



4-H Club Officer Handbook

Name _____

Club _____

Office(s) I held _____

Year(s) _____

To 4-H Club Officers

You have been elected to an office in your 4-H club because your fellow club members trust you to do a good job. The success of your 4-H club depends largely on how well you and your fellow officers carry out your duties.

Good officers get things done correctly and on time. They are friendly, courteous, and cooperative. Working with the 4-H club leaders, they plan and carry out the club program. Officers who involve fellow 4-H members in club decisions are most successful. They give everyone a chance to participate.

America was made great through strong leadership. Doing your job as a 4-H officer will help build not only a successful 4-H club, but a good community and a strong America, as well. You are building leadership for tomorrow. Do it well. We hope this handbook will assist you in that goal. Refer to *Exciting Meetings for Great Groups* (4-H 0256L) for more information.

Duties of Officers

President

- Work with the club leader and other club officers in developing an agenda for the meeting. Use the *Meeting Agenda Planning Guide* on page 12.
- Call the meeting to order on time.
- Direct the activities of the club and preside at the meeting.
- See that all members have a part in each meeting.
- If the President cannot attend, arrange for another person (usually the Vice President) to preside.
- Appoint committees as needed with the help of the club leader.
- Help develop and carry out the club plan for the year.
- Cast the deciding vote in case of a tie.
- Keep the meeting running at a good pace.
- Make sure everyone at the meeting has a chance to express his/her opinion.
- Show courtesy and fairness to all.
- Cooperate with members and leaders.
- After each meeting, fill out the *Evaluating Your Meeting Leadership* form on page 13. After completing this form, discuss the items with your club leader and decide on ways to improve. Keep the completed forms with this handbook so you can see the improvement made throughout the year.

Make sure everyone at the meeting has a chance to express his/her opinion.

Vice President

- Assist the President in developing the meeting agenda and in other ways as needed.
- Preside at the meeting when the President is absent.
- Contact members and see that they are ready to do their part at each meeting.
- Act as program chairperson for the club.
- Be alert to activities and program ideas that will benefit the club and club members.
- Assume other duties and responsibilities when asked, such as assisting with record books, helping with the local achievement program, and helping prepare club members' exhibits.

Secretary

- Keep minutes of all meetings in the *4-H Secretary's Book* (4-H 036) available from your local Extension office.
- Keep a list of all members, call the roll, and record attendance at each meeting.
- Have the minutes ready when the President asks for "the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting."

- Stand when reading the minutes and remain standing until they are approved.
- During meetings, keep notes on the kind of discussion and results of all motions.
- Be accurate with dates, names, places, and motions.
- Report topics discussed.
- Include in the minutes the names of special visitors, demonstrations, entertainment, club tours, etc.
- Keep a copy of the club's plan for the year in the Secretary's Book.
- Write letters for the club such as thank-you letters, requests for information, responses to all correspondence, and so forth.
- At meetings, read aloud letters and other correspondence received by the club and responses sent by you.
- Keep past newspaper items concerning club activities in the Secretary's Book.
- Keep a copy of all Treasurer reports and committee budgets and reports in the Secretary's Book.
- Notify members of upcoming meetings by phone, personal contact, or postcard. Be sure each member knows where and when the next meeting is scheduled.

All clubs must have on file a statement of how club assets are to be disbursed if the club disbands.

Treasurer

- Follow the information in the *4-H Club Treasurer's Book* (4-H 0361) to plan your club's budget for the year. A copy of the completed form should be given to your club secretary to keep with the official club records. This form also can be used by committees who are planning club activities that involve money.
- Clubs having \$25 or more in their treasury should place it in a club bank account. Before opening a bank account, notify your local Extension office by providing them with the name of your club, name and address of your leader, your name and address, the probable location of your account, the date, and how club assets are to be disbursed if the club disbands.
- Ask your local Extension office to provide the bank with the tax identification number from your county 4-H Leaders Association. This will ensure that your club bank account is tax free.
- All clubs must have on file a statement of how club assets are to be disbursed if the club disbands. Acceptable alternatives are to disburse assets to the county 4-H Leaders Association or the Oregon 4-H Foundation. Funds and properties raised in the name of 4-H cannot be divided among group members upon disbandment.
- Keep an account of all moneys in the bank in the name of 4-H _____ club, by _____ as Treasurer and _____ as club Leader. You and a leader should co-sign all checks.
- Pay all club bills and keep an accurate account of all money earned and spent.

- Give a Treasurer's report at each club meeting.
- Prepare a yearly written statement of your club's account from January 1 through December 31. Give a copy of this report to your club secretary, your county 4-H Leaders Association treasurer, and your local Extension office by the date set by the office. Your county 4-H Leaders Association treasurer is required to submit a report to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) of all accounts that use the 4-H tax identification number.
- Help plan fund-raising activities for your club. Notify your local Extension office of all club fund-raising activities.

Reporter

- Read the *4-H Reporter* (4-H 037), available from the local Extension office.
- Write a news report of each club meeting. The first sentence or two should answer these questions: who, what, where, when, why.
- Always put the most important thing first.
- Write all that you think will interest readers. List names of guests and members attending.
- Be accurate. Spell names correctly. Use first names or initials and get dates right.
- Send the report immediately to the newspaper for publication. News must be timely or it isn't newsworthy.
- Clip the story from the newspaper and give it to the Secretary to place in the Secretary's Book. If the story is not published, give a copy of the story you wrote to the Secretary.

***News must be
timely or it isn't
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Recreation Leader

- Have some form of recreation planned for each meeting. It's best to have recreation planned for people as they arrive and to have the total group involved in recreation activities after the meeting.
- Select games suitable for the space and time available.
- Have necessary equipment or materials on hand and ready.
- Make sure everyone is included and involved.

Sergeant at Arms

- See that the meeting room is set up and comfortable. Check lights, heat, and ventilation.
- Greet guests and see that they and members are comfortable.
- Assist President in maintaining order during the meeting.
- Know correct parliamentary procedure and assist the President with procedure questions if needed.
- Assist refreshment committee.
- Direct cleanup after meeting.
- Care for club equipment.

Planning 4-H Meetings

Why have meetings?

- Meetings give people a chance to share ideas and to plan and do things together. Usually a group of people has more information and more ideas than any one member of the group. Together, they can develop even better ideas and do much more than one person can do alone. Also, it is more fun to work together and share with friends.
- Exciting, involving 4-H meetings will capture the interests of the members. Active participation in club meetings, activities, and programs creates interest and stimulates members to learn and be involved.
- Work together with the members and leaders in your club to explore ways to incorporate active, fun learning into your meetings.
- As the presiding officer, the President should have a preplanned agenda. The President should make sure every member has a chance to speak and have an active part in each meeting. Participation will make the meeting more interesting for everyone.
- Good meetings are planned in advance. They start on time, end on time, and are orderly.

Preparing for a meeting

The club officers should work with their leader to see that these jobs get done:

- The yearly club calendar is planned. When this is completed, distribute a copy to each of your 4-H families.
- The club budget is prepared following the information in the *4-H Club Treasurer's Book* (4-H 0361).
- The date and time of the meeting are set and every member knows about the meeting. This is usually the Secretary's job, or you may have a calling committee to notify members.
- The meeting place is available and ready.
- The meeting place is arranged so that everyone is comfortable and can see and hear. Seating in a circle or around a table is good because everyone has a front seat and is more likely to take part in the discussion.
- The meeting agenda is planned, and any special guest speakers and members doing presentations are contacted.
- All special guests and members giving presentations are properly introduced.

The meeting agenda

Use a separate sheet of paper to write down your agenda before each meeting. You may want to use the *Meeting Agenda Planning Guide* on page 12 as a guideline.

Exciting, involving 4-H meetings will capture the interests of the members. Active participation in club meetings, activities, and programs creates interest and stimulates members to learn and be involved.

Suggested order of business for meetings:

1. Call the meeting to order on time. The President says, "Will the meeting please come to order."
2. The Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H Pledge.
3. Roll call.
4. Introduction of visitors.
5. Review agenda with club members to see if there are items that should be added. (It's often helpful to go over the agenda at the beginning of a meeting with your club to see whether anyone has items they would like to add.)
6. Reading and approval of minutes of the previous meeting.
7. Reading of club correspondence. The President says, "Are there any letters to be read?" If so, the Secretary reads them.
8. Treasurer's report. The President says, "Will the Treasurer please give a report?"
9. Call for reports of officers and committees.
10. Call for reports of leaders and junior leaders.
11. Old or unfinished business (anything left over from a previous meeting).
12. New business.
13. Next meeting date, time, place, and other announcements.
14. Adjourn.
15. Program.
16. Recreation.

The order of business may be varied to suit the needs of the club.

If no one has any corrections, the President says, "The minutes stand approved as read."

Approval of minutes

1. The President says, "The Secretary will now read the minutes of the last meeting."
2. The Secretary stands, reads the minutes, and remains standing until the minutes are approved.
3. After the reading, the President says, "Are there any additions or corrections to these minutes?"
4. If no one has any, the President says, "The minutes stand approved as read."
5. If there are corrections, the President directs the Secretary to make the change, then says, "The minutes stand approved as corrected."

Adjourning a meeting

- A motion to adjourn may be made from the floor.
- A second is made.
- A vote is taken; if carried the President says, "We are adjourned." The members must not rise or leave their seats until the President declares the meeting adjourned.

Parliamentary Procedure

Purpose of parliamentary procedure

- To give every member a chance to be heard
- To allow everyone to be a participating member in an orderly group
- To establish and maintain order in a meeting
- To prevent confusion when discussing club business
- To keep the meeting moving

The five basic principles of parliamentary procedure

1. Discuss one subject at a time.
2. Each idea presented for consideration is entitled to full and free discussion.
3. All members are to be treated with justice and courtesy.
4. The rule of the majority must be carried out, and the rights of the minority respected.
5. The wishes of each group member should come together to form a cooperating, united club.

The rule of the majority must be carried out, and the rights of the minority respected.

Making and handling motions

Official business at meetings is conducted by making motions and by discussing, amending, and voting on them.

- A club member who wants to suggest an idea or plan or wants something done makes a motion.
 - A member must address the President.
 - A member must be called on by the President.
 - Then the member may make her/his motion.
 - The motion is then seconded by another member.
 - The President restates the motion and asks for discussion.
- A motion cannot be discussed until it is seconded.

Introducing business by a motion

- This is called a “main motion.”
- A main motion may be discussed, postponed, rejected, withdrawn, tabled, or referred to a committee.
- Action on a motion takes a vote of the group.
- The motion is discussed until the group votes on it.
- No other motion can be made while one is still being considered.

Main motions

- The member raises his or her hand or stands and waits to be called on by the President. The President calls on the member by speaking his/her name.

Members discuss and vote on the amendment, then on the main motion as amended. Any number of amendments may be made one after the other.

- The club member says, “Mr./Madam President, I move that_____.”
- Another club member says, “I second the motion,” meaning that the member approves or at least favors discussing and voting on the motion. A motion that is not seconded is lost for lack of a second. The President then says, “It has been moved and seconded that_____. Is there any discussion?”
- After discussion, the President repeats the motion and then asks, “Are you ready for the question?” If the answer is “Yes,” the group is ready to vote.
- Be sure a vote is always taken both in favor and opposed.
- The President asks, “All in favor say ‘aye’ (rhymes with eye); all opposed say ‘no’.” The motion is passed if more members vote “aye” than “no.” More “no’s” defeat the motion. If the President is in doubt about the vote, he/she should request a secret ballot, a show of hands, or a standing vote. The President usually does not vote; however, he/she may vote to break a tie or make a tie. In case of a tie vote, the motion fails.
- No member can be required to vote.
- The President then says, “The motion is passed” or “The motion is lost,” according to the votes.
- A motion that is seconded must either be voted on, withdrawn, amended, or tabled before another motion can be made.

Secondary motions

To amend a motion. Motions can be amended or changed. Motions to amend must be seconded like main motions.

Members discuss and vote on the amendment, then on the main motion as amended. Any number of amendments may be made one after the other.

President: “A motion has been made and seconded to invite our mothers to a demonstration program on May 11.”

Member: “I move to amend that motion by adding: ‘at 2 p.m. in Liberty School.’ ”

Another member: “I second the amendment.”

President: “Is there any discussion on the amendment? Are you ready for the question?” The members vote on the amendment. If the motion to amend is carried, the President states the main motion and the amendment together, “...we invite our mothers to a demonstration program at 2 p.m., May 11, in the Liberty School. Is there any further discussion?”

The members discuss, then vote on the main motion as amended.

To withdraw a motion. A motion may be withdrawn if the person who made the motion and the person who seconded the motion both agree that it be withdrawn.

To table a motion. If additional information is needed or there is not enough time to discuss and vote on a motion, it may be tabled until the next meeting or some later date.

A member says, “I move that the motion be tabled until _____.“ Another member seconds this motion, and a vote is taken. This motion is not discussed but does require a majority vote to pass. (A majority is more than half of the members who vote.)

To refer a motion to a committee. A secondary motion may be made to refer a main motion to a committee. A member says, “I move to refer this motion to a committee.” The motion must be seconded and requires a majority vote to pass.

Discussion. It is important that motions be thoroughly discussed and understood before the members vote on them. The President should delay voting until everyone understands the advantages and disadvantages of the motion. People are often less open-minded after they have voted.

Making decisions by consensus

Business can be conducted in small groups without motions and voting. Members make suggestions to the group. When the suggestion has been thoroughly discussed and everyone is in agreement, the President may say, “Does everyone agree that we invite Mr. Jones to our next meeting?” If no one disagrees, the President may say, “Okay, we’ll invite Mr. Jones. Will the Secretary please write a letter of invitation to him.” This is called **consensus** and does not require a formal motion and vote.

Methods of voting

By acclamation. The President says “All in favor of the motion say ‘aye’...All opposed say ‘no’.” The President announces the result. If there is any doubt about the results, the President should call for a standing or a show-of-hands vote.

By standing or raising your hand. The President says, “All in favor signify by raising your right hand.” The President counts the votes, then says, “All opposed,” and counts the opposing votes. The President does not vote except to make or break a tie. A tie vote fails.

By secret ballot. For controversial issues or at times when it may be best to keep individuals’ votes secret, blank ballots (pieces of paper) are used. The President votes with other members.

By prepared ballot. Ballots should be prepared in advance. The President votes with the other members. Voting by ballot is recommended for elections of officers.

By roll call. Each member votes as his/her name is called.

By the honor system. Club members close their eyes and vote by raising their right hand. The President counts the votes and announces the results.

For controversial issues or at times when it may be best to keep individuals’ votes secret, blank ballots (pieces of paper) are used. The President votes with other members.

Nomination and Election of Officers

Nominating and electing officers are important parts of club business. Much of the success of your club depends on the officers you elect.

Nominations from the floor

- The President explains the duties of the office, then announces, "Nominations are open for_____."
- Member says, "I nominate_____."
- Nominations do not require a second but may be seconded to show support.

Nominations by committee

- Sometimes nominations are made by a nominating committee selected by the President.
- After getting permission, the committee makes a list of candidates—usually two for each office.
- These nominations are presented as a committee report to the club.
- Other nominations may be made from the floor by the members.
- The committee should have a pre-prepared ballot with a blank space after the candidates for each office to allow for write-in candidates and nominations from the floor.

Closing nominations

- When the members finish nominating, the President says three times, "Are there any other nominations?" If no one else is nominated, the President says, "Nominations are closed."
- Any time during nominations a member may say, "I move that nominations cease." Another member may second the motion. The President calls for a vote. If the vote passes (two-thirds required), the President says, "Nominations are closed."

Voting on nominations

- Voting for officers should always be done by ballot.
- It takes a majority (more than half) of the votes to be elected.
- When no one receives a majority, the group votes again, this time only for the two candidates receiving the most votes.

***Much of the success
of your club depends
on the officers you
elect.***

Working through Committees

- Committees can be useful to deal with some issues rather than involving the entire club. Committees should be used when needed.
- A committee can gather information and make plans for tours, programs, and other activities.
- When selecting a committee, give a description of the job to be done, then appoint members who are interested in serving on the committee. Give the committee members the necessary information, then give them responsibility for getting the job done and the credit for doing it.
- Committees often gather information and develop plans which they present to the club for the approval of the entire group.
- Committees may want to use the *Committee Worksheet* on page 14 to help plan their job.
- If the activity you are planning involves spending or earning money for the club, follow the information in the *4-H Club Treasurer's Book* (4-H 0361).
- After the work or activity is finished, committees should evaluate their work or the activity they planned and report this evaluation back to the club. Committees may want to use the *Committee Evaluation Form* on page 15. Give a completed copy to the club secretary to keep with the financial information for this activity.
- It may be useful to have club members evaluate activities. One idea for evaluation is described on page 16.

Give committee members the necessary information, then give them responsibility for getting the job done and the credit for doing it.

Meeting Agenda Planning Guide

Use this Guide when planning your meeting agenda with your club officers and leader.

| <i>Subject</i> | <i>Agenda item #</i> | <i>Who reports</i> | <i>Materials or equipment needed</i> | <i>Time required</i> |
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Evaluating Your Meeting Leadership

Name _____ Club _____

Meeting date _____ Time _____ Place _____

After a meeting that you chaired, rank yourself on each of the following items. Discuss these with your leader and decide on ways to improve.

| | <i>Great</i> | <i>OK</i> | <i>Not so good</i> |
|--|--------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. I prepared a meeting agenda ahead of time. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. I reviewed the agenda with the club at the beginning of the meeting. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. I started the meeting on time. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. We said the Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H pledge. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. All visitors were introduced. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. All club members were present. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Members were courteous to guests, leaders, and club officers. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 8. I drew non-talkers into the discussion. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 9. I kept the discussion on topic. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 10. I periodically summarized the discussion. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 11. I helped keep members interested, attentive, and enthusiastic. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 12. I spoke clearly, distinctly, and loudly enough so everyone could hear. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 13. I adjourned the meeting on time. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 14. We had recreation that was fun and involved everyone. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 15. The program gave everyone a chance to participate. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 16. The program was fun and interesting for everyone. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 17. The program provided an opportunity for learning. | _____ | _____ | _____ |

What will I do next time to improve?

Fill out one *Evaluating Your Meeting Leadership* form after each meeting you lead. Put additional forms here so they become a part of your *4-H Club Officer Handbook*. This will help you keep track of your leadership progress throughout the year.

Committee Worksheet

Use this worksheet to plan the tasks of your committee.

Activity_____ Chair_____

Committee members _____

Date of activity_____ Time_____ Location_____

| <i>Job to be done</i> | <i>Person responsible</i> | <i>Resources needed</i> | <i>Date to be completed</i> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
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Committee Evaluation Form

The planning committee should complete this form after their work or activity is finished.
Submit the completed form to the club secretary to keep in the official club records.

Activity _____ Chair _____

Committee members _____

Date of activity _____ Time _____ Location _____

| | <i>Great</i> | <i>OK</i> | <i>Not so good</i> |
|--|--------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. We did a good job of thoroughly planning the activity. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. We spent enough time planning the activity. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. All committee members followed through with their responsibilities. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. The date and time of the activity were convenient for most of our club members. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. The location was convenient for most of our club members. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. We started the activity on time. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Our club members all participated. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 8. Our leaders and parents participated. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 9. The activity was fun and interesting for everyone. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 10. The activity provided an opportunity for learning. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 11. We ended the activity on time. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 12. Our club should do this again next year. | Yes_____ | No_____ | Maybe_____ |

What should be done to improve this activity?

Evaluating Club Activities and Leadership

Member activity evaluation

A committee may want to have the club members evaluate the activity also. Following is one simple way to do that.

Purpose

This evaluation is designed to give the planning committee information about all club members' feelings and ideas about an activity. It helps members take more responsibility for the success of club activities.

Number of people. All club members or activity participants.

Amount of time. About 10 minutes.

Materials needed. 3x5 cards, pencils or pens, large paper.

Setting. At end of activity or at first meeting after the activity.

Evaluation helps members take more responsibility for the success of club activities.

Process

1. Distribute 3x5 cards to participants and ask them to respond anonymously to the three or four questions that you have written on a large piece of newsprint paper.
2. Explain and clarify questions so all members understand them. Keep the format simple, three or four questions.

Sample questions

- A. What I liked best about this activity was...
 - B. The activity could have been improved by...
 - C. Next time I would like to...
 - D. What I want to learn more about is...
3. Collect cards and summarize the information.
 4. The committee chair may want to share the results of the evaluation with the group at the beginning of the next meeting and indicate how the evaluation information and suggestions are being incorporated in the next activity.

Revised by Lillian Larwood, Extension specialist and assistant program leader, 4-H youth development. Original publication prepared by Lyla Houghlum, former Extension specialist, 4-H youth development; and Cecile Babich, former Extension faculty, Klamath County; all of Oregon State University.

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