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Revised 9-18-07  
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## **Trempealeau County 4-H Policy**

### **CLUBS**

1. To be officially recognized as a 4-H Club in Wisconsin, the following requirements must be met:
  - Club name
  - Five or more youth
  - Adult leadership that has been approved through the Youth Protection process
  - Educational plan which meets the purposes of the 4-H program
  - Youth involvement in leadership and decision-making
  - Meet on a continuing basis
  - Charter must be completed and submitted by county deadline
  - Open to any youth within the age parameter--regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, disability, ancestry, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital or parental status
2. Dues are set at \$2.00 per regular member per year. If member is enrolled in the Horse Project, add an extra \$1.00 per member per year to cover county insurance costs. Membership dues are payable by the club to the 4-H Leader's Association Treasurer. Statements will be sent out approximately February 1st, and dues shall be mailed to the extension office, postmarked no later than March 31st. A penalty of \$10 per month per club will be assessed beginning April 1st, until paid.
3. Clubs are required to hold at least 8 business meetings throughout the year.
4. The 4-H Club year runs from September 1st to August 31st.
5. Upon dissolution, any 4-H Club with assets must turn over those funds to the Trempealeau County 4-H Leaders' Association.

### **MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES**

1. 4-H is an educational program whose membership/participation eligibility is based on grade rather than age. You will note that County, State, National and International camps, trips and other activities are regulated by grade rather than age.

4-H membership is open to any person in Kindergarten through the year following high school graduation (13th grade). This is a Wisconsin 4-H program requirement. Trempealeau County may not override Wisconsin 4-H program requirements.

“Kindergarten” does not include 4-year-old kindergarten or pre-kindergarten classes, it is the grade offered immediately before 1st grade.

A 4-year-old youth enrolled in “regular” 5-year-old Kindergarten is in Kindergarten for the purposes of 4-H. Similarly, youth in other grades may not be an age typically associated with that grade, but are still eligible for 4-H based on that grade. It does not matter if a grade is skipped or repeated, eligibility is based on grade.

PLEASE NOTE: the Trempealeau County Fair and other shows may be regulated by AGE not GRADE. An exhibitor and their family/club should ensure the youth is in the correct age category for the event.

2. Youth in Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades participate as Cloverbuds. This is a Wisconsin 4-H program requirement.

3. Third graders must participate as Explorers. This is a Wisconsin 4-H program requirement.

In Trempealeau County, Explorers may also enroll in any other projects besides Exploring. These additional projects may include animal projects. Explorers may exhibit in project-related departments at the Trempealeau County Fair or other shows.

4. Fourth graders through 13th grade will be eligible for traditional (regular) 4-H membership with no limitation on project number or variety.

5. To exhibit animals at any public event as a 4-H member, youth must be in at least 3rd grade during the current 4-H year. This policy is for safety of the 4-H member and the public at the exhibition. 4-H program insurance only covers 3rd grade and above in animal related projects and events. The developmental ability and maturity level of the exhibitor and the unpredictable behavior of animals should be considered prior to involving a 4-H member of any age in the exhibition of animals. Board recognized project teams may have additional requirements to ensure the safety of animals, exhibitors and the public at events.

## **FUNDING REQUESTS, AWARDS, AND TRIPS**

1. Youth who want to receive financial assistance for awards/trips/other 4-H activities must meet the following requirements:

- Complete the Trempealeau County 4-H Funding Request Form, which can be obtained from the website or the Extension Office. Funding requests will be heard at Leaders' Board meetings. However, they will not be voted on unless they were received at the Extension Office at least 7 days prior to the Leaders' Board meeting.
- \$30.00 and under--no additional requirements
- \$30.01 and above--in addition to the above requirements, a personal appearance is required prior to the event. A video or phone interview will be allowed for special circumstances as pre-approved by the Leaders' Board.
- State Fair participants do not individually request funding.
- A list of awards and trips will be listed in the 4-H newsletter. An application, documentation of 4-H experience, and a personal appearance are required prior to the event. A video or phone interview will be allowed for special circumstances as pre-approved by the Leaders' Board. Documentation of 4-H experience may be

a record book, Member Evaluation form, or other media that clearly demonstrates the member's involvement in 4-H.

- The Leaders' Board will not approve a funding request for a trip over \$1,000 that the 4-H member has already attended previously. These large trips will be funded only once per member.

## **SPECIAL ACTIVITIES**

### 1. County Fair

a. In order to be eligible to exhibit at the County Fair, a 4-H member must meet the county and club requirements. If a project has Leaders' Board approved additional requirements, those also have to be met in order to show in that project.

b. Members may enroll at any time, but must meet enrollment guidelines for certain programs to ensure educational integrity and safety.

### 2. State Fair Participation

a. For Clothing Revue, if participation at the State level is limited, preference will be given to those who did not attend the previous year.

b. Non-animal projects that are sent to State Fair are selected at the County Fair.

c. Animal project members may exhibit at the State Fair without the need to be selected at the county level. They must meet State Fair entry guidelines.

d. Any drama, mini-drama, musical, or demonstration may participate at the WI State Fair. All are welcome and invited to apply. The WI State Fair will decide who performs.

e. In order to seek reimbursement, club leaders must seek reimbursement through the Funding Request Form and follow the requirements set forth on that form. The Leaders' Board will use discretion in appointing money.

## **YOUTH PROTECTION**

### 1. The Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Youth Protection process includes:

- A background check for arrest and conviction records with the Wisconsin Department of Justice.
- Participation in the volunteer orientation program.
- Signing the Volunteer Behavior Expectations form. All volunteers, age 18 and over, who work with youth in the 4-H youth program on an ongoing basis will participate in Youth Protection. The Volunteer Behavior Expectations form must be signed annually to continue as a volunteer. Arrest and conviction records will be rechecked every four years for continuing volunteers. 4-H members who serve as youth leaders do not need to go through the process. If they enroll as an adult volunteer, they need to complete the process.

2. Background checks and attendance at a volunteer orientation program are required for all parent/guardians who are hosting 4-H youth in their home if they are not currently certified 4-H Youth Development volunteers. Background checks are required for all other adults (18+) living with families who are hosting 4-H youth overnight.

3. Returning volunteers who have been absent one to four years need the background records check, and signed volunteer expectation form, but are not required to attend the orientation to be reinstated as a volunteer. Returning volunteers who have been absent five or more years need to repeat the entire youth protection process.

4. 4-H volunteers who have already had background checks and child abuse training as part of their employment or other volunteer experience will need to complete the 4-H Youth Development Youth Protection process.

### **PROGRAM SAFETY REGULATIONS**

1. Adults and youth participating in all high-risk programs, including horses, ATV, bicycle, rock climbing/rappelling, rollerblading, and ropes adventure courses must wear protective clothing, head, and foot gear. The policy means that all 4-H members and leaders (adult or youth) participating in the mentioned projects and/or activities need to use protective or safety equipment while participating. Approved safety helmets need to be worn while mounted or driving a horse, operating a bicycle or ATV, on roller blades, rock climbing, or doing a challenge course. Minimum requirements for these programs:
  - Protective head gear (SEI approved for the specific activity) which properly fits the participant.
  - Shoes or boots which provide protection from the hazards of said program.
  - Clothing appropriate for the activity which will protect the participants from the elements surrounding the event.
2. We cannot insure any activity that involves aviation (people leaving the ground, i.e. hot air balloon rides, hang gliding, etc.) or paint ball. Beyond this caveat, if there is a question of needing additional insurance, please contact the UW-Extension Agent to conduct a risk management checklist and develop a risk management plan.
3. If a 4-H club is listed as a sponsor or co-sponsor of an activity which includes the above listed projects, the helmet and safety equipment requirement applies for all participants. This includes adults, as they need to be positive role models. Should people decide not to comply, they need to be disqualified from the competition or asked to at least dismount, if during a non-competitive activity. **When adults are serving in leadership roles, they are expected to meet the same safety requirements as the youth.** If leaders fail to comply with the safety policy and individuals are participating without proper safety equipment and an injury occurs, the leader may be found negligent and application of liability insurance coverage would be questionable. It is strongly encouraged that 4-H groups set an example of using proper safety equipment and maintaining the highest standards of injury prevention.





