

VOL-0016

# Alabama 4-H Volunteer Handbook

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**Alabama 4-H**  
Alabama Cooperative  
Extension System

Alabama  
4-H Volunteer  
Training

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## **Welcome to Alabama 4-H!**

4-H is a learning-by-doing education program for youth 9 to 18. It can involve "any kid...any time...anywhere" through one-time events, camps, organized 4-H clubs (with officers and membership cards), and activities. Young people have an array of choices in their 4-H experiences. Wherever energy, creativity, and involvement match the 4-H mission, values, and objectives—*that is 4-H!*

4-H is the youth development and education program of the *Alabama Cooperative Extension System*. For more than 100 years, 4-H has helped young people develop into resourceful citizens and responsible leaders. To help youth become productive individuals, professional Extension staff enlist support from caring, concerned parents as well as volunteers and business leaders.

The purpose of 4-H is to foster skill development in young people. Youth are given opportunities to select from a variety of programs and projects. Individuality is valued, and each person is encouraged to discover his or her own skills, talents, and interests. 4-H helps young people learn to make decisions, think critically, build relationships, practice leadership, and develop a concern for their community and their world.

Alabama 4-H has identified five programming priorities: Animals, Arts, Healthy Living, Leadership, Outdoor Education, and Science and Technology.

Adults who are trained to work with young people and have a genuine interest in helping them grow and develop help lead 4-H programs.

The 4-H program itself encompasses a pledge, creed, motto, slogan, colors, and emblem.

## **The 4-H Pledge**

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.

## The 4-H Creed

- I believe in 4-H for the opportunity it will give me to become a useful citizen.
- I believe in the training of my head for the power it will give me to think, plan, and reason.
- I believe in the training of my heart for the nobleness it will give me to be kind, sympathetic, and true.
- I believe in the training of my hands for the ability it will give me to be helpful, skillful, and useful.
- I believe in the training of my health for the strength it will give me to enjoy life, resist disease, and work efficiently.
- I believe in my country, my state, and my community, and in my responsibility for their development.
- In all these things I believe, and am willing to dedicate my efforts to their fulfillment.

## 4-H Motto

To make the best better

## 4-H Slogan

Learn by Doing

## 4-H Colors

*Green and White*

**Green**—nature's color, symbolic of springtime, life, and youth

**White**—purity and high ideals

## Alabama 4-H Vision

Alabama 4-H is innovative and responsive in engaging youth in rich and effective learning experiences as they grow into productive citizens and leaders of a complex and dynamic twenty-first century society.

## What Is Alabama 4-H?

Alabama 4-H, the youth development organization of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, is striving to become the state's premiere networked youth learning organization, helping future generations of Alabama youth acquire critical skills in learning, leadership, and citizenship that will prepare them for the challenges of living and working in an increasingly interconnected global economy.

For more than a century, 4-H has distinguished itself throughout the world for its emphasis on learning by doing, connecting "any kid, anytime, anywhere" with a multitude of opportunities, whether these happen to be one-time events, camps, organized clubs, or digital learning.

Wherever there is energy, creativity, and passion, there is 4-H—an outreach effort that is carried into all of Alabama's 67 counties by dedicated 4-H educators with the enthusiastic support of parents, volunteers, and business leaders.

Valuing individuality, we create learning spaces in which each learner is encouraged to discover his or her own skills, talents and passions, while developing a deeper concern for the world that awaits them.

## Membership and Participation

It is the policy of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System to extend equal opportunities for membership and participation in Extension 4-H programs and activities to all youth in Alabama according to the provisions of Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, provided they meet the minimum requirements for membership and participation indicated below.

Discrimination in the 4-H and Youth Development program because of socioeconomic status, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, or disability is contrary to the purposes and policies of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

Alabama 4-H is a learning-by-doing youth education program for boys and girls ages 9 to 18, and the Cloverbuds program is for youth ages 5 to 8. 4-H can reach youth through events, camps, clubs, or activities. 4-H club members have an array of choices in when, where, and how these learning activities take place. Wherever energy, creativity, and involvement can be applied to the 4-H mission, values, and objectives—that is 4-H!

Eligibility for membership is determined by the age of the child on January 1 of the year of participation. The Cloverbuds program provides educational noncompetitive activities for youth who are between the ages of 5 and 8 on January 1. Junior 4-H members are youth who are between the ages of 9 and 13 on January 1 and can be involved in a variety of activities, both educational and with a competitive component. Senior 4-H members are between the ages of 14 and 18 on January 1.

A local Extension professional in consultation with appropriate Extension leadership determines special needs youth membership and age guidelines on a case-by-case basis using the age and eligibility chart.

Competitive events may have specific age requirements. For example, most state activities involving animals have age requirements concerning youth showing animals after high school graduation.

Club membership is held in the county where the youth resides. Participation on multicounty teams is possible if the program is not offered in the home club or county. Crossing county, regional or state lines requires consultation with appropriate Extension leadership.

## Supervision Requirements NEW

Alabama 4-H strictly prohibits Extension staff and 4-H volunteers from being left alone with one child unless they are the parent or legal guardian of that child. No exceptions.

- Adults (Extension staff and adult volunteers) are never allowed to share guest rooms with youth members unless they are the parent or legal guardian of that child. No exceptions.
- Two adults (Extension staff and adult volunteers) are required for all 4-H events and activities involving 4-H members 13 and under. No exceptions.
- Two adults (Extension staff and adult volunteers) are required for 4-H events, travel, and activities involving 4-H youth 4-H and over. Special exceptions can be granted in advance by the assistant director for 4-H when unusual situations exist. For consideration, a justification is to be submitted in writing to the assistant director outlining additional protection safeguards. At least two senior age 4-H members (14 to 18) must be involved to receive consideration.

- Do not have any direct electronic communication, including contact on social media, with participants without at least two personnel members, the participant's parent or guardian, or a shared program email address being included in the communication. Additionally, do not communicate with participants through email, text messages, social networking websites, Internet chat rooms, or other forms of social media unless there is an educational or programmatic purpose for the communication.

## Overnight Events

Adults and youth participants are never allowed to share guest rooms unless they are the legal parent or guardian of that child. Alabama 4-H strictly prohibits Extension staff and 4-H volunteers from being left alone with one child unless they are the parent or legal guardian of that child. No exceptions.

## Delivery Methods

Youth may participate in a variety of ways, which the volunteer and 4-H club members design to best meet their needs. All are equally valid ways of being involved in 4-H. In Alabama, the following delivery methods are standards.

1. **4-H Clubs** are organized groups of at least five youth, led by a screened and trained volunteer, with a planned program that is carried on through the year or most of the year with at least five regular meetings. The club has adopted an official club name, has elected officers, and is chartered. Members should be individually enrolled in 4HOnline. Examples include community clubs, special interest clubs, and military 4-H clubs.

### Minimum Supervision Ratios

Age of Youth Participants	Day-only Programs Ratio of Program Staff	Overnight Programs Ratio of Staff
5-8 years	1 staff for every 8 participants plus 1 additional staff	No overnight programs
9-14 years	1 staff for every 10 participants plus 1 additional staff	1 staff for every 8 participants plus 1 additional staff
15-18 years	1 staff for every 12 participants plus 1 additional staff	1 staff for every 10 participants plus 1 additional staff

2. **In-School 4-H Clubs** are organized groups of youth in grades 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 led by trained adults, with a planned program that is carried on during the school year. In-school clubs meet during school hours and have elected officers to govern the club. In-school clubs meet for no less than 30 minutes and a minimum of five times. In-school clubs say the Pledge of Allegiance and 4-H pledges. Members should be individually enrolled in 4HOnline.
3. **4-H Enrichment** is organized groups of youth receiving a sequence or one-time learning experience as part of Extension outreach associated with any program. 4-H Enrichment programming can be delivered in cooperation with schools, youth serving organizations, and other local, state, or federal partners. Enrichment programming can be made up of enrolled 4-H'ers, nonenrolled youth, or both. Participation should be captured in 4HOnline using group enrollment.
4. **4-H Individual Membership** is youth participating in planned learning experiences independent of a formal group setting, self-directed, usually with limited adult involvement except for parents or mentors. Examples include self-study, home study, and project work. This delivery mode provides youth with a new and nontraditional 4-H environment and increases participation through technology. Members should be individually enrolled.
5. **4-H Camping** is a sustained experience that provides a creative, recreational, and educational opportunities in group living in the outdoors. 4-H campers are all youth who are registered for a 4-H sponsored residential or day camping event through the local Extension office and meets the age and eligibility requirements. Members should be individually enrolled.

## The 4-H Support Structure

4-H is a part of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M and Auburn universities) in partnership with state and local government. Each county has an Extension office that provides oversight to youth programming. Nationally, 4-H is a unit of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the federal partner of the state land-grant university system. 4-H is the youth development program of the land-grant universities' Cooperative Extension Service (CES). It has developed into a practical, educational program based on everyday living.

4-H is global. All 50 states and many countries throughout the world are actively involved in 4-H.

Chartered 4-H clubs can use the 4-H name and emblem with approval of state and national affiliates. The guidelines and policy for use of the 4-H name and emblem is available at National 4-H Headquarters.

4-H Clubs must be approved by the Extension personnel within the county to complete the criteria for 4-H club status. Criteria for chartering a 4-H club are as follows:

- (1) a group has five or more members;
- (2) a group has one or more screened and trained volunteers;
- (3) a group has an established meeting place;
- (4) a group has elected officers and approved basic club rules; and
- (5) an official club name has been determined.

## 4-H Volunteers

The success of the 4-H and Youth Development program is due to its volunteers. A 4-H volunteer is anyone who contributes time, energies, or talents to the 4-H program and is not paid by Extension funds. Specific 4-H volunteer roles may include the following:

- Club advisers or leaders
- Middle managers or key leaders
- School enrichment volunteers
- Special emphasis volunteers
- Advisory committee members

4-H volunteers enrich the youth development program through teaching, developing programs and 4-H projects, securing resources, and providing positive life experiences for young people.

## Alabama 4-H Overnight Chaperon

### Position Description

#### *Purpose*

- To provide supervision for 4-H'ers during overnight events
- To assist as needed with the overall coordination and facilitation of events

The overnight chaperon is responsible to the county Extension staff person and event coordinator. The chaperon is required to commit time for the duration of the event as well as all the travel time to and from that event.

***Responsibilities may include one, all, or any combination of the following, as determined by necessity or direction from the event supervisor (an event supervisor may be an overnight chaperon, volunteer, or parent):***

- Provide transportation to, from, and during the event as needed
- Cooperate with event coordinators, county Extension staff, and other volunteers in implementing event activities
- Supervise housing (dorm, cottage, or hotel), including check-in, cleanup, and check-out
- Supervise 4-H'ers, including discipline, housing, and emergency needs
- Enforce the Alabama 4-H Code of Conduct and the event policies
- Complete necessary reports following the event (i.e., accident and incident report, phone log, or medical treatment log)
- Follow the Alabama 4-H Adult Behavioral Guidelines and Policies

#### *Qualifications*

- Age 21 or older to supervise 4-H'ers overnight alone
- Must be enrolled as a screened volunteer without a break in service of more than a year
- Completion of *all required training*
- Interest in youth and patience and enthusiasm for working with young people
- Ability to work with youth while nurturing positive self-esteem, decision-making skills, responsibility, and leadership in youth
- Ability to handle sensitive issues, discipline, and emergency situations

## **Alabama 4-H Volunteer Behavioral Guidelines**

These guidelines are a reminder of the way our volunteers need to act, as worthy models of what adults should be. The applicant should retain a copy of these guidelines for future reference

- Work cooperatively with youth, families, Alabama Cooperative Extension System staff, community members, and others in a courteous, respectful manner, demonstrating behaviors appropriate for a positive role model.
- Represent Extension and the Alabama 4-H Youth Development Program with pride and dignity, behave appropriately, exhibit good sportsmanship, and demonstrate reasonable conflict management skills.
- Respect, adhere to, and enforce the Alabama 4-H Code of Conduct as well as other rules, policies, and guidelines established by Extension and event coordinators, including state laws and regulations.
- Recognize that foul language and obscenity, verbal abuse, humiliation, physical abuse, bullying, and criminal acts will not be tolerated and are grounds for termination as a 4-H volunteer. Abusive behavior towards 4-H members or other adults, including failure to provide adequate health and safety measures and care or supervision, will not be tolerated.
- Comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination policy and governmental laws. Make all reasonable efforts to assure that 4-H youth programs are welcome and accessible to youth without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, or disability. This is the law and also what is required of 4-H volunteers.
- Be a role model in respecting individual differences, beliefs and values.
- Respect others' property and provide appropriate and ethical care of animals.
- Alabama 4-H strictly prohibits Extension staff and 4-H volunteers from being left alone with one child unless they are the parent or legal guardian of that child. No exceptions.
- Adults (Extension staff and adult volunteers) are never allowed to share guest rooms with youth members unless they are the parent or legal guardian of that child. No exceptions.
- Two adults (Extension staff and adult volunteers) are required for all 4-H events and activities involving 4-H members.
- Under no circumstances, condone the use of or personally consume alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs at 4-H events. Using or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while in the presence of 4-H members or at 4-H programs or activities will result in termination as a 4-H volunteer.
- Operate vehicles and other equipment in a safe and responsible manner when working with youth and adults participating in 4-H programs.
- Accept responsibility for promoting, conducting, and supporting 4-H programs to develop an effective local, county, regional, and state program.
- Recognize the following behaviors as inappropriate in the presence of 4-H club members during any 4-H activity:
  - Consumption of alcohol
  - Promotion of religious or political preferences
  - Theft, pilfering, or fraud
  - Use of tobacco products outside of designated areas

- Sexual advances or sexual activities involving 4-H youth
- Willful damaging of property
- Permitting passengers to ride in motor vehicles without seat belts
- Permitting youth or adults to ride in the back of trucks
- Behaviors that are illegal under Alabama or federal law
- Direct volunteers will not, under any circumstance, discipline children by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care, such as food and shelter.

### **Why Worry About Youth Development?**

Research consistently shows that for youth to succeed, one factor must be present: Consistent support from, and monitoring by, an adult who recognizes their shortcomings, loves them anyway, and still expects them to do well.

### **Youth Needs**

- A positive self-concept
- Opportunities to succeed and achieve
- Opportunities to increase their independence
- Adventure
- Acceptance from their peers to successfully navigate physical, social, and cognitive changes and growth.

### **Why Youth Misbehave**

Children misbehave in many ways but their misbehavior can often be traced to six needs.

#### **Attention**

Children who feel left out or not part of the group will seek attention. Volunteers should redirect the behavior, ignore the behavior, or impose logical consequences. Keep in mind that children who are given recognition and attention for positive behaviors are less likely to misbehave.

#### **Power**

Children who feel out of control will try to gain control of the situation by controlling the actions in the room. Volunteers who give youth the opportunity to feel empowered to make decisions see less misbehavior.

#### **Revenge**

Children who feel badly about themselves will hurt others. Working towards a positive self-image and providing opportunities for success begins to eliminate these behaviors.

#### **Inadequacy**

Children who feel that they are not equal with the rest of the group will act out to prevent continued failure. Again, volunteers need to work towards offering lots of opportunities for achievement and provide positive reinforcement. Keep in mind that from time to time, misbehavior occurs because of inadequacy from circumstances—the child is hungry, tired, or afraid. Often, a week of camp will create this challenge. While a volunteer may not be able to change the circumstances, he or she can understand the misbehavior's cause.

#### **Imitation**

Children may imitate those around them, including adults. If the adults in the group are not following the rules, the youth may not either.

#### **Testing**

Children want to know if volunteers are willing to do as they say. Kids want and need limits and will test adults to see if those limits will be imposed. Talking about taking action does little good. Be warm but firm in imposing the consequences that have been established.



# Ages and Stages of Development

## 4th-8th Grade Youth

	Characteristics	Implications for 4-H Volunteers
<b>Physical Development</b>	<p>Moving all the time</p> <p>Beginning of adolescence marked with growth spurt</p> <p>Females maturing before males</p> <p>Menstruation may begin</p>	<p>Provide active learning</p> <p>Provide a variety of activities</p> <p>Avoid having all competitive activities</p> <p>Be prepared for "firsts" to occur during 4-H overnight trips</p>
<b>Social Development</b>	<p>Joining clubs is popular</p> <p>Don't always understand other points of view</p> <p>May be moody</p> <p>Justice and equality important</p> <p>Strive to please adults</p> <p>Bullying behavior will peak</p>	<p>Use group learning</p> <p>Encourage older mentors to work with youth</p> <p>Don't compare youth to each other</p> <p>Model and teach positive problem-solving skills</p>
<b>Cognitive Development</b>	<p>Think concretely until about age 11</p> <p>At 11 begin to think more abstractly</p> <p>Become immersed in subjects of interest</p> <p>Often reject solutions given by adults in an effort to find their own answers</p>	<p>Use simple, short directions</p> <p>Offer wide range of activities</p> <p>Use the experiential learning model</p>

## High School Youth

	Characteristics	Implications for 4-H Volunteers
<b>Physical Development</b>	<p>Physical changes are accepted, but boys are still growing</p> <p>Most females reach maximum height by 14 and males by 16</p>	<p>Avoid critiques or comments about physical stature</p> <p>Vary activities so that size doesn't influence success</p>
<b>Social Development</b>	<p>Self-centered but capable of feeling empathy</p> <p>Acceptance by opposite sex is important</p> <p>Want to belong to clubs but want to be recognized as unique</p> <p>Spend more time working and going to school</p> <p>Want to be autonomous from parents</p> <p>Imaginary Audience Syndrome</p>	<p>Let teens plan their own programs</p> <p>Establish climate conducive to peer support</p> <p>Emphasize personal development whenever possible</p> <p>Let teens assume responsibility and expect follow-through</p> <p>Help in individual skill development</p>
<b>Cognitive Development</b>	<p>Learning to make decisions</p> <p>Consequences portion of the brain still forming</p> <p>Mastering abstract thinking</p> <p>Want to set own goals based on own needs</p> <p>Emphasis on exploring and preparing for future roles</p>	<p>Provide real life problem solving opportunities</p> <p>Let teens make decisions and evaluate outcomes</p> <p>Provide opportunities for positive risk</p> <p>Encourage service and career exploration</p>

# Discipline Planning

## Be Kind But Be Firm: Your Role in Enforcing Rules

While the Alabama 4-H Code of Conduct establishes a basic code of behavior, volunteers must also establish a more immediate set of standards. These standards are simply a way of doing things so that order is maintained. This structure includes **rules**, **rewards**, and **consequences**.

## Rules

- It is appropriate and important to involve youth in setting limits
- Expectations of behavior
- Simplify rules so they can be remembered (usually three to five)
- Rules won't cover everything
- Rules set limits; youth need and want limits

## Rewards

- The best reward is the satisfaction of a job well done
- You can't teach self-discipline if you always have a reward or a punishment

## Consequences

- Should be the natural effect of the action and not greater than the misdeed
- May be to repair the damage of the misbehavior; apologies are an example
- May use time-outs as long as a 4-H'er is within eyesight and hearing range

## Positive Strategies for 4-H Activities

- Set clear, consistent rules. Use the 4-H Code of Conduct as the beginning point.
- Make sure the physical, emotional, and social environment is safe and worry-free
- Show interest in the child and his or her activities.
- Provide appropriate activities.

- Encourage self-control by providing choices.
- Focus on desired behavior rather than behaviors to be avoided.
- Build self-image.
- Give clear directions, one at a time.
- Say yes whenever possible.
- Carry out rules, rewards, and consequences in a calm and sensible manner.

## Alabama 4-H Code of Conduct

### Behavior Standards

All rules governing conduct during 4-H activities will be discussed with agents, volunteers, and 4-H'ers. This signed code of conduct is valid for one year from the signature date. It applies to all activities coordinated through 4-H, including local, county, district, state, and national activities.

### Consequences of Misbehavior

Anyone who observes a breach in the code of conduct should report the misbehavior to the event coordinator or the leader of the county or regional delegation. People accused of misbehaving may discuss their actions with leaders in charge of the activity and may request a review board. The event coordinator may also convene a review board to review charges and recommend action. The review board will consist of one Extension staff member, two volunteers, and three 4-H members.<sup>1</sup> The Extension staff member coordinating the event will serve as chairperson. Disciplinary action is confidential and may only be discussed with those involved, their parents or guardians, and Extension leaders who are directly involved.<sup>2</sup>

If the 4-H'er is found in violation of the actions listed below and receives disciplinary action issued through the review process, his or her parents or guardians will be notified; the 4-H'er may be sent home at the parents' expense and may be suspended from participation in 4-H events for a period of no more than 6 months.

### (Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> A review board member may not be a parent, guardian, or agent of the accused 4-H'er.

<sup>2</sup> All review board members must keep all review board proceedings confidential.

- Breaking curfew or disturbing the peace
- Unexcused absences from the activities of an event
- Unauthorized use of vehicles during the event
- Reckless behavior
- Use of foul or offensive language
- Possessing or using of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs or remaining in the presence of those using them
- Breach of the 4-H Code of Conduct
- Boys being in girls' rooms and girls being in boys' rooms

If the accused is found in violation of the actions below, his or her parents or guardians will be notified. The 4-H'er may be sent home at the parents' expense and suspended from 4-H events for a period of no more than 12 months.

- Possession or use of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages
- Theft, misuse, or abuse of public or personal property
- Sexual misconduct
- Possession of weapons, including knives or fireworks
- Unauthorized absence from the premise of the event
- Assault or personal harm

In extraordinary cases, the 4-H review board may recommend suspension exceeding that listed. If a 4-H'er wishes to appeal the decision of the board, the 4-H'er must appeal in writing through his or her county Extension office. Appeals must be filed within 10 days of notification of the disciplinary action. The appeal is sent to the county coordinator of the 4-H member and the state 4-H leader. If the local and state 4-H staff cannot resolve the matter, an appeal board will meet within 30 days of the 4-H'er's request. The appeal board will consist of one Extension staff member, two volunteers, and three 4-H members. Following any disciplinary action, the person coordinating the activity must provide written notification concerning the action to the 4-H'er's parent or guardian, county Extension staff, and the state 4-H program leader.

# Alabama 4-H Youth Code of Conduct



- I will exhibit good character and behavior, such as trustworthiness, responsibility, respect, caring, citizenship and fairness.
- I will value the rights of all others. As a 4-H member, I am committed to the policies of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Auburn University and Alabama A&M University.
- I will act and speak respectfully. I will not use language that belittles others or is disrespectful of individual differences.
- I will dress appropriately. Apparel including accessories must not have pictures or wording involving nudity, sex, weapons, violence, drugs, alcohol or tobacco.
- Apparel, accessories and equipment featuring culturally or racially insensitive images violates 4-H's values of respect, fairness and caring and will not be permitted.
- I will attend all sessions of planned programs.
- I will be responsive to the reasonable requests of leaders and comply with the need for personal safety.
- I will not use alcohol, drugs, or tobacco nor remain in the presence of anyone using them.
- I will not behave recklessly, engage in sexual misconduct, assault, threaten, or harm another person or abuse public or private property.
- When I have access to computers at Extension facilities, I will use the computer for educational purposes and will not access inappropriate Web sites.
- I recognize that these guidelines are not all inclusive and that the Alabama Cooperative Extension System may make adjustments to these policies.

MEMBER: I have read the Alabama 4-H Youth Code of Conduct and agree to live up to the expectations. I realize my failure to do so could result in a loss of privileges during the event and in the future and may result in my being sent home at the expense of my parent(s) or guardian(s).

4-H Member Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This signed **Alabama 4-H Code of Conduct** is valid for one year from date of signature. It will be on file at the county Extension office.

## Implementing the Alabama 4-H Code of Conduct

- The Alabama 4-H Code of Conduct is completed and signed by 4-H'ers and their parents or guardians each year. The code is in effect for 12 months from the date of signing. 4-H'ers must have a 4-H Code of Conduct signed before participating in 4-H activities and events that take place off the 4-H'er's school campus and not during the school hours.
- Before any event or activity, the details of the Code of Conduct should be reviewed for the entire group. This includes consequences of misbehavior and expectations of good behavior.
- If a 4-H'er is suspected of being in violation of the Code of Conduct, the event coordinator should be contacted to assist the volunteers with the process. Volunteers must ensure throughout the process that the rights of the young person are observed. Volunteers may not invade a 4-H'ers rights to privacy or due process in determining offenses.
- A 4-H review board may be called when an infraction has been noted. The review board determines whether a violation has occurred and the disciplinary action needed.
- The event coordinator will call the review board as outlined in the Alabama 4-H Code of Conduct. The coordinator will advise members of the offense, and ensure that persons not essential are excluded from the hearing. Witnesses may only be present in the hearing room during their own testimonies.
- Before, during, and upon completion of the review process, confidentiality should be maintained at all times. Disciplinary action should be discussed only with the 4-H'er, his or her guardian, and Extension leaders.
- The appeals process as described in the 4-H Code of Conduct should be discussed with the disciplined 4-H'er. This process must be followed as outlined.
- Following the review process, the event coordinator should make a written record of the event before the proceedings, the proceedings, and the disciplinary action recommended. The record should be kept on file with the event information and a copy should be sent to the local Extension staff member coordinating 4-H.

## Overnight Housing Procedures

### Housing varies from event to event.

- 4-H'ers may select their cottages, dorms, or hotel or be pre-assigned. It is the responsibility of the volunteers to fully supervise all aspects of housing, including discipline, curfew, cleanup procedures, and other guidelines established during the event.
- 4-H'ers housed in a cottage, dorm, or hotel are the responsibility of the county or regional leader or volunteer. In some instances, a volunteer may not be housed with only the 4-H'ers in his or her group. However, it is appropriate and expected that volunteers supervise and discipline any youth assigned to their cottage, dorm, or hotel.
  - 4-H'ers will not be allowed to change room assignments without the approval of the event coordinator.
  - 4-H'ers may not miss scheduled activities, break curfew, sleep late, or violate any other guidelines established by the event coordinator.
  - Male 4-H'ers are not permitted in female 4-H'ers' rooms, cottages, or dorms, nor are female 4-H'ers permitted in male 4-H'ers' rooms, cottages, or dorms.
  - Adult volunteers are discouraged from entering the rooms, cottages, or dorms of 4-H'ers of the opposite gender.
  - Roll should be checked at night. It is the responsibility of the volunteer in the room, cottage, or dorm as well as the volunteer from the county or region to ensure that each young person is in his or her room, cottage, or dorm.
  - Cabins and dorm rooms should be left in the manner that they were found, with floors swept, trash cans emptied, and the rooms generally cleaned. Any damages should be reported before leaving the facility and all charges should be paid.
  - Adults (Extension staff and adult volunteers) are never allowed to share guest rooms with youth members unless they are the parent or legal guardian of that child. No exceptions.

## Alabama 4-H Safety and First Aid Guidelines

The Alabama 4-H Program takes seriously its obligation to provide responsible and reasonable care for 4-H youth. The safety and first aid policy is designed to aid adults supervising youth in handling accidents, illnesses, and emergency situations.

### For the purpose of this guide

- *An adult volunteer* is an Extension staff member, school teacher, direct volunteer, or chaperon accompanying and supervising the 4-H'er during his or her involvement in the program.
- A *4-H event* includes but is not limited to 4-H club meeting, summer camp, conferences, round-ups, and other local, state, and national 4-H activities.

## Orientation

Each event will begin with an orientation session. Orientation will include the following:

- Introduction of event coordinators and other key contact people
- Identification for the group of emergency personnel (emergency personnel are considered to be doctors, nurses, EMTs, and first responders who are attending the event). This identification process is done to ensure that volunteers know who is qualified to work with emergency situations should they arise.
- Review of procedures for injuries, emergencies, and discipline situations, including maps of facilities

## General Care and First Aid

- 1) Adult volunteers must be sure that all 4-H'ers attending an event have completed the Alabama 4-H Youth Consent Form detailing medical information and health history. Signatures of the parent or guardian as well as the 4-H club member are required. 4-H'ers may not be given any medication that is not indicated on the form unless the medication is prescribed or administered by a trained medical professional.

- 2) Adult volunteers are responsible for the care of program participants. Care includes administering routine prescription medications and treating minor injuries. It is recommended that all medications be locked in a container (lock box, suitcase, or tackle box) in the chaperon's room.
- 3) Most 4-H Center counselors and environmental educators are trained in first aid and CPR. 4-H staff will assist in any situation in which they are trained; however, 4-H staff and volunteer actions will be limited to their training. If a nurse is provided, he or she is available for medical situations, but is not expected to administer routine medications.
- 4) If participants need further over-the-counter medication, such as aspirin, Pepto Bismol, or the generic equivalents, the 4-H Center may have a limited supply of over-the-counter medications that may be provided upon the request of an adult volunteer. Adult volunteers must obtain parental permission before administering any medication unless the medication was prescribed or administered by medical personnel while at the event. Permission may be given on the Alabama 4-H Parent and Youth Consent Form or may be given over the phone. Phone consent must be documented in a medical phone log. Events at locations other than the 4-H Center may or may not supply over-the-counter medications.
- 5) All medical treatment and emergency actions taken must be kept in a log. The adult volunteer is responsible for ensuring that the action is logged. If there is an accident, the child's adult volunteer is responsible for completing an accident and incident report and sending the report to the appropriate individuals.

A copy of all required forms for documentation can be found in the Alabama 4-H Volunteer Handbook or on the Alabama 4-H website: [www.Alabama4h.com](http://www.Alabama4h.com) under Volunteer Resources and 4-H Forms and Waivers.

## Emergency Medical Situations

- 1) In the event of an emergency medical situation, all non-emergency trained adult volunteers will clear the scene of all participants and organize an activity to entertain the youth.

- 2) 4-H Center or Extension personnel should be notified immediately of any emergency medical situation. When practical, 4-H volunteers will be responsible for calling an ambulance if necessary. Every effort should be made to contact the 4-H event coordinator immediately.
- 3) Nonambulatory transport is the responsibility of an Extension staff member or screened volunteer. Remember, Alabama 4-H strictly prohibits Extension staff and 4-H volunteers from being left alone with one child unless they are the parent or legal guardian of that child. Maps to the nearest hospital will be provided by the 4-H Center or 4-H event coordinator.
- 4) All medical treatment and emergency actions taken must be kept in a log. Volunteers will keep a log at the first aid station. The volunteer is responsible for ensuring that the action is logged. The volunteer is responsible for completing an accident and incident report and sending the report to the appropriate individuals.
- 5) If a situation is deemed serious by Extension personnel, the Accident and Incident report will be filed and sent to the appropriate individuals as soon as possible.

## Reports

Volunteers should keep the local Extension staff informed of illnesses and injuries requiring treatment. Remember to use empathy and care as you talk with parents or guardians concerning medical situations. Follow up after the event.

The 4-H Center has a first aid station set up for minor injuries. The first aid station will consist of soap, water, clean bandages, and latex gloves. Any other medications and ointments will be kept in a locked cabinet. Only 4-H Center staff and volunteers will have access to the additional medication. During activities held at locations other than the 4-H Center, the event coordinator will establish a first aid station for minor injuries. The station will be set up in an area with soap, water, clean bandages, and latex gloves. Other medication and ointment may also be available. Volunteers are encouraged to have a first aid kit that meets American Red Cross standards. Only trained medical personnel should administer treatment to serious injuries.

## Keep in Mind... (More Risk Management)

### Transportation

Volunteers are often asked to provide transportation to and from an event. Volunteers should use all safety precautions, including only transporting the number of passengers the vehicle is recommended to carry and never allowing youth to ride in locations other than seats with belts. Seat belts should be worn by every person in a vehicle traveling to or from a 4-H activity. Volunteers must have a valid Alabama license and auto insurance.

### Automobile Use By 4-H'ers

In some instances, 4-H'ers receive permission to drive to an event. The local Extension staff should handle this before the event. Once a 4-H'er who is driving arrives at an overnight event, he or she should turn his or her keys over to the volunteer until the close of the event.

### Abuse or Neglect of a Minor

If personnel become aware or suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse or neglect, they must act. If a child is in imminent danger, contact police at 911 to obtain immediate protection for the child. If the child is not in imminent danger, contact the Department of Human Resources.

#### Tips for recognizing abuse:

- Listen closely. Participants often form a bond with program staff and may disclose past or current abusive situations.
- Believe them. It is not your responsibility to investigate or substantiate claims. Remember that even highly regarded members of the community could be abusers.

- Watch participants carefully. Up to 40 percent of children who are sexually abused are abused by older, more powerful children. As youth programs place more emphasis on controlling adult/child interactions, they sometimes leave openings for peer abuse. Identify blind spots where peers might be alone together and supervise them closely. Also, remember that peer abusers may be victims of abuse themselves.
- Know what you are looking for. Child abuse can take many forms including:
  - Harm or threatened harm to a child's welfare, which can occur through nonaccidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation, or attempted sexual abuse or sexual exploitation.
  - Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation, which may be perpetuated by an adult or another child, may or may not involve touching.
  - Negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child, which includes the failure to provide adequate food, medical treatment, supervision, clothing, or shelter.
- Err on the side of caution. In deciding whether to report an incident or situation of suspected abuse or neglect, it is not required that you have proof that abuse or neglect has occurred. Any uncertainty in deciding to report suspected abuse or neglect should be resolved in favor of making a good faith report, and Alabama law contains protections for those who make a good faith report.

If an allegation of child abuse, attempted child abuse, or child neglect has been made against 4-H personnel, they should discontinue any further participation in program and activities covered by this policy until such allegation has been satisfactorily resolved.



# PHONE LOG

The purpose of this log is to keep a permanent record of any telephone calls made to acquire a parent's or legal guardian's permission to treat a 4-H member for an illness or injury. This log should be kept in accordance with the safety guidelines set forth by the Alabama 4-H Program.



DATE	TIME	4-H'ER'S NAME	COUNTY	PERSON CONTACTED	PERMISSION WAS GIVEN TO	SIGNATURE OF PERSON PLACING THE CALL

# MEDICAL TREATMENT LOG

The purpose of this log is to keep a permanent record of all medicine dispensed during the course of a 4-H event or activity. All medical treatment should be administered within the safety guidelines set forth by Alabama 4-H Program and within the training and certification of the care giver.



DATE	TIME	4-H'ER'S NAME	COUNTY	COMPLAINT	TREATMENT	ADMINISTERED BY	HOW WAS PERMISSION OBTAINED?

# Alabama 4-H Accident and Incident Report Form

Use this form to report all accidents and all **medical** and **nonmedical** incidents:

- Incidents involving health or safety concerns
- Incidents requiring medical treatment
- Potential violations of the *Alabama 4-H Volunteer Behavioral Guidelines*
- Potential violations of the *Alabama 4-H Code of Conduct*.

It is for use with incidents involving youth or adults.

## How to file an Accident and Incident Report Form

1. Fill out all sections of the form. Incomplete information may not be useful.
2. Give the completed form to the 4-H volunteer or staff member in charge of the event or activity. In instances where that is not possible (or the 4-H leader or staff member is involved in the incident), mail this form to the County Extension Coordinator. Keep a copy of this form for your records.
3. Use this form (add additional sheets, if necessary) to briefly describe what happened. Include any additional information you feel is important.
4. All relevant information must be reported. This information will be used by the staff to conduct an inquiry into the incident and assist in resolving the issue.
5. Confidentiality of reports will be maintained according to Alabama 4-H policies and guidelines. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System may release information as required by law enforcement or court order.

## Person Filing Report Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a:     4-H Member     4-H Leader     4-H Parent     Other

## Information Regarding Incident

Date and Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of 4-H Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult 4-H Event Coordinator/Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Was anyone physically injured during incident?  Yes     No

Name(s) of individuals involved in incident:    Youth    4-H Staff    Volunteer    Parent    Other

\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_

Were there other witnesses to this incident?  Yes  No If Yes, please list their names below.

Individuals who witnessed the incident:      Youth    4-H Staff    Volunteer    Parent    Other

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Please explain briefly what happened in the space below. Use additional paper if necessary.

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**I certify that the information contained in this *Alabama 4-H Accident and Incident Report Form* is true to the best of my knowledge.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_

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This publication was prepared by **Nancy Alexander**, *4-H Youth Development Specialist*

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For more information, contact your county Extension office. Visit [www.aces.edu/directory](http://www.aces.edu/directory).

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**Revised May 2021, VOL-0016**