



4-H VOLUNTEER TRAINING SERIES

Adopting 4-H Club By-Laws



Why does a 4-H club (for youth ages 8-18) need by-laws? For the same reasons our country needs a constitution! By having fair and written rules, the rights of all members can be protected. The following is a suggested format for 4-H by-laws. The by-laws below may be adapted to meet local conditions. Be sure to send a copy of your club's approved by-laws to your county 4-H office. Include in the by-laws when they were approved and most recently revised.

Suggested Format for Club By-Laws

ARTICLE I - Name/Identity

Section 1 - Name

The name of this organization shall be the _____ 4-H Club.

Section 2 - Motto

The club motto shall be "To Make the Best Better."

Section 3 - Emblem

The club emblem shall be a green four-leaf clover bearing a white "H" on each leaflet.

Section 4 - Pledge

The club pledge shall be: I pledge. . .

My Head to clearer thinking, My Heart to greater loyalty,
My Hands to larger service, and
My Health to better living, for
My club, my community, my country, and my world.

ARTICLE II - Mission and Purpose

Section 1 - Mission of 4-H

The UF/IFAS Extension 4-H Youth Development Program uses a learn-by-doing approach to help youth gain the knowledge and skills they need to be responsible, productive citizens. This mission is accomplished by creating safe and inclusive learning environments, involving caring adults, and utilizing the expertise and resources of the University of Florida and the nationwide land grant university system.

Section 2 - Purpose of Club

The purpose of this club shall be to improve ourselves, our homes, our club, and our community. (Note: Different or additional purposes can be used.)

ARTICLE III - Nonprofit status

This club is a nonprofit organization. Any funds received by the club for carrying out its purpose shall not accrue to the benefit of individuals, but to the benefit of the 4-H program.

ARTICLE IV - Membership

Section 1 - Eligibility

Any boy or girl in this county, ages 8-18 (as of September 1 of the current 4-H year, which spans from September 1 through August 31), may become a member of this club

Written by Keith G. Diem, Ph.D., 2005. Adapted by Georgene Bender and Judy Levings for use with Florida 4-H, 2014. Used by permission.

An Equal Opportunity Institution. 4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization. Over 230,000 members in the State of Florida help to make up the community of more than 6.5 million young people across America. 4-H is a non-formal, practical educational program for youth. Florida 4-H is the youth development program of Florida Cooperative Extension, a part of the University of Florida/IFAS.

by enrolling in the county 4-H program for membership in at least one of the approved club projects and agreeing to live up to the standards set by the club. (However, the size of the club may be limited due to space limitations or the leader's available time or ability to accommodate more members.) Membership shall not be denied on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations.

Section 2 - Responsibility

Each member must attend at least 70 percent of the meetings during the year. If a member is unable to attend a meeting due to a valid excuse (such as sickness or an important school or family event), the member must contact the club leader, secretary, or president in advance to be excused. Each member should also complete an approved club project, keep a project record book up-to-date, and do a club, community, or county 4-H presentation annually.

Note: Additional or different membership requirements may be used.

However, the non-discrimination statement must be included exactly as printed in section 1. Club dues are optional and determined by the club's membership.

ARTICLE V - Meetings

Section 1 - Dates

The club shall meet regularly every ____ (day/week)

At _____ (time) at _____ (place).

Special meetings may be called by the president and 4-H leader as needed. Adequate notice is needed.

Section 2 - Quorum

A simple majority (one-half plus one) of members must be present to conduct official business of the club.

Section 3 - Order of business

The following order of business shall be followed at regular club meetings:

- 1.Meeting called to order
- 2.Club rises, salutes the American flag with the Pledge of Allegiance and then recites the 4-H pledge (to the 4-H flag)
- 3.Roll call
- 4.Minutes of last meeting
- 5.Treasurer's report
- 6.Report of committees
7. Old or unfinished business
- 8.New business
- 9.4-H leader's report
10. Announcements
11. Adjournment
12. Educational program/project work
13. Recreation/refreshments



ARTICLE VI - Committees

Standing and/or special committees will be created as needed. Members are expected to volunteer for committee assignments. The president has the authority to appoint committee chairs and members.

ARTICLE VII - Officers

The officers of this club shall include: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and reporter. Their duties shall be as follows:

- The president will preside at all meetings, uphold the constitution and adhere to parliamentary procedure.

The president shall appoint committee chairs and members.

- The vice-president shall preside over the club in the absence of the president. The vice-president shall assist the president and serve as a link to all committees.
- The secretary shall write minutes of each meeting and report at the next meeting. The secretary will also keep attendance records and write club correspondence.
- The treasurer shall be responsible for all club funds and property, along with the club leader. The treasurer will give a report of the club's finances at each meeting.
- The reporter/historian shall collect newspaper and county newsletter clippings, photos, etc. for a club scrapbook, bulletin board, history, and/or web page. The reporter completes and sends a 4-H club activity report to the county 4-H office regularly, and also may write and send club news to local newspapers, radio stations, etc.

Note: If the club has more or fewer officers, duties of each one should be written and included in this article.

ARTICLE VIII - Election of Officers

The officers of this club shall be elected at the first regular meeting in _____ (month). They shall hold office for one year. All active members are eligible to run for an office and to vote. Voting is by majority rule and done by secret ballot.

ARTICLE IX - Amendments

By-laws may be amended at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote cast by those in attendance, providing notice has been given at the previous meeting.

ARTICLE X - Dissolution

If this club disbands, all club assets shall be assigned to (non-profit countywide 4-H organization. Ask your county 4-H staff the name of this organization.)

Developing by-laws does not pertain to Cloverbud groups/clubs, because creating by-laws is based on a youth and adult partnership that implies a higher degree

of development than is appropriate for 5-7 year olds. If a Cloverbud group is meeting on an on-going basis it is recommended that children be guided by their adult leader to create a set of rules.

Reference

Portions were adapted from a variety of 4-H publications.

