

4-H Rules and Information for Counties Serving Clay, Effingham, Fayette & Jasper

1. **COMMUNITY CLUB MEMBER ELIGIBILITY:** Any boy or girl, regardless of race, creed, color, or handicap, who is 8-18 years of age on Sept. 1, 2021, may be a member of a 4-H community club. These members can hold offices, participate in the county 4-H project expo/fair/interview, and participate in the 4-H awards program. Mentally challenged adults who are over the age of 18 may also be a 4-H member.
2. **SPECIAL INTEREST CLUB MEMBERS ELIGIBILITY:** Any boy or girl, regardless of race, creed, color, or handicap, who is 8-18 years of age by September 1, 2021, may be a member of a 4-H SPIN (Special Interest) Club. 4-H'ers enrolled in SPIN Clubs is eligible for full membership, awards, scholarships, and exhibit opportunities.
3. **INDEPENDENT MEMBER ELIGIBILITY:** 4-H members do not have to enroll in a community club to participate fully in the 4-H program. Members who cannot or do not wish to enroll in a club may enroll as "Independent Members." Independent members must meet with an adult mentor (non-related) at least four times during the year to be eligible to exhibit at the 4-H show. Independent members may apply for all awards. Members wishing independent status must request an application form and return it prior to January 1, 2022. Independent members are allowed to exhibit at the 4-H show and may sell animals in the auction as long as they have met at least four times with their mentor.
4. **4-H CLOVERBUD MEMBER ELIGIBILITY:** Youth ages 5-7 years of age by September 1, 2021, may enroll in 4-H as 4-H Cloverbuds. Cloverbuds may learn about 4-H by attending club meetings, take 4-H projects and participating in 4-H shows and events. Cloverbuds do not hold club offices. Cloverbud members are not allowed to exhibit livestock or horses. Cloverbud members do not receive premiums but are allowed to exhibit at the 4-H show and receive a ribbon. Members enroll in the "Cloverbud" project but may order manuals especially suited for youth ages 5-7 listed on the project selection sheet.
5. **PROGRAM FEES:** All members, regardless of classification must pay the \$20 Illinois State Program Fee. The fee helps support state programs and events, as well as provides funds for local events, workshops, recognition, office materials, manuals and leadership training opportunities. Member who belong to more than one club are only required to pay the fee one time. The fee covers 12 months of 4-H club membership. The date of the renewal is September 1 for community club, SPIN club, and independent and Cloverbud members.

***If you were enrolled by December 31, 2021, county program fees were covered by the Effingham County 4-H Foundation.**

6. **MULTI-COUNTY MEMBERSHIP:** Members may join more than one 4-H club in two different counties. They are only required to pay **one** program fee. They only receive premium funds in the county where their membership fee was paid.
7. **ENROLLMENT YEAR:** The 4-H year runs from September 1 through August 31 of the current year. "4-H age" is determined as the age of the 4-H member was on September 1, 2021.
8. **ACCESSIBILITY:** Anyone needing reasonable accommodations to participate in a 4-H program should contact the Effingham County Extension Office.

4-H Policies

1. **INDIVIDUAL CODE OF CONDUCT:** All 4-H members & adults must abide by the 4-H Code of Conduct at all 4-H events and during club meetings. The code is found on the following page.
2. **CLUB POLICIES:** All 4-H Clubs must submit a secretary's report and audited treasurer's report annually. Additional rules regarding club operations and finance are outlined in the Illinois 4-H Policies Manual. Clubs which do not comply will not be allowed to re-enroll the following year.
3. **COUNTY POLICIES:** Changes in these 4-H rules are made by Extension Staff with the guidance of the 4-H Leadership Council and Livestock Committee.
4. **STATE POLICIES:** The Effingham County 4-H Program must adhere to all the rules, regulations, and policies of the State 4-H program as outlined in the Illinois 4-H Policies manual. Anyone may request a copy of the policy manual from the county office.
5. **FEDERAL TRADEMARK REGULATIONS:** The 4-H Clover is protected by trademark laws. Specific rules must be followed when using the 4-H clover. Anyone may request a copy of those rules from the county office.
6. **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES:**
 - a. Members of the public, who are involved in Effingham County Extension Programs, have the right to bring complaints to the attention of the County Director with assurance that the complaints will receive a review and be accorded fair and equitable treatment. The County Director can be reached at 618-662-3124.
 - b. *A formal written complaint* may be made to the County Director. A review team consisting of the County Director, Youth Educator, and other Extension staff will be involved in reviewing the situation. The County Director will initiate discussion, considerations, and resolution within 20 working days from the date of the complaint.
 - c. If the grievant is not satisfied with the informal/formal process at the Unit level, the grievant may present a formal written grievance to the Regional Director.
7. **SHARED MEMBERSHIP:** Illinois 4-H members may participate in 4-H under a shared membership arrangement with another county; however, approval must be granted by both counties prior to enrollment by completing the *4-H Shared Membership Agreement* form. Members may not benefit economically from exhibiting the same project at multiple local or county 4-H exhibitions, fairs, or shows, including premiums, auctions, trophies, ribbons, and other awards. Members may apply for 4-H awards or recognition in only one county. 4-H program fee should be paid in the county of residence. This policy is designed to meet the changing needs of today's families including youth who live with parents or guardians in dual or multiple legal residences due to divorce or separation. Shared membership is also an option when a project(s) or exhibitions are NOT OFFERED in the county of residence.
8. **TAX IMPLICATIONS FOR PRIZES, GIFTS OR AWARDS:** Program Participants (including minors) will be required to provide their Social Security Number or foreign national tax ID number prior to receiving a prize, gift, or award to ensure proper IRS reporting as required by law. This sensitive information is kept confidential and handled through security protected software (PEAR). Participants will not be eligible for prize, gift, or award if social security or foreign national tax ID information is not provided.

4-H Member Code of Conduct

All participants of the Illinois 4-H program are responsible for their conduct to University of Illinois Extension personnel and/or volunteers of the 4-H program. All 4-H members are expected to maintain the following standards:

1. Be courteous and respect others.
2. Obey all the laws of the locality, state, and nation and University of Illinois and Extension policies and guidelines as well as 4-H Program Guidelines and those of the local club/group.
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.

Members and parents sign this agreement as part of their 4-H enrollment.

The following conduct will not be allowed by any youth participating in 4-H activities or events and is subject to disciplinary action, which could include being removed from the program and activity:

1. Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol and other controlled substances, including tobacco products.
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.
6. Willfully breaking curfew.
7. Unauthorized use of vehicles.
8. Leaving the site of the event without permission.
9. Participating in gambling.
10. Absence from the planned program.
11. Intentionally interfering with or disrupting the event.
12. Use of profane, abusive, or sexually explicit language.
13. Public displays of affection or inappropriate actions.
14. Failure to comply with direction of Extension personnel, including designated volunteers.

4-H members' behavior is expected to demonstrate the character traits of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

Benefits of Membership

1. **4-H NEWSLETTER:** All 4-H families and volunteers will receive a 4-H newsletter detailing upcoming 4-H events and activities. These newsletters contain important information. You may request a paper copy or email copy of the newsletter when you enroll.
2. **ILLINOIS 4-H PROJECT GUIDE:** The 4-H Project Selection Guide lists all the projects available from the State 4-H office. It briefly describes these projects, gives suggested ages for each project level and lists available publications. Special 4-H awards and programs, which may be applied for, are also listed in the Pick Your Project Guide.
3. **4-H MANUALS:** 4-H members may order a project manual for each project that they enroll, if available. Members receive \$5 worth of manuals FREE of charge. Members must pay for any additional manuals ordered over \$5. The Effingham County Extension Office is required to pay for these manuals. 4-H leaders and members are STRONGLY encouraged to recycle and reuse these 4-H manuals as much as possible to save on money for families and the local office as well as encourage a "green" lifestyle. After you have reached the \$5, families are to purchase their own at <https://shop4-h.org/collections/illinois-virtual-pop-up-shop>.
4. **DEMONSTRATIONS & TALKS:** 4-H members gain confidence by giving a talk or demonstration about at least one of their projects to their club each year.
5. **STATE 4-H EVENTS:**
 - a. **4-H MEMORIAL CAMP:** Youth ages 8-18 may attend summer camp at 4-H Memorial Camp in Monticello, IL. This is a great place to camp, make new friends, swim, learn lots of new things, sleep in log cabins, and have the best time!
 - b. **CITIZENSHIP WASHINGTON FOCUS:** Youth 15 and older by January 1 can attend a 7-day conference at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland. While there, 4-H'ers will spend time in Washington, D.C. visiting the White House, Lincoln's Memorial, Arlington Cemetery, Mt. Vernon, and many more historical sites. They will also meet congressional delegates. The trip is held every other year.
 - c. **STATE 4-H ILLINI ACADEMIES:** Youth 14 and older by January 1 can attend a state-wide conference. At this unique learning experience, 4-H'ers will meet with other 4-H'ers from around the state to study projects and various topics in a university setting, a good way to meet new friends and become familiar with the various places throughout Illinois. This program will return in 2023 and will then take place every other year.
 - d. **STATE 4-H JR. LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE:** Youth in grades 7 & 8 may attend a statewide conference. At this unique learning experience, 4-H'ers will meet with other 4-H'ers from around the state to learn about being a leader in their 4-H club.
 - e. **JUDGING CONTESTS:** 4-H'ers have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of judging events throughout the year.
6. **COUNTY 4-H EVENTS:**
 - a. **4-H ACHIEVEMENT NIGHT:** An annual awards program is held for 4-H members and leaders.
 - b. **WORKSHOPS/CLINICS:** There are several workshops/clinics offered to 4-H members and the public throughout the year.
 - c. **PUBLIC SPEAKING/DEMONSTRATION CONTEST:** A county Public Speaking Contest is held, and the top speakers are eligible to attend the Illinois State Competition.

- d. **4-H COMMITTEES:** 4-H Committees meet throughout the year to plan activities for upcoming 4-H events, evaluate project rules, select fair judges, settle project conflicts, and to encourage participation in their project area. Adults and youth are welcome to be on any or all the 4-H committees. Contact the office about being on a committee.
- e. **4-H FUNDRAISERS:** There are several fundraisers for both youth and adults to help with throughout the year.

7. **COUNTY AWARDS**

Deadline for applying for County Awards is September 1 of each year. To receive a **COUNTY AWARD**, you must fill out the Illinois State 4-H Award Application in any area.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY RECOGNITION AWARD due April 1

The application form and two letters of recommendation (one from a 4-H leader and one from a non-family member such as teacher, employer or other community leader), should be submitted to the Effingham County Extension office by April 1. Letter of recommendation should be in a sealed envelope or emailed to logan1@illinois.edu directly from the individual writing the recommendation letter.

OFFICER AWARDS:

Special prizes are given to the following top club officers:

President: MEMBER'S APPLICATION PROCESS: Write an essay about your leadership as the club's president. Include your involvement in preparing the club agenda, planning programs, assisting members, holding officer meetings, etc. which might give a clue into how you personally led your 4-H club.

Vice President: MEMBER'S APPLICATION PROCESS: Write an essay about your leadership as the club's vice president. Include your involvement in preparing the club agenda, planning programs, assisting members, holding officer meetings, etc. which might give a clue into how you personally led your 4-H club.

Secretary: MEMBER'S APPLICATION PROCESS: Submit secretary book and all supplemental material. The secretary's book may be typed instead of handwritten, but all additional sections of the secretary's book must be completed.

Treasurer: MEMBER'S APPLICATION PROCESS: Submit treasurer book, bank statements and all supplemental material. **THE AUDIT MUST BE COMPLETED AND SIGNED.**

Reporter: MEMBER'S APPLICATION PROCESS: Submit reports submitted to the paper or the office.

The following criteria is used in judging the officer awards: neatness; thorough completion of the books by the member; accuracy of the information provided; and the scrapbooks should include the club name, officers', leaders' and members' names.

JEFF BROOKS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

You must have been a member or alumni of an Effingham County 4-H Club, high school graduate, fill out an application and compose answers into an essay. Applications are to be submitted to the University of Illinois Extension Office by July 1.

NEWLIN MARTIN SCHOLARSHIP

You must currently be a high school senior or junior, or college freshman, enrolled in the Effingham County 4-H program, and submit a 500 word essay including the following criteria: 4-H accomplishments, community service activities; how you will utilize what you have learned from 4-H; and financial need of the scholarship. Essay must be in the Extension Office no later than the end of October.

STATE LEVEL AWARDS

- a. **My Illinois 4-H Experience:** Applicants, ages 8-18 years by the beginning of the 4-H year, must complete the application by marking the experiences achieved over the September 1, 2021 – August 31, 2022 program year. Members will be recognized based on the level achieved-bronze, silver, gold, diamond or emerald.
- b. **Illinois 4-H Award Application:** Applicants must be 15-18 years of age by September 1 of the 4-H program year in which they are applying. The application consists of a 3-page form and attached pages with responses to two required essay questions. **No additional lines may be added to sections or pages (besides those required for the essay questions) to this application.** The application must be submitted to the county office by TBD deadline.
- c. **Excel Level Recognition for Clubs:** Any club enrolled with their local Extension Office by August 1 of the calendar year in which they are submitting an application is eligible to apply. The application should reflect the involvement of club members and leaders working together as a team toward the accomplishment of a common goal. The activities and projects must relate to the specific award category and must be completed from September 1 of the previous year to August 31 of the year in which the application is being completed.