**EMMET COUNTY 4-H OPERATIONAL POLICIES**

**AGE:**

1. The age the 4-H member is for the current year as of January 1 (4-H age) will be the age we consider for all 4-H activities. Members must be between the ages of 5 and 19 years of age (4-H age). Cloverbuds are 5-7 years old (4-H age). Members with a handicap or disability may continue as 4-H’ers through age 26 (4-H age).
2. Volunteers must at least 20 years of age by January1st of the current 4-H year in which they apply. They must have aged out as a 4-H member. To be an active gold or silver volunteer, the individual must complete the Volunteer Selection Process. Volunteers wanting to serve as chaperones must be 21 years old at the time of the event.
3. Additional age requirements may be determined by the individual councils and committees.
4. Regional and state event/activities may have different age requirements for participation. It is the responsibility of the participant to be aware of and comply with those requirements.

**RESIDENCY**:

1. Members and volunteers must be registered in Emmet County clubs to be eligible to participate in any County, in regional and state events in which they will be representing the Emmet County 4-H program.
2. Members may live in nearby counties, but will be encouraged to seek membership in clubs within their own counties before applying to the Emmet County 4-H program.
3. Members may have residency in any county in the state of Michigan. However, members are encouraged to reside in close proximity of the county in which their club is registered by May 1st of the year of the fair. This is to encourage participation in club and county meetings and events.

**VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS:**

Individuals wishing to become a volunteer in the Emmet County 4-H program, must complete the following process:

* Complete an application Volunteer Central;
* Complete the online trainings in Volunteer Central;
* A background check will be completed on individual;
* Gold Status- Participate in an interview;
* Gold Status- Provide at least 3 references who will respond;
* Attend a mandatory “Volunteer Training” session:
* Code of Conduct
* Sign media, evaluation, and medical agreement.
* Gold and Silver Volunteers- Enroll in 4-H Online after acceptance. Only Gold volunteers have access to members personal information.

**CLUB REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Clubs must consist of at least 5 members from 2 different families to be considered an official 4-H club;
2. Volunteers may determine the maximum size of their group, the age of club members and how often they meet, however a minimum of 6 meetings per year is required. Club calendars are due with enrollments.
3. Club leaders need to contact the county 4-H office to inform them when the 4-H club has reached its membership limits, to ensure that no further referrals are made to that club.
4. Volunteers cannot serve as club leaders in the same project area in more than one county. However, they may serve as club leaders in *different* project areas, other than the projects they promote in their “home” club.
5. Be open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.
6. Provide a welcoming and safe environment to all members.
7. Agree to follow state and county 4-H policies and procedures, and state and national 4-H guidelines for using the 4-H name and emblem.
8. Club leaders need to let members know what is expected of them and their parents, club activities, financial responsibilities, etc.
9. Follow all financial guidelines for 4-H groups outlined in the Michigan 4-H Treasurer’s Record Book including preparing and providing to the county 4-H Extension staff an Annual Summary Financial Report for any funds raised or collected in the name of 4-H including account numbers and balances.
10. Have a volunteer leader who has successfully undergone the Michigan State University Extension Volunteer Process.
11. Be appropriately structured, with a leadership team of officers. Must have at least 2 active and approved Gold Volunteers in each club.
12. In the case of group dissolution, turn over all property and funds to the County 4-H staff on behalf of the Council and follow the group disbanding checklist and disbursement of assets from financial manual. Final annual reporting forms must be completed.

**ATTENDANCE:**

1. Clubs and councils may establish their own attendance requirements, providing they are fair and impartial.
2. Members are responsible for knowing and abiding by the requirements designated by their individual 4-H club regarding attendance at club meetings.
3. Members are responsible for knowing and abiding by the requirements designated by their individual county 4-H councils - Livestock, Horse and Animal Husbandry - regarding attendance at county meetings to be eligible for county fair participation.
4. Members enrolled in market livestock, horse or small animal clubs are required to attend 50 % of their club meetings in order to be eligible to participate in 4-H classes at the fair.

**REGISTRATIONS / ENROLLMENTS:**

* To maintain their status, leaders will be required to complete various paperwork during the program year:
* Project award nominations for members (for Awards Banquet) - October
* Market Livestock Enrollments - November - 3rd Monday;
* Current & New Club Membership Re-Enrollments
* Club Calendar and Directory- meeting dates, topics and locations (est.) -October
* Club Minutes- October
* Code of Conduct- October
* Annual Financial Summary and Bank Statements- October
* Animal Husbandry Enrollments - May 1
* Horse Registrations - May 1
* Fair Registrations - for members and clubs - 3rd Monday in July
* Enrollments for new members are due: December 1st for participation in the county fair; additional requirements will be determined by individual boards such as Market Livestock, Animal Husbandry, and Horse Developmental Council.
* Enrollments will be accepted from leaders 365 days a year. HOWEVER, the date those enrollments are received in the **county office** will determine the participation eligibility of that 4-H member. New members may be an exception.
* Club leaders are required to submit a signed Code of Conduct statement, a Civil Rights Statement, Financial report, Club Minutes, Club Directory, Club Calendar, and Bank Statements” on an ANNUAL basis.
* A club is not considered enrolled/re-enrolled, and will not be able to participate in 4-H events, until all of the above requirements are complete.

**PROJECT / PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS:**

**ANIMAL PROJECTS:**

Refer to Emmet Charlevoix Market Livestock Associations rules/guidelines

Refer to Emmet Charlevoix Horse Superintendents.

Refer to Emmet Charlevoix Small Animal Superintendents.

**EDUCATION REQUIREMENT:**

All members must complete at least one education event in order to exhibit in 4-H Classes at the Emmet-Charlevoix County Fair. If a member is not able to participate in a County Sponsored Education Clinic, they will be required to give an age-appropriate educational presentation to the Emmet County 4-H Council Board within one month of the Education Clinic date. Cloverbuds are exempt, however highly encouraged to attend. Length of requirement is determined each year. Members may participate in educational opportunities and receive credit, a form must be completed and signed by an educator as documentation.

The purpose of the education clinic is to gain knowledge and skills in the members project area.

**COUNTY FAIR:**

Members and clubs are to have their projects and exhibits registered by the designated deadline in July prior to the fair. Fair books and registration forms are available at the county Extension Office by July 1.

It is the responsibility of the exhibitor to read, understand and be aware of all class requirements, deadlines, show dates and exhibit requirements before attending the fair. The 4-H section of the fair book is located at the end of the book and pages are laid out in a landscape format.

The open class section is located in the front of the fair book. 4-H members are able to exhibit in open class, however, their entries will be displayed and judged in the open class youth department, not with their 4-H club.

4-H members cannot be enrolled in the same project in more than one county. 4-H members can only exhibit in the 4-H departments of the fair if they have not or *will* not be exhibiting in the youth or 4-H divisions of another county fair in the same year.

Clubs need to complete a fair registration form for their booth exhibit, and club projects and herdsmanship (barn) entries. All of these entries are to be listed on a fair premium statement with the club’s name and leader’s address listed. The club will receive a premium check for their exhibits and funds are to be used for club programming.

**CLUB FUNDS & FUNDRAISING:**

1. Clubs wishing to open checking and/or savings accounts will need to apply for a “Federal Employer ID #” that will be assigned to their individual 4-H club unit;
2. Clubs may choose to have dues as part of their club operations. Dues MUST be optional to avoid discrimination against those with few or little resources.
3. Any funds remaining in a club or council accounts following the dissolution of that club or council, will - by USDA mandate - revert back to the Emmet County 4-H Council.
4. Clubs may organize fundraising activities, providing they meet the following criteria:
   * Volunteers must complete a “Request for Fund Raising” application - and receive approval from the MSU Extension Office - at least 2 weeks prior to the planned event;
   * Following the event, leaders must complete a financial report, available from the county office;
   * Funds must be raised and used for the promotion of the 4-H club, its membership and the county program - not individual members;
   * A yearly “Club Financial Report” must be completed by each club and county council. The report must be accompanied by a starting and ending year bank statement.
5. Failure to comply with any item in # 4 will result in a verbal warning, followed by a written confirmation of that warning. Additional offenses will result in a volunteer’s dismissal from the 4-H program.

**COUNCILS / COMMITTEES:**

1. County planning committees, sub-committees and developmental councils are to review their by-laws, rules and other policies annually as required by their individual mission statements. By-laws and rules are reviewed annually at the October Emmet County Council meeting.

2. An annual financial report, accompanied by a bank statement, must be completed by each county council.

3. Adults wishing to serve in officer roles on any of the county’s developmental councils must be registered leaders at the time of the elections.

1. Adults wishing to serve in officer roles on any of the county’s developmental councils must be registered volunteers at the time of the elections. Exceptions will be made only to those individuals who have submitted a volunteer application. Those individuals, if elected, will be considered an “officer-elect” until their volunteer process is finalized. In the event that the individual does **not** complete the volunteer training process, they will lose their officer-elect position and the appropriate developmental council would appoint a replacement, according to the process outlined in their by-laws.

**TRIPS / OVERNIGHT ACTIVITIES:**

The Michigan 4-H Youth Development youth-adult overnight housing policy applies to all 4-H-sponsored youth overnight events where adults are house with (or nearby) youth, or where youth and unrealated adults share bathrooms.

The overnight housing policy was developed to help ensure the safety and well-being of both youth and adults involved with Michigan 4-H. This mandatory policy applies to any Michigan 4-H-sponsored state, regional, multicounty, county, or club-level overnight event where adults are housed with or share bathrooms with unrelated youth, such as workshops, events, fairs, exchanges, overnight trips, lock-ins, and camps. For purposes of this policy, a “Michigan 4-H-sponsored event” is defined as any event that has an affiliation with 4-H through the use of the name or emblem, and that involves a representative of

4-H (either a 4-H staff member or a 4-H volunteer who has been through the MSU Extension VolunteerSelection Process).

Males and females will be housed separately. Youth participants aged 17 and under at the time of the event will be housed with other youth participants. Youth participants aged 18 to 20 at the time of the event will not be housed or share a bathroom with unrelated youth aged 17 and under. Adult participants aged 21 and up will be housed with other adult participants. An adult participant may be housed with related youth; however, no unrelated youth will be housed in that room. Related is defined as immediate family, including parents/guardians, grandparents, and siblings. Non-related adults can stay with youth only when parent/guardian written consent is provided to the event coordinator.

All adult participants aged 20 by January 1st of current program year will have been through the MSU Extension Volunteer Selection Process. Youth participants ages 18 to 20 (4-H age 19) must complete the MSU Extension Background Check Form for 18-, 19- and 20-Year-Olds so staff members may complete their criminal history check and at least one reference check . Local MSU Extension staff members are responsible for ensuring that these background checks are completed before the event.

Please note that in cases such as a cabin set-up, if no other housing is available for adults, more than one adult must be housed in the cabin.

Before a child goes on any overnight 4-H activity, the policy requires that his or her parent or guardian must sign the 4-H Overnight Housing Parent/Guardian Permission form. If a parent or guardian does not sign and submit this form, his/her child will not be able to take part in the activity.

When determining housing arrangements, it is important to accommodate changes when able. Staff members are encouraged to provide flexible housing options upon request (for example, single room, private bathroom, floor changes).

Michigan 4-H Youth Development has a minimum ratio of 1 adult to 8 youth across all 4-H programs. 4-H staff members may choose to put in place a more stringent ratio, particularly when working with Cloverbud youth.

When staffing events, gender should be a consideration. When possible, there should be adult representation for the gender of youth participating in the program. For day programs, utilizing adults who are the same gender as youth participants is ideal, but not mandatory. For overnight experiences, especially when housing chaperones in the same vicinity as youth, gender should be appropriately assigned. Any adult who is providing supervision and serving as a chaperone for youth participating in 4-H sponsored events (locally, regionally, statewide or nationally) must have successfully completed the MSU Extension Volunteer Selection Process and be registered as a gold volunteer with the 4-H program. Chaperones must be at least 21 years old.

Clubs or groups may, from time to time, plan events or activities that require them to travel out of the county. For this to occur, the following procedures must be followed in order for those involved to be covered by 4-H accident and liability insurance and to ensure proper communication with all parties involved:

The 4-H Coordinator must be notified of the planned event within 30 days of the start of the event;

 Complete itinerary of the event (dates and times)

 Location(s)

 List of Enrolled 4-H Youth Participating

 List of Adult gold volunteer

 Copies of driver’s license photos and insurance forms on EVERY potential driver that is a gold volunteer

 Emergency phone numbers such as cell phones for all gold volunteers attending

 Copies of youth medical authorizations will be given to chaperones.

As part of our youth participant safety policy, any youth ages 18-20 years old must complete a background check (State of Michigan check run by MSU Extension staff through Michigan ICHAT- Internet Criminal History Access Tool) and provide two non-family adult references for feedback. To complete this process for INSERT PROGRAM, we ask that you take the following steps by DEADLINE DATE:

NOTE: In addition to the above policies, any new rules and regulations from the State 4-H Office must also be abided by.

PENALTIES FOR MISBEHAVIOR:4-H members, leaders, co-leaders, jr-leaders, volunteers, parents, etc. will be expected to act in an acceptable and approved manor in accordance with the Michigan 4-H Mission Statement. We are a youth development program that involves volunteers in providing positive, experiential, educational opportunities for and with youth. Our mission is to create environments, through collaborations, that build strong, healthy youth who are proactive in a complex and changing world. If a criminal offense occurs, any of the above individuals will be terminated immediately by a 4-H Coordinator and a written notice will be sent to the offending party. Appropriate club or program individuals will be notified as well.

If behaviors are inappropriate by members, leaders, co-leaders, jr-leaders, volunteers, parents, etc notification needs to be made in writing to the Charlevoix County 4-H Coordinator. Depending on the severity of the situation and if satisfactory evidence has been obtained that a 4-H rule(s) has been violated, a verbal warning followed by a written notice will be provided that will serve as a last warning. Again, depending on the severity of the offense the leader or member will be given specific guidelines and restrictions that apply to the individual situation. A second offense will result in the offending party being terminated from Emmet County 4-H. In addition, all written notices will be communicated to the offender, parents, leader, and appropriate 4-H staff. Procedures for dealing with dismissal of an adult volunteer will be in accordance with the policies that are outlined in the Volunteer Selection Process.

**DRESS CODE:**

A dress code will apply to every 4-H member and adult volunteer directly involved in a 4-H event. This includes 4-H club meetings, county council meetings, clinics, workshops, regional events, state events and the county fair. Regarding the county fair, this dress code will be enforced during the entire duration of the fair, and will not be limited to the times an individual is involved in a shows, auction or clinic. The dress code will include - but is not limited to - the following items:

**ITEMS NOT APPROPRIATE:**

* + Clothing, hats and other articles endorsing cigarette or alcohol use, brands or logos;
  + Shorts that are too short, revealing or skimpy tops and shirts, or other inappropriate items;
  + Any other item determined as inappropriate by any of the 4-H council or board members;
  + Violations will be communicated to the individual, their parents, leaders and 4-H staff, and will be considered as a first warning in the violation process.

**CONDUCT POLICY:**

1. Anyone participating in a 4-H sponsored event who is not abiding by the signed “4-H Code of Conduct” shall immediately be sent home at his/her own expense. In cases where illegal activity has occurred, the proper legal authorities will be notified for a possible criminal investigation.

2. Any violations of the above policy at county, regional, state or national events, or any violations of the “County Fair Conduct Policy” will result in immediate termination of membership in the Emmet County 4-H program for the remainder of the program year. If the current program year concludes within six months, the member’s termination will carry over into the next program year.

3. At the end of their termination period, the member may request to be re-enrolled in a county 4-H club. Depending on the severity of the situation the member may be accepted back into the 4-H county club. Each situation will be dealt with on an individual basis under the direction of the 4-H Staff person. If the member is granted participation back into a 4-H Club the member will be given specific guidelines and restrictions during that program year and must complete all club and county requirements for behavior, attendance, paperwork and registrations to continue their enrollment in the program.

**FAIRWEEK EXHIBITION, PARTICIPATION & CONDUCT**

Complete rules and regulations regarding fair week exhibitors can be found in the “Emmet Charlevoix County Fair Code of Conduct”. It is the responsibility of each exhibitor and their families to read, know and understand the rules listed in that document. A complete listing of offenses and disciplinary actions is listed in the Code of Conduct and will apply to every 4-H member, volunteer, exhibitor and their families.

**APPROVED:**

**November 12, 2024**