

St. Joseph County, MI 4-H Youth Council By-Laws

Article I: NAME

The name of the Council shall be the St. Joseph County 4-H Youth Council. The Council exists as a non-profit organization for educational purposes.

Article II: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Council is to plan, advise, organize, and conduct, with the assistance of the MSU Extension staff, educational programs and activities that meet the needs and interests of St. Joseph County youth and adults.

The Council also conducts fundraising on behalf of the St. Joseph County 4-H Youth Program in the form of countywide fundraising activities and secured donations.

Article III: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - The membership shall consist of twelve (12) adult leaders and a minimum of four (4) and a maximum of six (6) senior teens. Adult leaders can run and be elected to four (4) two (2) year consecutive terms. Senior teens can run and be elected to three (3) one (1) year terms. (Refer to Article III, Section 6 for further guidelines.) Up to four (4) intermediate age teens (12-14 years old 4-H Age) can be elected to a junior youth council membership. Junior teens can run and be elected to a maximum of three (3) junior teen one (1) year terms.

Section 2 - Council members must be active adult leaders (organizational, project, or resource leaders for a minimum of three (3) consecutive years) or 4-H members at the time of election, and during the time they hold office. In addition, 4-H members must be 15 years of age by January 1 of the year which they serve and must have completed a minimum of two (2) years in 4-H prior to running for election. Spouses shall not serve simultaneously on 4-H Youth Council. Completed teen leadership project years or youth council senior teen leader years will count toward eligibility for elected leader years for aged-out members.

Section 3 - The 4-H Program Coordinator shall be an ex-officio member without a vote.

Section 4 - If a vacancy should occur in a given area during the term in question, the adult leader/teen with the next greatest number of votes in the most recent 4-H Youth Council election will be asked to fill the respective vacancy until the vacated term has expired. If there are no competing nominees to fill the vacancy, the 4-H Youth Council By-Laws committee will appoint a leader/teen to fill the vacancy until the next election.

Section 5 - If a member is absent unexcused from three (3) regular meetings in a calendar year, that individual will be asked by the 4-H Youth Council president to re-evaluate his/her commitment to serve on the Council. If a member is absent from three (3) meetings, a discussion between the executive board, 4-H Program Coordinator, and the member will be held to determine the member's commitment to serve on the Council. If a member cannot fulfill his/her duties, they will then be asked to submit a letter of resignation.

Section 6 - Each member who serves on the St. Joseph County 4-H Youth Council shall adhere to the 4-H Code of Conduct.

Article IV: SUPERINTENDENTS

Section 1 - Cat, Dog, and Still Exhibit Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents fall under the direction of the St. Joseph County 4-H Youth Council.

Section 2 - Process of Selection of St. Joseph County 4-H Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents.

A. Notification of open position to the county 4-H leaders by written letter. Letter will include the expectations and requirements of position.

- B. Interview process within one month of notification letter with those who meet the requirements of position to be filled.
- C. Notification will be given to county leaders of newly appointed superintendent.
- D. All superintendents and assistant superintendents will participate in an annual review conducted by the 4-H Program Coordinator and/or review committee.

Section 2 - Process of Dismissal or Resignation of St. Joseph County 4-H Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents.

- A. **Resignation** - said Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent will submit a letter of resignation to the 4-H Program Coordinator, or St. Joseph County 4-H Youth Council President if the 4-H Program Coordinator position is vacant.
- B. **Dismissal** of said Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent will be based on written notification of violation. Said violations may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Violation of the 4-H Volunteer Code of Conduct provided by MSU Extension.
 - 2. Violation of direct requests or instructions given by Michigan State University Extension Staff.

Article V: OFFICERS

Section 1 - All primary Council officers shall be adult leaders. 4-H Youth Council offices shall include president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, deputy treasurer, and media officers. The president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, deputy treasurer, and media officer shall constitute the Council Executive Committee, and shall transact any business arising between regular meetings. All Junior Officers shall be teens. Junior officers shall include junior secretary, junior treasurer, and junior media.

Section 2 - The duties of each office are as follows:

- A. **PRESIDENT** - The president shall
 - 1. Preside over all meetings.
 - 2. Oversee the work of other officers and committees.
 - 3. Appoint committees, as needed, according to By-Laws guidelines, and select the chairperson of each.
 - 4. Prepare an agenda for each regular/special meeting in conjunction with the MSU Extension 4-H Program Coordinator.
 - 5. Be empowered to co-sign vouchers and checks as necessary.
 - 6. Be the official representative of the 4-H Youth Council.
- B. **VICE-PRESIDENT** - The vice-president shall:
 - 1. Assume the duties of the president in his/her absence.
 - 2. Serve as the coordinator of *the annual* countywide 4-H fundraisers with help from the fundraising committee.
- C. **SECRETARY** - The secretary shall:
 - 1. Keep a record of minutes and attendance at all regular and executive Council meetings.
 - 2. Handle correspondence on behalf of the Council as needed.
 - 3. Keep and maintain a current listing of the membership of all Council committees.
 - 4. Prepare and mail "thank you's" to all Council special donors, scholarship donors, and those fair trophy/special award donors who do **NOT** receive "thank you's" from 4-H member recipients in a given year (due to the fact that the trophies/special awards designated to be given in their names were not awarded).
 - 5. Shall obtain and keep on file a copy of the Michigan Open Meeting Act.
 - 6. Coordinate and oversee the work of junior secretary.

- D. **TREASURER** - The treasurer shall:
1. Be responsible for payment of bills, collection of revenue, and all financial records of the Council.
 2. Prepare and file all necessary reports as needed (federal, state and other).
 3. Name an adult Council member to serve as deputy treasurer, with appointment to be approved by the Council.
 4. Prepare and submit monthly financial statements to the Council at its regular monthly meetings.
 5. Prepare year-end budget statement for use by the Council Budget Planning Committee.
 6. Be empowered to co-sign vouchers and checks as necessary.
 7. Shall oversee accounting of expenses against the 4-H Youth Council budget, report Over-expenditures against the same to the Council and request action to ensure the budget is amended as needed.
 8. Educate the deputy treasurer relative to all responsibilities of the office of treasurer.
 9. Coordinate/oversee the work of the deputy treasurer and junior treasurer.
- E. **DEPUTY TREASURER** - The deputy treasurer shall:
2. Be empowered to co-sign vouchers and checks as necessary.
 4. Assist the treasurer with preparation and mailing of invoices relating to pledged donations.
 5. In the case of an incapacitating emergency relative to the treasurer, serve as the interim treasurer.
 6. Provide the treasurer with any other assistance, as needed, to fulfill the responsibilities of the office.
- F. **MEDIA OFFICER** – The media officer shall:
1. Promote 4-H.
 2. Contact media regarding 4-H announcements.
 3. Coordinate radio spots, print advertising and social media postings.
- G. **JUNIOR SECRETARY** - The junior secretary shall:
1. Read Correspondence received by the Council at regular monthly meetings.
 2. Provide the Council Secretary with any assistance as needed to fulfill the responsibilities of the office.
- H. **JUNIOR TREASURER** - The junior treasurer shall:
1. Meet with the Council Treasurer prior to the regular monthly meeting to prepare and/or review financial statement and present same to Council members.
 2. Attend both the mid-year and year-end audits.
 3. Provide the Council Treasurer with any assistance as needed to fulfill the responsibilities of the office.
- I. **JUNIOR MEDIA** - The junior media officer shall:
1. Promote 4-H.
 2. Work with the Council Media officer to contact media for county events.
 3. Create a year-in-review presentation for the annual Recognition banquet.
 4. Provide the Council Media with any assistance as needed to fulfill the responsibilities of the office.

Section 3 - No officer shall hold office for more than two (2) years in succession. **Exception:** Additional terms for any officer are possible with a two-thirds vote of the Council members present at the January reorganizational meeting.

Section 4 - Election of officers shall be by secret ballot from Council membership. A majority of those present at the January 4-H Youth Council reorganizational meeting shall constitute an election.

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- Section 5** - Council members may become nominees for a given office either by self-nomination or by nomination from the floor.
- Section 6** - In the event an officer becomes incapacitated or unavailable to perform the functions of his/her elected office, an election shall be held to fill the vacant position on an interim basis until the next yearly election of officers. **Exception:** The office of treasurer will be filled by the deputy treasurer (see Article IV, Section 2, regarding deputy treasurer responsibilities).
- Section 7** - If at any time an officer fails to fulfill the duties of his/her elected office, he/she shall be asked by the Executive Committee to re-evaluate his/her position in said office.
- Section 8** - If the situation warrants, an officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Council. Vote to be by secret ballot.

Article VI: ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Section 1** - The Nominating Committee will be responsible for securing at least two (2) nominees for each 4-H leader and 4-H teen member Council seat that will be vacated in the subsequent calendar year. The Nominating Committee may both survey active 4-H leaders and teen members to seek out interested candidates (utilizing lists of eligible leaders and teens members supplied by the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office).
- Section 2** - The Nominating Committee shall submit a list of nominees to the 4-H Program Coordinator for use in preparing the election ballot and related materials.
- Section 3** - Election ballots shall be electronically sent to all active, eligible 4-H leaders and members registered in the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office. Voting instructions will be included with the ballot. Each eligible leader/member may vote the entire ballot. Space will be provided on all ballots for "write-in" candidates. Only ballots completed by the specified date and time deadline will be counted.
- Section 4** - The adult leader and 4-H teen nominees receiving the greatest number of votes will be elected 4-H Youth Council representatives.
- Section 5** - In the case of a tie, the adult leader/teen with the most years of leadership/membership will be seated on the Council.
- Section 6** - New Council members shall be seated at the January 4-H Youth Council reorganizational meeting. Current Council members shall continue to serve until new members are seated.
- Section 7** - New Council members will be required to attend a 4-H Youth Council Member Orientation Meeting.

Article VII: MEETINGS

- Section 1** - Meetings are open to all interested parties and shall be run in compliance with the Michigan Open Meeting Act.
- Section 2** - Meetings shall be run according to "Robert's Rules of Order".
- Section 3** - Regular monthly meetings will be held the first Monday of every month, except where other scheduling is needed to avoid conflict. **EXCEPTION:** The "September" 4-H Youth Council meeting will be held the last Monday of August in order to allow the Council more lead time, as needed, to act on matters that may impact 4-H involvement in the St. Joseph County Grange Fair in September (the fair is held the third full week in September of each year).

Section 4 - Special meetings may be called whenever deemed necessary by the 4-H Program Coordinator and/or the Youth Council president.

Section 5 - Each Council member is requested to notify the MSU Extension office if he/she will be absent from a regular or special 4-H Youth Council meeting.

Section 6 - Fifty-one (51) percent of the voting members/teens shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting Council business.

Article VIII: AMENDMENTS

Section 1 - The By-Laws of the Council may be amended or changed by a two-thirds vote of the Council, provided prior notice has been sent out in writing to all adult leaders and teen leaders regarding the proposed amendment or change.

Article IX: COMMITTEES

Section 1 - Committees shall be appointed by the president as needed to handle jobs which cannot reasonably be completed by the entire membership at regular meetings. The president shall also appoint committee chairpersons.

Section 2 - Standing committees shall be appointed by the president (following election of officers at the annual Council reorganizational meeting) to deal with regular and continuing matters of the Council, and shall remain standing (active) until the next reorganizational meeting.

Section 3 - Special committees shall be appointed by the president at any time to deal with specific matters. A given special committee will cease to exist once it has fulfilled its purpose.

Article X: ASSETS

Section 1 - All assets and real property will revert to the MSU Extension office should the organization dissolve.