



MICHIGAN 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Michigan 4-H Advisory Groups Sample Council Bylaws

This first sample represents an adult strong committee with youth participating as full members. In this sample the council is structured in a hierarchy setting. All of the counties committees such as animal committees, special program committees and others are represented on council and council oversees all of the committees. This is just one way a council can be structured.

For more information on bylaws, see other examples at http://4h.msue.msu.edu/programs/leadership_citizenship or contact 4-hleadership@anr.msu.edu.

Sample 1: Adult Strong

Bylaws of the Green County 4-H Council

Article I-Name

The name of this organization shall be the Green County 4-H Council.

Article II-Purpose

The purpose of this organization shall be to assist in *planning, helping, advising and promoting* the 4-H Youth program in Green County, Michigan. It will be the goal of this organization to ensure the following:

1. Youth develop positive relationships with adults and peers.
2. Youth are physically and emotionally safe.
3. Youth are actively engaged in their own development.
4. Youth are considered participants rather than recipients in the learning process.
5. Youth develop skills that help them succeed.
6. Youth recognize, understand and appreciate multiculturalism.
7. Youth grow and contribute as active citizens through service and leadership.

Article III-Membership

The Green County 4-H Council programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

Section 1. Regular Membership

- A. Twelve (12) adult representatives.
- B. Six (6) teen representatives, 15 years of age or older as of January 1st of the current



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program year.



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Section 2. Ex Officio Membership with voting rights

- A. Fair Board representative.
- B. The elected representatives of Green County 4-H Council's associations, advisory committees and developmental committees (Small Animal, Market Livestock, Horse Leaders, PEP and Still Exhibits) appointed by council shall be Ex Officio members of the 4-H Council during their term of office with voting rights.

Section 3. Ex Officio Membership without voting rights

- A. The MSU Extension staff member in charge of the 4-H program shall be an ex officio member of the 4-H Council and all committees of the Council and be exempt from Section 3. B

Section 4. Rules of the Membership

- A. All adult 4-H Council members are limited to two consecutive 2-year terms. Members may then be re-elected or come back as an Ex Officio member after being off the 4-H Council for one year.
- B. All Ex Officio members are limited to two consecutive 2- year terms. Members may represent their committee again or be elected to 4-H Council after being off the 4-H Council for one year.
- C. No term limits for teen representatives.
- D. Ex Officio members cannot hold simultaneously a regular membership on council.
- E. All adult 4-H Council members must have been a registered volunteer for at least two (2) years prior to being an elected member of the 4-H Council.
- F. A vacancy occurs when a member has missed three consecutive meetings without notifying the President or 4-H staff person or submits a letter of resignation.
- G. Vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the term by appointment by the 4-H Council at the next regular 4-H Council meeting, after the vacancy has been declared, by a vote of council members present at a regular meeting.
- H. Green County Fair Board representative will be elected by 4-H Council for a two year term and is exempt from Section 3.A

Section 5. Election Procedures

- A. Six (6) adult representatives and 6 teen representatives shall be elected to 4-H Council annually in October. New members will begin their term at the 4-H Council meeting in November of the year they are elected or re-elected.
- B. Representatives shall be selected by being placed on a ballot but a nominating committee. There shall be at least eight (8) adults, and eight (8) teens on the ballot each year in order for an election to take place. Ballots will be mailed to each registered 4-H volunteer (both youth and adult).



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Article IV-Officers

Officers shall be elected each year to a one-year term at the November 4-H Council meeting. Any member may hold any officer position, with the exception of the treasurer, which must be held by an adult.

- A. President, to preside at all meetings, appoint standing and ad hoc committees as needed and in general carry out the usual duties of president.
- B. Vice-president, to preside in the absence of the president and as the president shall direct.
- C. Secretary, to keep the minutes of all meetings, return them to the Extension office for distribution with the notices of the next meeting or as is appropriate, and record all correspondence which the officers or the 4-H Council shall authorize.
- D. Treasurer, shall keep record of income and disbursements, make deposits and have check writing authorization, distribute a monthly financial report at 4-H Council meetings and prepare and distribute an annual financial report.

Article V-Meetings

- A. 4-H Council shall hold at least eight meetings a year and more if necessary.
- B. Meetings shall be held according to Roberts Rules of Order, current edition.
- C. Meetings shall be held the second Monday of every month except July, August and December.

Article VI-Fiscal Year

The Green County 4-H Fiscal year runs from September 1st to August 31st.

Article VII-Quorum

Nine or more members shall constitute a quorum at all meetings of the 4-H Council.

Article VIII-Restrictions

- A. In the event of the dissolution of the Green County 4-H Council, all funds and assets will be turned over to the Green County MSU Extension for support of 4-H Youth programs and activities in Green County.
- B. Any decision passed by the Green County 4-H Council that is in conflict with the policies or practices of MSU Extension may be vetoed by the 4-H Staff.
- C. Any decision passed by any 4-H related committee or association that is in conflict with the policies or practices of either MSU Extension and/or Green County 4-H Council may be vetoed at the next regular meeting of the Green County 4-H Council by the staff or 4-H council.

Article IX-Amendments



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This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote at any regular or special meeting of the Green County 4-H Council, provided members of the Council and MSU staff are properly notified of such meeting, that a copy of the proposed amendment is included with said notice and there is a regular meeting of the 4-H Council between the notice date and the meeting of the amendment adoption.

Adopted 5/09/88





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Sample two represents a youth/ adult partnership where there are equal number of youth and adults on the council. This sample is also a stand-alone committee and no other committees report to them except ones they themselves create.

Sample 2: Youth/ Adult Partnership

Constitution and By-laws of CLOVER COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL

Established: August 5, XXXX

Article I: Name

The advisory body for the 4-H Program in Clover County shall be known as the “Clover County 4-H Council”

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of this advisory body shall be:

- A. To support the 4-H Program in helping youth develop positive self-esteem, effective communication and decision-making skills and become responsible adults who will work toward a peaceful global future.
- B. To provide an organization to aid the Extension Staff in determining the needs of the 4-H Program of the County.
- C. To act as a representative body in 4-H Program relationships with other organizations and individuals.
- D. To provide a local organization to act as custodian of properties of the 4- H Program of Clover County.
- E. To provide monetary sponsorship of 4-H Programs and events.

Article III: Membership

Membership on Council shall be open to all without regard to: race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status. All efforts will be made to have a diverse representation of Council members.

Qualification for Membership:

- A. Members should be familiar and supportive of the 4-H philosophy and purpose.
- B. All adult members are required to successfully complete the volunteer selection process.
- C. Youth members must be currently enrolled as Clover County 4-H Youth member and must be 13 years or older.



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- D. All proposed members shall be nominated by a current council member and shall be voted on during the annual election process in November.
- E. Members shall be elected in such a manner that one-half of the full number shall be elected each year. There shall be 5 new youth members and 5 new adult leaders elected each year to serve a 2 year term. Any Council Member may be re-elected for an unlimited number of terms.
- F. The President of the Clover 4-H Council may declare a vacancy or vacancies on Council when a member (s) has missed three (3) meetings in succession or submits a letter of resignation.
- G. The President of the Clover 4-H Council shall make such appointments as necessary with a majority vote of support by the Council membership.
- H. Michigan State University Extension 4-H Staff in Clover County will be ex-officio members of the council. They shall also be ex-officio members of all committees of the council.

Article IV: Duties of a Council Member

- A. Serve on standing or ad hoc committees when appointed or asked to participate.
- B. Attend meetings of the County 4-H Council and participate actively in the discussions and recommendations for the 4-H Program. Attend and actively participate in activities, special events and fund raisers.
- C. Support the recommendations of the County 4-H Council.
- D. Promote good public relations for the 4-H Youth Program at every opportunity.
- E. Recognize and understand that 4-H Programs are for the development and participating opportunities of youth ages 5-19.
- F. Assume responsibility to and for the area or group represented.
- G. Reflect the need, interest and opinions of people represented.
- H. Inform groups represented on recommendations of the County 4-H Council and why they were made.
- I. Take the necessary leadership to make sure that the 4-H Program is conducted according to the highest standards including: club meetings, project work and other educational experiences in local, county, area and state programs.
- J. Consult with the Extension staff concerning local programs and activities.
- K. Be alert to ways of improving the 4-H Youth Program for youth, parents and leaders.

Article V: Officers

The officers shall consist of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. A Council officer shall be elected during the annual election process. New officers will take office January 1.

The President and Treasurer will be elected on odd years only, allowing for a 2 year term. The Vice President, and Secretary will be elected annually. No Council member shall hold the same office for more



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than three consecutive terms. If current officer(s) terms are exhausted and no member(s) steps forward to serve, membership may vote to reelect former officer(s).

- A. *President* – The President shall preside at all meetings of the Council and shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Council.
- B. *Vice President*- In the absence of the President, the Vice-president shall have the same power and duties of the President.
- C. *Secretary*- The Secretary shall keep a correct record of the proceedings of Council. At the expiration of the term of office, the Secretaries shall turn over to the succeeding secretaries all books, papers and property belonging to the Council for two preceding years with all other materials stored at the 4-H Office. In the absence of both the President and Vice President, the Secretary will have the power to act.
- D. *Treasurer*- The Treasurer shall handle all monies of the 4-H Council and keep an accurate account of all monies incomes and expenses, will prepare and present a summary of all income, expenses, and current balances of all accounts at each meeting. A duplicate copy of all records shall be stored at the MSUE 4-H Office.
- E. *Fairboard Liaison*- The Liaison is a voting member of both the 4-H Council and the Fairboard and serves as a liaison between the two. They will prepare and present a report at each monthly meeting with all appropriate information.

Article VI: Finance

- A. *Assets and Finances* - The Council may acquire such funds as deemed necessary to carry out the purpose of the Council.
- B. *Handling of funds*
 - a. When receiving funds from any activity, a receipt must always be written. All funds must be deposited in the bank within one week of receipt.
 - b. All bills must be paid by check. A payment voucher is to be used if no receipt is available.
 - c. All checks must be signed by two of the officers.
 - d. Signature cards for all savings and checking accounts must contain the signatures of designated officers.
 - e. Financial statements must be prepared and presented as required by the 4-H office. A treasurer's report shall be presented at every monthly meeting, regardless of account activity and after each fundraising event.
 - f. As required, a budget must be prepared and presented and voted on by the Council at the meeting following the election of new officers, or at other time designated by the Council.
 - g. An annual audit shall be performed.
- B. *Fiscal Year* - The financial accounting year shall be from January 1 to December 31.
- C. *Dissolution* - In the event of dissolution of the Council, all funds shall revert to the jurisdiction of the Clover MSU Extension office which has sole legal responsibility for the administration of all 4-H related activities.



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Article VII: Meetings

- A. Council shall determine at its yearly organizational meeting the number of meetings and when it shall meet.
- B. Special meetings of the Council may be held on an order from the President and/or the MSU Extension Staff, provided each Council member is notified at least twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting.
- C. Quorum. To do business shall exist when one third of the Council membership is present.
- D. Meeting by Telephone or Similar Equipment. A Council member may participate in a meeting by conference telephone or any similar communications equipment through which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this section constitutes presence in person at the meeting.

Article VIII: Restrictions

- A. In the event of the dissolution of the Clover County 4-H Council, all funds and assets will be turned over to the Clover County MSU Extension for support of 4-H Youth programs and activities in Clover County.
- B. Any decision passed by the Clover County 4-H Council that is in conflict with the policies or practices of MSU Extension may be vetoed by the 4-H Staff.

Article IX: Amendments

The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Council by a majority vote of all Council members provided proposed changes were read at the previous meeting or members had received written notice of such changes.

These two examples show an adult strong council with youth participation and a youth/adult partnership sample. However, a county may choose to have a Youth Council or Youth Advisory Board in lieu of the above samples. If a Youth Council or Youth Advisory Board suits the county program needs better please see the Youth Advisory Board by-law example tool.

A committee or council should not limit themselves to the two samples above as there are many variations of by-laws. However, it is strongly encouraged that all groups use the article created by Janelle Stewart, By-Laws: The back bone of an organization- Part 1 and Part 2.

