



**MASSACHUSETTS 4-H**

**CLUB OFFICERS HANDBOOK**

**YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_**



---

UMassAmherst Outreach **UMass**  
**Extension**

UMass Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer, United States Department of Agriculture cooperating. Contact your local Extension office for information on disability accommodations or the UMass Extension Director if you have complaints related to discrimination, 413-545-4800.

## 4-H PLEDGE

### I PLEDGE

My HEAD to clearer thinking,  
My HEART to greater loyalty,  
My HANDS to larger service, and  
My HEALTH to better living, for  
My Club, My Community, My Country, and My World.



### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### WHAT DO OFFICERS DO?

All club officers serve as role models for other 4-H members.

#### The President

- Checks on arrangements for the meetings.
- Presides at meetings.
- Sees that the meetings start and adjourn at the scheduled time.
- Follows the recommended order of procedure and parliamentary law in conducting meetings, if applicable.
- Appoints committees with the help of the leader.
- Meets with the leader and other officers to plan the order of business for each meeting.
- Guides meetings, encouraging all members to take an active part.
- Is familiar with the duties of other officers and helps them when needed.
- Casts the deciding vote if there is a tie.
- Arranges to have the Vice President take over if the President cannot be there.

## By-Laws

- Article I. The regular meetings of the club shall be at (time) on the first and third (day) of each month.
- Article II. A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the membership.
- Article III. Should the club members vote to disband, the club charter shall be returned to the 4-H Extension Educator in the regional office and the treasurer's book and money in the treasury turned over to the County 4-H Fund.
- Article IV. An annual report of the club treasury shall be made.
- Article V. An annual inventory of equipment owned by the club shall be made.
- Article VI. This constitution shall be read at each annual meeting of the club.
- Article VII. A budget shall be submitted for approval at the annual meeting.
- Article VIII. These By-Laws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any meeting



## The Vice President

- Is prepared to perform the duties of the President, if necessary.
- Presides at meetings when the President is absent.
- Assists other officers in arranging for and conducting meetings.

Usually serves as chairperson of the Program Committee.

## The Secretary

- Keeps club records in a permanent form.
- Takes minutes at all business meetings and is prepared to read them at the next meeting.
- Maintains a list of all members and takes the attendance at all meetings.
- Reads letters to the club and handles all correspondence.
- Informs members of special meetings and may remind members of regular meetings.

Refer to Club Secretary's Handbook.

## The Treasurer

- Receives and is responsible for all money.
- Keeps an accurate record of:
  - All money received and its source
  - All money paid out and for what
- Reports at club meetings on money received, money paid out, and the amount on hand.
- Pays out money only when approved by the club.
  - Gives the new Treasurer complete and accurate records when the member takes office. (See "Treasurer's Book" for report forms)

### The News Reporter

- Sends advance information to local papers or radio or TV stations when planning a special event or a community service work project.
- Writes interesting news items and sends them in immediately after each meeting or event. (Old news will not be printed.)
- Sends reports of club activities to their local Extension office.
- Makes sure all articles tell – who, what, when, where, why, and how.
- Collects all newspaper items referring to the club and puts them in a scrapbook for the permanent records.

Refer to Club News Reporter handbook.

### **COMMITTEES**

You may form a committee made up of members and parents for special projects. These projects could be refreshments, fundraising, parent 4-H night, etc. The committee ends when the project is completed.

### **MEMBERS ARE IMPORTANT TOO!**

Without good members, the club will not be successful. Encourage members to take an active part. That means they speak up in meetings and make their ideas known. They volunteer for jobs without having to be coaxed. In addition, members should attend all the club meetings and activities if they possibly can. Attendance is really important to the success of the club.

## **SUGGESTED CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS FOR 4-H CLUB**

(Clubs wishing a constitution and by-laws may use this guide)

### Constitution

Article I. The name of the club shall be \_\_\_\_\_. (Be sure that the name does not exclude anyone. "For Girls Only" or "The Cowboys" would not be acceptable.)

Article II. The object of this club is to help boys and girls develop into capable, well-adjusted individuals who are responsible community members and leaders.

Article III. All boys and girls, irrespective of race, color, or national origin, who are 5 years of age and not over 19 years of age on January 1<sup>st</sup> of the 4-H Club year, are eligible for membership.

Article IV. The officers of this club shall include the following: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and News Reporter, elected annually. They shall perform the usual duties of such officers. The club shall have a club leader.

Article V. There shall be at least 8 meetings per year.

Article VI. The order of business for all regular meetings shall be as listed in the "4-H Club Officers Handbook".

Article VII. Committees for special purposes may be formed by the club.

Article VIII. This constitution may be amended by two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting of the club, previous notice being given on amendment.

Article IX. Payment of dues shall be approved by all members of the club.

## AMENDMENTS

When a motion is brought before a 4-H club for consideration, some members may wish to change it before it is voted on. This is called amending a motion. This takes the form of a motion and may be made and seconded during the discussion period of the original motion.

For instance, in the above motion a member might say, "I move that we amend that motion by substituting \$20 for \$10". After another member seconds the amendment, it is then open for discussion as the original motion was.

Members first vote on the amendment itself. If that is carried, they then vote on the motion as amended. If carried, the President would say, "The motion is carried and we will donate \$20 to the Food Pantry".

Amendments may take any of the following forms:

1. To substitute
2. To add
3. To strike out and insert
4. To insert
5. To strike out

## DIFFERING OF OPINIONS

Occasionally, there may be a difference of opinion among club members. If this happens, continue to have conversations and try to come to a consensus (agreement) to include everyone's ideas. This helps members feel they are part of the decision making process. Remember, it is okay to have different opinions, but not ok to be rude.

## NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Nominations and elections are important club business. Tell the members about the election ahead of time. Then they can be thinking about the kinds of officers they want to have. Make sure everyone knows the duties of each office, too!

There are two ways to nominate officers:

1. The members may suggest someone for an office during the election meeting. The member says, "I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_". A nomination does not need a second, although a second can be made to show support.
2. The President may appoint a nominating committee. The committee chooses candidates for each office and asks them to run. It presents its nominations as a report at the meeting. Other nominations can be made from the floor.

\*\*Nominees may either accept or decline the nomination prior to the final vote.

In either case, when there are no more nominations, a member can say, "I move to close the nominations". If the motion is carried, the members then vote on the candidates. Voting for officers is usually by ballot with the one receiving the highest number of votes being elected.

## WAYS TO VOTE

VOICE VOTE — The President says, "All in favor of the motion say 'aye'".

STANDING VOTE – The members stand so their votes can be counted.

SHOW OF HANDS – The members raise their hands so the President can count their votes.

BALLOT – The President has one or more helpers hand out blank slips of paper; members write down their vote.

ROLL CALL – Each member votes as his or her name is called.

HONOR SYSTEM – Each member closes (or covers) his or her eyes and votes by raising one hand.



## 4-H CLUB BUSINESS MEETING

### SUGGESTED PROGRAM & AGENDA FOR 4-H CLUB MEETINGS

1. Call to order by the President
2. 4-H Pledge; Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll call by Secretary
4. Secretary's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. News and other committee reports
7. Old business
8. New business

#### Adjournment

The business meeting can be either long or short. There is no need for an hour meeting when the business can be covered in 15 minutes. If the President and club leader plan this ahead, the rest of the time can be spent on the 4-H projects and other activities.

## MAKING A MOTION

### Obtaining the Floor

Before a member can bring business before the club or make a motion, he or she must "obtain the floor". The member raises his or her hand or stands and waits to be recognized. When the President calls on the member, he or she then "has the floor".

### Making a Motion

The member says, "I move" – then states the business he or she wants action on. For example, "I move that the 4-H club donate \$10 to the Food Pantry".

### Seconding a Motion

A motion must be seconded before discussion or vote. Any member may second a motion by saying without rising, "I second the motion".

If a motion is not seconded, it is declared lost by the President without a vote.

### Discussing a Motion

After a motion has been made and seconded, it is stated by the President. Before putting it to a vote, the President asks whether there is any discussion of the motion. Any member can discuss the motion.

### Voting on a Motion

When a motion is put to a vote, the President first states the motion. Example: "The motion has been made and seconded that the 4-H club donate \$10 to the Food Pantry. Those in favor of the motion say 'aye' (or the President can ask for a show of hands); those opposed say 'no'".

### Announcing the Results

The President then announces the results. "The ayes have it; the motion is passed".

