**Welcome to 4-H** – you and your club members are in for an exciting year. This manual is designed to help you understand the parts of a club meeting and the importance of each one. As you have been told by your 4-H Agent, 4-H is a youth driven organization where we utilize youth in conducting the club meetings and making decisions in setting the yearly club goals and in planning the club agenda and programs for the coming year. As a leader, it is your responsibility to make sure your club officers and members are all a part of the planning process. Work with your parents, other club volunteers, and most importantly your 4-H Agent to have a successful year.

**What Happens at a 4-H Club Meeting?**

The 4-H club consists of three parts – business, educational program, and social/recreation. The suggested length of time for the business meeting is 1/4 of your scheduled time together. The educational portion is often the largest part of the meeting, followed by a shorter social time of recreation/refreshments. Club meetings usually follow this format, but keep in mind, you can be as creative as you and your club officers want. At times you may want to move the agenda around so the same thing does not happen at every club meeting.

**The Business Meeting** (1/4 of scheduled time)

- Meeting is called to order by the club president
- American and 4-H Pledges are recited
- Club membership roll call
- Minutes of last meeting are read by the club secretary
- Treasurer’s report is given by the club treasurer
- Correspondence is read by the secretary
- Committee reports are given by committee chairmen
- Unfinished business (things from previous meetings that still need to be discussed, decided upon or reported on)
- New business (things not discussed at a previous meeting)
- Make assignments, club leader announcements
- Adjournment
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM (1/2 of scheduled time)

Many different methods can be used to present an educational program for the members. This is an important part of the club meeting and should be included in all regular club meetings throughout the year. 4-H clubs should try to choose topics of interest to all, regardless of the projects in which members are enrolled. Parents often have special talents or interests areas that they can share with the club. This is a good way to get parents more involved. Here are some program ideas:

- Project demonstrations/illustrated talks by club members
- Project talks or panel discussions by club members or others
- Slides, movies, videos, guest speakers
- Judging contests or activities, games, quizzes, skill-a-thons, etc.
- A project activity – something for the fair
- Working on the club’s community service-learning project

RECREATION/TEAM BUILDING (1/4 of scheduled time)

Clubs that have fun will be more active, do more things and get along better. Fun should be included in every club meeting. This is also another good way to use your older club members in a leadership/mentoring role. There are a number of recreation guides and game books available at your local bookstore. Songs may also be considered as a form of building relationships and having a good time.

Planning a Good 4-H Club Meeting

Good meetings take place in a safe and inclusive environment. As the club leader you can help to make meetings both enjoyable and educational. At each meeting include activities that members feel are important to them. Involve club officers and members in planning meetings and you will be able to stimulate continuing interest. You should meet with your club president and possibly other officers a few days prior to your club meeting to assist with planning the agenda. Or better yet, have them plan the agenda for you. As a result of proper planning, you will have meetings that are fun and provide quality learning experiences.
Well planned meetings give the members an opportunity to:

- Make new friends
- Share ideas
- Learn physical, social, intellectual, and emotional skills
- Enjoy recreational activities and develop healthy lifestyles
- Develop self-confidence and leadership
- Participate in decision making
- Develop a sense of pride
- Form cooperative attitudes
- Develop positive relationships with caring adults
- Value and practice service to others

Well planned meetings also consider these factors:

Meeting Location: Explore available meeting places and consider how well each one will meet the needs of your club and your members. Light, available space and room arrangements influence meetings. Meetings can be held in a public or civic facility as well as in members’ homes (liability issues may exist in private homes).

Seating Arrangement: Use the seating arrangements to create a feeling of informality and friendliness. Think about how the individual feels and reacts in different room set ups such as rows, larger circles, table groupings and even pairs. More is learned when a positive atmosphere is created by casual seating. Different seating arrangements can be used to help break up fixed groups. Hearing and participation will also be better in a casual arrangement.

Length: The length of your club meeting will depend on the ages of your members and the business and activities you have planned. Younger members sometimes have earlier bedtimes and this may affect evening meetings on school nights. Be clear when meetings start and finish and then start and finish at those announced times.

Balance: Every meeting should include a variety of experiences. Plan for a balance of business, learning and recreation. A planning committee of members and parents will be helpful in insuring that meetings meet the needs and interests of all the club members.
**Just Before the Meeting:** Activities for early arrivals help the group develop a spirit of togetherness. Members can plan and lead games to help others have fun. Helping everyone feel welcome and accepted is vital to enthusiastic participation and cooperation. This could also be the time where you have your refreshments instead of at the end as everyone is leaving. Activities for early arrivals may include:

- Set up meeting room
- Scrambled word games
- Outdoor sports (supervised)
- Puzzles
- Board games
- Indoor sports (supervised)
- Set up exhibits
- Singing
- Crafts

**The Business Meeting**

The BUSINESS MEETING usually includes roll call, reading of the minutes by the secretary, treasurer’s report, committee reports, old and new business and leader announcements. The opening of the business meeting should involve all members.

Use the club roll call as a way to get members actively involved by having them respond in ways other than saying “here” or “present.” Here are some ideas — but let the officers decide what the roll call will be.

- Kind of Bird
- Good Habits I Admire
- Favorite school subject
- Favorite holiday
- Favorite food
- Favorite animal
- Favorite 4-H project
- Favorite sport
- Good health habit

To keep the business meeting interesting and moving, plan the meeting with your club officers. Do not wait until the day of the meeting to plan the agenda and program. Your president will feel more confident if he/she knows and understands what business is to be discussed.
Refer items that will require extensive planning or discussion to committees. This also gives members an added opportunity to participate in activities and feel they are an important part of the group.

During the business meeting make sure each member understands the business being discussed, feels free to ask questions, and offers opinions and helps make decisions. This is a great opportunity to learn parliamentary procedures in a fun way.

Here are some ideas for the business part of the meeting.

- Elect officers
- Plans for judging teams
- Plan future programs
- Plan a fund-raiser
- Plan a family get together
- Set up committees
- Plan a field trip
- Plan a community service-learning project

Only 4-H club members can vote and hold elective office in a 4-H club. Successful clubs and good club meetings depend on leadership for good club officers. These officers are elected by and from members of the club. Following is a list of officers and their duties. As club leader, it is your responsibility to facilitate officer elections and to train your club officers. Use the Florida 4-H Officer Training Handbook (4H GCM 11) as a resource and guide for electing and training your officers.

President

Presides at meetings. Guides the meetings in a tactful, positive way. Appoints committees as needed. Attends County 4-H Council meetings.

Vice President

Serves in the absence of the President. Serves as Program Committee Chair, leads the committee in planning the annual program. Helps president coordinate club committee.

Secretary

Keeps complete and accurate minutes of meetings. Keeps records of each member and their attendance. Handles all correspondence. Keeps record of committee reports.
Treasurer

Historian
Keeps the club scrapbook up to date. Takes photographs (or gets them from other club members) of club activities and events. Cuts articles from newspaper about club members for the scrapbook.

Reporter
Writes short news article about special events and activities for Newsletter.

Song/Recreation
Plans and lead songs for club meetings. Provides leadership for Recreation at club meetings and activities.

The Educational Program

The EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM is an important part of the 4-H experience for your club members. This part of the meeting provides an opportunity for the members to join in a group learning experience. The learning experience you provide can take many forms. The topic of the program may or may not be related to a specific 4-H project. Listed below are some ideas for club meeting programs.

- Demonstrations by members
- Guest speakers
- Presentation on how to give a demonstration
- Community service-learning project
- Judging contest or activity
- Craft ideas for fair exhibits
- 4-H project activity
- Movie or video (discussion)
- Exhibit display
- Tour or field trip
- Quiz Bowl or Skill-a-thon
Recreation/Refreshments

RECREATION AND REFRESHMENTS occur at many club meetings. Refreshments should be simple, inexpensive, and nutritious. You could have a Refreshment Committee where each month someone different brings the refreshments — another way to get parents involved. If you have refreshments, you can also make it a time to promote good nutritional habits — serve veggies and fruit instead of the sugary snacks. Whether or not refreshments will be served at club meetings, as well as how to provide them, are decisions which should be made in concert with other parents.

Here are some ideas for the recreation part of the meeting.

- Songs
- Recreation
- Team-building Activities
- Ice-breakers
- Games
- Trust Activities
- Refreshments

Looking Ahead

LOOKING AHEAD: Will your members come back? Anticipation is half the fun. If members of your group are to remain active and involved, they need to look forward to the next meeting. Make sure they know the date, time and place. Alert them to the focus of the program, and be sure individual members know their specific responsibilities.

As you and your club members learn more about 4-H, you may want to expand your interest and go beyond the basics of business, project work, and recreation. Ideas for other educational and service-learning programs are numerous. Possibilities include the areas of health, safety, citizenship, environmental stewardship, community service-learning, and cultural understanding. A variety of fun activities adds enthusiasm and enjoyment to club meetings.

As the club leader you want to involve club officers and members in “Designing Your Own Clover”. You might want to discuss responses with the entire group. This activity involves all members in planning club activities for the entire year and can be found in the 4-H Club Planning Leader’s Guide (4H GCL 20).
You can use the 4-H Club Planning Workbook (4H GCW 20) with club members to set yearly goals and monthly club meeting programs (see example pages below). Club officers should be involved in all phases of club program and activity planning. The Florida 4-H Club Officers’ Handbook (4H GCM 11) is available to help club officers with their roles and responsibilities. The following page contains a 4-H Club Meeting Checklist to help club officers assess the quality of each meeting.

**Samples of Club Goals, Calendars and Meeting Plans**

**CLUB GOALS (example)**
1. Enroll 5 new members
2. Increase family participation
3. Have 100% of members complete at least one project record
4. Have 75% of members participate in one community service-learning project
5. Have at least 50% of members give at least one demonstration or illustrated talk.

**CLUB CALENDAR (example)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>PROGRAM ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUGUST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPTEMBER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTOBER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOVEMBER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECEMBER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JANUARY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CLUB MEETING PLANS (example)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>PROGRAM TOPIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Person Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arrangement for meeting place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan business agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read pledge to American Flag and 4-H Pledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact program presenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instruction, speaker or presenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present Demonstration or Illustrated Talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lead recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lead singing, etc., or team-building activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide refreshments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>PROGRAM TOPIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Person Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arrangement for meeting place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan business agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read pledge to American Flag and 4-H Pledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact program presenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instruction, speaker or presenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present Demonstration or Illustrated Talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lead recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lead singing, etc., or team-building activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide refreshments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4-H Club Meetings
# 4-H Club Meeting Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting was well planned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each officer did his/her job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preside used an agenda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary had minutes prepared</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer had report prepared</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business meeting moved along well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All members took part in discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting room was set up when members arrived</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting place was comfortable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was a program or activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program/activity was interesting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation was included</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation was well led</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refreshments were served</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each member spoke at least two times during the meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Use this check list to do a quick evaluation of your 4-H club's meeting.*
Club Performance Recognition

Club recognition systems exist to recognize clubs for their performance. Clubs may strive to reach specific standards of performance just as individual club members work to achieve standards. Florida 4-H provides four levels of recognition—bronze, silver, gold, and emerald—for 4-H Club attainment. Each of the four levels of standards is available for clubs to achieve. Criteria for Club Performance Standards can be found on the Florida 4-H web site.

**BRONZE Clover**

Club will receive a BRONZE Clover Certificate and name printed in the 4-H newsletter.

**SILVER Clover**

Club will receive a SILVER Clover Certificate and name printed in the 4-H newsletter.

**GOLD Clover**

Club will receive a Gold Clover Certificate and name printed in the 4-H newsletter.

**EMERALD Clover**

Club will receive an EMERALD Clover Certificate, name printed in the 4-H newsletter and name in a news article submitted to the local newspaper for publication.

For more information about 4-H Club Awards and Recognition please contact your Club Leader.

For further information about the Florida 4-H Program go to the Florida 4-H web site at: http://www.florida4h.org
The 4-H Pledge

The HEAD represents:
1. Thinking, planning and reasoning.
2. Gaining new and valuable knowledge.
3. Understanding the whys.

The HEART represents:
1. Being concerned about the welfare of others.
2. Accepting the responsibilities of citizenship.
3. Determining the values and attitudes by which to live.
4. Learning how to live and work with others.
5. Developing positive attitudes.

The HANDS represent:
1. Learning new skills.
2. Improving skills already known.
3. Being useful, helpful, and skillful.
4. Developing respect for work and pride in accomplishment.

The HEALTH represents:
1. Practicing healthful living.
2. Enjoying life.
3. Using leisure time wisely.
4. Protecting the well being of self and others.

The 4-H Pledge, first adopted in 1927, summarizes 4-H as the four-fold development of youth through the Head, Heart, Hands and Health.

Post a pledge banner at your meeting site. At the end of the first meeting, give everyone a card with the 4-H pledge to take home.