



4-H Animal Shows & Fundraisers

Allowable 4-H Activities

- The programmatic focus of 4-H is to provide educational and positive youth development experiences for enrolled or registered youth ages 5-18
- In some cases, clubs may choose to offer educational activities (e.g. tack shows, clinics, trail rides, etc.) for others (i.e. non 4-H youth and adults). These should have a specific purpose that benefits 4-H youth – such as an opportunity to share their knowledge with others, to develop leadership skills in planning an event, or to help raise funds for the club. In these cases, special event insurance should be taken out to provide liability coverage for the participants.
- Competitive animal show activities are considered higher risk. The only cases in which competitive activities are covered by University of Illinois Extension liability (and therefore allowed) are those for registered or enrolled youth ages 8-18. Competitors outside that age range are not covered by our insurance policy and therefore cannot be sponsored by 4-H clubs, committees or other university-affiliated entities. Competitive “open” shows must be sponsored by a non-university entity.

Fundraising Options to Support 4-H Animal Science Project Activities

Scenario 1 – Sponsored by 4-H/Extension (club, committee, office)

- There are several educational activities that can be provided for purpose of fundraising (ex. Tack show, clinic, trail rides) – no age limits for participants. All participants must sign assumption of risk forms and appropriate additional insurance should be secured. The horse helmet policy must also be strictly followed.
- Competition events add an element of risk and are only covered for youth ages 8-18. 4-H sponsored competition should never use term “open” and cannot include adult competitors

Scenario 2 – Sponsored by non-Extension group or organization to benefit 4-H

- Facility contract, insurance, management of expenses and supervision of event are conducted independent of the University of Illinois Extension
- No University of Illinois risk forms should be used.
- No Extension staff should assist in the management or supervision of the event
- The sponsoring organization should have permission to use 4-H name and emblem – signed by county director
- The sponsoring organization should have an MOU with the county director to agree upon use of funds raised to benefit a 4-H club or program

Related Risk Management Policies:

- General liability insurance – only covers 4-H members and 4-H volunteers
- Special event insurance – can be purchased as additional coverage for “non-enrolled parents, siblings, and other non-4-H members who may be present” – does not cover adults in competition role
- Additional policies related to Horse Shows: Equine Activity Liability Act, Horse Show Liability Insurance (only covers registered or enrolled 4-H youth ages 8-18) and Illinois 4-H horse helmet policy
- Cloverbud policy – ages 5-7 not allowed to participate in competitive events and not covered by insurance in those cases.

Related Club Fiscal/Fundraising Policies:

- Illinois Department of Revenue Regulations – clubs limited to 2 per year
- All club fundraisers must be pre-approved by extension staff two weeks prior to event promotion
- All other club fiscal policies apply (e.g. required treasury report reviewed by extension staff, updated club inventory of assets, budget balance guidelines, etc.)



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