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4-H Officer Handbook

This 4-H Officer Handbook belongs to:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Officer Title: _____

4-H Club: _____

4-H Year _____ **to** _____

4-H Leader: _____



Congratulations! You have been elected as an officer for your club! This comes with great responsibilities to not only represent your club, but also your county and the entire 4-H Youth Development program. Every successful 4-H club has a good team of officers. A good officer displays teamwork and cooperation among members through leadership and organization. Each officer is a piece of the puzzle and has an important role to play for the overall success of the club. Together, you are responsible for the leadership and guidance of your 4-H Club for your 4-H members.

4-H's motto challenges every 4-H member—To Make The Best Better! This 4-H motto doesn't just happen. Intentional planning is the main ingredient to having successful experiences. 4-H club members should make the club's decisions, with leadership provided by the club's officers. 4-H Adult Volunteer Leaders are present as advisors, project leaders, resource providers, coaches and facilitators to nurture the planning of the 4-H club as well as youth leadership.

Good officers are enthusiastic, tactful, and friendly. They work to get each member of the club involved in plans and to give everyone a fair chance to participate. They accept and respect each member and encourage everyone to contribute to the club. Club officers are proud of their jobs and always do their best. They get things done right and on time.

Good Officer Characteristics

Honest

FRIENDLY

Fair

SINCERE

Loyal

RESPECTFUL

Summary

A 4-H Club needs officers who will:

- Serve the group.
- Work with all members.
- Give everyone a chance to participate.
- Share leadership.
- Be dependable.
- Plan a program that is in the best interest of all members.
- Work well with others.
- Try to make meetings worthwhile and interesting.

Rate Yourself as an Officer and Club Member

Check the statements that apply to you. Try to have all the following checked by the end of the year.

- ☐ I try to know the people I am working with.
- ☐ I know the duties and responsibilities of my office.
- ☐ I attend meetings regularly.
- ☐ I am willing to learn more in order to be a better officer.
- ☐ I am on time for meetings.
- ☐ I try to spend some time at meetings with each club member.
- ☐ I accept responsibilities willingly and enjoy doing more than just what is required of me.
- ☐ I try to work cooperatively with the leaders and other officers.
- ☐ I am willing to give credit to others.
- ☐ I encourage new members to join and make them feel welcome.
- ☐ I listen to ideas and suggestions from others.
- ☐ I am willing to help conduct and take part in the meetings.
- ☐ I am ready to try new ideas.

Committees

The reason to have committees in a 4-H club is to allow 4-H members to get involved in their club and have a voice in the programs and events.

- Committees allow small groups to tackle large tasks.
- It is a great goal that every 4-H club member participates in one committee through the year.
- Committee meetings do not follow any certain type of parliamentary procedure.
- It is important for everyone to feel welcome to share their ideas and opinions.
- Five to seven is a good number of members for a committee.
- A 4-H volunteer leader is needed at all committee meetings to provide guidance and support for the members.
- Your club should have several committees. The exact number will depend on how big the club is and what you want to do.

Each committee should:

- Know its specific assignment.
- Give serious thought and study to the problem or tasks.
- Seek opinions and suggestions outside the committee membership, if needed.
- Encourage cooperation among its members in working out details.
- Prepare recommendations for club action.
- Report back to the club.

What is Leadership?

Leadership is ...

...the ability to influence the thinking and actions of people. Good leadership helps others in the group to become the best they can be and it inspires everyone to want to “make the best better”.



Tips for Being a Good Leader

- Be a Team Player
- Be thoughtful of others
- Be helpful
- Be a good sport
- Be reliable and responsible
- Celebrate others' success
- Be fair
- Have fun with 4-H!

Characteristics of a Good Leader

One of the greatest challenges in learning to be a successful leader is learning to understand yourself and to know as much as possible about the others in your group.

- **Recognize ability** - If you find what a person is good at or interested in, you will find he or she has some ability that can help the club.
- **Grow in wisdom** - Enhance your wisdom through training, meetings and sharing experiences with others. Be open minded and admit when you don't know all the answers, but strive to find them if you can.
- **Work with others** - Leadership means guiding people into making their own decisions and doing things for themselves.
- **Cooperate** - From planning your meetings to organizing fundraisers, cooperation is key. You must be willing to compromise in order to be successful.
- **Lend a helping hand** - Your 4-H'ers may need a little coaxing to gain courage every once in awhile. Give them support by showing them how and telling them why.
- **Play** - Get in the game. When you are enthusiastic and fun, your attitude rubs off on others. Recreation is a great opportunity to learn more about the members and let them learn more about you.

Nominations and Elections

Nominations and elections are important club business.

- You should tell the members about the election ahead of time, so they can be thinking about the kinds of officers they want to have.
- Make sure everyone knows what the duties of each office are.
- Members may suggest, or nominate, someone for an office during the election meeting.

To offer a nomination:

- A member obtains the floor and says, "I nominate (name) for (office)."
- A nomination does not need a second.
- The president then asks for further nominations.
- When there are no more nominations, a member says, "I move to close the nominations."
- If the motion is carried, the members then vote on the candidates.
- Candidates are voted upon in the order in which they are nominated.
- Members may vote by raising their hand, standing or using a ballot, however, voting for officers is usually by ballot.
- If voting is done by hand raising or standing, the candidates usually leave the room during the vote for their office.
- It takes a majority, one vote over half, to be elected. If you have 17 members, a majority is 9.
- When the vote has been counted, the president announces the name of the person elected.



Voting

- After a reasonable amount of time for discussion the president calls for a vote.
- The president should repeat the motion so that the membership or assembly understands what they are voting on.
- The president asks the members to vote.
- The president then indicates whether the motion was passed, or defeated.

Ways to Vote

- **Voice Vote** – The president says “all in favor of the motion say ‘aye,’ all opposed say ‘no.’”
- **Standing Vote** – Members stand so their vote for or against can be counted
- **Show of Hands** – Members raise their hands so the president can count their vote for or against.
- **Ballot** – The president has helpers pass out blank or pre-printed slips of paper so that members can write down their votes. Ballots are then counted by a few appointed individuals and the results are reported back to the club.
- **Roll Call** – Each member votes for or against as their name is called.
- **Honor System** – Members close their eyes and vote by a show of hands.



Officer Responsibilities

It is an honor to be a 4-H club officer and like all honors, it carries responsibilities. As an officer, you will manage the planning and leadership of your club's programs and business. You will be a decision maker of the club's legal, financial, social and educational responsibilities. Officers are responsible for ensuring that the club is inclusive and welcomes all 4-H members and youth in your community! Each officer has general responsibilities to the group and specific duties of his or her elected office.

The success of a 4-H club depends on the officer's ability to work with all other club members.

A 4-H club needs officers who will:

- Learn and act upon the duties of their office.
- Attend an officer training if available.
- Attend club officer meetings.
- Attend & participate in club meetings & activities.
- Work well with other officers, members and leaders.
- Give everyone a chance to participate.
- Be dependable.
- Help to plan a program for the year.
- Try to make the meetings worthwhile and interesting.
- Be a role model.
- Represent 4-H in a positive manner.
- Give your opinion on issues.
- Listen to what others have to say on issues.
- Recruit new members and organize the club.
- Be enthusiastic and interested in the club.



Officer	Name	Phone	Email
President			
Vice-President			
Secretary			
Treasurer			

Motions

A member who wants the club to vote on something makes a motion.

To make a motion:

- A member must be recognized by standing and saying, "Mr. or Madame President"
- The president will recognize one member at a time.
- The member should state the motion: "I move to . . ."
- Motions must be seconded.
- If the motion is not seconded, it is dropped.
- The president will restate the motion after it is made.
- The president will ask for discussion.
- Only one motion is permitted on the floor at a time.
- After discussion, the president will call for a vote.
- The motion is passed if more members vote "Aye" than "No." If there is doubt about the vote, a show of hands or a standing vote should be called.
- The president then says, "The motion is carried," or, "The motion is lost," according to the vote.

If you need to amend a motion:

- After the original motion was made and seconded, during the discussion a member may say: "I move to amend this motion by ...(state the proposed change)"
- The proposed amendment must be seconded
- Discuss the amendment
- Vote on the amendment. Voting on the amendment is just voting to change the motion, not voting to actually approve the original motion.
- If the amendment passes, discussion continues on the original motion as amended. If the amendment does not pass, continue discussion on the original motion.
- A vote is taken on the motion in it's final form.

Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary Procedure is an orderly way of conducting a business meeting. Club Officers should become familiar with the basics of parliamentary procedure. These rules provide a way for every 4-H member to have an opportunity to voice their opinion on how their 4-H club should make decisions.

Basic Parliamentary Procedure Rules

- Only one member speaks at a time
- There can be only one motion before the group at a time.
- If a motion is amended, vote on the amendment before voting on the original motion.

Discussion Tips

- Always gain recognition from the president.
- Speak on the motion that is on the floor.
- Give reasons why the motion is a good or bad idea or reasons for an amendment.

The gavel is used as a symbol of authority to support an orderly meeting. The number of times a president raps the gavel has meaning and the membership is to respond.

- Calls the meeting to order - 2 raps
- Adjournment - 1 rap
- All stand - 3 raps
- Restore order - a series of raps
- All be seated - 1 rap
- End of Business - 1 rap



Roles of Adults

4-H Adult Volunteer Leaders serve as coaches to the officers. The amount of adult guidance will depend greatly on the age and developmental make up of the group.

Leadership is not an inborn trait, but is developed through experience. Much like when you learn to ride a bike, you need some support at the beginning, but as you gain confidence and experience you are able to ride on your own. The same is true of leadership.

4-H Adult Leaders should teach members how to think, not what to think.

Main Responsibilities of the Adult Leaders

- Assist the officers in learning their officer roles.
- Assist the officer team in planning their club year calendar and budget.
- Meet with the officers before each meeting.
- Let the officers run the club meeting.
- Celebrate their success.
- Believe that the club truly belongs to the youth.
- Believe that young people are capable of managing their own affairs but need the guidance of a knowledgeable adult.

Youth and adults should be partners in leading the 4-H club meeting. Adults coach and guide youth of all ages to become leaders.

President

The president leads the club meetings, ensures that officers give reports on club business, and strives to engage all members in club committees and activities. The president's leadership directly affects the involvement of the 4-H member in the club!

The duties of the President may include but are not limited to:

- Be a role model.
- Meet with club officers and adult leaders before each meeting.
- Arrange to have the Vice President take over in their absence.
- Prepare a meeting agenda before the meeting.
- See that the meeting starts and ends on time.
- Preside over meetings in a courteous manner according to parliamentary procedure..
- Casts the deciding vote if there is a tie.
- Helps other officers with their jobs as needed.
- Make guests feel welcome and greet them as they arrive.
- Encourage everyone to participate in the meeting.
- Remain neutral throughout the meeting.
- Upon club approval, sign official minutes.
- Become familiar with parliamentary procedure.
- Appoint committees as needed.
- Be prepared and organized for their part in the meeting.

In general, it is the president's duty to make sure everyone is working together and everyone feels free to be a part of the discussion. The president may need to act more like a facilitator, to watch, listen and ask questions that cause others to think.

Meeting Order

Agenda for a Regular Business Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Ceremonies- Pledges
3. Roll Call
4. Introduction of Guests
5. Minutes and Correspondence
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Reports
8. Unfinished Business
9. New Business—(Rule of Thumb– Unfinished and New Business are items requiring formal discussion and a vote. It is not a time for announcements or committee work.)
10. Announcements
11. Adjournment for Program, Education or Recreation



Ending a meeting

When all items on the meeting's business agenda have been completed, the president calls for a motion to adjourn the meeting as follows:

- A member is recognized by the president and says, "I move to adjourn the meeting."
- A member seconds it.
- The president says, "Seeing no objections, this meeting is adjourned."

Meetings

Your club meetings should should take about 45-90 minutes and consist of three segments:

Business Meeting, Program & Social Activities.

Social Activities

- 4-H members want to have fun! This is a great time for your 4-H club to get to know each other too!
- Icebreakers, games, and activities will help the members to socialize.
- Choose activities that are appropriate for all ages and that fit into the time frame allowed.

Business

- This portion of the meeting should always begin at a scheduled time.
- Keep to the agenda and discourage excessive discussion on individual issues.
- Officer, committee and project reports should be complete but brief. Larger clubs often schedule alternating reports at each meeting rather than have all project groups or committees reports at every meeting.

Program

- This is a great way for 4-H members to learn.
- This should be tailored to the interests of the membership.
- Outside guest speakers can be invited to address topics of interest.
- This is a perfect time for 4-H members to give 4-H demonstrations.
- You can also discuss upcoming county events, public speaking skills or project information.



Presidential Phrases

Call to Order	"The meeting will come to order."
Pledge to the Flags	"(Member Name) will lead the pledges."
Roll Call	"The secretary will please call the roll."
Reading of the Minutes	"The secretary will read the minutes of the last meeting."
Approval of the Minutes	"Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes?" If not, "The minutes are approved as read." After additions and corrections, "I call for a motion to approve the minutes as corrected."
Treasurer's Report	"The treasurer will present the treasurer's report" No motion is required to approve the report.
Unfinished Business	Present any old business. Then ask, "Is there any more unfinished business?"
New Business	Present any new business . Then ask, "Is there any more new business?"
Adjournment	"Do I have a motion to adjourn?" "Are there any objections?" "The meeting is adjourned ."

Vice-President

The vice president is the president's assistant and greets members and guests at the meetings. It is also the Vice President's role to help in developing and carrying out the activities of the club's program calendar, and provide leadership and direction for the club's educational programs.

The duties of the Vice-President may include but are not limited to:

- Learns the duties of the President.
- Presides at meetings when the president is absent.
- Greets guests at the door.
- Introduces guests during the meeting.
- Plans the program for each club meeting.
- Arrive early to help greet members and guests as they arrive.
- Be prepared and organized for their part in the meeting.
- Assists the presenter or special guest with any help for the presentation.
- Checks on meeting arrangements, such as seating, lighting, temperature and location, and is responsible for club equipment.



Planning a Meeting

4-H meetings give your club members a chance to think and act as a group. Meetings let members learn from each other and have fun.

Planning is the key to developing effective club meetings. The meeting times and order of the meeting should be arranged to meet the needs of your club. There is no one size fits all for 4-H meetings.

A well planned and organized meeting will keep the interest of the members and minimize possible disruptive behavior.

Why have 4-H Club Meetings?

- Sharing information – project, club, county, regional, state and national information and opportunities.
- Networking - meeting people, exchanging ideas, learning from others.
- Building life skills (public speaking, record keeping, financial management, etc.).
- Help new or younger 4-H members become acquainted with 4-H terms.
- Facilitate club decision making.
- Having fun!



Planning the Year

Officers and 4-H organizational leaders should hold regular monthly planning meetings. These meetings will assist the club in meeting their goals, establishing a calendar of events, and planning program activities and agendas for the monthly club meetings. The meetings also help address club issues.

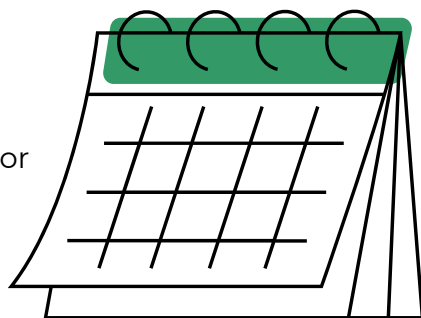
Setting Goals

Develop goals for your 4-H's membership, programs, community service and leadership. Here are some examples of goals the 4-H club may have:

- This club will increase membership by 15 youth this year.
- The club will conduct three service learning projects this year.
- Every 4-H member will have the opportunity to serve on at least one club committee.
- All 4-H members will give one demonstration on one of their 4-H projects.

Setting Calendar Events and Program

- Plan parent orientations and membership events.
- Set monthly officer meetings.
- Program planning should be prior to regular club meetings.
- Develop a year-long club program/calendar.



Budget

- Develop a proposed budget for club consideration based on the program calendar, historical and anticipated activities.

Treasurer

Duties include helping plan the club's budget for the year, maintaining all the banking records, plus providing financial records to members, the public and the University.



The duties of the Treasurer may include but are not limited to:

- Develop a club budget for the year, with officers and leaders.
- Receive all money for the club.
- Put money in a club bank account.
- Pay out money when approved by the club.
- Promptly pay all bills authorized for payment by the club.
- Check the monthly bank statements and balance (reconcile) the club ledger reports.
- Keep accurate, up to date records .
- Present a treasurer's report at each club meeting .
- Maintain an inventory of club property and equipment.
- Arrive early to help the other officers greet members and guests as they arrive.
- Be prepared and organized for their part in the meeting.

Some bank policies may not allow minors to be able to sign checks or be listed on 4-H Club Bank Accounts. Every effort should be made by the Treasurer and 4-H Organizational Leader so that the Treasurer handles as many of the above duties with the most involvement possible.




Secretary

The secretary keeps a record of what the club does, keeps accurate records, and handles its correspondence.

The duties of the Secretary may include but are not limited to:

- Record the happenings, or “take minutes,” of each meeting.
- Keeps a record of attendance at each meeting.
- Call roll. Roll call can be done by calling each name, having a sign in sheet or taking attendance as members arrive.
- Read the minutes of the last meeting when the president calls for them.
- Make corrections to the minutes if the club members indicate they are needed.
- Keep an updated member list.
- Read any correspondence received by the club.
- Write letters (such as thank you notes) on behalf of the club.
- Sit next to the president at the club meetings.
- Arrive early to help greet members and guests as they arrive.
- Be prepared and organized for their part in the meeting.

As a Club Officer, you will gain experience, knowledge, and skills in the areas of:
**CITIZENSHIP
LEADERSHIP
LIFE SKILLS**

 *To Make the Best* 
BETTER

Good 4-H club meetings are the result of:

- Efficient leadership.
- Adequate facilities and space.
- Well-planned educational programs.
- Active and involved members

Rules for an Enthusiastic Officer Team

- Help each other be right – not wrong.
- Look for ways to make ideas work – not reasons they won't.
- If in doubt – check it out!
- Help each other win, and take pride in other's victories.
- Speak positively about each other at every opportunity.
- Maintain a positive attitude, no matter the circumstances.
- Act with initiative, as if it all depends on you.
- Do everything with enthusiasm – it is contagious.
- Don't lose faith and never give up!



WHY MEETINGS FAIL

Don't make these mistakes!

- Key people (officers, leaders) not present.
- No Agenda!
- Lack of leadership, organization, control.
- Lack of participation.
- Getting off subject.
- Nothing accomplished or learned.
- Arguing or noisy
- Too long.

Other Officers

Historian

- The Historian maintains the club's scrap-book to document important events.
- Adding names, dates and short descriptions to scrapbook entries helps future members know what took place.
- The historian uses creativity to record memories for the group!

Parliamentarian

- The Parliamentarian's responsibility is to keep order at the club meetings.
- They should be knowledgeable about parliamentary procedure, clarify rules and help the president conduct an orderly business meeting

Photographer

- The Photographer is responsible for taking photos of club activities and events.
- Photos are important for the reporter to submit to newspapers, for the historian to include in the club's historian book, and for the members to remember all the activities of the 4-H year!.
- Members need to sign a photo release, which is included on ZSuite.

Other officers

- Other officers, such as social media coordinator, may be created as needed or desired.
- Each office should have a distinct set of duties and be an active member of the officer team. If other officers are added, outline a specific set of responsibilities for these offices.
- 4-H clubs may add, subtract or combine offices depending on the size and needs of your club.



Minutes

The minutes of a meeting are a record of a meeting. They contain what is done at the meeting, not what is said.

Minutes Should Contain:

- Type of Meeting.
- Name of 4-H Club.
- Date and Place of Meeting.
- Number in Attendance.
- Name of President and Secretary.
- Statement that the minutes were read and if they were approved.
- Record the treasurer's report in the minutes of the meeting.
- All reports and what was done about them.
- All motions– who made and seconded them and if they passed or failed.
- If there is a close vote on a motion, include the count of the vote.
- Members appointed to committees.
- Note the meeting's guest speakers and any demonstrations, entertainment or activities that took place during the meeting.
- Program Presented.
- Keep a list of topics that are discussed and require further discussion at the next meeting. These topics will be brought back up at the next meeting by you as the secretary in the unfinished business portion of the meeting.
- The time the meeting adjourned.

Recreation Leader

The recreation leader plans and leads fun activities at meetings that involve all members. This may also include helping to plan larger social events throughout the year.

The duties of the Recreation Leader may include but are not limited to:

- Keeping the membership enthusiastic and energized at meetings.
- Plan and facilitate games, ice breakers, songs and fun activities for the club so that 4-H is fun!
- Be prepared and organized for their part in the meeting.
- Make sure any game or song is appropriate for all ages of your membership.
- Involve everyone in the recreation activities and songs.
- Keep track of club's recreation supplies.
- Begin an activity or game before the meeting to give those who arrive early something to do.
- Plan more games and activities than needed for each meeting.
- Plan for special recreational events such as parties, picnics or dances throughout the year.
- Lead any singing and be prepared with songs at any time during the meeting.
- Teach new songs.
- Arrive early to help the other officers greet members and guests as they arrive.

Tips for a Successful 4-H Fun Activity

- * Give Loud Directions
- * Involve all members and visitors
- * SMILE
- * Stay on Time

Reporter

The reporter's job is to manage the 4-H club's communication with the community, county extension office, other 4-H clubs and its members. The reporter tells the public about what your club does. The reporter can write and send in news articles to the local newspaper, county 4-H newsletter or school newsletters.

Writing News Articles:

1. Use WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY and HOW
2. Start with the most important facts.
3. Don't make MISTAKES.
4. Write in THIRD person only. (He, She, It, They, Him, Her, Them)
5. Keep it simple! (Write easy-to-read sentences, use a short word instead of a long word, and keep paragraphs short.)

The duties of the Reporter may include but are not limited to:

- Attend club activities that would make good news stories.
- Write and submit news releases about 4-H activities to newspapers and radio and TV stations.
- Keep reports factual.
- Give accurate information.
- Use full names and check spelling.
- Report at club meetings about any news items that were printed or broadcast.
- Send reports and photographs to the County 4-H Agent for the County 4-H Newsletter.

