

Montana 4-H Event Guidelines

- Chaperones for overnight events MUST be at least 21 years of age and a certified Montana 4-H Volunteer or MSU Extension staff.
- **State Events - No youth may attend an event without an onsite chaperone designated by the County Extension office.** If counties have an extremely limited number of youth interested in attending an event (1-2) they may choose to arrange for those youth to attend the event under the supervision of another county, if a county chaperone is not able to be obtained. It is the counties responsibility to make these arrangements. *Other guideline may apply for events such as Shooting sports events and State Horse Show.*
- Each county MUST designate the appropriate number of chaperones to accompany youth. Chaperone may not be responsible for more than 10 senior 4-H members and 8 junior 4-H members.

Expectations of a Chaperone

- Chaperones designated by each county are responsible for their county delegation. Supervision and advising of county delegation and any needed disciplinary action, according to the code of conduct, are the responsibility of county chaperones.
- Event staff and volunteers will assist the chaperones, but primary responsibility rests with the county chaperones who are acting on behalf of the County Extension Office.
- Assist youth in making the most of their experience including attending all scheduled activities and positively representing their county.
- Manage Risk.
 - *Physical: risk of bodily harm to participants.*
 - *Reputation: risk of others losing confidence and/or trust in organization.*
 - *Emotional: risk of participants feeling upset, uncomfortable, embarrassed, etc.*
 - *Financial: any risk associated with money.*

Code of Conduct

- All youth and Adult event participants must have authorization that they have read and signed the Montana Code of Conduct recorded in the enrollment system. A signed copy of the paper form should also be filed in the County Extension office.
- Adult chaperones must abide by the same code of conduct as youth members. This is in addition to the volunteer agreement signed each year.
- Use of alcohol or illegal drugs are not allowed at any time for youth or adults.

Authorization

Chaperones MUST be provided and travel with a copy of the current signed Montana 4-H **MEDICAL RELEASE FORM** for each youth participant under their supervision. It is recommended that a copy of the **CODE OF CONDUCT** be provided as well.

Housing/Lodging

If lodging is arranged by the County Extension office or Montana 4-H event:

- Adults will NOT stay in the same hotel/dorm rooms with youth 4-H members. Accommodations will be made for special situations and arrangements will be made by event staff. (does not apply to camp situations)
- Male and female youth members will NOT stay in the same "rooms". This includes hotel, dorm, cabin, common areas etc.
- Room checks to ensure that youth are in their assigned sleeping rooms are highly recommended for overnight events.

- When a female/male volunteer/staff is chaperoning youth of the opposite gender they should respect the lodging space of the members while also carrying out their chaperone responsibilities. It may be appropriate to call upon a fellow chaperone of the same gender as the youth to assist in room checks or other situations.

Emergency Procedures

In the event that a youth under a chaperones supervision requires medical attention or emergency care:

- The first priority is to provide appropriate medical attention for the situation. Call 911, police or ambulance as appropriate. **Do not be afraid to provide medical attention due to cost, it is covered under supplemental event or annual coverage.**
- Contact the Parent or Guardian to make them aware of the situation
- Contact your County Extension agent and/or Department Head.
- If offsite care is required be sure the adult accompanying the youth has the signed medical release form. Designate a fellow chaperone to supervise youth remaining at the event.
- Complete and incident report to the appropriate office within 24 hours of the accident, even if no medical attention was not necessary.

Transportation

It is recommended that personal transportation to and from 4-H events and activities is the responsibility of the 4-H member or parent/guardian.

In the event that 4-H staff (authorized 4-H organizer) arrange transportation for youth, drivers:

- Must be at least 21
- Have a valid driver's license
- Have no volunteer restrictions that include driving
- Have valid auto insurance

Driver's MUST be Extension staff or certified volunteers if Extension office or volunteers ARRANGE travel.

It is important that the parent/guardian are made aware of transportation arrangements made for the participating youth, however no authorization form is required.

If a youth member or their parent/guardian **OPT OUT** of this arranged transportation the county office should obtain the **PERMISSION TO TRAVEL form**.

MSU Extension 4-H recognizes that there are circumstances wherein the 4-H participant may be required or chooses to provide his/her own transportation in conjunction with scheduled 4-H activities or events. MSU Extension 4-H may allow 4-H participants to opt out of the transportation provided by the authorized 4H event organizers. In order to opt out of the travel requirements set forth by the authorized 4H activity or event organizers, the participant and parent/legal guardian must authorize and request this alternative to 4-H provided transportation.

Cancellation of Participation

Participants who register for an event and cancel before regular registration closes will receive a full reimbursement of any associated fees. Once registration has closed, no refunds will be awarded unless a documented medical emergency or natural disaster inhibits a participant from attending.

Please note that refunds issued after registration has closed may not be a full reimbursement if particular costs associated to the registration have already been garnered and are unable to be adjusted, such as meals or shirts. Any requests for reimbursement after an event has concluded will not be accepted, regardless of circumstance.