



Record Books and Project Records

The 4-H program has a long history of record keeping. The focus reflects the importance of this life skill in our daily lives. In 4-H, young people have tracked their activities, events, profits and losses, skill development and learning experiences, and much more using the iconic 4-H Record Book. In addition to record keeping, the 4-H Record Book gives members an opportunity to reflect on their year, measure their achievements and growth, and set goals, and develop plans to meet those goals.

What is the difference between a Record Book and Project Records?

A Record Book is a complete book that reflects the 4-Hers work for the current year and also serves as a cumulative record. A 4-H Record Book is documentation of all 4-H activities at the club, county, state level, and national level in which a youth has attended and participated. This also includes community activities and the progress of a youth in each respective 4-H project. Many 4-H members will attest to the benefit and importance of Record Books and record keeping as they apply for higher education, prepare their resume, and submit applications for jobs. Included in the record book are:

- Title page (including photograph of the 4-H member)
- Resume (Senior age 4-Hers only)
- Essay (Senior age 4-Hers only)
- Summary Report Form (cumulative form for all years of 4-H work)
- 4-H Story
- 4-H Pictures
- 4-H Project Records

Project Records are individual records about one particular project. The county requires every youth to complete at a minimum a project record for every project they are enrolled in as of May 1st. For example, a member enrolled in woodworking, market swine, and poultry as of May 1st this year, will turn in three project records at the end of the year (a woodworking project record, a market swine project record, and a poultry project record).

Why have 4-H Record Books and Project Records?

4-H Record Books and Project Records serve a variety of purposes in the Howard County, Maryland 4-H Youth Development Program.

Some 4-H clubs require members to keep Record Books as part of their bylaws, while some clubs do not. However, the county requires every youth to complete at a minimum a project record for every project they are enrolled in as of May 1st. For example, a member enrolled in woodworking, market swine, and poultry as of May 1st this year, will turn in three project records at the end of the year (a woodworking project record, a market swine project record, and a poultry project record). A yearly 4-H Record Book is required in order for a 4-H member to qualify for County Level awards and/or scholarships. 4-H Record Books and project records should be filled out completely and accurately. Parents should oversee the member's work, but the member **must do** his or her own writing or typing. There are provisions for youth with an IEP. Parents and project leaders should encourage each 4-H member to work on his or her Record Book and Project Records throughout the year.

- 4-H Record Books and Project Records give members an opportunity to reflect on their yearly work. They document their skill development and their learning experiences in a written report. 4-H members measure their achievements and growth in their total years in 4-H.

- 4-H Record Books and Project Records encourage members to set goals, pursue strategies to meet those goals, and to shift gears in the face of challenges and obstacles.

Completing a 4-H Record Book is a process where 4-H members record project and club work. Records management is a competency skill to identify, create, classify, archive, and preserve records. The 4-H Record Book and Project Records teaches 4-H members these skills through a standard format.

How are Record Books evaluated?

- Organizational Leaders review each of their club members books and verify that all parts have been included which includes a check off sheet.
- Record books are then judged by one of thirty-five judges. Judges are Howard County 4-H All Stars or former University of Maryland Extension Educators from other counties. Judges have had a variety of experiences with records books and most are former 4-Hers who have completed a Record Book themselves. In addition, the majority of judges have served in this role for many years so they have a great deal of knowledge and background. Judges receive specific instructions as well as all materials that are available to our 4-H members as resources.
- Judges evaluate each member's Record Book and assign an award (blue, red, white or participation). Judges provide feedback to 4-H members by notes written on the evaluation sheet which is returned to the 4-H member and through sticky notes placed in the book.
- All blue books are judged a second time by a new set of judges. During this judging, each project area is evaluated separately. There is a rubric scoring sheet for this round of judging. For example, if Callie Clover has a blue book and was enrolled in the food and nutrition project and photography, then her book will be evaluated with all other members who had a blue book and were enrolled in food and nutrition. Likewise, it will be evaluated by a different judge along with all blue books in the area of photography.
- From the second round of blue book judging, County Achievement Program awards are selected. County Achievement Program awards are not based only on the projects and awards entered at the county fair. Just because you received a first place or champion at the county fair doesn't mean you automatically receive a county award. Judges consider whether you made presentations about your project, attended learning activities, provided leadership to other members, exhibited at other venues, had a complete income/expense statement, etc.
- All books that receive a red, white, or participation ribbon are judged a second time by a new judge to verify the placing.

How are Project Records evaluated?

- Project Records are evaluated by veteran 4-H University of Maryland Extension Volunteers and/or Howard County 4-H All Stars. As Project Records are reviewed, the evaluator reviews to verify if members have accurately documented all aspects of his/her individual project. Evaluators will often make individual notes on the project records and/or sticky notes that are placed on individual pages.
- Another component of evaluation of Project Records includes the completion of all components of the project record. It is the 4-Her's individual responsibility to make sure his/her records reflect all project work. A project is considered complete when the following have been done in the calendar year in relation to that project: at least one communication (demonstration, visual presentation, project talk, etc.) has been given/presented by the 4-Her during the current year, project work has been demonstrated (exhibition, etc.), and learning has taken place in relation to the project.
- Starting for the 2014 4-H year, there will be a rubric utilized to evaluate each individual project record. The rubric will be utilized to provide feedback to the 4-H member about his/her project records.
- Project records that are incomplete, contain incorrect information, and/or are plagiarized will be returned to have corrections made.

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