

EDGAR COUNTY 4-H POLICIES

PROGRAM YEAR

The 4-H year begins on September 1 and ends on August 31. Enrollment is open to 4-H members throughout the period. Youth may enroll in 4-H year round; however, re-enrolling 4-H'ers must enroll by February 1 and new members must enroll by April 1 in order to be eligible to show at the Edgar County 4-H Fair.

MEMBERSHIP

1. Any person, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, ancestry, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, or disability may participate in 4-H programs. Youth who are eight years of age or in the third grade and have not reached their nineteenth birthday on or before September 1 of the current 4-H year may enroll in a 4-H club.
2. Any girl or boy who is between the ages of 5-7 years of age on or before September 1 of the current 4-H year may enroll in Cloverbuds. 4-H Cloverbuds may participate at the 4-H Fair as non-competitive exhibitors in certain project areas only. Cloverbuds are not eligible for premium funds.
3. A \$20 4-H program fee will be applied to members who participate in the 4-H program. Fee waivers are provided to any youth who would be unable to participate due to financial reasons. No child will be denied the opportunity to participate in 4-H due to his/her inability to pay the program fee.
4. A member may enroll in more than one county, but may only receive 4-H premium money in one of those counties. Youth not residing in Edgar County may enroll in Edgar County 4-H; however, the member must meet the county attendance policy in order to participate in the fair and auctions. A shared membership agreement form must be completed, signed and submitted to each of the counties for approval.
5. 4-H membership may not be terminated during the 4-H year without that member's knowledge and due process. Participation in activities may be restricted due to behavior or ethical misconduct. Members will be notified in advance, when possible, when such restrictions will be enforced.
6. Tenure of membership refers to the cumulative number of "4-H years" in which the member is enrolled regardless of the location of that membership. Years of 4-H Cloverbud participation do not count toward 4-H member tenure.
7. 4-H'ers must attend a minimum number of meetings in order to be a member in good standing and be able to show/exhibit at the 4-H fair. First year members joining on or before April 1st will be required to attend two (2) meetings. College aged members must attend one (1) meeting. All other members must attend a minimum of three (3) meetings. Members are expected to participate in as part of their community club's responsibilities the following events:
 - a) Pork Chop BBQ Bash (BBQ prep the Thursday before BBQ day)
 - b) Pork Chop BBQ (held on the 4th Saturday in June)
 - c) Fair Clean Up/Preparation Day (as scheduled)



INDEPENDENT STUDY MEMBER POLICY

In order to participate in the 4-H Fair exhibition:

1. An Independent Study 4-H member must complete the Edgar County Independent Study Agreement at the time of enrollment and turn it into the office by the re-enrollment deadline.
2. Each Independent Study member shall have a minimum of six [6] contacts with a designated mentor. Mentor may be a club leader or an Extension Staff member. Contacts may be in person, through written correspondence, telephone conversations or e-mail and must be monthly, beginning no later than January of the program year. Contacts must include information on 4-H project work planned or accomplished.
3. Each Independent Study member shall participate as part of their county 4-H responsibilities in the following activities each year:
 - Pork Chop BBQ Bash (BBQ Preparation)
 - Pork Chop BBQ
 - Fair Clean Up/Preparation Day (as scheduled)



PROJECT ENROLLMENT

A **project** is an area of study a member chooses to select because of his/her personal interests. A list of all projects is in the **Pick Your Project Guide**. Leaders will receive enough copies for each family. A new or revised copy is printed each year.

To **enroll** in a project, a member must complete enrollment at 4-H online (<http://il.4honline.com>.) It is here where you will select your projects. Projects should be selected based on the suggested age and description. After enrollment, leaders will receive requested project books that are available from the State 4-H Office. They contain information to help members with their projects.

1. All 4-H members must be enrolled in a minimum of one project area by the enrollment deadline of February 1 for re-enrolling members or April 1 for new members.
2. A member may add or delete project areas up to April 1 of the current 4-H year. Consult the Green Pride Press newsletter for exact enrollment deadlines each year.

GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Edgar County 4-H members are asked to remember that they are representing the youth of Edgar County and their actions will reflect how others feel about our 4-H programs. Members are expected to comply with the following member code of conduct:

1. Be courteous and respect others.
2. Obey all rules established by the University of Illinois Extension 4-H Youth Development program and those of the local club, as well as local and state laws.
3. Treat all people fairly and animals humanely.
4. Respect the property of others.
5. Respect the authority of adult or youth volunteers, paid Extension staff, and others in leadership roles.
6. Use appropriate language and wear acceptable clothing at 4-H activities and events.
7. Show kindness to others and give assistance when needed.
8. Be honest and honor commitments.
9. Strive for personal best and keep trying to improve.
10. Accept responsibility for personal choices.

The following conduct will not be allowed by any youth participating in 4-H activities or events and is subject to disciplinary action:

1. Possession, use or distribution of alcohol and other controlled substances, including tobacco products. Information about prescription drugs should be provided to the club leader or coordinator of the 4-H activity
2. Theft or destruction of public or private property
3. Involvement in sexual misconduct or harassment
4. Unauthorized possession or use of weapons or dangerous materials, including fireworks
5. Fighting or other acts of violence

Participants may be removed from 4-H programs or activities for misconduct. The following conduct is not allowed while participating in any 4-H activity or event including overnight events and is subject to disciplinary action:

1. Willfully breaking curfew
2. Unauthorized use of vehicles
3. Leaving the site of the event without permission
4. Participating in gambling
5. Absence from the planned program
6. Intentionally interfering with or disrupting the event
7. Use of profane or abusive language
8. Disregard for public or personal property
9. Public displays of affection or inappropriate actions
10. Failure to comply with direction of Extension personnel, including designated adults acting within their duties and guidelines.

EDGAR COUNTY 4-H FAIR POLICIES

1. In order to participate in the 4-H Fair, 4-H'ers must attend a minimum number of meetings in order to be a member in good standing and be able to show/exhibit at the 4-H Fair. First year members joining on or before April 1 will be required to attend two (2) meetings. College members must attend one meeting. All other members must attend a minimum of three (3) meetings. Members are expected to participate in their club's work requirements at the annual BBQ and BBQ BASH (prep night for the BBQ).

2. All projects exhibited at the 4-H Fair must be made and shown by the exhibitor within the current 4-H year. Any project not made by the exhibitor or not made during the current 4-H year will be disqualified.
3. Fair Registration is completed online at faireentry.com. Fair entry will open on May 15 and close on July 1. No exceptions will be made.
4. Each 4-H project exhibited by an eligible member in accordance with the prevailing policies and rules set forth in the Edgar County 4-H Handbook will be judged under the Danish Award System. Blue, Red and White ribbons will be given.
 - A – Blue (Superior)
 - B – Red (Good)
 - C – White (Fair)
5. Only A rated (blue ribbon) projects are eligible for Champion, Reserve Champion or State Fair competition/awards.
6. Premiums will be paid based upon the amount of funds appropriated by the State of Illinois for state supported 4-H projects (no county projects). 4-H members are allowed to receive one premium per class exhibited in premium eligible projects. This **includes all** projects including livestock. The following formula will be used to calculate premiums:

A: 3x B: 2x C: 1x

“The Department of Agriculture shall use its best efforts to secure sufficient appropriations to fund premiums. In any year for which the General Assembly of the State of Illinois fails to make an appropriation sufficient to pay such premiums, premium amounts may not be accurately reflected in this handbook.”

7. A 4-H'er who will be unable to show their project at the fair must give written notification to the Extension Office one week prior to show date. Excused absences will be given to those members who notify the office by the deadline and will be unable to attend the show due to illness, death, vacation, or inability of the member to be given time off from their job. Any 4-H'er not present for judging will be ineligible to be selected as a State Fair delegate unless they are attending another 4-H event. A Fair Exhibit Form **must** be filled out and placed in a plastic sleeve and attached to the member's project. It is the responsibility of the absent 4-H member to arrange for another 4-H member to present their project during the judging time.
8. All 4-H'ers exhibiting livestock, cats and dogs at the 4-H Fair are required to complete a one-time Quality Assurance and Ethics training offered on the web at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/qaec/> to be eligible to show. Deadline to complete this training is JUNE 1. Failure to complete this certification will result in removal from the project area and ineligibility to show.
9. Failure to read and comply with the 4-H show rules may result in disqualification of the project.
10. If a 4-H member needs a reasonable accommodation to participate in the Edgar County 4-H Fair, they should contact the University of Illinois Extension Office at 465-8585 two weeks prior to the fair.
11. The University of Illinois Extension and the Edgar County 4-H Association is not responsible for damage, loss or injury to any personal property and/or any project during the show or at release time.

STATE FAIR POLICIES

1. All State Fair exhibitors must be 8 years old by September 1 of the current 4-H year, including livestock exhibitors.
2. A 4-H member chosen at the county fair as a state fair delegate may enter **one general project exhibit class** at the State Fair. General project exhibitors also wishing to show in the Jr. Livestock classes should realize that judging conflicts may exist and the member will need to make a decision based upon their personal priorities. The General 4-H Show will try to accommodate judging times if possible.
3. State Fair Livestock entries can be made by any 4-H'er enrolled in a livestock project. Entry forms are available at the Extension Office and are due to Springfield by June 1 for horse entries, July 1 for all other livestock entries and August 1 for the dog show. State Fair entry forms **MUST** be signed by Extension staff. It is the responsibility of the exhibitor to have their form signed and mailed in to the State Fair entry office by the appropriate deadline.
4. All 4-H'ers exhibiting livestock at the State Fair are required to complete a one-time Quality Assurance and Ethics training offered on the web at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/gaec/> to be eligible to show.

4-H CLUB POLICIES

1. A 4-H club must have at least five (5) members and one (1) screened adult volunteer leader. The club should have a written Constitution and By-laws which lists the club name, standing committees and regular meeting date, time and place. Other items may be added to the by-laws as the members wish. A sample outline for this information is located inside the front cover of the 4-H Secretary's Book.
2. Re-enrollment deadline is February 1 and new member enrollment deadline is April 1; however, club membership is based on the number of members enrolled as of June 1. New members added after June 1 should be included in the following year enrollment, and they may be allowed to participate in all 4-H programs **EXCEPT** county and state competitive events.
3. The club will hold at least 7 regular meetings, record of which is kept in the Secretary book.
4. A club must have officers.
5. Club treasurers are required to turn in their club treasury audit report at the start of the new 4-H year. Deadline will be posted in the Green Pride Press. These reports are mandated by the State of Illinois to have a copy on file in the Extension Office.
6. Types of 4-H Club Leaders:
Organizational Leader – guides the overall organization of the club to make certain that meetings are scheduled and members are aware of opportunities and requirements.
Project Leader – is a volunteer who assists members in specific project areas and may or may not attend 4-H club meetings. Clubs can identify a project leader who will be responsible for one or more project areas. They are responsible for working with members in groups or individually to help them with their projects.
Junior Leader – is an older 4-H club member who assumes leadership, responsibility, generally assisting in one of the areas listed above. Junior leaders build their personal leadership and communication skills while supporting club efforts.

NOTE: ALL leaders over 18 years of age are required to comply with the Illinois 4-H Volunteer Screening process. Volunteer application packets are available in the Extension Office.

CLOVERBUD POLICIES

1. Youth ages 5 – 7 (as of September 1 of the program year) are eligible to enroll in the Illinois 4-H Cloverbud program.
2. A \$20 4-H program fee will be applied to members who participate in the 4-H Cloverbud program. No child will be denied the opportunity to participate in 4-H due to his/her inability to pay the program fee.
3. The 4-H Cloverbud program is activity-based. “Activity-based” means a variety of short experiences for youth that create an eclectic, cooperative, and fun approach to learning through an immediate, positive feedback response to youth’s involvement in the activity.
4. It is not the intent or the objective of the Illinois 4-H Cloverbud program to duplicate the 8 – 19 year old Illinois 4-H program experience, nor to create a mini-4-H concept. While many Cloverbuds will continue to be involved in other 4-H experiences, the Cloverbud program is designed with specific educational objectives focused on the ages of 5 – 7.
5. Cloverbuds will be encouraged to exhibit one project at the county 4-H fair from a specified list of Cloverbud projects. Cloverbud clubs may complete this as a club activity. These projects will be “judged” during the fair at the Cloverbud show and tell time only (see 4-H Fair schedule for date/time). Each exhibiting Cloverbud will receive a participation ribbon. 4-H Cloverbuds exhibits are non-competitive exhibits and no premium funds will be paid. Cloverbud members are NOT eligible to exhibit live animals at the 4-H fair.



PARENTS

1. Parents should become familiar with what 4-H has to offer and the responsibilities of its members. They should assist their children in selecting projects and provide materials and encouragement while the 4-H'er carries out the work. They are responsible for providing transportation for their youngster to club meetings and other 4-H events. Car pools and sharing of responsibilities are encouraged. Parent's support to the club by providing transportation, refreshments, or hosting a meeting in their home is most important to the success of a 4-H club. Parents are welcome at club meetings and other 4-H events.
2. Volunteers are continuously sought for club and county activities and committees. Parents may serve in these capacities and are encouraged to volunteer to do so.
3. Call the 4-H leader or the Extension Office when you have questions or suggestions. Your support is essential to the success of 4-H in helping young people.

VOLUNTEER BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

1. Treat others in a courteous, respectful manner demonstrating behaviors appropriate to a positive role model for youth.
2. Obey the laws of the locality, state, and nation.

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3. Make all reasonable effort to assure that 4-H youth programs are accessible to youth without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability.
4. Recognize that verbal and/or physical abuse and/or neglect of youth is unacceptable in 4-H youth programs and report suspected abuse to the authorities.
5. Do not participate in or condone neglect or abuse which happens outside the program to 4-H youth programs and report suspected abuse to the authorities.
6. Treat animals humanely and teach 4-H youth to provide appropriate animal care.
7. Operate motor vehicles (including machines or equipment) in a safe and reliable manner when working with 4-H youth, and only with a valid operator's license and the legally required insurance coverage.
8. Do not possess, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances while responsible for youth in 4-H activities, nor allow 4-H youth participants under supervision to do so. All 4-H activities and events are to be alcohol and drug free.
9. Tobacco use during 4-H sponsored events is discouraged and should only be done in designated areas and not in the view of youth participants.

Failure to comply with any of these guidelines may be reason for termination of a volunteer. Complete volunteer policies are available at the Extension Office.



OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

4-H Handbook

Each 4-H Family who has a member(s) enrolled in a livestock or general project(s) will receive a 4-H Handbook. This handbook contains important information about 4-H policies, events and activities and general and livestock project requirements. It is the 4-H'ers and their family's responsibility to read the handbook in order to understand the rules. It is also the responsibility of the 4-H'ers and their family to keep their Handbook current from year to year.

Project Manuals

4-H members will receive a project manual for projects in which they are enrolled, if requested when enrolling. These manuals are listed in the Pick Your Project Guide. (Exception: there are no project manuals for county projects.)

Newsletters

4-H families who have a member(s) enrolled in the 4-H program will receive our county newsletter. The Green Pride Press is published and mailed about ten times throughout the 4-H year. These newsletters contain valuable information about events and activities, project areas, club happenings, and important deadlines. PLEASE read these newsletters and keep them with your county 4-H Handbook.

eBlast

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Each Friday the Extension office will send an email out to every member that has supplied our office with an email address. This email will include information about upcoming 4-H events and deadlines for the next week, as well as Extension programming within our unit.

Pick Your Project Guide

Each 4-H family will receive the 4-H Pick Your Project Guide, which lists all the state projects that are available along with suggested activities relating to each project. It also lists suggested ages and the manuals for projects. (County projects are not listed in the Pick Your Project Guide)

Judging

Exhibits are evaluated independently, not compared to other projects. The standards are appropriate to different age levels and number of years a 4-H'er has been enrolled in a project.

Conference Judging

Projects at the county level are judged using conference judging. During the judging process, the judge will ask the individual 4-H'er pertinent questions about his/her project. 4-H'ers should be knowledgeable about the project, be prepared to talk about goals and objectives, and able to describe the process used to produce the exhibit.

Judging is a learning experience from which you can learn what you did well and how you can improve in the future. An exhibit does not measure all that you have learned, but it is an example of what you have done. Remember to listen carefully to the judge so that you can accept constructive criticism and learn from it. Remember that judge's comments can be helpful, but they are only one person's evaluation. See "Project Guidelines" section for more information on Conference Judging.

