TEXAS 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

2025-2026

Revised: 7/2025

The following guidelines assist volunteers in understanding personal conduct expectations during the course and scope of their duties. 4-H Volunteers must abide by all applicable Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service procedures.

A 4-H VOLUNTEER IS EXPECTED TO:

- Recognize that serving as a 4-H volunteer is a privilege and an honor, not a right. Participation is contingent upon eligibility for volunteer service, compliance with program rules, and adherence to the directives of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas 4-H Youth Development Program. This volunteer status can be removed at any time by AgriLife Extension.
- Respect the individual rights, safety, and property of others.
- Carry-out the assigned position responsibilities that he or she has accepted. Volunteers will agree to a position description when enrolling in 4HOnline (or paper application form). Full position descriptions are available on the Texas 4-H website. Additional expectations may be determined by the County Extension Agent and/or local county staff. Volunteers are expected to work amicably with and through the County Extension Agents and/or local staff as a 4-H volunteer.
- Participate in routine volunteer training opportunities and activities pertinent to their duties.
- Be committed to the core values, education goals, and standards of the 4-H Youth Development Program.
- Support the 4-H Youth Development Program and its rules and guidelines.
- Respect, adhere to, and support the rules, policies, and guidelines established by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the Texas 4-H Youth Development Program. and Extension employees in setting program standards, priorities, and direction.
- Support the non-discrimination practices of the 4-H Youth Development Program, providing equal opportunities in programs, activities, and education regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- Make reasonable efforts to provide access to 4-H related information and equal opportunities to youth in their community to participate in project activities, awards programs, and other events and activities.
- Adhere to Texas laws on the use of motor vehicles.
- Not consume alcohol and/or illegal drugs (or to be under the influence thereof) while involved or en route to or from any 4-H event, meeting, or activity.
- Serve as good examples for youth in both public and private life. This includes appropriate dress, language, and moral conduct in accordance with the generally recognized standards of our society.
- Use technology and social media in an appropriate manner that reflects the best practices in your role as a 4-H volunteer. Understand that communication, including social media, unrelated to official 4-H activities is prohibited between adult volunteers and minors (except parent-child relationships).
- Technology and social media use should always be professional and be a positive reflection of the 4-H Youth Development Program.
- Maintain direct supervision of 4-H members and not leave their delegation unsupervised unless approval was received from the individual in charge of the overall event or delegation.
- Not sign a lease agreement, use permit with schools or other public or private facilities, or grant or other contracts on behalf of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. All such agreements shall be forwarded to the local office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service for review and forwarding to appropriate official for signature.
- Recognize Texas Law requiring all adults to report suspected child abuse to proper law enforcement or county child protective services.
- Safeguard and hold confidential any information gained through administrative duties involving supervision of participants or other information identified by the program as being confidential.
- Not physically or verbally abuse a youth member or use corporal punishment to reprimand 4-H members for inappropriate behavior.
- Understand that falsifying enrollment information, budgets, documents, or records is a violation of AgriLife Extension and Texas 4- H policies, rules and guidelines, and may also be a criminal act under Texas law.
- Not engage in sexual activity with youth members.
- Adhere to fiscal responsibility and financial management best practices as outlined by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.
- Register as a volunteer in only one county.
- Not receive compensation for professional services provided in support of youth 4-H activities (excluding reimbursement for expenses).

GENERAL POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Below are general descriptions of 4-H volunteer roles. Full descriptions are available during enrollment and on the Texas 4-H Youth Development website. Additional responsibilities may be added by local Extension professional(s) coordinating the county 4-H program.

Club Manager	Project Leader	Parent Volunteer/Activity Leader
Works closely with 4-H club officers and provides leadership for the club. Serve as the liaison between club officers, members, parents, volunteers, and the County Extension Office.	Provides leadership and overall guidance for a specific project. Provides structured learning experiences.	Assists with setting up meetings or activities. Short-term basis, or as needed.
• Example: Works with a group of youth officers to plan and carry out club meetings and activities.	• Example: Organizes the photography project and sets up activities for youth in the project.	• Example: Helps with an individual activity or event but is not able to commit long-term

CONSEQUENCES FOR INFRACTIONS

Volunteers' infractions of the Texas 4-H Volunteer Code of Conduct must be reported to the 4-H Youth Development staff and/or applicable Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Office. Consequences may include:

- Discussion of the inappropriate actions with the 4-H leader and clarification of the policy.
- Reassignment or suspension of volunteer.
- Termination as a 4-H volunteer.
- Notification of incident to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

A volunteer may be reassigned, suspended, or dismissed at the sole discretion of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, with or without cause. Examples of conduct which could lead to disciplinary action include, but are not limited to: illegal activity, behavior which compromises the health and safety of youth, violating an Extension policy, violation of 4-H Rules and Guidelines, willfully violating or causing children to violate rules, being habitually disruptive to the overall program, unwilling or unable to work amicably with agents and/or other volunteers, exhibit conduct which is harmful to the 4-H program's reputation, or failure to rotate the leadership role. The nature and seriousness of the infraction or violation will determine whether the option of reassignment, suspension, or dismissal should be considered.

An adult volunteer who is unable to grasp the overall philosophy of youth development may be asked to leave and/or counseled toward other avenues of volunteering.

A child who has a parent dismissed as a 4-H volunteer is still eligible to participate in 4-H.

IMMEDIATE REMOVAL OF AN ADULT FROM AN EVENT

Any adult (volunteer or otherwise) may be required to immediately leave any 4-H function for illegal activity, using abusive language, threatening any individual, becoming violent, causing or threatening bodily harm to any minor (including their own child) or adult, violating an Extension policy, violation of 4-H Rules and Guidelines, willfully violating or causing children to violate rules, being habitually disruptive to the overall program, unwilling or unable to work amicably with agents and/or other volunteers, exhibit conduct which is harmful to the 4-H program's reputation, or exhibiting signs of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

VOLUNTEER CERTIFICATION SECTION

Volunteer Printed Name	County
Volunteer Signature	Date

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.