

Does your club have by-laws?

If so, when were they last updated? It's good for 4-H clubs to evaluate their by-laws every 3-5 years.

If not, here is an example of what to start from.

Club by-laws should be written and approved by the membership of the club with adult guidance.

Might be good to have copies of by-laws for new families who join your club each year.

Be sure the Extension Office has a copy on file each time they are updated.

Suggested 4-H Club Constitution and Bylaws

Article I – Name

Section 1 – Name

The name of this 4-H organization shall be _____ 4-H club.

Article II – Membership

Section 1 – Eligibility

Any boy or girl in this (area, community, county), who is eight years of age by September 1 or in the third grade and has not reached their nineteenth birthday on or before September 1 of the current year, may become a member of this club regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, ancestry, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation or disability. Five to seven year olds on or before September 1 of the 4-H year and not yet in third grade may be 4-H Cloverbuds (if the county allows this program).

Section 2 –Size of club

(However, the size of the club may be limited due to space limitations or the leader's available time or ability to accommodate more members – state specifics)

Section 3 – Re-enrollment

Members must re-enroll in 4-H on an annual basis to retain active 4-H member status.

Section 4 – Responsibilities

Each member is encouraged to participate regularly in club meetings.

Each member must enroll in a minimum of one project and is encouraged to keep a project record and share what they learned through a talk, demonstration or exhibit.

Participation in 4-H is a privilege and participants are expected to show respect and cooperation to 4-H leaders and other participants. Each member is asked to sign and abide by the Illinois 4-H Member Code

of Conduct and the Behavior Guidelines established by this club. Participants may be removed from 4-H programs or activities for misconduct.

Section 5 – Voluntary Dues

This 4-H club may assess voluntary dues of _____ to cover club expenses for educational programming. If members cannot pay these dues, they need to discuss the situation with the 4-H leader.

Article III – Meetings

Section 1 – Dates

The club shall meet regularly every _____ at (time) _____ at (place). Special meetings may be called by the President and 4-H leader as needed. Adequate notice is needed.

Section 2 – Quorum

A simple majority (one half plus one) of members must be present to conduct official business of the club.

Section 3 – Order of Business

The following order of business shall be followed at regular club meetings:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Call to Order | 8. New business |
| 2. Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H Pledge | 9. 4-H Leader's report |
| 3. Roll Call | 10. Announcements |
| 4. Minutes of last meeting | 11. Adjournment |
| 5. Treasurer's report | 12. Educational program/project work |
| 6. Report of committees | 13. Recreation/refreshments |
| 7. Unfinished business | |

Section 4 – Parliamentary Procedure

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the meetings of the club.

Article IV – Election of Officers

The officers of this club shall be elected at the first regular meeting in _____ (month). They shall hold office for one year. All active members are eligible to run for an office and to vote. Voting is by majority rule and done by secret ballot.

Article V – Officers

The officers of this club shall include: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and reporter. Duties of the individual offices are outlined in the informational packet – Helping You Help Officers and Committees.

Article VI – Committees

Section 1 – Standing Committees

Standing or special committees will be created as needed. Members are expected to volunteer for committee assignments. The president has the authority to appoint committee chairs and members.

Section 2 – Audit Committee

An audit committee consisting of one member, one parent, and one volunteer – all of whom do not have signatory rights on the financial accounts will conduct an audit of the club financial records. The club leader will see that the audit and records are turned into the Extension Office at the end of each 4-H year. (August)

Article VII – Fiscal Operations

Section 1 – Fiscal Policies

The club will follow all University of Illinois fiscal policies as well as state and federal regulations.

Section 2 – Tax Exempt Status

The club is authorized to use the University of Illinois identification number for tax exempt organizations in order to purchase items in support of 4-H activities.

Article VIII – Amendments

This constitution may be amended at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote cast by those in attendance, providing notice has been given at the previous meeting.

Article IX – Dissolution

Upon consideration of disillusionment, the members of _____ 4-H club agree to the following procedure:

The _____ 4-H club shall be terminated and dissolved by a majority vote of the membership in favor of dissolution and termination of the 4-H club. The member shall also vote on how to disburse club resources for a project or activity or contribution to the betterment of the county or state 4-H program. When a 4-H club dissolves or fails to reorganize without vote of the members, the resources become the property of the County/Unit Council or the Unit 4-H Foundation after a waiting period of one year. During the one-year waiting period, a representative of the county 4-H program will maintain the account.

Upon dissolution and termination of the _____ 4-H club for any reason, the officers shall take full account of the _____ 4-H club assets and liabilities, and shall liquidate the assets and shall apply and distribute the proceeds there from the following order:

- a. To the payment of the debts and liabilities of the _____ 4-H club.
- b. To the setting up of any reserves that the officers may deem reasonable for the purpose of paying any unforeseen liabilities or obligations of the club.
- c. The remaining balance shall be distributed to the _____ County/Unit Council or Unit 4-H Foundation for the purpose of program development directly related to the enrichment of the 4-H youth program.

Each of the members shall be provided a statement prepared by the _____ 4-H club outlining the assets, liabilities, and the distribution upon complete liquidation. Upon compliance with these terms and the distribution of fund, the 4-H club shall cease.

Voted upon and adopted 9/98
Voted upon and revised 11/98
Voted upon and revised 07/02

Additional Club Documents

Each year the 4-H club should develop and/or review/revise their 4-H club behavior guidelines, set club goals, and develop and/or review/revise club policies. All of this information could be compiled into the club program booklet. Behavior guidelines should be developed by the members and leaders, voted upon by the membership, and signed by members and leaders. Club goals should be determined on an annual basis. These should be developed by the entire membership, a committee, or the executive committee and voted upon by the entire membership. Club policies should be developed by members and leaders and reviewed at least annually. Club policies should not duplicate state policies and may not supercede state policies.

Club Behavior Guidelines

- Behavior Management Volunteer Training Series
- Code of Conduct Materials

Club Goals

- Volunteer Training
- 4-H Program Planning Packet on web
- Illinois Club Standards of Excellence

Club Policies

- Illinois 4-H Policies Volunteer Training and Materials

Club Program Booklet

Might include:

- Meeting schedule
- Dates of talk, demonstrations
- Program schedule
- Committees with chair and members
- List of members with names, addresses, and phone numbers
- List of leaders with names, addresses, and phone numbers
- Behavior Guidelines
- Club Goals
- Club Policies