



# 4-H Volunteer Information

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Thank you for volunteering with the MSU Teton County 4-H program. As a volunteer, you are responsible to provide a safe learning environment for youth. Members in the 4-H program learn from you both directly and indirectly. Please consider your behavior carefully as you are a role model for youth.

## Safety and Health

- ✿ There should be no tobacco, alcohol or illegal drug use or abuse of prescription medications at any 4-H activities.
- ✿ All meeting places used for 4-H should be in a safe, clean and secure environment and allow for participation of all members.
- ✿ Ample adult supervision should be provided for activities, for example two adults for every 10 members under age 10, and two adults for every twenty members over the age of 10. For safety, more adult leaders can be used when working with large animals.
- ✿ Private passenger vehicles used during 4-H activities or for transporting to 4-H activities must be properly registered, insured and operated by licensed adults (over age 21).
- ✿ 4-H volunteers shall drive in a careful and prudent manner so as not to unduly or unreasonably endanger the life, limb, property, or rights of a person entitled to use a street or highways.
- ✿ 4-H volunteers are strongly encouraged not to use handheld cell phones or other handheld electronic communications devices or objects while operating vehicles on 4-H business.
- ✿ The number of passengers in a vehicle should not exceed the number intended for the vehicle and each person should have and use an individual seat belt.
- ✿ Take safety precautions including having a well-stocked first aid kit, appropriate clothing for the weather and activity, plenty of water and sunscreen for 4-H activities.
- ✿ Communicate with a 4-H member's family when transporting them. Know when and where they are to be left, obtain permission to travel forms, health forms and contact phone numbers. Youth should not be left alone in any place for any time.
- ✿ Leaders should read and follow labels when using any chemically-based products and provide ample ventilation and work space during such activities as furniture refinishing, art projects, woodworking, livestock grooming, etc.
- ✿ Leaders must adhere to civil law concerning the reporting of neglect, abuse or when physical harm could come to the person or a third party.
- ✿ Leaders should model healthy, safe and positive behaviors when working with youth.

## Inclusion

- ✿ Leaders must recognize the dignity of each person and refrain from behaviors or words that are disrespectful of anyone or any group of people. Leaders also have an obligation to educate 4-H members if they engage in behavior that is disrespectful of anyone or any group of people.
- ✿ Volunteers and leaders serve all people without regard to gender, creed, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status or political beliefs.
- ✿ Leaders must ensure that all persons have access to the resources, services and opportunities they require.
- ✿ Leaders should make reasonable and requested accommodations for people with special needs or disabilities.

## Conduct

- ✿ Leaders must be aware that they have considerable influence when dealing with youth. Leaders must strive to create and maintain respectful relationships with youth, adults and other leaders, avoiding manipulation and abuse of power.
- ✿ Leaders need to maintain appropriate professional boundaries (physical, sexual, relational and emotional). Leaders and volunteers should never be alone with a minor in a residence, sleeping facility, locker room, dressing facility, closed room or isolated area that would be inappropriate to the 4-H member/leader relationship.
- ✿ Leaders should not administer any prescription or over-the-counter medications without written and verbal instruction from the youth's guardians.
- ✿ Leaders should never engage in physical discipline of a minor.
- ✿ Leaders should be savvy regarding current technology and take steps to ensure proper use by 4-H members and adults involved in 4-H activities. For instance, limiting cell phone or electronic recording device use to record others in private spaces. Leaders should not engage in inappropriate contact through electronic means and/or social networking sites.
- ✿ Leaders should conduct themselves in a manner free from inappropriate jokes, comments, gossiping, swearing, touching, and rough-housing.
- ✿ Recognize the following behaviors are inappropriate: consumption of alcohol or drugs, promotion of religious or political preferences, theft, pilfering or fraud, use of tobacco, sexual advances or activities involving 4-H youth, willful damaging of property, permitting passengers to ride in motor vehicles without seatbelts, permitting youth or adults in the back of pick-ups, behaviors that are illegal under Montana or federal law.

## 4-H Overnight Chaperone

- ✿ Provide supervision for 4-H members during overnight events.
- ✿ Assist, as needed, with the overall coordination and facilitation of event.
- ✿ Provide transportation, do, from and during event as needed.
- ✿ Supervise cabins, check in, cleaning and check out.
- ✿ Enforce and follow the 4-H Code of Conduct and program policies.

Through the 4-H program, adults have the special opportunity to interact with young people in ways that are affirming, educational and inspiring to young people and other adults. Adults must exercise good judgment and mature wisdom in the 4-H program. If you have concerns about your responsibilities, or any area of the MSU Teton County 4-H program, please contact the Extension Office.

## Welcome to the MSU Teton County 4-H Team!

**Sign:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### References:

Montana State University Orientation Fact Sheet and Code of Conduct  
Georgia 4-H Behavior Guidelines for Adults working with Youth in Extension Programming.  
University of Nebraska Extension 4-H Volunteer Information Series  
Volunteer Code of Ethics St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church  
1995 UUA Congregational Handbook