines and the specific purposes or projects of the club, its leadership and membership.

The Cooperative Extension system, by law, cannot discriminate against any youth. Therefore, volunteer leaders are asked to encourage membership of youth who are handicapped, of different sexes and races, low-income or disadvantaged in any way. For the legal interpretation of responsibilities, see *Issues, Discrimination*, page 5.

### *Enrollment Procedure*

These are the steps to enroll in 4-H and receive project material.

1. The Extension office supplies the leader with enrollment materials and directions for their use.

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2. The leader distributes the material to the members and explains the enrollment process.

3. Leaders, members and parents should discuss interests and needs with individual youth before the projects are determined.

4. Complete the enrollment forms.

5. The leader turns enrollment forms into the Extension office.

6. The staff in the local Extension office will check the enrollment forms, make any corrections and record any information in the county office.

7. A list of project materials is prepared from the enrollment forms and distributed to clubs.

8. The leader should check the material received by putting the member's name on each piece. If there are errors with the order, the local Extension office is notified within 30 days.

9. The leader distributes the project literature to the members.

10. The leader submits change reports if members are added or dropped from their club or if they change projects.

#### *4-H Member and Leader Enrollment Forms*

A club leader will be given 4-H member and leader enrollment forms. Use these to enroll members and leaders at the beginning of the year. Use additional forms to enroll new members, add or drop projects, change information, put members on the inactive list or withdraw members from the club.

Instructions are provided. If you have any questions, contact your Cooperative Extension office.

Make changes as soon as possible after they occur. This will help keep mailing lists and records current.

## **Dues**

There are no official county, state or national dues paid by 4-H members.

A “program support fee” is assessed that partially pays for educational aids and training provided for members, leaders and Extension agents. Check with your Colorado State University Extension agent on how to pay in your county. Some counties have money raising projects to take care of the expense for all members, others ask for it on an individual basis. This fee should never discourage a young person from becoming a 4-H member.

A club, with the consent of its own members, may agree to charge dues to carry on its local program. In no case should dues keep a boy or girl from enrolling.

## **Issues**

Because 4-H clubs are organized and operated under the guidance and control of Cooperative Extension, there are some legal matters to be aware of.

### *Discrimination*

4-H programs at all levels must be conducted in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. There can be no membership requirements that prohibit, restrict, segregate or inhibit the participation of youth on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin or handicap.

Legally, Extension must withdraw its services from a club if that club discriminates and/or restricts membership and participation or provides services in a different manner, or segregates based on race, color, sex or national origin. This means the club can no longer use the 4-H name or emblem and loses its tax-exempt status.

### *Tax-Exempt Status of 4-H Clubs*

The Internal Revenue Service recognizes that 4-H clubs are exempt from federal income tax.

- Donors may deduct contributions to 4-H organizations.
- When practical, give dated receipts to donors. The following wording may be used: “The (name of 4-H club) gratefully acknowledge receipt of your donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_, which is deductible as a contribution for federal income tax purposes under Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code, pursuant to rulings issued April 24, 1946, and February 9, 1973, by the Internal Revenue Service to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.”
- The Colorado sales tax exemption number that applies to all purchases utilized directly for educational purposes in the 4-H program is #98-00794.
- Funds in the 4-H club treasury are exempt from taxes.
- Even though they are exempt from federal income taxes, 4-H clubs receiving \$10 or more interest in any one calendar year are required to furnish their savings institutions with an Internal Revenue Service employer identifying number.

An identifying number may be obtained by filing an Application for Employer Identification Number (Form SS-4) with the IRS. These forms may be secured from any Social Security Administration or IRS office. When completing item 10 on the form for “Nature of Business,” use 4-H club.

- 4-H clubs are required to file the Annual Information Return, Form 990, when total receipts from gifts, donations, sale of goods, fees, dues, and so forth, without reduction for the cost of goods or assets sold or for expenses is over \$20,000 during the tax year.

File form 990 by the 15th day of the fifth month, following the close of the accounting period (end of club year).

The 4-H group exemption number (GEN) to be used on Form 990 is #2704. This number is used nationwide for 4-H.

The 4-H group exemption number is not the same as the employer identification number. Include both numbers on form 990 in the appropriate places.

### *Use of Funds When Clubs Disband*

Because funds in the club treasury were developed to support 4-H, and most of the contributors, supporters, purchasers, etc., have taken a tax deduction for their charitable contribution, turn the remaining funds over to a tax-exempt organization. This can be another club, the County 4-H Council, County 4-H Foundation, Colorado 4-H Youth Fund, Inc., etc. The funds may *not* be divided among members.

A dissolution clause has been added to the constitution in the Secretary's Record Book and should be filled out in detail to provide for these funds.

Materials that may be helpful with tax and financial questions are:

*Tax-Exempt Status of 4-H Organizations Authorized to Use the 4-H Name and Emblem.* (Contact your local Extension office for the latest copy of this information.)

### **Club Recognition**

Several methods are used to recognize the achievements of local clubs at the state, county and local levels. Check with your local Extension personnel for information on the county recognition available for clubs.

Club Charter for “*Standard 4-H Clubs*”

As the 4-H program has developed, certain good features of local 4-H clubs have been noted. A number of these have been copied and are known as requirements for a standard 4-H club. Clubs may order a charter through their Extension office as soon as they meet the first four standard requirements.

The requirements for a 4-H club charter are:

- A standard club shall have a membership of at least five. Additional members are recommended in order to have more opportunities available to the club. However, boys and girls may be 4-H members even though there are not enough in the community to make a standard club.
- A local adult leader or qualified teen leader shall guide the club during the year.
- A local club organization with necessary officers shall be formed. A constitution and bylaws with a completed dissolution statement should be adapted by the club and a copy filed with the local Colorado State University Cooperative Extension office.
- A written program of work shall be made using the forms included in the 4-H Secretary's Record Book. One copy is sent to the Colorado State University Extension office, one copy is for the local leader and one copy should be left in the book. The suggested program of work in the Secretary's Record Book will be helpful in developing the local club program.

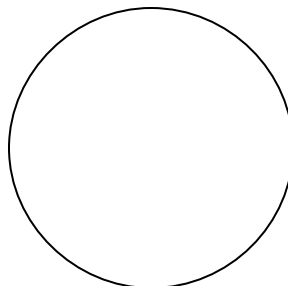
You should ask your county Cooperative Extension office for a charter. The Extension office will order the charter presentation to your club.

Your club should keep its charter as long as possible. It is not necessary to order a new charter each time the club changes leaders or makes minor revisions.

#### *Charter Seal*

Annually, each club that completes the four standard requirements and six additional requirements is entitled to a seal for its charter.

The seal is available after the club year is completed and the county report sent to the state 4-H office.

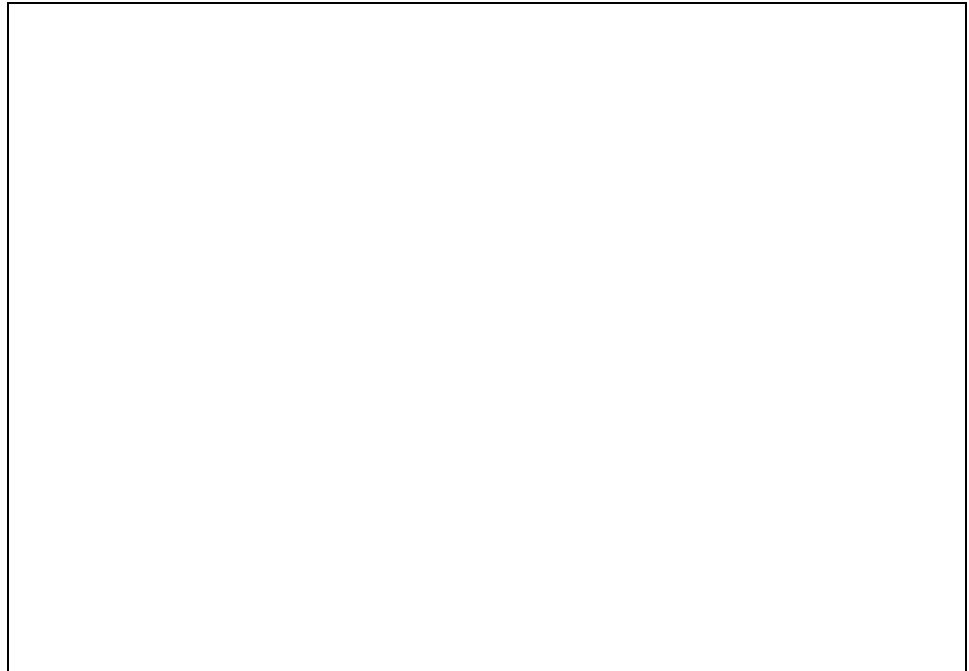


Additional requirements for a seal are:

- The club shall hold regular meetings during the year. There should be enough meetings to keep the club active and enthusiastic.
- Each member is expected to exhibit every project taken during the club year. (Exhibit may be local.)
- Each member of the club shall participate in a demonstration or other speech arts presentation some time during the year.
- Each member shall receive instruction in judging and participate in judging products related to projects taken.
- At least 75 percent of the members must complete a project and leaders should make a final report to the local Extension office. If a member completes one project carried, it counts as a completion.
- The club shall hold or participate in an annual achievement day program.

*Club Certificates*

The Certificate of Accomplishment is also known as the Completion Certificate. It is awarded to each local club that has 75 percent of its active membership completing all enrolled projects.



## Ceremonies Used in the Club

Some clubs use a formal ceremony for installing new officers or initiating new members. These highlight the ideals of 4-H with dignity and may also create a closer bond among members.

Your club may wish to adapt these ceremonies or write their own. Ceremonies developed by the group will meet their needs, express their feelings and uncover talent that might not otherwise be discovered. Ceremonies also have their place in the 4-H program because they can establish the ideals of a group of 4-H members.

### *Installation of Club Officers*

The officers stand according to the diagram shown. It is more effective if retiring officers learn their parts.

Retiring Officers:

President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Treasurer



New Officers:

President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Treasurer

The table in front of the leader holds the United States and the 4-H flags.

The retiring officers, beginning with the president, cross the room to the new officers, make short talks, and present them with the various records of the club. The new officers cross behind the table, walk over and take the retiring officers' places.

#### Retiring President

“As presiding officer for the (club name) 4-H Club, great responsibility will be yours. You will preside at meetings and will be ready at all times to serve in the best interests of the whole club. You must protect its good name, strive always to further its ideals and good purposes and see to it that the people of the community are acquainted with the work being done and the services being rendered. This gavel is given to you as the property of (club name) 4-H Club to help you in performing your duties.”

#### Retiring Vice President

“As vice president, you will become familiar with the duties of the club president and will be ready to act at any time in the absence of the president. You will strive in every way to aid in upholding the dignity of your 4-H club.”

#### Retiring Secretary

“As secretary, you will keep the membership roll and a complete and accurate record of what takes place at each meeting. You will make reports and write official letters. You will keep such important information and papers as the club may direct. In your hands and keeping will now be placed the secretary's book for the (club name) 4-H Club.”

#### Retiring Treasurer

“As treasurer, you will be entrusted with the money for the (club name) 4-H Club. You will be expected to keep accurate records of all receipts and expenditures. You will also be expected to furnish detailed information concerning the finances of your club whenever it is needed. This is the treasurer's book for the club to help you in recording the financial business.”

#### Retiring Reporter

“As club reporter, you will keep the community and Cooperative Extension office informed of the activities of your club through the press and other means of communication. This is a most important responsibility and can benefit many people in your community.”

#### Local Leader

“As officers you have been chosen to guide and direct the (club name) 4-H Club. I know that you will live up to the trust placed in you. You will be responsible for the club's spirit and for its progress and faithfulness to the principles and ideals of 4-H club work.

As members of this 4-H club, it will be your responsibility to help these officers in every way possible.”

#### Retiring President

“We will all stand and give the 4-H pledge.” (Another way of closing this ceremony might be to sing a 4-H or patriotic song.)

#### *New Member Initiation*

A guide takes the candidate or candidates for 4-H membership to the front of the room where the officers are standing behind a table on which an American flag and a 4-H flag have been placed.

#### President

“To you who are about to become a member of the 4-H Youth Development Program, we, as active members of (club name) 4-H Club, sharing responsibilities in carrying out our 4-H program, wish to inquire as to your earnestness in becoming a 4-H member. Have you selected a 4-H project and returned a 4-H enrollment card signed by your parents or guardians?”

Candidate

“I have.”

Vice President

“Before becoming a 4-H member, we feel that you should become acquainted with the organization and the purpose of 4-H clubs.

4-H clubs are a part of the Cooperative Extension system. In Colorado, this service is under the cooperative direction of the United States Department of Agriculture, Colorado State University and our county government. 4-H clubs are organized to help us become better citizens in a democracy by teaching us how to work and play together; by guiding us in solving our own problems and those of our homes and community; by giving us an opportunity to learn better methods of working on the projects we have chosen to do; by assisting us in demonstrating to others what we have learned; by giving us an understanding and appreciation of wholesome, healthful living; and by aiding us in offering service in our homes, our clubs, our communities and our world. Our 4-H program provides us, as young people, with an opportunity to do our full part in working together for better world understanding.”

Secretary (exhibiting a 4-H emblem)

“Our 4-H emblem is a green four-leaf clover with a white ‘H’ on each leaf, representing the development of the head, heart, hands and health.

Our motto is “To make the best better.”

Treasurer

“Our 4-H Creed is:

I believe in 4-H club work for the opportunity it will give me to become a useful citizen.

I believe in the training of my Head for the power it will give me to think, to plan and to reason.

I believe in the training of my Heart for the nobleness it will give me to become kind, sympathetic and true.

I believe in the training of my Hands for the ability it will give me to be helpful, useful and skillful.

I believe in the training of my Health for the strength it will give me to enjoy life, to resist disease and to work efficiently.

I believe in my country, my state and my community and in my responsibility for their development.

In all these things I believe, and I am willing to dedicate my efforts to their fulfillment.”

Reporter

“Our 4-H club would like to point out that you are now joining a large national youth organization with membership of over five million young people. 4-H clubs similar to ours have been established throughout the United States and its territories.

Moreover, 4-H clubs, or clubs patterned after our 4-H clubs, are now established in over 80 other countries.”

President

“You are now familiar with the purposes of 4-H club work, the extent of the organization, the 4-H emblem and what it symbolizes, the 4-H motto and the 4-H creed. Are you willing to try to live up to these ideals of the 4-H club?”

Candidate

“I am.”

President

“Do you now wish to become a 4-H club member?”

Candidate

“I do.”

President

“In becoming a member of our 4-H club, we expect you to attend our meetings regularly, take an active part in our program, complete your project work and keep a record of all your 4-H activities. You are to learn the 4-H club pledge and motto, keep your parents informed of the club's activities, make an exhibit and help other members of our club who may be in need of such help. As you sign the 4-H club membership roll, please think of these responsibilities which you are now assuming.” (Candidate signs in secretary's book.)

President

“Please repeat the 4-H club pledge after me. (Candidate repeats each line after President.)

I pledge:

My head to clearer thinking,  
My heart to greater loyalty,  
My hands to larger service, and  
My health to better living,  
For my club, my community, my country and my world.

You are now a member of (club name) 4-H Club. We welcome you into our membership. May you ever do your full part in carrying out the 4-H program; be faithful in helping to carry on your work as a part of the general community and county in partnership with your parents and neighbors; and live up to its high ideals to the end that you will be among the distinguished number who are working for a better home, a better nation and a better world.”

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