

4-H SHOOTING SPORTS GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are for providing learning experiences in shooting sport projects. The shooting sports project is oriented to the individual and is an activity that can be practiced throughout life. It is also a project where the entire 4-H family can participate.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL MEMBERS

- Learn safe and responsible shooting practices.
- Develop an appreciation of nature through outdoor recreation activities.
- Develop favorable conservation attitudes.
- Learn a lifetime skill.
- Learn to keep good records as to what was learned, how it was learned, leadership roles, expenses, property inventory and other essential facts.
- Learn the parts of the equipment and what equipment is needed.
- Learn how to select and buy equipment.
- Learn proper shooting techniques and fundamentals.
- Learn proper way to aim, shoot and follow through.
- Learn to identify various kinds of arms and ammunition.
- Learn new skills each year.

Minimum age requirements (as of January 1) for:

- Hunting & Wildlife – 5 years of age
- BB Gun - 8 years of age
- Archery - 8 years of age
- 3D Archery – 8 years of age
- .22 Cal. Rifle, Trap, Skeet, Muzzleloading, - 12 years of age

BEFORE youth may participate in the 4-H shooting sports program youth must:

- **be a registered member in an Eaton County 4-H club or the 4-H Shooting Sports program and enrolled in 4-H Online, including a completed medical release form**
- **submit a completed participation agreement form**
- **pay the \$10.00 shooting sports project fee (non-refundable after March 15)**
- **successfully complete a DNR Hunter Safety Certification class if shooting in .22 cal. rifle, trap, skeet and muzzleloading divisions.**

Forms must be submitted, registration accepted in 4-H Online, and payment received BEFORE a member can shoot. No forms, payment or new members will be accepted after March 15. Forms and payment may be turned into the MSU Extension office or at a county meet.

General Safety Rules: Please refer to the specific guidelines outlined for each discipline (available from a registered shooting sports leader or at the Extension office) for specific safety requirements for each discipline area.

1. All firearms or bows must be handled in accordance with the guidelines for safety established by the National Rifle Association. These are as follows:
 - a. Treat every firearm or bow as if were loaded.
 - b. Always point the muzzle of a firearm or arrow in bow in a safe direction.
 - c. Keep your safety on until you are ready to fire.
 - d. Never point at anything you do not intend to shoot.
2. In accordance with Michigan law enforcement guidelines, all rifles, shotguns, and bows transported in a vehicle must be unloaded in both barrel and magazine and either enclosed in a case or carried in the trunk. These rules apply whether the vehicle is parked, stopped, moving, or is on private or public property.
3. Equipment safety checks will be conducted by a Certified 4-H Shooting Sports Leader. Equipment will be checked to ensure functioning safety mechanisms, to see if they are loaded or unloaded, and in full working order. These individuals will also inspect equipment to make sure it is in alignment with county meet/tournament rules.
4. Certified 4-H Shooting Sports Leaders are responsible for maintaining safety practices, following the established rules of the county and making decisions on issues related to these areas. Any person, youth or adult, who steps up to any shooting line, must follow the rules and safety procedures established by the Certified 4-H Shooting Sports Leader.
5. In the event a range accident should occur, the range officer will call for an immediate cease-fire on the line. All firearms or bows will be unloaded and laid on the bench or ground.
6. If there is a misfire on the range, the range commander will decide how to best handle the situation. Blatant failure to follow safety guidelines while shooting will result in dismissal.
7. No horseplay or disruptive behavior will be tolerated.
8. The word "weapon" will not be used in association with this equipment. The use of humanoid or tombstone targets will not be allowed during 4-H Shooting Sports events.
9. Refrain from smoking and vaping, including during club meetings at the range.
10. **Inclement Weather:** Certified 4-H Shooting Sports Leaders will determine whether or not the conditions are safe to shoot. Always assume that meets and tournaments will continue. A decision regarding canceling an event due to inclement weather will be made on-site at the time the scheduled shoot is set to begin. Always refer to the instructions given by Certified 4-H Shooting Sports Leaders during inclement weather situations.
11. **Dress Code:** Please refrain from wearing open-toed shoes, tank tops, and clothing that exposes the midriff area. Shorts are acceptable, but must be at least as long as youth's fingertips when their arms hang comfortably at their side. Please wear close-toed shoes (no sandals). Please refrain from wearing long earrings or ear buds. These guidelines are in place for the safety of all members. Please do not wear clothing that advertises alcohol, tobacco, or other explicit activities that are contrary to healthy lifestyle.

County and State Tournament

The county shooting sports committee offers local meets for any 4-H'er in the project. They also sponsor a county shooting sports tournament. Members must participate in the scheduled county tournament prior to competing at the state tournament. The state 4-H shooting sports committee sponsors a state 4-H shooting sports tournament each year.

In order to participate in the county tournament, members must:

- Attend and shoot complete rounds in at least three county meets for each division they plan to shoot in. If a member shoots archery and trap, they must attend at least three county meets to shoot archery and at least three county meets to shoot trap.
- Submit entry form and fees for each event they enter to the MSU Extension office by the registration deadline.
- Successfully complete a DNR Hunter Safety Certification class in order to compete in .22 Cal. Rifle, Trap, Skeet and Muzzleloading divisions.

In order to participate in the state 4-H shooting sports tournament, members must:

- Attend and shoot complete rounds in at least three county meets for each division in which they plan to shoot.
- Participate fully in the county 4-H shooting sports tournament- NO EXCEPTIONS.
- Submit entry form and fees for each event they enter to the MSU Extension office by the registration deadline.

Participation in the county fair is optional. Classes are listed in the current Eaton County Fair Book. Participants must follow class requirements listed in the fair book.

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Updated 1/2015 participation fee
Updated 12/2019 ages for disciplines, added wilderness
Updated 12/2021 for changes to fees, code of conduct
Updated 11/2022 for dress code changes and fee change