



4-H Ontario Frequently Asked Questions 2020

4-H Ontario is committed to the positive development of young people so that they may become contributing citizens in their communities. In this unprecedented time, what some are calling “The Great Disruption”, people are still looking to engage in 4-H – those that have been involved before and those that are just finding out about this great program. 4-H Volunteers have the opportunity to be thought-leaders in youth service sector and showcase to others how to adapt to changes and make the most of any situation, putting the youth first.

For youth, it is beneficial to provide support and structure in times of change and challenge. 4-H Volunteers embracing alternate ways of engaging youth during this “great disruption” will be beneficial in supporting youth that may be struggling with the impact of COVID-19. The opportunity to connect in an online format with their fellow 4-H’ers and mentors can provide the support and normalcy that can have a significant impact on their resilience to get through this pandemic.

4-H Ontario encourages you to remember the focus of 4-H is the young person rather than the project.

Membership, Club Meeting & Completion Requirements

Q	I’m new to 4-H and would like to join a 4-H club, how can I do that?
A	Great question! The first step in joining 4-H and becoming a 4-H Ontario Member, Cloverbud or Volunteer is providing us with some information about yourself. The information you provide (by filling out the link below) will enable 4-H Staff or Volunteers to contact you and connect you with a 4-H club or another 4-H activity. You won’t automatically become a Member, Cloverbud or Volunteer, but this is how the process starts! To send us your information so we can connect you, click here.
Q	How can we arrange for membership fees to be paid when we aren’t meeting in person?
A	There are some great options for arranging for payment without having to be face-to-face or handle cash. The easiest, user friendly way is the use of electronic transfers (Interac e-transfer) from bank account to bank account. (Some 4-H Associations are already doing this!) As an association, just set up an email address for your membership to send the funds to and give access to your signing authorities. It will have to be linked to the bank account for the association. Provide a password to be used as the answer to the security question; and away you go!
Q	I have heard that some 4-H volunteers are going to be running a virtual 4-H club and I would like to take it. Do I have to be a paid 4-H participant to do that?
A	Yes. It is important to talk to the leaders in your area to determine what is being offered and how you can register – both for 4-H and for the virtual 4-H club. If you don’t know who to talk to please reach out to your Coordinator Volunteer Support and they will do their best to assist you.
Q	If 4-H Club meetings are all virtual, do I have to follow 4-H Ontario Youth Safety and other policies?
A	Yes. 4-H Ontario policies regarding Youth Safety (Section 4.1 – Ontario 4-H Council Board Policies; Policy B-CE-10 – Youth Safety Policy); requirements for Membership & Club Composition, Meeting Time, Achievement Program and Project Completion (Section 4.2 – 4-H Operating Policies & Procedures), and other 4-H Ontario policies are still in effect for virtual clubs.
Q	When is it too late to start running my 4-H club project?
A	The great thing about 4-H is that 4-H club projects are able to be started all year round. Club leaders are able to start projects at the time of year that works best for them and their club. They are also able to plan the club meetings over a short or long period of time. There just needs to be 12 hours of meeting time for each project the club completes (see: (Section 4.2 – 4-H Operating Policies & Procedures).
Q	I would like to start meeting as a club virtually. Is this possible?
A	Absolutely! Virtual 4-H meetings are an amazing opportunity to continue with the valuable work you are doing with young people. It is important to remember that 4-H policies still apply to virtual 4-H clubs. Including, but not limited to, Youth Safety (Section 4.1.1 – Ontario 4-H Council Board Policies; Policy B-CE-10 – Youth Safety Policy); Membership & Club Composition, Meeting Time, Achievement Program and Project Completion (Section 4.2.1 – 4-H Operating Policies & Procedures). You could use tools such as ZOOM, Skype, or teleconferences, there are so many options to help you offer programming virtually. For ideas and to see what other 4-H Volunteers are doing to offer club experiences in a virtual environment, check out this Facebook Group 4-H Virtual Meeting Support Group.



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Q	Do 4-H Clubs have to still meet the minimum requirement of 12 hours of meeting time?
A	<p>Yes. As outlined in 4-H Ontario policy O-M-06 – Meeting Time. We encourage volunteers to think creatively about how this time could be met within the confines of virtual meetings – for example, for 2020 project work, you could provide at-home activities that have an estimated time of completion that can be used towards your club meeting time. 4-H Ontario trusts its volunteers to ensure that the learning objectives for their projects are met when meeting virtually – this includes determining what possibilities exist to support youth in participating in 12 hours of learning content while acknowledging the limitations of virtual meetings.</p> <p>4-H Ontario encourages volunteers to provide the opportunity for connection to complete club activities (i.e. club business, mentorship, etc). There are many resources available to you – reach out to your fellow club leaders for assistance, ask Youth Leaders for their help (they know a lot about how to use technology!), and connect with other 4-H volunteers from across the province to learn from what they are doing!</p>
Q	How do I ensure that 4-H'ers are completing the tasks I've assigned when we are meeting virtually?
A	4-H Ontario develops Record Books with each project resource. You could ask your participants to complete the parts of the record book that support the activities reviewed while you meet or that you have assigned for at-home learning. Then, have them submit the Record Books electronically so you can review these books prior to awarding completion.
Q	As a virtual club, and with the current suspension of all in-person activities, how do I incorporate community engagement into the Achievement Program?
A	This is an opportunity to use your creativity! When meeting virtually, try inviting speakers or family members to join the meeting. Create club signs at each house and post them. Create a Facebook group with friends and families and showcase your project activities and what the participants learned. The sky is the limit. Some of the virtual clubs that are already meeting have intrinsically integrated community engagement as parents are staying for the ZOOM meetings and getting to see what the project is all about.
Q	Will the deadline for completing 2020 4-H Projects change due to the suspension of 4-H in-person activities?
A	No. The deadline for completing 2020 4-H projects will not change; it will stay as noted in Document 8.3.1 4-H Ontario Awards Process. They must be entered in by November 1st. This ensures that all clubs can stay within the current calendar year, the appropriate supports (i.e. awards) can be arranged for the participants and that monies are collected within the appropriate fiscal year.
Q	Will the deadline for award information be extended?
A	The deadline for award information to be completed and sent into 4-H Ontario remains the same as in previous years – and as outlined in Document 8.3.1 4-H Ontario Awards Process. The timelines outlined in this process are in place to ensure that there is enough time for Awards Coordinators to verify the information shared by 4-H Ontario, and for 4-H Ontario to order the awards required and ship the awards to the Association for distribution.
Q	How can we incorporate Youth Leaders into the club project while meeting virtually?
A	There are so many ways in which Youth Leaders can benefit your virtual club meetings! Youth Leaders are a great resource, especially with technology and innovation. You could ask them to arrange for a fun trivia competition for the club members (check out Kahoot!), research the best meeting resources (i.e. videos, virtual farm tours, cooking show, etc.) to highlight during a meeting. Ask them for how they can help the club achieve success, they will have ideas!
Q	Can my members go to another member's house to participate in our virtual club meeting so they can share technology?
A	No. 4-H Ontario's top priority is the health and safety of its members. At this time, 4-H'ers must adhere to the guidelines for social distancing as outlined as part of the Declaration of Emergency from the Government of Ontario, this includes staying at home; all 4-H participants must have access to the required technology in their own home to be able to participate. We encourage volunteers to think about how all of their participants can engage in a meaningful way.



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Q	What considerations do I need to make regarding privacy and social media usage for virtual clubs?
A	<p>When hosting virtual clubs it is important to have conversations around security, media releases and appropriate use of social media. If you are using social media and Facebook groups make sure they are set to private to protect our youth members and allow parents to post on behalf of their kids. Please keep in mind Facebook's age restriction policy:</p> <p>Facebook requires everyone to be at least 13 years old before they can create an account. Creating an account with false info is a violation of our terms. This includes accounts registered on the behalf of someone under 13.</p> <p>Other options are group chats on What'sApp, Google Hangouts or Skype and you can use free secure accounts with programs like Google Drive to act as a depository for documents and photos. You can also use your dedicated Association Webpage on the 4-H website as a place to post and share updates on the online projects. (also keeping privacy and media releases in mind.)</p>
Q	I have signed up for a free ZOOM account but I can only host a meeting for 40 minutes. How can I complete a meeting for a club in that time?
A	<p>There are many ways in which you can use technologies to your advantage for club meeting time. If you choose to use a free ZOOM account, you can structure your meeting in two parts, each 40 minutes in length. This gives the participants an opportunity for a short break in between meeting activities. Or you could have a few more meetings that are shorter in length.</p> <p>For tips and tricks on meeting virtually, join the Facebook 4-H Virtual Meeting Support Group and check out the information provided below.</p>

Livestock

Q	Do I have to have a project animal to be involved in a 4-H livestock/animal project?
A	No! 4-H projects can be taken without having a project animal. 4-H Ontario encourages volunteers to provide opportunities for any youth to be engaged in the projects whether they have access to a project animal or not.
Q	Will 4-H Ontario be extending the June 1st deadline for Project Animal Identification Form (PAIF) submission?
A	<p>No. The current situation is unprecedented and 4-H Ontario does not know when the restrictions on social distancing will be lifted or when gatherings are once again allowed to take place so to ensure everyone is ready for what this year holds it has been decided to maintain the livestock policies as outlined in Section 4.2.3 Livestock Policies, O-L-01 4-H Project Animals regarding the June 1st deadline for submission of Project Animal Identification Forms (PAIF).</p> <p>This deadline is well established within the 4-H program, ensures equitable opportunities for all participants, and allows youth to still select the animal that they would like to work with this year. Also, the deadline supports other activities locally, provincially and nationally.</p> <p>It is important to remember that 4-H is a positive youth development organization. While we understand the valuable learning opportunities that come from showing a project animal, there is also a lot of learning that comes from participating in project work as well.</p>
Q	What if I don't live on a farm and would like to register a project animal. How do I do that?
A	If you want to select a project animal but you don't live on a farm speak to your club leaders or local farmer(s), while respecting social distancing, to see what options for project animals you have available to you. Use technology to help you select the animal – you could use Facetime or Skype and have the farmer show you a few animals and then have them send you the information needed for the project animal you select. You can work with the farmer virtually to discuss nutrition for the animal, confirmation traits the animal has, etc. so that you are prepared when the restrictions for social distancing are lifted.



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Q	I was planning on purchasing an animal to be my project animal for the year, should I do that?
A	Only you can make the decision to purchase an animal for your project animal. We are in unprecedented times and 4-H Ontario is unable to forecast what will happen and how long this situation will persist. You don't need to have a project animal to complete a 4-H project – talk to your leader to see what you can do to achieve your project in that instance. The value, lessons and skills learned from working with an animal far exceed that of any competition or award and we are encouraging online club resources to support this learning.
Q	Will there be 4-H shows (livestock, life skills, etc.) available this year?
A	The decision on whether shows will be offered by industry partners (i.e. fairs and exhibitions) for 4-H members is up to the individual event organizing committees. We encourage you to reach out to the event organizers to learn what the status of their event is for the 2020 season. As with 4-H, these event organizers are doing their best to adapt and plan according to the current directives included in the provincial State of Emergency.
Q	How will the suspension of 4-H activities impact 4-H'ers looking to attend the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair youth shows?
A	At this time (April 7, 2020) the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair is planning to move forward for its shows in November. For updates or information about RAWF please visit their website or contact the organizing committee. 4-H Ontario encourages all Associations to start having discussions around selection processes to have a Plan B in place in case the restrictions for social distancing impact the processes that are outlined in your selection processes. Having any changes in selection processes that may be necessary determined and ready to share as they are needed will be helpful for all involved.

Online Explore 4-H Project and Cloverbud At Home Experience

Q	With the Online Explore 4-H Project and Cloverbud At Home Experience, when will the information for club completion be entered into the 4-H Ontario database and by whom?
A	Participants that are taking part in the Online Explore 4-H Project and the Cloverbud At Home Experience will need to submit their project work into programstudent@4-hontario.ca by June 1st. In order for them to receive completion they must be Members In Good Standing. The participants who complete these experiences will be entered into the 4-H Ontario database by 4-H Ontario staff.
Q	Do I have to be a paid 4-H participant to use the activities in the Online Explore 4-H Project or Cloverbud At Home Experience?
A	The Online Explore 4-H Project and the Cloverbud At Home Experience are open to anyone! People can explore what 4-H has to offer! For 4-H'ers looking to receive completion credit for activity work that they do as part of these online experiences, they will need to be a Member In Good Standing with 4-H Ontario, part of which is having their membership fee paid. Youth looking to join 4-H and get all of the benefits of the 4-H program can reach out to the 4-H Ontario. Visit the 4-H Association (organized by counties/districts) closest to you by visiting https://www.4-hontario.ca/4h-in-my-area/ to find your Membership Coordinator's contact information, or you can reach out to the 4-H Ontario Staff team's Coordinator, Volunteer Support for your Region by emailing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region 1: region1@4-hontario.ca • Region 2: region2@4-hontario.ca • Region 3: region3@4-hontario.ca • Region 4: region4@4-hontario.ca • Region 5: region5@4-hontario.ca • Region 6: region6@4-hontario.ca
Q	Why were these online opportunities created?
A	The Online Explore 4-H Project and the Cloverbud At Home Experience were developed in a time when it was uncertain how long social distancing would last and we wanted to ensure continued engagement with the 4-H Program while we researched and developed other opportunities to support our participants. We continue to work on support for volunteers and opportunities for members to engage in a meaningful way with 4-H.

This is a "living" document and will be updated with more frequently asked questions as we continue to move forward in this unprecedented time. If you have any questions please reach out as 4-H Ontario staff are happy to help.



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Best Practices for Using Zoom for Club Meetings

- 4-H Ontario uses Zoom exclusively for all of our webinar meetings. We have found this platform to be very user-friendly, with options for participants to download the Zoom App to their computer, tablet, or smart phone and dial-in (audio-only) options available as well. Bandwidth usage is minimal by comparison to many other web-based options.
- The Zoom App is free to download. A free account allows any individual to host a meeting with up to 100 participants for a maximum of 40 minutes (1to1 meetings have an unlimited time frame). Leaders are encouraged to take advantage of a free account, allowing for a short bio-break every 40 minutes, after which members can come back sign back in to the meeting. Some Associations have chosen to purchase a paid account for the time being. Basic paid subscriptions come at a cost of \$20US/month and allow for meetings whose time limit is 24hrs for 100 participants. Administrator logins can be maintained by an Association contact, who will schedule club meetings for leaders and pass along the sign-in information for them. Only one meeting can be held under any account at a given time.
- Zoom offers many tutorials and coaching options through their website. https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials?_ga=2.90940125.67655216.1585937638-1859514353.1556979953. 4-H Ontario staff are also happy to help in any way we can as you prepare for using Zoom technology.
- In the Zoom platform, participants can use both video and audio communication, with the option available to share documents and screens as well. There is a chat function, which allows for 2-way or full group chatting. There are more advanced features available as well, as needed.
- When hosting a virtual meeting, we would recommend that leaders consider...
 - o 4-H policies apply for virtual events, as well as in-person events. Every event must follow the Rule of 2, with a minimum of 2 volunteers in good standing who are not spouses participating from the beginning through the end of the event.
 - o 4-H paperwork will need to be submitted and can be accepted electronically. The most up-to-date version of the Participant Agreement can be found at [https://www.4-hontario.ca/uploads/userfiles/files/participant%20agreement%20form%20-%20v1_lg_18dec19\(3\).pdf](https://www.4-hontario.ca/uploads/userfiles/files/participant%20agreement%20form%20-%20v1_lg_18dec19(3).pdf). Participants must download the form to their computer before filling it out and utilizing digital signatures. The form can then be forwarded to leaders electronically.
 - o Leaders may want to consider having shorter meetings when they are completed virtually. Keeping everyone engaged could be more difficult in a virtual setting than a live one.
 - o Assigning one leader whose responsibility it will be to help members work through any technical difficulties is a great idea. Let youth know how they can reach out to that person for help if needed. Zoom staff are also available 24/7 through tech support if needed.
 - o Allowing 10-15 minutes at the beginning of the meeting for participants to get used to the technology. Our youth will be busy taking it all in for the first little bit and, especially in a first club meeting, it is a great idea for you to allow them to check it all out. They may be able to find some cool features to share with the group that haven't been seen by leaders.
 - o Be sure to follow normal meeting format, utilizing Roll Call to get everyone talking comfortably and remembering to say the pledge and follow Roberts Rules for Parliamentary Procedure.
 - o Remember that the 4-H motto is Learn To Do My Doing. Where possible, have everyone completing activities along the way and getting interactive. Remember that this may require some prior notification to your members about what supplies they might need for activities and such. (i.e. host a cooking show, with everyone following along in their own kitchens, host a daily care clinic with everyone in their barns working on an animal, have a guest speaker join you, view a video tutorial online, play a virtual game, go step-by-step through a craft with everyone etc.)
 - o When passing motions or voting on elections and the like, have your members send their vote to a leader or the club president in a Private Chat message within the Zoom platform, so that the voting can still happen anonymously.
 - o In conversation, be sure to encourage the meeting chair to go around the 'room', asking participants for their individual opinions, so that everyone is involved.
 - o If you experience background noise with a participant, mute their audio as needed.
 - o Consider having members be assigned some at-home activities. For example, have them choose from a group of recipes to try at home with their family. This will allow for them to come back to the next meeting, reporting back to everyone on how it went.
 - o Allowing for some social time at the end of the meeting is always a good idea. Members are missing face-to-face interaction with their peers and will be happy to interact.