



Core elements of the California 4-H Youth Development Program

- The 4-H Youth Development Program (YDP) is provided to California's youth, families and communities through a strategic partnership among the county, state and federal government and is administered through the University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR).
- A 4-H program experience embraces the life skills model, is based on the [UC ANR 4-H Youth Development Framework](#) and utilizes the 4-H name and emblem
- 4-H program experiences or activities focus on the content areas indicated by our mission mandates and utilize research-based information. Our mission mandates are: a) Citizenship, b) Leadership; c) Healthy Living and d) Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).
- 4-H programs engage youth ages 5 to 19 as active participants in partnership with caring adults who extend research-based information.
- The UC ANR 4-H YDP values inclusivity and diversity. All clubs and units are required to make efforts to recruit new members and adult volunteers, with a focus on underrepresented groups, and to document these efforts.

The UC ANR 4-H YDP focuses primarily on five club models: 1) 4-H Community Clubs, 2) 4-H Afterschool Clubs, 3) In-School clubs, 4) 4-H Special Interest (SPIN) Clubs and 5) 4-H Military Clubs. Each of the five club models meet the USDA definition of a club (see 4-H National Headquarters Factsheet: [What is a 4-H Club?](#)). The objectives, program structure and setting differ among these models to allow flexibility in program delivery so that clubs can be designed to meet the interests and needs of California's diverse youth, families and communities.

Core elements of Organized 4-H Clubs are divided into the following categories:

- Membership (youth and adults)
- Program Plan
- Leadership / Authority
- Governing Documents
- Financial Procedures

A 4-H club must be chartered by 4-H National Headquarters at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the appropriate State 4-H office in order to be recognized as part of 4-H, and to be authorized to use the 4-H Name and Emblem. The 4-H charter also authorizes the following privileges inclusion as a tax-exempt unit under the umbrella of the Regents of the University of California's 501(c)3 non-profit status and the authority to raise, allocate, and disburse funds in support of local 4-H programs, projects, and groups.

The minimum requirements to be a chartered 4-H club in each category are outlined below as well as other options to consider based on the interests and needs of youth and families in the club.

The UC ANR 4-H YDP Policy Handbook directly addresses instructions on how youth and adult volunteers should be enrolled in the 4hOnline enrollment system, individual and group enrollment, and the fee structure based on participation in the program (see [Chapter 4: Enrollment and Delivery Mode](#), for a summary see [4-H Delivery Mode Matrix](#)). The Handbook also addresses the youth protection, organizational and risk management policies that all 4-H programs must follow (see [Chapter 10: Business, Insurance and Risk Management](#) and [Chapter 11: Health and Safety](#)). Therefore, this document does not include this information.





UC ANR 4-H Community Clubs

Objective: 4-H community clubs are organized in local communities and are open to all youth and families. They provide opportunities for youth to learn valuable skills with lifelong benefits and contribute to their communities through “hands-on” projects guided by appointed 4-H adult volunteers. 4-H community clubs are a safe place where youth can learn record keeping, practice decision making and participate in diverse educational activities related to club projects and governance.

	4-H Requirements	Options
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 youth members from at least 3 families At least 2 appointed adult volunteers At least one community club leader Young people and adults identify themselves as 4-H members or volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 to 7 families involved increases the viability and sustainability of the club Adult volunteer/staff recruit co- leader(s) Youth participate in county, regional, state and/or national events
Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the <i>Annual 4-H Club Planner</i> Minimum of 6 club business meetings per year Offer at least 1 project per year 6 hours of project instruction per project Youth complete APR for project completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the <i>4-H Program Planning Guide</i> Minimum of 8 club business meetings per year Number of hours of project instruction depends on project goals Offer community service, service learning and/or leadership project(s) once a year Youth complete record books Youth take projects in a SPIN Club
Leadership / Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide leadership opportunities for youth within the club Youth members make club decisions Club decisions made by consensus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Junior/teen leaders help lead projects Youth officers govern the club Decisions made by parliamentary procedure Coordinator position or other role to support the delivery mode within the VMO
Operating Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Operating Procedures</i> approved by volunteers and/or staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Bylaws and Constitution</i> approved by membership Keep records of meetings and finances
Financial procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finances managed by the county Volunteer Management Organization (VMO) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Club has a bank account and the youth treasurer manages the finances with support of an adult Treasurer Advisor



UC ANR 4-H Afterschool Clubs

Objective: 4-H afterschool clubs are organized in afterschool settings or existing programs that serve youth in a specific school, program or setting and are administered by Cooperative Extension staff, appointed 4-H adult volunteers or other organizations. They provide opportunities for youth to learn valuable skills with lifelong benefits and contribute to their communities through “hands-on” project-based learning. 4-H afterschool clubs are a safe place led by caring adult volunteers.

	4-H Requirements	Options
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 youth members from at least 3 families At least 2 appointed adult volunteers/staff One afterschool club leader or staff to administer the program Young people and adults identify themselves as 4-H members or volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult volunteer/staff recruit other co-club leader(s) Youth participate in county, regional, state and/or national events
Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the <i>Annual 4-H Club Planner</i> Offer at least 1 project per year 6 hours of educational experience per project Youth complete APR for project completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the <i>4-H Program Planning Guide</i> Offer projects yearlong Offer community service, service learning and/or leadership project(s) at least once a year Number of hours of project instruction depends on project goals Club meetings to gather input/make decisions Youth complete record books Youth take projects in other clubs
Leadership / Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afterschool Club Leader(s) or staff make club decisions Families and youth provide input on projects offered and other options to include in the club Provide leadership opportunities for youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Junior/teen leaders help lead projects Youth officers lead the club Youth members make decisions Coordinator position or other role to support the delivery mode within the VMO
Operating Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Operating Procedures</i> approved by volunteers and/or staff 	
Financial procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finances managed by the county Volunteer Management Organization (VMO) 	



UC ANR 4-H In-School Clubs

Objective: 4-H in-school clubs are organized in school settings during the school hours. Youth are under the direct supervision of the school. Cooperative Extension staff, appointed 4-H adult volunteers or 4-H members provide educational content and lessons designed to complement, meet and/or enhance the school’s core curriculum. The clubs meet over a sustained period of time, are focused on positive youth development and provide opportunities for youth to learn valuable skills with lifelong benefits through “hands-on” project-based learning.

	4-H Requirements	Options
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 youth members from at least 3 families Comply with school policies about student to adult ratios Young people and adults identify themselves as 4-H members or volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth participate in county, regional, state and/or national events
Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the <i>Annual 4-H Club Planner</i> Offer at least 1 project per year 6 hours of educational experience per project Youth complete APR for project completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the <i>4-H Program Planning Guide</i> Offer projects yearlong Offer community service, service learning and/or leadership project(s) at least once a year Number of hours of project instruction depends on project goals Club meetings to gather input/make decisions Youth complete record books Youth take projects in other clubs
Leadership / Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UCCE staff and/or school personnel make club decisions Families and/or youth provide input on projects offered and other options to include in the club Provide leadership opportunities for youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Junior/teen leaders help lead projects Youth officers lead the club Youth members make decisions Coordinator position or other role to support the delivery mode within the VMO
Operating Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Operating Procedures</i> approved by staff 	
Financial procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finances managed by the school or the county Volunteer Management Organization (VMO) as appropriate. 	



UC ANR 4-H Special Interest (SPIN) Clubs

Objective: 4-H SPIN clubs are organized in local communities and are open to all youth and families. 4-H SPIN clubs engage youth in experiential exploration of a topic of interest. They focus on specific content and offer youth the opportunity for mastery and decision-making in an environment that fosters belonging. The level of mastery is dependent on the developmental ability of the youth. 4-H SPIN clubs are a safe place led by caring adult volunteers that are content experts. 4-H SPIN clubs appeal to the special interests of youth and adults and allows youth to investigate topics that may not be offered by 4-H projects in other club models.

4-H Requirements

Options

Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 5 youth members from at least 3 families • At least 2 appointed adult volunteers: one SPIN club volunteer focused on content and another focused on management and assistance needed. • Young people and adult volunteers identify themselves as 4-H members or volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 to 15 youth to allow for individual attention and opportunities to develop relationships and belonging • Number of adult volunteers depends on project, number of youth in the project, and risk management considerations • Youth participate in county, regional, state and/or national events
Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the <i>Annual 4-H Club Planner</i> • Use the <i>Volunteer Plan of Action A</i> • Offer at least one project • 6 hours of project instruction over a minimum of 6 sessions • Youth complete APR for project completion • Have a defined timeline • Project work occurs during SPIN club meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the <i>Volunteer Plan of Action B</i> • Number of hours of project instruction depends on needs and interests of youth • Hold a culminating event for youth to demonstrate mastery • Offer community service and/or service learning opportunities for youth • Youth complete record books • Youth take projects in a Community Club
Leadership / Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPIN club volunteers make decisions • Families and youth provide input on projects offered and other options to include in the club • Provide leadership opportunities for youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth members make decisions and plan events/activities • Decisions made by consensus • Coordinator position or other role to support the delivery mode within the VMO
Operating Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the <i>Starting a SPIN club Checklist</i> • <i>Operating Procedures</i> approved by volunteers and/or staff 	
Financial procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finances managed by the county Volunteer Management Organization (VMO) 	



UC ANR 4-H Military Clubs

Objective: 4-H military clubs are organized on military installations for military dependents on or around an activity duty Army, Air Force, Navy or Marines military installation. 4-H military clubs are administered by the respective department (e.g., Department of the Airforce) under the Department of Defense (DoD). Youth receive 4-H Youth Development Program curricula or other educational materials and military staff are trained by Cooperative Extension staff or appointed 4-

	4-H Requirements	Options
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 5 youth members from at least 3 families • Youth who have a parent or guardian who serve on the installation • One military staff to administer the program • Young people identify themselves as 4-H members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth participate in county, regional state and/or national events. (Youth must be individually enrolled if they attend events off the installation).
Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the <i>Annual 4-H Club Planner</i> • Use the <i>Project Report & Outcomes</i> • Offer multiple projects, based on requirements of the supporting DoD organization • Offer projects per focus area of the installation/supporting DoD organization • 6 hours of project instruction per project • Youth complete APR for project completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the <i>4-H Planning Guide</i> • Offer community service, service learning and/or leadership project at least once a year • Number of hours of project instruction depends on project goals • Minimum of 6 club meetings per year • Youth complete record books
Leadership / Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military staff make club decisions • Provide leadership opportunities for youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families and youth provide input on projects offered and other options to include in the club • Junior/teen leaders help lead projects • Youth officers govern the club • Decisions made by parliamentary procedure • Youth members make decisions
Operating Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Operating Procedures</i> approved by staff • Group enrollment forms are turned in to county 4-H staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps records of meetings
Financial procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No finances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No finances

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University of California
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H adult volunteers. 4-H military clubs provide a safe place for youth to learn valuable skills with lifelong benefits through “hands-on” project-based learning.

