



**What Is a 4-H Club?**

A 4-H club is an organized group of youth who meet regularly for a long-term, progressive series of educational experiences. The 4-H club’s purpose is to provide positive youth development opportunities to meet the needs of young people to experience belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity and gain in-depth knowledge and skills.

4-H club membership is open to all youth ages 5-18 without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, public assistance, veteran or military status or sexual orientation

**4-H Club Criteria**

**Structure**

A 4-H club:

enrolls at least **five** members from at least **three** families.

conducts a minimum of **six** regular club meetings throughout most or all of the year,

supplemented by project meetings, camps, fairs, and other 4-H learning activities. A regular

meeting typically includes a business meeting led by youth officers, an educational program,

and time for social/recreational interaction.

typically selects youth officers or youth leaders to provide leadership to the club.

meets in any location—a home, community center, military base, school either during school

hours or after school, library, public housing site, place of worship, and/or many other places.

adapts to and supports mobility of youth and parents, linking them to 4-H programs in other

counties and states.

meets the interests and needs of youth in same-age or cross-age groupings using single project or multiple project formats.

is advised by adult staff or volunteers who have been screened and trained.

**Educational and Youth Development Principles**

A 4-H club:

includes planned opportunities to learn and apply life skills such as leadership, citizenship,

community service and public speaking.

provides individual project experiences to develop in-depth knowledge about science,

engineering and technology; citizenship; and healthy living.

provides programs, curricula and procedures that are based in research and developmentally

appropriate.

provides members and volunteers access to resources of land-grant universities and to county

**What Is a 4-H Club? (Continued)**

uses experiential learning—learning by doing—as a primary teaching approach.

fosters youth-adult partnerships that encourage active involvement and participation by youth

and adults.

provides safe and healthy physical and emotional environments.

offers projects in a wide range of subject matter areas to meet youth needs and interests.

(*A* ***4-H project*** *is a planned sequence of age-appropriate, research-based learning opportunities. As a result of long-term active engagement in the project, the youth gains knowledge and develops skills based on planned goals and identified outcomes. 4-H project work is guided by trained adults who help youth set goals and provide access to appropriate curricula and resources.)*

**Program Management and Implementation**

A 4-H club:

selects a club name.

develops a set of rules approved by the members to govern the club.

develops an annual educational plan.

keeps records of their meetings and finances.

complies with National 4-H Headquarters and state land-grant university policies.

**Chartering**

4-H clubs must be chartered through the United States Department of Agriculture to be authorized to use the 4-H Name and Emblem and eligible for tax exempt status. State 4-H offices should maintain documentation on the issuance of charters to 4-H clubs in their state.

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