



Maryland 4-H Activity Communication Template

At least 3 days prior to an approved 4-H activity, leaders must share information with participants about the plan for the activity and the rules and practices they will be required to follow. There are certain notifications leaders are required to make to every 4-H family or person who is considering attending an in-person 4-H activity. Leaders will also need to share details specific to the activity, such as what to bring and what the program will be.

Leaders should include their local 4-H Educator in this communication, to ensure they are aware of all details and prepared to answer questions, advise, or assist as needed. Use the email “carbon copy” (cc:) function to easily keep the 4-H Educator in the loop.

4-H activity leaders should use this template for communication with 4-H families and others, to ensure all required information is shared. Every element of this template should be addressed in communications about the approved 4-H activity. While this template was developed primarily for email use, it can be used to guide other types of communication such as phone calls and social media posts. You can see an example of an email communication using this template in Appendix C of the **Restoring Maryland 4-H Programs Volunteer Guidebook**.

Leaders may modify the wording of most sections to fit their needs and describe their unique 4-H activity. Wording that is **highlighted in yellow** should be included in the communication exactly as it is stated in the template. Items in **green text** are suggestions for personalization of the section to fit the 4-H activity.

Template Message to 4-H Families

Greeting

Dear 4-H Family: We have received approval from our 4-H Educator to hold an in-person 4-H activity. To get permission to hold this in-person activity, your leaders had to prepare and submit a detailed plan of how we will work together to keep everyone safe and well. The plan was approved, and we can now make final preparations for our 4-H activity. We will need the help and cooperation of everyone to make this activity a success. Please read this email carefully so you know all the details and what you will be asked to do if you attend.

Add additional greeting information or details as desired.

Voluntary Attendance

Participation in this 4-H activity is completely voluntary. You are not required to attend in-person, and if you don't attend it will not be held against you.

Include this statement along with any other relevant information, such as who the family should contact if they have questions or change their mind about attending.

Virtual Participation

If there is a way 4-H families can participate in the activity without physically attending, share instructions on how they can do it. Include any information about how they can access information or resources after the activity, such as watching a video that was shown at the activity, receiving lesson handouts by email, etc.

Stay-Home Directive

You should stay home and not attend this 4-H activity if anyone in your household does not feel well or is experiencing symptoms of illness, is considered high-risk for COVID-19 infection due to their health, age, or other factors, has had contact in the last 14 days with someone who was sick with COVID-19, or is in quarantine for possible exposure to COVID-19.

Face Coverings

Everyone who participates in this 4-H activity will be required to wear a mask or CDC-recommended face covering over their mouth and nose, at all times. You should wear your own mask or face covering. If you are not able or willing to wear a mask or face covering the entire time, you cannot attend this 4-H activity.

Modify and include other information as appropriate.

Physical Distancing

Everyone who participates in this 4-H activity will be required to practice physical distancing. This means everyone must stay at least 6 feet apart from everyone else. This may be a challenge, but we can do it. We will use tools and guides to remind everyone to keep our distance during this 4-H activity.

Modify and include other information as appropriate, such as an explanation of what tools will be used (tape marks on the ground, arranging chairs 6 feet apart, using restrooms one at a time, etc.)

Health Pledge

Everyone who attends this 4-H activity will be required to bring a completed Health Pledge form. Your Health Pledge is your “ticket” to enter the activity, and it will be collected by a leader before you join the group. The Health Pledge is very important, because it is your “promise” that you are healthy and that you will follow rules and practices to keep others safe and healthy.

You should fill out your Health Pledge about an hour before you plan to leave home to come to the 4-H activity. You will need to take your temperature so you know if you have a fever. The Pledge asks you how you are feeling at the time you are ready to go to the 4-H activity, so you need to be able to answer honestly. A parent or guardian must sign the Health Pledge form for a youth under age 18.

If you are going to ride to the 4-H activity with someone who is not your parent/guardian, be sure you complete your Health Pledge at home and take it with you. If you do not have a completed, signed Health Pledge when you arrive, you won't be allowed to enter the 4-H activity.

You can download the Health Pledge form from the [Maryland 4-H Website](#) on the COVID-19 Resources for Families page. The form is also attached to this email. Print and fill out the form before you leave home for the 4-H activity. If you do not have the ability to print the form yourself, let your leader know right away.

Include any additional information as needed. Leaders must provide 4-H families access to the Health Pledge form in any way they reasonably can. Modify the statement about how to access the form as appropriate to the 4-H activity and circumstances.

Hygiene & Sanitation

Everyone who participates in this 4-H activity will be expected to practice good hygiene habits. Participants will be required to wash their hands when they arrive and before they leave, and as needed throughout the activity. Hand sanitizer will also be available for use.

All common and high-touch surfaces will be sanitized as recommended by the CDC before the activity, as needed throughout, and at the end of the activity. Any shared equipment or materials will be sanitized between users.

Modify and include other information as appropriate.

What to Bring

Instruct participants what items they should bring for their own use and remind them that they should not share items they bring from home with anyone else. In addition to a mask/face covering, each participant may be asked to bring a filled water bottle, individual-sized hand sanitizer, notebook and writing tool, camp chair, etc.

Parent/Guardian Requirements

Clearly communicate whether parents/guardians are expected to bring only their own children, or whether carpooling is allowed. Also clearly state whether parents/guardians are expected or required to remain on-site during the 4-H activity. If so specify where they should wait, away from the activity participants.

Arrival & Departure Procedures

Explain what families will need to do when they arrive at the 4-H activity. Instructions should include how Health Pledges will be verified and collected, attendance recorded, and hygiene performed while practicing physical distancing and mask wear. Provide information on parking and waiting areas for drivers, if appropriate. Also explain how the pick-up process will work when the activity is over.

Spectators

Because of group size limitations and to minimize the number of people who come into contact with each other, no spectators will be allowed inside this 4-H activity. This includes parents/guardians, siblings, friends, or others. Families are strongly encouraged to leave anyone who is not actively participating in or providing transportation to/from this 4-H activity to stay home.

Modify and add additional information as appropriate.

Expectations

All participating 4-H families are expected to follow rules and procedures to help make this 4-H activity safe and fun for everyone. This includes displaying good behavior and cooperation with each other. Those who cannot or will not follow rules may be asked to leave this activity and may not be allowed to join in future in-person 4-H activities.

Include other information as appropriate or desired.

Other Information

Include any information about the 4-H activity that hasn't already been presented.