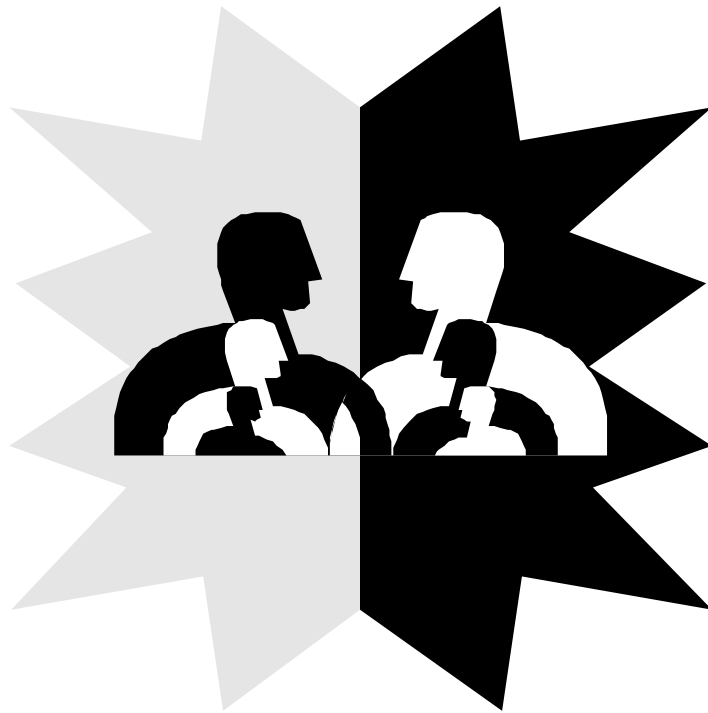




# **VIRGINIA 4-H BASIC VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION GUIDE**





## How to use this guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide a resource for orienting new and/or untrained 4-H volunteers in the basics of Virginia 4-H.

The guide provides the minimum standards for orienting volunteers to the world of 4-H. Definitions, expectations, management, policies, and 4-H forms are covered. Additional and/or more specific orientation topics may be added by the unit 4-H Agent.

An *Orientation Checklist* is included on page 24-25 of this guide.

If you need any additional information for orienting new 4-H volunteers, please contact Barry Garst, Extension Specialist, 4-H Staff Development and Camping at bgarst@vt.edu or (540) 231-6373.

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## What is 4-H?

Four-H is America's largest out-of-school educational program for youth. Over six million youth nationally now participate in 4-H, under the guidance of Extension trained adult volunteers or Extension staff members. One of every six Americans has been affiliated with 4-H as a member. It is estimated that nearly 45 million American adults are former 4-H members. An American idea, 4-H has spread to over 80 other countries.

Four-H is an informal, practical, learn-by-doing, fun, and educational program for boys and girls, ages 5 through 18, from all racial, cultural, social, and economic backgrounds. Membership is open to all youth in this age range without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, or religious affiliation.

The 4-H program has been serving the needs of boys and girls for nearly 100 years. In fact, Virginia 4-H has been actively working to provide educational opportunities for youth since 1909. America's largest youth program, as well as that within the Commonwealth of Virginia, 4-H now reaches over **6.8 million** boys and girls throughout the United States. In Virginia, we now serve over **140,500** boys and girls, ages 5-18.

### ***4-H is based on seven (7) foundations:***

1. Community centered,
2. Volunteer led,
3. Extension staff supervised,
4. Research-based,
5. Home and family oriented,
6. Publicly and privately funded, and
7. Responsive to change.

### **4-H Mission**

*"The mission of 4-H is to develop youth and adults working with those youth to realize their full potential—becoming effective, contributing citizens through participation in research-based, informal, hands-on educational experiences."*

### **4-H Organization and Leadership**

National leadership for 4-H is provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), located in Washington, DC. State headquarters for 4-H are located at the land-grant universities of each state and US territories.



State leadership for 4-H youth development is conducted by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), an educational component of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University (VSU), Virginia's land-grant universities. Local governments cooperate with this leadership and assist with funding of Extension staff in each of Virginia's 107 counties and cities.

Every state has a team of 4-H youth staff and subject matter specialists as part of the University Cooperative Extension System. County Extension agents direct 4-H work in the counties. Volunteer leaders assist agents by providing direct leadership and educational support to youth in local communities.

Virginia Cooperative Extension employed staff and volunteers together provide learn-by-doing educational projects and activities in a large variety of 4-H subject matter areas.

## **4-H Symbols**

Every 4-H member and leader should be familiar with the 4-H emblem, motto, pledge, and creed. The following symbols express the spirit and ideals of the 4-H organization.

### ***Pledge***

Every member and leader should know and be able to repeat the 4-H Club Pledge. The 4-H pledge is said after the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States. The 4-H pledge is:

*"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.*

In saying the pledge, 4-H'ers raise their right hands to their foreheads, when they say, "my head to clearer thinking." They lower them to their hearts as they say, "my heart to greater loyalty." At the line, "my hands to larger service," they extend their hands, palms upward. At the last line, they stand at attention with their hands at their sides.

### ***Motto***

The 4-H Motto, "*To Make the Best Better*," should be the aim of every 4-H member and leader.



### **Colors**

The white in the 4-H flag symbolizes purity. The green, nature's most common color, is emblematic of life, springtime, and youth.

### **Emblem**

The 4-H emblem is a four-leaf clover with the letter H on each leaf. The four H's represent the four-fold development of head, heart, hands, and health. (Note: The 4-H Symbol is protected under a U.S. copyright- 18 USC 707)

#### **HEAD**

Represents mental development, deeper knowledge, and reasoning.

#### **HEART**

Represents emotional development- developing interest, appreciation, and wholesome attitudes.

#### **HANDS**

Represents skills development (i.e. the ability to do, skill in doing, and habit of doing.)

#### **HEALTH**

Represents physical development- understanding and appreciating a growing and changing body.

## **Definition of a 4-H member**

Any boy or girl, ages 5-18, who enrolls and participates in a planned sequence of related learning experiences for a **minimum of six (6) hours**.

4-H members are under the guidance and supervision of Extension-trained volunteers or Extension staff members.



## Accountability to 4-H Manager of Unit 4-H program

Each 4-H volunteer serves under the direction and leadership of the unit 4-H Agent, or 4-H Program Assistant in charge of the unit 4-H program. This applies to all volunteers guiding or assisting with any 4-H program in that unit.

*It is very important for each volunteer to complete and turn into the local Extension office, a **Volunteer Leader Enrollment Form** each year. This form is available from the unit 4-H Agent, or 4-H Program Assistant in charge of the unit 4-H program.*

The 4-H agent will establish the guidelines for any 4-H club program, and the volunteer is expected to abide by the 4-H policies and procedures. Volunteers are responsible for enrolling youth in 4-H and for collect the enrollment forms with the local 4-H club/group, and turn this into the unit 4-H Agent, or 4-H Program Assistant in charge of the unit 4-H program.

## Importance of a “TEAM” of Volunteers

Too often, a single (one) volunteer has been recruited to lead and work with a group of young people. This is true for many youth organizations and groups. By doing this, so much responsibility and trust is placed on one person's ability and availability of time. While many adults are “super stars,” and can do great things, this is not a very effective method of recruiting 4-H volunteers. Here are some reasons for **not** recruiting a single volunteer leader to lead a 4-H club or group:

- It violates the Above Suspicion policy emphasis in our state
- When a single volunteer cannot meet with a group consistently, the youth become discouraged and lose interest in the club (the single volunteer has no one else to lead the club in his/her absence)
- The 4-H Agent spends much time orientating the single volunteer. If that volunteer has to move, or relocate to another job position, the 4-H club falls apart because there is no "back-up" to lead the club
- A single club leader has no one else to share with the club leadership role, which is greatly needed in order to work with several youth

The Importance of a "TEAM" of Volunteers to work with a 4-H club/group cannot be over emphasized. By recruiting a team of 2-3 volunteers, the leadership and responsibility is distributed and shared so that no one person has to do everything. A general rule of thumb is to have 3 volunteers work with a 4-H club (more is acceptable). Here are some reasons for having a **team of volunteers** to work with a 4-H club or group:



- A group of three volunteers compliments and better insures the safety of youth, and adults working with those youth, by being in compliance with the Above Suspicion policy emphasis in our state.
- When one volunteer cannot meet with a group, the club still meets because the other two can still meet with the club. This allows for consistency, which youth expect of adults in leading activities that affect them.
- If one or even two volunteers move or relocate to another job position, the 4-H club continues to meet because there is a 'back-up quarterback' to lead the club and the 4-H Agent can recruit others to assist with the volunteer who is still meeting with the 4-H club.
- A team of volunteers can share work and job responsibilities of the 4-H club, thus allowing more youth to be reached in the 4-H program.

### ***Volunteer Led 4-H Clubs/Groups***

Among the basic premises on which 4-H is different than other youth serving agencies and groups (there are many) include that 4-H clubs/groups are locally determined, and volunteer led. This allows more youth to be reached through 4-H club programs. The volunteers work under the guidance and supervision of the local 4-H Agent, or 4-H Program Assistant in charge of the unit 4-H program.

## **Expectations for a Virginia 4-H Volunteer**

Virginia 4-H volunteers are adults (or older teens) who have agreed to fill defined roles in planning, implementing, and evaluating the local 4-H program. Volunteer roles include a variety of leadership and assisting duties.

Volunteers are expected to set a positive example for youth at all times and to follow the responsibilities of role for which they have been assigned. The unit 4-H Extension Agent, or 4-H Program Assistant in charge of the unit 4-H program, establishes the job description and guidelines for all volunteers. Expectations include:

- Abide by the 4-H policies and procedures at all times
- Complete and submit an annual Volunteer Leader Enrollment Form
- Keep 4-H Agent (or 4-H Program Assistant) informed of club activities
- Meet with the 4-H club on a frequent basis, based on the 4-H Agent's job description
- Be willing and able to assist youth in 4-H club programming
- Abide by and complete the duties of the specific job for which they serve as a 4-H volunteer, as outlined by the 4-H Agent (or 4-H Program Assistant)





# What is Youth Development?

*An ongoing process through which young people grow and develop from infancy into childhood, into adolescence, and then into adulthood. During this process, youth attempt to meet their needs and develop the competencies they perceive as valuable both now and in the future. \**

## **Positive Youth Development vs. “HAPPENSTANCE”**

Sometimes a program can provide youth development without a purposeful plan- this is called “HAPPENSTANCE.” 4-H activities should not be ‘HAPPENSTANCE.’ Rather, 4-H activities should be purposely developed with consideration for the basics needs of youth and the basic competencies that youth need to acquire in order to grow into health, successful adults.

## **Basic Needs of Youth**<sup>1</sup>

It’s up to us to provide for the basic needs of youth and to ensure the competencies they develop are those that will help them to become productive members of our communities.

**Safety** (and structure)

**Belonging** (and membership)

**Self-worth** (and ability to contribute)

**Independence** (and control over one’s life)

**Closeness** (and several good relationships)

**Competence** (and mastery)

**Self-Awareness** (and ability to act on that understanding)

<sup>1</sup> Pittman, K. & Fleming, W. Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, Academy for Educational Development, Washington, D.C.



## **Basic Competencies that Youth Need to Acquire**<sup>2</sup>

In order to become successful adults, youth must acquire and develop attitudes, behaviors, and skills in five major areas:

### ***Health***

Youth need to be currently healthy, but also need to have the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors that will ensure future health and well being (i.e. exercise, good nutrition).

### ***Personal and Social Skills***

Youth need interpersonal knowledge, skills, and abilities related to: communication, working with others, developing friendships, cooperation, empathy, negotiation/conflict resolution, judgement skills, and a coping system.

### ***Knowledge, Reasoning, and Creativity***

Youth need a broad base of knowledge and reasoning skills, including oral communication, writing ability, problem solving skills, and an ability to learn. Youth also need an ability to appreciate and demonstrate creative expression. Youth should develop an interest in lifelong learning.

### ***Vocational Understanding***

Youth need to know the options that they have in life and need to be able to identify the steps they need to take to reach those options. Youth need to have adequate preparation for work and family life. Youth need to have an understanding of the value and purpose of family, work, and leisure.

### ***Citizenship***

Youth need to develop an understanding of their national and community history and values. Youth also need to understand racial, ethnic, and social history and values, including differences and strengths. Youth need the desire to be ethical, to demonstrate good character, and to be involved in efforts that contribute to the “greater good.”

<sup>2</sup> Pittman, K. & Fleming, W. Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, Academy for Educational Development, Washington, D.C.



## Developmental Characteristics of Youth

4-H activities should be age-appropriate and should reflect the developmental needs and characteristics of youth. This table describes the developmental characteristics of youth according to four age categories: Cloverbud, Junior, Intermediate, and Senior.

	<b>Cloverbuds 5-8</b>	<b>Juniors 9-11</b>	<b>Intermediates 12-13</b>	<b>Seniors 14-18</b>
<b>Developmental Characteristic</b>	Slow steady growth with limited muscle development.	Slow steady growth for most. Puberty starts for some girls, usually accompanied by a growth spurt.  Extremely active, will overdo, need 10-11 hours sleep. Large muscles pretty well developed.	Wide range in physical development, early maturing girls may have appearance of young women, some boys will not have entered puberty. Growth spurts may cause clumsiness. Much concern about changing bodies. Interested in grooming, but probably won't admit it.	Body changes have been accepted by most, some continue to struggle. Individual talents and abilities emerge.
<b>Teaching Method</b>	Plan activities that require limited small muscle coordination. Expect craft projects to be messy, but provide opportunities to make things anyway. It is the doing, not the finished product, which is important.	Be sensitive about concern over body changes. Plan action, hands-on doing.  Field trips and tours are good if stops are brief. Plan for needed rest. Better at making things, but still don't expect perfection.	Include learning experiences related to understanding self and the changes taking place. Provide opportunities for acquiring good grooming habits.	Be sensitive to late developers, help them feel they are okay.  Provide opportunities to help recognize their special talents and abilities. Individual counsel is good. High-light talents and skills.



	<b>Cloverbuds 5-8</b>	<b>Juniors 9-11</b>	<b>Intermediates 12-13</b>	<b>Seniors 14-18</b>
<b>Developmental Characteristics</b>	Concrete thinkers – deal with here and now. If they can't see, taste, or touch, it isn't real. Short attention span.	Many are still concrete thinkers, some beginning to think logically and symbolically.	Most have moved from concrete to more abstract thinking. They enjoy playing with ideas.	Mastering abstract thinking. Can interact on adult level. Beginning to plan for their future.
<b>Teaching Method</b>	Give (demonstrate) instructions in small increments. Plan a variety of hands-on, short, learning activities.	When introducing abstract ideas or concepts, relate to something concrete, something they can do, touch, or feel.	Adults should provide supervision without domination. Allow them to discuss ideas and concerns in small groups.	Include career education including opportunities to research careers. Encourage setting career goals, and planning to accomplish goals.
<b>Developmental Characteristics</b>	Curious, eager to try something new. Learn best if physically active.	Easily motivated, eager to try something different. Interest will jump from one thing to another.	Values, justice, and equality important issues – can become very intense. They want to be sure things both in and out of 4-H are judged fairly.	Significant moral growth, difficulty understanding compromise. Often think society is made up of a bunch of hypocrites.
<b>Teaching Method</b>	Provide hands-on experiences. Let them do, just don't expect perfection.	Guide to stay with tasks to completion. Work closely to have them record accomplishments as they happen. Help reflect back and set new goals.	Help them understand scoring process used in 4-H. Arrange for discussing values, justice, and equality as they relate to a variety of issues. Introduce the concept of personal values.	Continue opportunities for understanding how values are acquired and the importance of a set of personal values. Promote discussion and action related to current issues.
<b>Developmental Characteristics</b>	Strong desire for affection and approval from adults.	Approval from leaders and parents is important. Want to know how much they have improved and how they can do better next time.	Dependence on the opinions of adults shifts to dependence on the opinions of peers. Now seek peer recognition. Recognize this as healthy growth and help parents understand this also.	Opinions of peers remain important but self-recognition of accomplishments is also important. Becoming more independent, acquiring values and setting goals.
<b>Teaching Method</b>	One adult for each 3-4 children to give needed individual attention.	Give individual evaluation, suggest ways to improve.	Changes in hormones create mood swings, also a time of fragile self-concepts for many.	Adults need to continue to give support and guidance during this period when teens are making serious decisions.



	<b>Cloverbuds 5-8</b>	<b>Juniors 9-11</b>	<b>Intermediates 12-13</b>	<b>Seniors 14-18</b>
<b>Developmental Characteristics</b>	Sensitive to criticism doesn't accept failure well.	Comparison with success of others is difficult for them.	Plan self-discovery activities. Support, encourage, but don't dominate. Still important to avoid comparing with other teens.	Unsettled emotions cause them to be stormy or withdrawn at times, but will usually pride self on increased ability to be responsible.
<b>Teaching Method</b>	Emphasize individual accomplishments. Use activities involving cooperation; avoid competition even in games.	Build positive self-concept by comparing past and present performances of the individual and to emphasize positive changes.	Encourage continued participation in 4-H and promote opportunities to work with younger 4-H'ers.	Consistent treatment from adults is important even though some will act like adults one day and children the next. Provide opportunities to use special talents.
<b>Developmental Characteristics</b>	Learning how to be a friend and to make friends. May have several "best" friends at one time. By 7-8 often prefer to play with own sex.	Joining a club is popular, stronger identity with peers. Admire older boys and girls.	Moving toward more independence. Want to plan own activities and explore beyond a community. Better at planning than carrying out the plan.	Many can plan and interact on the adult level. Can initiate and carry out tasks such as researching area of special interest without much adult supervision. Achieving independence and identifying goals are important for this age. Achieving satisfactory adjustments to sexuality and definition of career goals are important factors of these goals.
<b>Teaching Method</b>	Allow youth to form their own groups for some activities. Plan activities to encourage total group interaction. Teach the characteristics of a friend.	Plan opportunities for club activities. Use teen teachers. Encourage teen mentoring.	Involve members in planning. Help them develop realistic plans and then provide necessary guidance for completion and evaluation. Plan activities beyond the community.	Become an advisor, let teens plan and assume responsibility for carrying out plans. Time is precious- if programs are filled with "busy work," then teens will lose patience and interest.



## 4-H Delivery Modes

In Virginia there are three delivery modes: 4-H Clubs, 4-H Enrichment, and 4-H Camping. Each is explained below.

### 4-H Clubs

#### ***What is a 4-H Club?***

A 4-H Club is an organized group of youngsters (ages 9-19) with elected officers and a planned program that is conducted throughout the year or the majority of the year. Clubs are lead by volunteer leaders and may focus on one or more project areas. Club officers conduct monthly organizational meetings. Members also participate in a variety of learning experiences in their organizational meeting as well as within their project meetings. Project meetings may be held as often as deemed necessary, but at least once a month.

Club officers, made up of youth members, are elected each year and serve in the various leadership positions at each meeting. The officers conduct the meeting using parliamentary procedures.

Four-H clubs may meet as neighborhood clubs (**known as Community Clubs**), as after school clubs, or as within school clubs. The "key" is that all clubs should have officers, be managed by volunteers, meet over a sustained period of time, and are focused on developmental growth.

#### ***Purpose of 4-H Clubs***

The 4-H club is the ideal 4-H delivery method for reaching and involving boys and girls in the 4-H program. The club setting serves as the center of activity that generates enthusiasm and support for participation in 4-H activities, events, and programs outside of the local club. The 4-H club meeting is an important learning experience for the youth, as well as for adults working with those youth. Youth and family members may participate in 4-H in a variety of ways. Ideally, participation in 4-H is over a long period of time in both organizational and project programming. Major emphasis is on 4-H educational programs delivered to youth.

Through the **club delivery mode**, Four-H in working with youth has the opportunity to meet the following objectives:

- ✓ To offer a wide array of programs and support
- ✓ To place a high value on youth participation
- ✓ To encourage long-term and sustained involvement
- ✓ To provide a progression of learning activities and experiences
- ✓ To promote developmental growth
- ✓ To provide a nurturing environment of support



- ✓ To build competencies, including health/physical, personal/social, cognitive/creative, vocational, and citizenship.

### ***Participation in 4-H Clubs***

Participation in planning and implementing club programs will help members to:

- develop a sense of self-confidence,
- learn to make decisions,
- develop a sense of belonging,
- try new ideas and methods,
- develop skills in group discussions,
- learn benefits of group cooperation and teamwork,
- develop leadership and citizenship skills, and
- develop a sense of responsibility and follow-through.

## **Other Types of 4-H Clubs**

### ***4-H In-School Clubs***

Volunteer or teacher led, it is more difficult to have in-depth parent involvement as outlined for community clubs, but parents should be involved as much as possible. Parents can be involved by letter with a form indicating support for child project(s) and 4-H activities or events.

### ***4-H After-School Club***

Quality after-school programs provide safe, engaging environments that motivate and inspire learning outside of the regular school day. While there is no single formula for success in after-school programs, it has been found that effective programs combine academic, enrichment, cultural, and recreational activities to guide learning and engage youth in wholesome activities.

### ***4-H Project Clubs***

Members may come from a broader geographic area. Parental and volunteer involvement is important. Members concentrate on one project area through the club, but also enroll in other projects under the supervision of a volunteer or parent.



## **4-H Enrichment Programs**

Youth involved in 4-H Enrichment Programs (ages 9-19) are participants in learning experiences not involving organized club activities. Enrichment programs may be coordinated with school personnel serving as volunteer teachers of 4-H curricula meeting the standards of learning. It may also be a special interest group in which youth complete six or more learning activities. Finally, it may be youth involved in 4-H instructional TV experiences; or may be a member participating in 4-H under the guidance of a parent or other adult as a lone member without group affiliation.

The purposes of enrichment programs are to teach youth subject matter in a short time frame, expose new youth to 4-H, and to involve those youth in 4-H for further programming opportunities--moving them toward club participation.

### ***4-H Special Interest Groups***

May be similar to a project club, but are often organized for a specific short-term purpose and do not have officers. Programs such as 4-H special interest groups are important because they expose 4-H members, parents, volunteers, and donors to other 4-H opportunities (or in some cases introduce them to 4-H).

### ***4-H School Enrichment Program***

Youth are participants in learning experiences. Enrichment programs may be coordinated with school personnel serving as volunteer teachers of 4-H curricula meeting the Standards of Learning; may be a special interest group in which youth complete six or more learning activities; may be youth involved in 4-H instructional TV experiences; or, may be a member participating in 4-H under the guidance of a parent or other adult as a lone member, but without group affiliation.

## **4-H Camping**

### ***Purpose of 4-H Camping***

In Virginia, 4-H camp is open to any boy or girl who meets the age guidelines. Youth do not have to be a 4-H member to attend 4-H camps; however, they should be provided the opportunity to join. All youth attending 4-H camp are eligible and should be encouraged to join 4-H.

Since 4-H camping is educationally focused, it is recognized as a delivery method for 4-H programming. Thus, youth who attend 4-H camp may sign up as 4-H members since they are receiving more than the minimum number of hours of educational instruction (six hours) during the camp.





It is strongly encouraged for agents and volunteers to utilize all camping events as a method by which to recruit and involve new youth, as well as those presently involved, into the 4-H program. All youth participating in camp should be given information concerning additional 4-H opportunities throughout the year in their unit, district, and state.

### ***Types of 4-H Camps***

There are a variety of 4-H camps conducted through the year at Virginia's six 4-H Educational Centers including residential, junior camp, special interest camps, weekend camps, and others. Additionally, many units conduct day 4-H camps to meet the needs of youth throughout the Commonwealth. The following is a list of the most commonly conducted Virginia 4-H Camps:

#### **CLOVERBUD 4-H CAMP**

Programming events for youth 5-8 years of age. Youth must meet the minimum age of 5 between October 1 and September 30 of the 4-H year, and must not be older than the maximum age of 8.

#### **RESIDENTIAL 4-H CAMP**

Programming events in which campers stay overnight from 2-5 days generally. Most residential camps last 5 days, with campers staying overnight for 4 nights. The junior 4-H camps, designed for youth 9-13 years of age, fall into this category.

#### **SPECIAL INTEREST 4-H CAMP**

Programming events focusing mainly on a specific project or theme area. There is a large variety of special interest 4-H camps available throughout the state.

#### **DAY 4-H CAMPS**

Programming events in which campers participate in learning activities throughout the day, but do not stay overnight.



# Risk Management

## What is risk management?<sup>3</sup>

The health and safety of 4-H youth and volunteers is critically important. The Virginia 4-H program maintains a safe environment for youth and volunteers using a risk management process. Therefore, “risk management” is the term given to the process that we use to identify, analyze, and manage risk during 4-H activities. The objective of risk management is the protection of our financial, physical, and human resources and assets from loss or destruction.

## Who is responsible for risk management?

Risk management involves protecting yourself as a 4-H volunteer and protecting 4-H youth. Therefore, everyone (4-H staff and volunteers) is responsible for risk management and maintaining a safe environment for all 4-H participants!

## What is the process of risk management?

*Risk management occurs in 1 of 4 ways:*

### **AVOID RISK**

(Ex: Discontinue a risky component of a program)

### **TRANSFER RISK**

(Ex: Insurance, contracting with another company to provide some services)

### **REDUCE RISK**

(Ex: Loss prevention through a safety program, staff and volunteer training, rules /code-of-conduct, separation or duplication of records)

### **RETAIN RISK**

(Ex: In some cases, if the amount of risk involved with a particular activity or situation is minimal, then we might choose to retain.)

<sup>3</sup> Information provided by the Virginia Tech Office of Risk Management



## Risk Management Terms That Every 4-H Volunteer Should Know<sup>4</sup>

### **Duty of Care**

Anytime that we accept youth into our 4-H activities, we assume a legal “duty of care” for those youth. We are responsible for maintaining a safe environment.

### **Liability**

Synonymous with “responsibility” and involves the concept of penalty when a responsibility may not have been met. In other words, if a 4-Her becomes injured during a 4-H activity, then someone may be found “liable” for that injury.

### **Reasonable and Prudent**

In all situations, 4-H staff and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves and behave in a manner that is consistent with a “reasonable and prudent” person. In other words, 4-H staff and volunteers are expected to follow established policies and procedures, to act logically, and in a way that is reasonable in terms of the health and safety of 4-H youth.

### **Negligence**

Failure to do, or not to do, what a reasonable and prudent person would have done in the same situation. For example, if a 4-H Extension Agent establishes a safety procedure, and a volunteer ignores the procedure, and a 4-Her is injured, then the volunteer might be found to be “negligent.” This means that the volunteer failed to act as a reasonable and prudent person would in that situation. The key to risk management is avoiding negligence!

## Risk Management Emergency Card (Developed 1997)

A risk management task force developed this emergency card as a resource for staff and volunteers (Publication #490-101). This card can be used to identify important emergency contacts and telephone numbers. You can order this publication through the VCE Intranet.

(Side 1)

Virginia Tech Virginia Cooperative Extension

**Emergency Procedures**

*Ensure all steps are followed in accidents resulting in serious injury and/or fatality and incidents that involve law enforcement and/or may result in litigation.*

- Priority attention: care for injured; stabilize the situation.
- Call 911 or police, ambulance and clergy as appropriate.
- A responsible Cooperative Extension representative stays at the scene.
- Make NO statements to anyone other than the police, a supervisor/in coordinator, Virginia Tech Legal Counsel, Risk Mgmt., or University Relations.
- Appropriate person must immediately contact the parent, guardian or next of kin to the injured and inform them of the situation.
- Contact your supervisor, unit coordinator and Risk Management ASAP.
- Contact Virginia Tech Legal Counsel.
- Immediately complete the Accident Incident report and take notes, FACTS ONLY. A copy of the report form can be found in the Risk Mgmt. Guide.
- Refer all media to University Relations. **DO NOT MAKE ANY COMMENT!**
- Call Virginia Tech Police for assistance if you cannot reach emergency contacts.

(Side 2)

**EMERGENCY CONTACTS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

First Contact: Risk Mgmt. Office: 540-231-3439 Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Office: \_\_\_\_\_

University Relations: 540-231-5386 VT Legal Counsel: 540-231-6293

State Police: Cell Phone #77 State Police Local: \_\_\_\_\_

VT Police: 540-233-6411 Local Police: \_\_\_\_\_

**THESE PROCEDURES SHOULD ONLY BE FOLLOWED IN THE EVENT OF A FATALITY OR AN EMERGENCY WHICH INVOLVES SERIOUS INJURIES OR LIFE THREATENING INCIDENTS.**

Information on how to handle incidents of a lesser nature, or on what forms to complete may be found in the Risk Management Information Guide for Virginia Cooperative Extension. The general switchboard number for Virginia Tech is: 540-231-6000. Publication No. 490-101



<sup>4</sup> Information provided by the Virginia Tech Office of Risk Management

## **Above Suspicion Policy**

[NOTE: This information was selected from the Virginia 4-H "Above Suspicion Policy" For a complete review of this information, please see the Virginia Cooperative Extension, 4-H Handbook and Policy Guidelines (3.13 Above Suspicion Policy), or visit <http://www.ext.vt.edu/vce/specialty/4h/handbook/policy.html#3.13>.]

### ***Purpose***

The purpose of the Above Suspicion Policy is: (1) To provide a safe and caring environment for youth and adults in all 4-H program situations, and (2) To protect both salaried and volunteer staff from situations that potentially could occur in any 4-H youth program, including camps, trips, and other events, where there is potential for being accused of abuse.

### ***Policy Overview***

1. Volunteers, both teens and adults, as well as salaried staff shall be screened prior to being selected to serve in a volunteer or salaried role in 4-H. Screening may include personal interviews, police background checks, and/or letters of recommendation, as defined in volunteer guidelines.
2. Prior to the beginning of any 4-H event, all staff shall receive information and instruction necessary to be made fully aware of the potential liability risks in the following areas: (a) SEXUAL HARRASSMENT, (b) CHILD MOLESTATION, (c) ONE-ON-ONE SITUATIONS, and (d) PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SEXUAL ABUSE
3. At times, volunteers may need to stay in a room with 4-H youth in order to provide supervision. During those situations, there will be at least two or more adults in the room.
4. All supervisory staff (salaried and volunteers) should avoid one-on-one situations whenever possible.
5. Each 4-H Educational Center's "Above Suspicion Policy", will apply for all activities and events conducted at that 4-H Educational Center.



## **Bloodborne Pathogens**

[NOTE: This information was selected from the Virginia 4-H "Blood Borne Pathogens and Post Exposure Plan." For a complete review of this information, see the Virginia Cooperative Extension, Risk Management (5.1 Blood Borne Pathogens / Post Exposure Plan) or visit <http://www.ext.vt.edu/vce/policies/riskmgt/riskmgt.html#blood>.]

### ***Purpose***

The purpose of this plan is to educate 4-H staff and volunteers about the risks associated with "exposures" to infectious substances and to inform them about the procedures to follow if they are exposed.

### ***Definition of Exposure***

An "exposure" is: contact with any potentially infectious substance (such as blood, urine, or other bodily fluids), through inhalation, needles, contact with an open wound, non-intact skin, eyes or other mucous membrane. Please note that contact of blood or bodily fluids onto intact skin does not signify an exposure and should be disinfected as outlined below.

### ***What To Do If You Are Exposed***

If a potentially infectious agent comes into contact with an open wound, broken skin, or mucous membrane, you have been exposed. You must contact the office listed below, who will give you instructions on how to proceed.

*ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICE - (540) 231-8751*

### ***Overview of Blood Borne Pathogens and Personal Protection***

1. All 4-H unit offices are responsible for assembling and providing the following personal protection equipment in a kit. If any part of a kit is used the entire kit must be disposed of. Most items needed can be obtained from your local grocery or pharmacy. For the latex gloves and hand cleaners you may want to consult with your local safety supply company.
  - Disposable towels
  - Disposable latex gloves
  - Waterless medicated hand cleaner such as a germicidal hand wash
  - Small equal size bottles of water and chlorine bleach
  - Small Plastic Bag
2. Disposable **latex gloves shall be worn in all first aid situations**.
3. Personnel (staff and volunteers) shall wash their hands and any other exposed skin as soon as possible after the removal of gloves. If personnel



are away from a facility, these body areas shall be cleaned with a waterless, germicidal hand cleaner. As soon as feasible, whether at the station or medical facility, personnel shall wash these body areas with appropriate hand washing agents, followed by soap and water.

4. Personnel shall wash as listed above, or flush eyes or other mucus membranes with water immediately or as soon as possible following contact of these body areas with blood or other potentially infectious materials. If you have an exposure read section 5.1 and Post Exposure Plan.

### ***Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines***

1. All unit offices will use the items listed in the personal protection section to deal with cleaning and disinfecting.
2. Latex gloves shall be worn during any process of cleaning or disinfecting.
3. Personnel shall not eat, drink, smoke, apply cosmetics or lip balm, or handle contact lenses during any process of cleaning or disinfecting.
4. For cleaning soiled areas, the fluids should be wiped up with the towel. The towel should be placed in the plastic bag. The containers of water and chlorine bleach should be mixed and this solution should be used to wipe down the soiled area. These towels should also be placed in the plastic bag along with the disposable latex gloves.
5. Personnel shall wash their hands and any other exposed skin as soon as possible after the removal of gloves. If personnel are away from a facility, these body areas shall be cleaned with a waterless, germicidal hand cleaner. As soon as feasible, whether at the station or medical facility, personnel shall wash these body areas with appropriate hand washing agents, (see section 5.4) followed by soap and water.
6. If a small area of clothing becomes contaminated, spot cleaning of the garment is appropriate. The spot cleaning procedure is as follows:
  - Squirt pre-cleaner(such as Shout, Spray & Wash or Liquid Tide) onto the spot once or twice. Gently rub fabric together until light foam appears. Rinse



# 4-H Enrollment Policy

## Individual

Each youth involved in 4-H who receives six or more hours of educational programming is to be enrolled as a 4-H member, using the Individual 4-H Enrollment Form or Group Enrollment Form. These forms are to be obtained from the unit 4-H office or downloaded at the following web address:

*<http://www.ext.vt.edu/vce/specialty/4h/materials.html>*

## Group

You may use a Group 4-H Enrollment Form to enroll a 4-H club. If so, every youth's name, age, gender, race, and project choice is to be on the form. The school address or meeting place may serve to be on the form. *The school address or meeting place may serve as each youth's address for receiving mail if the school does not wish to provide address or names of parents.*

## Age Guidelines for 4-H Events

### ***4-H Club Age Policy***

For each of the club categories described above, youth must turn the entry age during the 4-H year, October 1 through September 30. That is, youth who turn 5, 9, 12, and 14 between October 1 and September 30, participate in these respective categories:

Cloverbud 4-H Members:	5 through 8 year olds
Junior 4-H Members:	9 through 11 year olds
Intermediate 4-H Members:	12 through 13 year olds
Senior 4-H Members:	14 through 18 year olds

Eligibility for 4-H membership terminates on December 31 of the year the member has his/her 19th birthday.

Senior 4-H age requirements for National contests are ages 14 to 18 prior to January 1 of the year the youth participates in a National event.

For local and state competitive events in which there is a regional or national contest, the age guidelines of the regional or national contest shall apply. Those youth, born between January 1 and September 30, affected by this policy, are allowed to participate in the next lower age category.



### **4-H Camp Age Policy**

In order to clarify confusion concerning the Virginia 4-H age policy for campers, counselors-in-training, teen counselors, and adult leaders, and eligibility for attending 4-H camps at the 4-H educational centers, the 4-H Leadership Council enacted the following policy on February, 2000.

The 4-H year is October 1 – September 30.

If a child is 4 years of age, but will become 5 years of age during the 4-H year, he/she is eligible to attend a Cloverbud 4-H Camp.

If a child is 8 years of age, but will become 9 years of age during the 4-H year in which a 4-H junior camp is held, he/she is eligible to attend a 4-H junior camp. [NOTE: this covers the lower minimum age requirement].

If a child is 13 years of age, but will become 14 years of age during the 4-H year in which a 4-H junior camp is held, he/she is eligible to attend a 4-H junior camp. [NOTE: this covers the upper maximum age requirement].

This does not change the age requirements for a Counselor-in-Training (CIT) or TEEN Camp Counselor. In order to be eligible to become a 4-H Teen Camp Counselor, a teen must be 14 years of age or older by January 1 of the 4-H year.

#### **Age on January 1 of the current year:**

- 13 years of age may attend 4-H camp as a camper (or CIT)
- 14 years of age may attend 4-H camp as a Teen Camp Counselor

#### **Birthday between January 2 through and including September 30 of the current year:**

- 13 years of age may attend 4-H camp as a camper
- 14 years of age may attend 4-H camp as a camper (or CIT)

## **Other Questions and Concerns??**

Contact your local unit 4-H Extension Agent (or 4-H manager of unit 4-H program) if you have any questions or concerns about your role as a 4-H volunteer.

***Thank you for your commitment and dedication to Virginia youth!***





## Basic Orientation Checklist for Supervisors of 4-H Volunteers

*(Please use this checklist as a resource for volunteer management. Following training, the volunteer and trainer should sign this checklist. This form should be filed in your volunteer records.)*

1. **Overview of 4-H**
  - a.  Give a brief history of the 4-H program
  - b.  Explain 4-H delivery modes
  
2. **Relationship of a 4-H volunteer within the overall unit program**
  - a.  Discussion mission, purpose and scope of unit program
  - b.  Give a brief history of the unit program
  - c.  Explain the responsibilities of the program committee
  - d.  Show and explain organizational chart
  - e.  Explain major program issues
  - f.  Describe types of volunteers involved in program
  - g.  Explain the specific 4-H delivery modes in the unit and projects available
  - h.  Identify the 4-H Center serving your unit and discuss 4-H camping programs
  - i.  Provide a glossary of terms used in 4-H and/or with the unit program
  - j.  Discuss management practices
  
3. **Responsibilities of a 4-H volunteer**
  - a.  Give volunteer a current position description
  - b.  Discuss individual duties and responsibilities
  - c.  Provide detailed instruction (if applicable)
  - d.  Indicate availability of resources and other help when needed
  - e.  Provide learning aids and procedural manuals
  - f.  Explain procedures for obtaining and caring for 4-H property
  - g.  Explain relationships to other agencies
  - h.  Stress security of confidential information and public trust
  - i.  Negotiate and sign volunteer job agreement
  
4. **The relationship of the 4-H volunteer's work to that of other volunteers**
  - a.  Tell the volunteer who his/her supervisor is and who, if anyone, reports to the volunteer
  - b.  Discuss the responsibilities and rights in volunteer relationships
  
5. **Orientation to other office staff**
  - a.  Describe the new volunteer's position to other staff member
  - b.  Briefly mention duties of each person introduced to volunteer
  
6. **Office management and operations**
  - a.  Explain office procedures
  - b.  Discuss association practices, procedures, policies, and plan of work
  - c.  Explain any unusual working conditions, hazards, etc.
  - d.  Provide copy of enrollment forms (leaders & members)



7. **Physical layout and available facilities**
  - a.  Show volunteer own work area
  - b.  Show volunteer classrooms, elevators, rest rooms, water fountain, etc.
  - c.  Discuss eating facilities, coffee machines, etc.
  
8. **Information resources**
  - a.  Show volunteer copy of 4-H Newsletter and describe content
  - b.  Explain VCE Intranet and gaining access to relevant volunteer information
  - c.  Describe other volunteer resources (volunteer newsletters, etc.)
  
9. **Assessment of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KNA)**
  - a.  What training or experiences have you had that prepared you for your responsibilities as a volunteer?
  - b.  What knowledge, skills, and abilities do you already have?
  - c.  What knowledge, skills, and abilities do you need or feel would be helpful to be effective and satisfied in this role?
  - d.  What barriers exist in your functioning in this role? What resources do you need in order to fulfill your responsibilities as a volunteer?
  
10. **4-H volunteer benefits**
  - a.  Discuss liability insurance
  - b.  Explain travel reimbursement and related procedures
  - c.  Discuss use of association owned automobiles
  - d.  Discuss eligibility to join VAA4-HVL (Virginia Association of Adult 4-H Volunteer Leaders)
  
11. **Staff development and training opportunities**
  - a.  Explain pre-service requirements
  - b.  Explain opportunities for in-service education and training
  - c.  Explain Master 4-H Training opportunity
  - d.  Explain VAA4-HVL conferences
  - e.  Review expectation to discuss future goals with volunteer
  
12. **Policies**
  - a.  Age guidelines for 4-H programs (Cloverbud, Junior, Intermediate, Senior)
  - b.  Risk Management (Liability/Negligence, Above Suspicion, Bloodborne Pathogens, 4-H Health History Form, Accident/Incident Form)
  - c.  AA/EEO/CR/ADA Requirements –have volunteer complete compliance form
  - d.  Proper handling of 4-H assets
  - e.  Use of 4-H Clover for Publicity
  - f.  Confidentiality
  - g.  Sexual Harassment Policies
  - h.  Ethics on the Job
  - i.  Use of animals

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*Volunteer Signature*

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*Date*

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*4-H Extension Agent (or other representative)*

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*Date*



# Appendix: 4-H Forms