



Maryland 4-H Activities Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Families

Q: I usually just drop my kids off at 4-H and go run errands. Can I still do that?

A: It is recommended that a parent/guardian remain on-site but outside the 4-H activity, in case they are needed. Check with your 4-H activity's leader about whether they will need you to stay on-site while your 4-Hers participate in the activity.

Q: I can't bring my daughter to this meeting. Can she come with our neighbors?

A: To avoid close contact with members of different households, carpooling is discouraged. However, if it is necessary for two (or more) 4-H families to work together to provide transportation to a 4-H activity, be sure to observe hygiene and safety practices as much as possible. If your child will ride to a 4-H activity with an adult who is not parent/guardian, it is recommended you complete the **Permission to Travel** form and provide it to the driver. (Don't forget to send a completed Health Pledge with your daughter!)

Q: My daughter has a medical condition that makes her high-risk, so she can't attend in-person meetings. Will her club still do meetings on Zoom?

A: 4-H volunteers are strongly encouraged to continue to hold 4-H activities virtually whenever possible. Even when an in-person 4-H activity is held, leaders are encouraged to provide ways for youth to participate "live" by virtual means. You should talk with your 4-H leader about ways your daughter can continue to stay connected with her 4-H club or group.

Q: I'm not comfortable with my kids being around other people in groups. If they don't attend in-person meetings or activities will they still be eligible to enter their photography in the fair?

A: Participation in in-person 4-H activities is strictly voluntary. No 4-H family, volunteer, or faculty/staff member is required to participate in an in-person 4-H activity or program if they do not feel comfortable doing so. 4-Hers will not be penalized for choosing not to attend in-person 4-H activities. You should check with your 4-H Educator and the fair organizers to confirm that your children will still be eligible to submit their entries.

Q: Why do I have to fill out a separate Health Pledge for each of my 4 kids? Why can't I just do one for the whole family?

A: The Health Pledge is a statement by each individual (or their parent/guardian) that they are healthy and have not been exposed to someone who has COVID-19 or who is quarantined because of possible exposure. For that reason, a Pledge must be filled out for each child – it documents their own individual health.

Q: Why do I have to fill out a new Health Pledge every time my child attends a 4-H activity? If nothing has changed, can't you just use the one I turned in last time?

A: A Health Pledge certifies your child's health on the day of the 4-H activity. Because health can change from day-to-day, a new health pledge is required each time your child attends a 4-H activity. It certifies they are healthy "today."

Q: My daughter wasn't allowed to join her 4-H Robotics Team practice because she had a sore throat. The leader wouldn't even let her come in and watch. How can a leader keep a kid out of a 4-H activity?

A: For the safety and wellness of all participants, youth or adults who are experiencing any symptoms of illness cannot attend 4-H activities. This practice is to prevent spread of any illness, not just COVID-19. However, because COVID-19 is highly contagious and may cause common or slight symptoms, 4-H is exercising extreme caution to prevent exposure or spread. This means prohibiting anyone who might be sick from participating. 4-H volunteers and faculty/staff members must follow this protocol as a condition of being allowed to hold in-person activities.

Q: My son didn't feel well when he was at his 4-H meeting, and his 4-H leader made me come get him. He had a low fever when I picked him up but he was fine the next day. Now the leader says he can't come to another 4-H meeting or activity without a note from his doctor. Is that true?

A: Yes. Any person, youth or adult, who is asked to leave a 4-H activity because of illness must provide a note from their health care practitioner that they are well enough to attend 4-H activities. You should provide the note to your local 4-H Educator. Your 4-H Educator can provide more information about this requirement.

Q: How are you going to protect my child from getting sick?

A: The Maryland 4-H Program has put into place strict requirements for holding in-person 4-H activities, that include health and safety and hygiene and sanitization protocols. There is also an absolute requirement that every person who participates in an in-person 4-H activity must complete a Health Pledge certifying that they are healthy, have not been exposed to someone who has COVID-19, and that no one in their household is quarantined due to exposure. While no one can guarantee that your child won't get sick, 4-H volunteers and faculty/staff members are taking extraordinary precautions to make 4-H activities and programs as safe and healthy as possible.

Q: What if somebody at the 4-H activity was asymptomatic, and we find out later they had COVID-19? Will we be informed?

A: If 4-H learns possible exposure to COVID-19 occurred at a 4-H activity or program, all participants of that program will be notified and advised to contact their health care practitioner for guidance. They will also be encouraged to cooperate with State COVID-19 contact tracing efforts. The 4-H program will cooperate with local Health Departments and state contact tracing efforts as requested.

Q: I lease a Dairy Goat from my neighbor. Can I still go take care of her and work with her for the fair?

A: Yes, as long as your neighbor (or someone else) doesn't hold an organized gathering of you and other 4-Hers to all work with your goats together. That would be a "4-H activity" and would require advance approval from your 4-H Educator. If you and your neighbor have a one-to-one agreement for you to visit the farm to take care of and work with your leased goat, that is not considered a 4-H activity. It is a personal agreement.



Q: I lease a horse from my trainer as my 4-H project horse. Our barn is going to non-4-H equitation league horse shows again. Can I ride my 4-H horse in those shows? Or do I have to wait until 4-H Horse Shows are allowed again?

A: Yes, you can participate in non-4-H shows if you choose to do so. Just because your horse is a 4-H project animal does not mean you are restricted to only riding him in 4-H shows. Just realize that if you choose to attend non-4-H shows you do so at your own personal risk. You are encouraged to research how the show will keep participants safe and healthy, and to follow hygiene and safety policies of those shows and your barn.

Q: My child has been told they have to start attending meetings in person to stay in their 4-H project. I don't think that's fair, and I'm not even sure these required 4-H meetings are approved. What can I do?

A: Contact your 4-H Educator to discuss your concerns. They can help you resolve this issue.