

Escambia County Volunteer Training: Managing a 4-H Club

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The 4-H Youth Development Program aims to be youth-centered, professional-led, and volunteer-delivered. To make this happen, 4-H encourages the teamwork of county- and campus-based faculty, staff, and volunteers to offer youth and adults high-quality personal growth opportunities. Volunteers, as full partners in 4-H, contribute their unique talents, skills, and knowledge of their communities to assist county 4-H faculty in offering a comprehensive local 4-H youth development program.

This guide provides a brief introduction to the following:

Expectations of Club Members

4-H Projects

Community Service

Fundraising

County Level Activities

State Programming

Record Keeping

Volunteer Screening

The 4-H Community Club

Conducting a Club Meeting

Further information on all of these topics can be found at <http://escambia.ifas.ufl.edu/4h/> and in the following additional resources:

4-H Program Planning Guide: <http://florida4h.org/clubs/files/4H%20GCL%2020.PDF>

4-H Officer Handbook: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/4H/4H04900.pdf>

Expectations of Club Members

In general, 4-H club members are expected to meet the following standards each year:

- Complete a 4-H project.
- Give a club, community, or county 4-H presentation.
- Participate in a community service event.

These are the minimum expectations. Each club may have additional requirements. All club rules and policies should be contained in its club bylaws.

Just as many club members will work to achieve standards, the clubs themselves may also strive to meet Standards of Excellence. There are four levels of standards available for clubs to achieve. For a description of the clover standards, view the Standards of Excellence for 4-H Clubs and Groups application at <http://escambia.ifas.ufl.edu/4h/curriculum-and-record-books/>

4-H Projects

A project is a planned series of learning experiences of six hours or more within a particular area of youth interest (Florida 4-H definition). The purpose of a 4-H project is to promote mastery of subject matter and to foster life skill development (i.e., communication skills, citizenship, leadership, good decision-making, and goal setting).

Projects are based on goals youth have developed themselves with the help of a caring adult. Usually, members choose projects at the beginning of the 4-H year (i.e., in the fall, or any time after they have enrolled in 4-H).

4-H has over 50 project areas youth can work on throughout the year. It is recommended that cloverbud, junior, and intermediate youth do not take on more than 3 projects in a 4-H year. Once a youth chooses their project, curriculum and the record book for the project can be found at <http://escambia.ifas.ufl.edu/4h/2015/09/25/4-h-project-curriculum/>. If youth are interested in a project not listed, talk to your 4-H agent.

Youth should keep records of their project with their Record Book. Record keeping is a life skill that helps youth learn how to reach goals, identify what they have learned throughout the year, and keep track of project expenses. This workforce skill also helps 4-H members keep good records that can be used to apply for awards and scholarships and to complete job and college applications.

Record books should be submitted at the end of the 4-H year, usually September 1. Record books will be judged and youth presented with awards at an annual awards and recognition banquet usually held in mid-September. Youth can apply for awards related to their projects or for their participation in 4-H. Descriptions of awards can be found at <http://escambia.ifas.ufl.edu/4h/curriculum-and-record-books/>.

Project handouts are available for you to review and share with your 4-H members at <http://florida4h.org/programs/>

Community Service

Each club is required to organize at least one community service project during the 4-H year. Club members should decide on the project their club will do. At least 60% of club members are required to attend. Ideas for local projects can be found at <http://escambia.ifas.ufl.edu/4h/4-h-community-partners/>.

Fundraising

4-H is a nonprofit and attempts to provide free youth development programming. Depending on the project a club or youth chooses to pursue, there may be costs related to equipment or activities needed. Some 4-H clubs may decide to collect money from members to cover the costs of club activities. They may also vote to collect dues at the beginning of the 4-H year to cover minor costs throughout the year.

Clubs may also decide to hold a fundraiser to help provide resources for their club projects or events. The club should make a budget of the needs they have that need financial support. This will provide justification for any fundraising the club will do. The club should fill out a fundraising application that can be found in the club leader's notebook or at http://florida4h.org/volunteers/training/files/notebook/Fundraising_Permission_Form.pdf and return it to the 4-H office for approval.

Fundraising guidelines can be found at <http://florida4h.org/policies/#funds>.

Various fundraising opportunities may be provided by the 4-H office throughout the year such as providing concessions or constructing a club fair booth for a premium.

Once clubs have received funds, money should be deposited in the club's account with a monies received form. This can be found in the club leader notebook and at http://florida4h.org/volunteers/training/files/notebook/Monies_Received.pdf

Please bring all money to the 4-H office. Club leaders should submit reimbursement forms along with the club's minutes approving the use of the funds for that purpose. Money from the club account will be used to reimburse the club leader. Reimbursement requests must be turned in to the 4-H office within 60 days of the date of purchase to be reimbursed. Please give two weeks for these checks to process. The check request form can be found in the club leader notebook as well as at http://florida4h.org/volunteers/training/files/notebook/Check_Reimbursement_Request.pdf

County Level Activities

Throughout the year, the 4-H Agents will organize activities that are open to all 4-H clubs. These are typically workshops, day camps, and special interest events related to specific project areas. If these events relate to the project a youth is working on, they can county these activities as part of their project. These events are typically free of charge or have a nominal fee per youth. If you have any concerns about participation cost, please talk to your 4-H agent.

County agents will also coordinate various competitive events for youth to demonstrate their project skills throughout the year. Various livestock shows, a 4-H open house, the Pensacola Interstate Fair, and District Competition will allow youth to present their skills and be awarded for their accomplishments. Cloverbud aged 4-H'er are not eligible for competitive events but may present in events without being judged.

A schedule for county level activities can be found at <http://escambia.ifas.ufl.edu/4h/upcoming-events/> and in the monthly newsletter at <http://escambia.ifas.ufl.edu/4h/2015/08/11/escambia-county-4-h-monthly-newsletter/>.

State Programming

Florida 4-H offers various opportunities for 4-Hers to participate with 4-H youth across the state throughout the year. These trips range from 3 day to week long camps. Escambia County 4-H offers scholarships for many of these events. However, individuals are ultimately responsible for the remaining cost of attending, including travel.

Any kind of out of county event in which youth participate as representative of 4-H MUST be approved through the county office. DO NOT register for any out of county event without notifying the county 4-H agents. This is necessary for youth protection as well as to ensure that Escambia County 4-H does not incur any event fees that participants are not aware they are responsible for.

If your youth are interested in participating in any out of county event, please talk to your 4-H agent for more information about registration.

Record Keeping

Record keeping is important for many reasons. Having accurate head counts of each meeting or event youth do as part of 4-H help us to monitor who is attending as well as to analyze the effectiveness of programs.

During each gathering by 4-H'ers, club members and adults present, whether or not they are official 4-H volunteers, should sign in on a Summary Sheet that can be found in the club leader notebook and at http://florida4h.org/volunteers/training/files/notebook/Summary_Sheet.pdf

These sheets should be turned in to the 4-H office on a quarterly basis, preferably at the monthly volunteer leader meeting.

Volunteer Screening

It is the responsibility of the 4-H Agent and the Club Organizational Leader to work with volunteers to make sure they are appropriately screened to work with 4-H youth. All volunteers should register with fl.4honline.com and submit a volunteer application. Additionally, all volunteers should complete a brief online training at <https://oycs.ufsa.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/YCS800-simulated-version1.swf>

You can find detailed information about Volunteer Screening requirement with the following resources:

Escambia County Screening Information: <http://escambia.ifas.ufl.edu/4h/4-h-volunteer-information/>

- Volunteer Application and Screening Policies and Best Practices- <http://florida4h.org/policies/#handling>
- Volunteer Screening and Application Procedures- <http://florida4h.org/volunteers/screening/>
- Youth Protection FAQs <http://florida4h.org/about/policies/faqs/>
- OYCS Overnight Chaperone Online Certification for Volunteers <https://oycs.ufsa.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/YCS800-simulated-version1.swf>.
- Volunteer Application and Screening Policies and Best Practices- <http://florida4h.org/policies/#handling>

The 4-H Community Club

The 4-H club meeting consists of three parts – business, educational program, and recreation. The suggested length of time for the business meeting is 1/4 of your scheduled meeting time. The educational portion is often the largest part of the meeting (1/2 of your meeting time), followed by a shorter social time of recreation (1/4 of your meeting time). Club meetings usually follow this format, but keep in mind, you can be as creative as you and your club officers want. At times you may want to change the agenda so the same thing does not happen at every club meeting.

Business Meeting - The business meeting usually includes roll call, reading of the minutes by the secretary, treasurer's report, committee reports, old and new business and leader announcements. The clubs officers should run this part of the meeting, with leader guidance. A business session doesn't have to be part of every meeting, but probably should be held at least once a month and other times as needed.

Educational Program - The topic of the program may or may not be related to a specific 4-H project. Many clubs focus on leadership and citizenship activities or working through life skills projects throughout the year. The club may also pursue a project consistently throughout the year and work on this project during the club meetings. Listed below are some ideas for club meeting programs.

- Project demonstrations/illustrated talks by club members Project talks or panel discussions by club members or others
- Slides, movies, videos, guest speakers
- Judging contests or activities, games, quizzes, skill-athons, etc.

- A project activity – something for the fair
- Working on the club's community service-learning project

Recreation - Clubs that have fun will be more active, do more things and get along better. Fun should be included in every club meeting. Recreation may come in the form of songs, team-building activities, ice-breakers, games, trust activities, and/or refreshments. Your youth may have ideas for their recreation time. Your club's recreation leader is responsible for having a recreation plan for each meeting. Club leaders should have a backup plan in case the recreation leader is absent.

Conducting a Meeting

A club can't accomplish its goals if it doesn't meet often enough. How often is enough? This depends on the club, its members, and their projects. However, all clubs should meet at least once a month. Many clubs meet as often as once a week. Except for a major holiday month, around county fair time, or summer vacation, clubs should meet throughout the year.

A 4-H club needs to meet regularly at a regular place and time. Moving a meeting date to meet the whims of the group may help get more members to a meeting in the short run. However, in the long run, members may become confused about meeting dates. Irregular meetings can also make it difficult for new members to merge well into the club. The best way to set an acceptable meeting schedule is for the club to vote and to abide by majority rule or consensus (where everyone agrees). This is generally done at the first (organizational) meeting when the club is established. It is included in a club's by-laws. After that, it should change only when the membership and its needs drastically change. (In that case, a revision of the club by-laws would be needed.)

Obtaining parental support for the meeting schedule is helpful in maintaining member participation. The length of your club meeting will depend on the ages of your members and the business and activities you have planned. Younger members sometimes have earlier bedtimes and this may affect evening meetings on school nights. Be clear when meetings start and finish and then start and finish at those announced times.

During each meeting, the club secretary should write down thorough minutes to keep a record of club business. The minutes should reflect important discussion, the vote count or status. Using the agenda as a guide is a tool for the secretary. A good set of meeting minutes include the following:

- Date, time, and location of the meeting
- Names of the members and visitor's present
- Approval of the previous meeting minutes
- Approval of committee and officer reports, as well as any action taken
- All the motions made in the meeting, including the name of the person who made the motion, seconded the motion, and whether or not the motion carried
- The adjournment time
- A list of any programs, guest speakers, refreshments, or recreation that occurred at the meeting

The Secretary is also responsible to take a roll at each meeting and can use the opportunity to help youth learn more about each other. Rather than having youth respond to their name by simply saying, "here" or "present," whoever is taking roll can ask questions to find out the preferences or opinions of members of the club.

The President is responsible for the agenda of the club meeting and making certain the club meeting runs smoothly. The business meeting includes the following:

- The 4-H Club President calls the meeting to order.
- Club members recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and the 4-H pledge. These pledges led by individual club members or officers.

- The 4-H Club President calls roll.
- The club secretary reads the minutes from the last meeting. The club votes to accept the minutes as read, reject the minutes as read, or amend the minutes.
- The club treasurer reads the treasurer's report. The recorded report is in the treasurer's book.
- The club secretary reads any club correspondence.
- Chairs of various club committees will report any updated information.
- Old or Unfinished Business follows. These items are from previous meetings that still need to be discussed or decided
- New business, or new items that have arisen since the last meeting, are discussed. Assignments are made on action items that arose during the new business portion of the meeting.
- The Club leader makes any important announcements.
- Adjournment of the business meeting for the educational and fun components of the meeting.

More information on 4-H Business Meetings can be found at
<http://florida4h.org/volunteers/training/files/notebook/4H34400.pdf>

Please do not hesitate with any questions you have about managing your 4-H club. Your 4-H Agents are always happy to help and want you to have all the resources you need to be successful. Thank you for all you do in educating our youth and preparing them for a lifetime of success.