



Virtual Club Elections



Maryland 4-H in-person club meetings are currently limited and controlled as per the **Restoring Maryland 4-H In-Person Program Plan**. Information and resources regarding the guidelines, expectations and requirements are available to all volunteers and family on the State 4-H website via the following webpages:

For Volunteers: <https://extension.umd.edu/4-h/youth-families/covid-19-resources-families>

For Families: <https://extension.umd.edu/4-h/youth-families/covid-19-resources-families>

Local 4-H Educators may determine specific start dates or add additional requirements for their local jurisdiction.

Baseline conditions to conduct in-person 4-H activities and programs may change this fall and will be reflected on the main [4-H webpage](#). Many clubs have met virtually during these times of social distancing, but some have not made that transition. It is essential to stay connected with club members and families in either situation and regardless, certain charter club requirements will need to be followed such as club officer elections. With that being said, the Maryland 4-H Program thought it would be beneficial to provide some election options to fit your club meeting situation.

Method	Virtual Meeting	Online	Paper
Mode	Synchronous	Asynchronous	Asynchronous
Nomination	Self or Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide officer position descriptions or information. • Consult club by-laws (term limits, age requirements, etc.). • Nominating others- be sure to allow for the individual to accept or decline the nomination. • Election speech, poster, video requirement. 		
Nomination Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Verbal ◇ Private chat to host ◇ Online submission ◇ Email ◇ Text ◇ Call 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Online submission ◇ Email ◇ Text ◇ Call 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Postcard ◇ Email ◇ Text ◇ Call
Election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting should be done by secret ballot and by majority rule. • Only youth members may vote. • Designate two election "officials"- Certified UME 4-H Volunteers with no affiliation to the nominated candidates, if at all possible. 		
Election Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Zoom poll ◇ Private chat to host ◇ Participant emoticon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Online submission ◇ Email ◇ Text ◇ Call 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Postcard ◇ Email ◇ Text ◇ Call
Notification/ Announcement	During the meeting after official verification	Via email after official verification	Via email or postcard/letter after official verification

Election Process Methods for Clubs to Consider:

- **Virtual Meeting**

- *Zoom poll* - Create poll ahead of time using solicited nominations and members are able to vote directly on their device screen, once the poll has been launched by the Zoom host.
- *Private chat with host* - Members can type into the chat box, directly to the host, their real-time vote. The chat feature must be enabled on Zoom before the meeting starts in order to vote using this process.

- **Online Voting** (see chart below) - Each platform below will allow club leaders to create an online ballot of nominees and distribute a link or code to members in order to keep the votes anonymous.

- **Email** - Individually email club members and a parent (for safety) a list of nominees. Members will need to reply to the sender with their votes.
- **Text** - Individually message club members and a parent (for safety) a list of nominees. Members reply to the text with their votes.
- **Call** - Individually call club members and a parent (for safety) to gain a verbal confirmation of which candidates a member is voting for. The club leader will need to maintain a spreadsheet or tally system to account for each vote.
- **Postcard** - Create a postcard ballot with positions and nominees and send to or drop off for each club member to vote. Consider mailing timeline or drop off option. Be sure to provide one per member, not one per household.

Online Voting Platforms for Clubs to Consider:

Platform Name	Platform Link	Platform Description
Google Forms	https://www.google.com/forms	Create virtual ballots using online form tools. Questions can be asked in a variety of ways in one form.
Election Runner	https://electionrunner.com	Election Runner provides a clean, attractive and easy-to-use voter interface that runs well on all Internet-enabled devices. Each voter has a unique "Voter ID" and "Voter Key" and can only vote once.
Election Buddy	https://electionbuddy.com	ElectionBuddy is a simple to setup through its ability to send notices of the polls opening, providing electronic access to the voting form, recording the vote, tallying the results and allowing you to share the winners.
Free Online Surveys	https://freeonlinesurveys.com	FreeOnlineSurveys provides three categories for online voting: Quizzes, Forms, and Polls. You can add up to 20 questions per survey and can accept up to 100 responses.
Survey Monkey	https://www.surveymonkey.com	Create virtual ballots using online form tools. Questions can be asked in a variety of ways in one form.

**Each of the online platforms will require you to create an account (free) before being able to use the product. Some features may be premium, but the free access will allow you to prepare for, conduct, and carry out a basic 4-H club election.*

For additional assistance we encourage you to reach out to tech-savvy club members to help create online election ballots or contact your local 4-H Team.

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