

Frequently Asked Questions 4-H Professionals

Effective April 10, 2020

This FAQ is our response to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. Responses are subject to change per government and university directives. This FAQ is for internal use by 4-H professionals. A separate FAQ with pertinent information has been developed for volunteers and members. It will be posted on ohio4h.org and Ohio 4-H social media at noon on April 15.

- **Why was the decision made to cancel camps so far in advance?**
 - The Ohio State University made the decision to cancel or postpone in-person events through July 6. This includes all OSU Extension and 4-H events. The safety of campers, counselors, and staff is always our highest priority. We considered information from health experts who have discussed the pace of transmission of COVID-19 and the fact that individuals are infectious prior to showing symptoms. Additional considerations included the extent of recommended sanitization and cleaning protocols, along with the unknowns about how long COVID-19 remains viable on surfaces, and the time required between user groups to reduce the likelihood of transmission. We also considered the likelihood of reoccurrence, given the absence of a viable vaccine and the percent of the population that could still be vulnerable to infection. Sources include the [American Camp Association](#), [Centers for Disease, Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), [The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation \(IHME\)](#), [The Lancet COVID-19 Resource Centre](#), [The Ohio Department of Health](#), [Stanford University Researchers COVID-19 Modeling](#), and [World Health Organization](#).
- **Can 4-H camps host non-4-H affiliated user groups?**
 - 4-H camp facilities can host non-4-H groups after July 6, as long as additional restrictions have not been mandated. If they choose to do this, they must follow local health department and government guidelines including, but not limited to: group size, following current social distancing practices, disinfecting and cleaning between groups, and having a written plan for the facility if a staff member or other individual exhibits symptoms of COVID-19.
- **What about other in-person overnight events that are not 4-H camps; for example, teen events, family retreats, etc.? Are those only cancelled until July 6?**
 - These are permitted after July 6 if the following factors are considered, including, but limited to:
 - Current government orders related to group size and social distancing practices;
 - Sanitation of facilities between user groups; and
 - Additional university guidance.
- **What about in-person field days or other day-long activities, meetings, or events? Are those only cancelled until July 6?**
 - These are permitted after July 6 if the following factors are considered, including, but limited to:



- Current government orders related to group size and social distancing practices;
 - Sanitation of facilities between user groups; and
 - Additional university guidance.
- **Do we need to refund camp counselor training program fees?**
 - We encourage refunds; and that should be pro-rated based on any remaining cancelled activities that required funding.
- **Are background checks needed for 18+ camp counselors participating in virtual camps?**
 - No, since they will not be in the direct care, custody, and control of campers.
- **Will we have our fair?**
 - The decisions regarding how fairs will be held are determined by local health departments, county commissioners, and ag societies, as well as Governor DeWine's administration.
 - 4-H and FFA support the education and development of youth for the fairs, but the decision about whether fairs will occur is in the hands of other partners.
- **How can 4-H professionals support tagging activities, weigh-ins, skillathons, fairs, etc.?**
 - A group of 4-H and other Extension professionals who focus on animal sciences are working on virtual resources.
 - Extension professionals should only have a virtual presence until July 6. We are seeking additional guidance from college and university leadership.
 - If a fair is held, we will monitor and negotiate for the health and safety of our staff, members, and volunteers.
- **What about fairs that happen between now and July 6? Can Extension professionals take vacation time and volunteer at the fair?**
 - How individuals choose to spend their vacation time is a personal decision.
- **Are junior fair board (JFB) members who represent 4-H, senior fair board (SFB) members who are 4-H advisors, etc. able to be involved with in-person fair activities before July 6?**
 - Ohio residents must abide by the current government orders. Fair is not a 4-H event.
- **What is the status of PAS shows and other horse events?**
 - Refer to Kim Cole's email of 4.8.2020.
- **What about volunteers who still need background checks conducted?**
 - If volunteers had a background check done and the results are not back and they are not on the unclaimed list, they need to follow up with OHR.
 - For those who have not yet had a background check, please hold off until the stay-at-home order is lifted. These individuals must not be the sole person who is present for care, custody, and control of minors.

- **What do we need to do about our enrollment deadline?**
 - Be flexible. We are not asking you to disregard policies (e.g., across county lines), but are asking you to be flexible for when items are due (enrollments, forms, etc.) to the extent you are able, while meeting market livestock or animal requirements. Remember, 4-H enrollment deadlines have historically been driven by county fair dates. This is an unusual year, so maximum flexibility is important.

- **Can 4-H members fill out a cross-county line form to join 4-H in a neighboring county due to the current situation?**
 - The policy remains the same for cross-county line membership approval. When members transfer to another county, the intent is to retain membership in that county for the duration of their 4-H career.

- **Do we need to refund county 4-H member program fees?**
 - If a 4-H member has enrolled in the 4-H program, he or she should pay the respective county program fee. Follow the guidelines for the way in which refunds are handled/not handled in a typical program year.

- **Can virtual project judging be held with only a member and a judge?**
 - No. Include a third person (volunteer, junior leader, etc.) to welcome and be an unbiased third party. This is in accordance with policy 1.50 and our rule of three.

- **Can shooting sports still happen if there is less in-person time for group instruction?**
 - In-person meetings may not happen through July 6. Group instruction can resume after July 6, pending any new university or government restrictions.

- **Can we give ourselves grace to drop things versus trying to scramble? Or suspend some activities until 2021?**
 - Yes! Please consider what you can let go of this year, unless it is a required policy (e.g. volunteer training, policy 1.50, etc.) or a core component of the 4-H program (e.g., project judging, club meetings, important partnership with stakeholders such as fair boards, etc.)