



CANADA  
4-H Ontario

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## 4-H ONTARIO PROJECT



**Secretary**

**EXECUTIVE HANDBOOK**

## The 4-H Pledge

I pledge my Head to clearer thinking,  
my Heart to greater loyalty,  
my Hands to larger service,  
my Health to better living,  
for my club, my community, my country and my world.

## The 4-H Motto

Learn To Do By Doing

## 4-H Ontario Provincial Office

7660 Mill Road

Guelph, ON N1H 6J1

TF: 1.877.410.6748

TEL: 519.856.0992

FAX: 519.856.0515

EMAIL: [inquiries@4-hontario.ca](mailto:inquiries@4-hontario.ca)

WEB: [www.4-HOntario.ca](http://www.4-HOntario.ca)

## Handbook Resource Information:

Updated by: Elizabeth Johnston, 4-H Ontario

Layout by: Mary Kathleen Dunn

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Kate Higgins, Huron 4-H Association

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Jennifer Pollock, Wellington 4-H Association

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4-H Ontario grants permission to 4-H volunteers to photocopy this 4-H handbook for use in their local 4-H program.

All information presented in this handbook was accurate at the time of printing.



**CANADA**

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# 4-H CLUB SECRETARY

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## Welcome!

Congratulations on your new role as your 4-H club's secretary! Your fellow club members have elected you to be the secretary of the club. As the Secretary within your club, you join a group of 4-H officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Press Reporter) and become a representative of your club. This guide will help you to understand what your role is as the secretary and how to carry out your many official duties.

## An Officer's Role in the Club

Serving as a club officer means you are part of a team. The team's responsibility is to hold a club meeting that is fun but is also well run to inform others what your club does within your community. Make sure you come to the meeting prepared and ready to go!

## Your Role as the Secretary

Winning the nomination to be your club's secretary is an honour and a responsibility. As the secretary, your responsibilities include:

- Keeping an accurate record of proceedings of all meetings and special activities in a binder or notebook
- Maintaining a list of all members
- Taking attendance at meetings and activities
- Maintaining a list of all leaders and officers of the club
- Calling the names of members when doing the roll call at the beginning of a meeting
- Completing the minutes and signing them before the next meeting
- Bringing the secretary's book to every meeting
- Standing to read the minutes at every meeting
- Correcting the minutes as directed by the president
- Having the president sign the minutes after they are approved
- Restate motions and look up items in the minutes at the president or leader's request
- Sharing correspondence with the club
- Writing letters as directed by the club
- Recording the proceedings of the meeting including any business, activities completed and guest speakers that were at the meeting.
- Conducting meetings when both the president and vice president are absent
- If asked, cooperating with the press reporter in preparing articles for the newspaper
- Turning in your completed Secretary's Record Book at the end of the club

## Tips for Secretaries

- Before each meeting gather all correspondence received since the last meeting so you can present it to the club.
- Have an up-to-date list of club members to make taking attendance easy.
- Check the minutes of the last meeting for old business and make a note to bring each item to the attention of the president or leaders.
- After the meeting, write the minutes as soon as possible while everything is still fresh in your mind. Your minutes will be more accurate and complete if you do them right away.
- When writing out the minutes always remember to be impartial and to never express your opinions in the minutes of any action taken. Do not put discussion, adjectives or interpretations in the minutes. Minutes are a record of what was done, not what was said.
- Record both the first and last names of members so there is no doubt as to who is being referred to in the minutes.
- If your minutes are handwritten, make sure the final version of the minutes (the version that will appear in your Record Book) are neat, legible and written in ink.
- If using a computer, make sure the final version of the minutes are in a font that is easy to read.
- Sign the completed minutes. The person who is presiding over the meeting when the minutes are approved will also sign.
- Write any necessary business letters or thank you letters on behalf of the club.
- After the last club meeting, give your completed Record Book containing the attendance list, list of officers and minutes to your leaders.

*Learning how to be an effective Secretary of your 4-H club is an important skill to learn both now and for future organizations you might be a part of such as Minor Sports Associations, Junior Farmers, Agricultural Societies and community organizations such as Rotary, Kinsmen, Lions, etc.*

## Club Attendance (Roll Call)

It is the secretary's responsibility to keep an accurate attendance record for the club. Enter the names of your club's entire membership in your Club Attendance List at the beginning of the club. List the names alphabetically by last name. If new members join after the first meeting, add them to the bottom of the list.

When the President asks for the roll call to be answered at each meeting, proceed to read through the list of names on your Club Attendance List. You can stand or stay seated while you do this. The roll call question will be determined by the leaders in your club or by the president.

When a member is present and answers the roll call question mark a “P” in the correct box for present. When a member is absent, mark an “A” in the correct box. If a member arrives after the meeting is half over, mark them late with an “L” in the correct box.

## Volunteer Leaders and Officers Lists

Keep a list of all club volunteer leaders and officers including their phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

Having all of this information together in one place will help you to be able to quickly contact the leaders and officers of the club.

## Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the meeting are the secretary’s most important job. The official minutes of the meeting are a permanent record of the 4-H club’s activities and actions. Minutes need to be neat and easy to read. They should always be written in ink or typed. In the minutes include the following:

- Type of meeting (regular or special)
- Name of the club
- Place and date of the meeting
- Name of President (or person presiding over the meeting)
- Time the meeting began
- Number of members, leaders, parents and guest present
- A statement that the minutes were read
- A motion that the minutes were approved as read (or as corrected)
- An accurate treasurer’s report (if applicable) showing the previous balance, money received since last meeting, payments made after the last meeting and the current balance.
- Reports of other officers and committees.
- Complete motions including:
  - Name of the person making the motion
  - Exact wording of the motion
  - Who seconded the motion
  - Whether it was approved or defeated
- Type of program or activities and the presenter’s name
- Acknowledgement of services to the club such as who provided recreation, activities, refreshments, snacks, etc.

A worksheet for keeping meeting notes is available in this Record Book. You can use it as is or change it to accommodate your style of note taking. Make a copy of the form so you have a copy for each meeting.

After the meeting is over, prepare your minutes, either handwritten in ink or typed on the computer, and transfer the information onto the Official Minutes Form. Sign it at

the bottom and ask the president (or presiding officer) to sign after the minutes have been approved at the next meeting. This document should be kept in your Secretary's Record Book as your official club record.

If you are absent for a meeting, then the person who served as the secretary for that meeting will be the person who signs the minutes for that particular meeting.

## **Roving Secretary**

Many clubs share the duty of secretary by having a roving secretary. At each meeting a different member volunteers for this responsibility. If you volunteer it is your duty to make sure the:

- Meeting report is complete
- Club attendance list is updated
- Correspondence is recorded
- Official minutes are written or typed
- Minutes are signed

## **Other Responsibilities**

Even though you hold the office of secretary, you may introduce motions, discuss them and vote on all business.

## **Parliamentary Procedure**

In order to accurately record the minutes, you should have a basic understanding of Parliamentary Procedure.

Parliamentary decision making is governed by a set of rules and procedures called Robert's Rules of Order. These rules provide for courtesy and respect for each member and bring order to the meeting.

### **Motions**

Business is conducted at meetings by voting on proposals put forward by members. These proposals are called motions. Any person who is eligible to vote at a meeting may make a motion. Depending on the type of motion, another member is usually needed to second the motion. Motions are then discussed and voted upon.

The motion is a very important key to having good meetings. Motions are a way of introducing topics for discussion and allowing each member to speak and vote.

### ***Steps in Making a Motion:***

1. Address the chairperson (i.e. raise your hand).
2. Wait for the chairperson to acknowledge you.
3. Make the motion: "I move that..."
4. Another person seconds the motion: "I second the motion."
5. Chairperson states the motion.
6. Chairperson calls for discussion of the motion.

7. Chairperson restates the motion.
8. Chairperson calls the vote: "All in favour? Opposed?"
9. Chairperson announces the result of the vote: "Motion carried" or "Motion defeated."

A motion cannot be discussed or voted upon until someone seconds the motion. If a motion is not seconded, it is declared by the Chairperson to be lost without a vote.

*The secretary can record a motion in a variety of ways:*

- *John Jones moved, seconded by Mary Smith, that.....*
- *Bill Hart seconded Betty Green's motion that.....*
- *It was resolved on the motion of Helen Cross, seconded by Harry Cooper, that....*
- *On a motion by Art Ross, seconded by Doreen Russell, it was agreed that.....*

A motion may be amended by a subsequent motion if someone thinks there should be a slight change to the original motion. There must be a motion made to amend the original motion, the amendment must be seconded by another person and then the amendment can be debated and voted on.

If the original motion was as follows:

- **John Jones moved, seconded by Mary Smith, that a donation of \$50 be made to the local hospital fundraising drive.**

Then the amendment might look like:

- **Sally Brown moved, seconded by Bill Johnson, that an amendment be made that the donation be \$100.**

If the amendment passes, then the 'amended motion' will be on the floor to be discussed and voted on.

To restate the amended motion it would read:

- **The amended motion on the floor is that a donation of \$100 be made to the local hospital fundraising drive.**

If the amendment does not pass, then the original motion is back on the floor for discussion and voting.

To restate the original motion it would read:

- **The motion on the floor is that a donation of \$50 be made to the local hospital fundraising drive.**

## ***Voting***

Voting on motions normally requires a simple majority. Voting is normally done by a show of hands but can also be done by secret ballot, by saying yea or nay or by having people stand when voting. Anyone eligible to vote has the right to demand a vote by roll call and can ask for a recorded vote.

Voting by secret ballot normally only occurs when there is an election to fill a club executive position but voting does not have to occur this way.

The Chair (usually the President) does not vote unless there is a tie vote. In the case of a tie, the Chair casts the deciding vote.

### ***Parliamentary Procedure Rules to Keep in Mind!***

1. Only one member speaks at a time after being recognized by the Chairperson.
2. There can only be one motion before the group at a time.
3. If a motion is amended, vote on the amendment before voting on the original motion. Then, vote on the original motion as amended.
4. A motion to adjourn is a “privileged motion” which means that it cannot be discussed. It requires a majority vote to pass.

## **Elections**

Elections are generally chaired by a ‘scrutineer.’ This person is someone who is not a club member and in most cases, is a club volunteer leader.

### ***Procedure:***

1. All positions are declared vacant by the scrutineer, who indicates this by saying “I’d like to declare all positions vacant.”
2. The group decides on the method of voting (i.e. show of hands, ballot, standing).
3. The scrutineer accepts nominations from members for each position being filled. Nominations do not require a seconder. Nominations are closed by motion or declaration by the scrutineer after asking 3 times if there are any more nominations.
4. Each member nominated is asked if he/she will stand for the position. Names of members who decline are crossed off.
5. Voting takes place by selected method and majority rules (i.e. member with most votes).
6. Announce the name of the successful member. Offer congratulations and thank all others that ran for the position.
7. If ballots are used, a motion to destroy the ballots is required and voted on.



## References

Ohio 4-H Secretary's Handbook, Ohio State University Extension  
4-H Club Officer Handbook, Oregon State University Extension Service  
The Secretary's Record, Cornell  
The 4-H Club Officer Handbook, AgriLife Extension, Texas A&M System  
Florida 4-H Officer's Handbook, University of Florida IFAS Extension  
4-H Ontario Youth Director Manual  
4-H Ontario Club Secretary's Record Book

## Evaluating Your Leadership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Club: \_\_\_\_\_

At the completion of this project, rank yourself on each of the following to determine which skills you improved upon and which skills you need to keep working on.

Rate as great, OK and not so good.

|  | Great | OK | Not so good |
|--|-------|----|-------------|
| 1. I took accurate notes at every meeting.   |       |    |             |
| 2. I recorded names in the minutes using first and last names.   |       |    |             |
| 3. I did not put any of my own opinions in the minutes.  |       |    |             |
| 4. I did not put any conversations in the minutes, just the facts.                                     |       |    |             |
| 5. I completed the official minutes before the next meeting by either handwriting in ink or by typing. |       |    |             |
| 6. I completed the attendance list for each meeting accurately.  |       |    |             |
| 7. I maintained a list of leaders and their contact information.                                       |       |    |             |
| 8. I maintained a list of club officers and their contact information.                                 |       |    |             |
| 9. I brought the secretary's book to every meeting.  |       |    |             |
| 10. I stood and read the minutes at each meeting.  |       |    |             |
| 11. I presented any correspondence we received to the club.  |       |    |             |
| 12. I wrote any letters and thank you cards that the club asked to be written.                         |       |    |             |
| 13. I turned in my secretary's book to my leaders at the end of the club.                              |       |    |             |
| 14. I improved my listening skills to be able to take accurate minutes.                                |       |    |             |

What can I do next time to improve?

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## Club Leaders

| <i>Club Leaders' Name</i> | <i>Phone Number</i> | <i>E-mail Address</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
|                           |                     |                       |
|                           |                     |                       |
|                           |                     |                       |
|                           |                     |                       |
|                           |                     |                       |
|                           |                     |                       |

## Club Officers

| <i>Position</i> | <i>Name</i> | <i>Phone Number</i> | <i>E-mail Address</i> |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| President       |             |                     |                       |
| Vice President  |             |                     |                       |
| Secretary       |             |                     |                       |
| Treasurer       |             |                     |                       |
| Press Reporter  |             |                     |                       |
|                 |             |                     |                       |
|                 |             |                     |                       |

*Note: extra lines have been added in case your club has any added club officer positions*

### Club Attendance List

| Name | Mtg #1 | Mtg #2 | Mtg #3 | Mtg #4 | Mtg #5 | Mtg #6 | Acheivement Day |
|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------|
|      |        |        |        |        |        |        |                 |
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|      |        |        |        |        |        |        |                 |
|      |        |        |        |        |        |        |                 |

P = Present    A = Absent    L=Late

## Club Meeting Notes Form

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person who opened the meeting (presided over the meeting) and led The 4-H Pledge: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

Roll Call Question: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Members Present: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Leaders Present: \_\_\_\_\_

New Members and/or Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of person reading the minutes: \_\_\_\_\_

List of any corrections to the minutes: \_\_\_\_\_

A motion to accept the minutes was made by: \_\_\_\_\_

The motion was seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

Carried: \_\_\_\_ Defeated: \_\_\_\_ (check one)

Highlights from the meeting:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of the person who led The 4-H Motto to end the meeting:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Official Meeting Notes:**

Name of Club: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Number Present: Members \_\_\_\_\_ Leaders \_\_\_\_\_ Parents \_\_\_\_\_ Guests \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number Present: \_\_\_\_\_

Type or print your meeting minutes in the space below. Place this copy in your Secretary's Record Book.

Secretary's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ President's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Club Meeting (Sample Minutes)

The second meeting of the Country Clovers 4-H Club was held at the Midtown Community Centre on January 31, 2014 at 7:00pm.

President Susie Smith called the meeting to order and led the members with the 4-H Pledge. Richard Johnson, Secretary, did the attendance. Eighteen members answered the roll call with their New Year's Resolution. Amy Green was welcomed as a new member.

The secretary read the minutes of the January 14th meeting. A motion was made by Ryan Campbell, seconded by Dylan James, that the minutes be approved as read. The motion was carried.

The treasurer, Ashley Brooks, reported a balance of \$142.16 in the bank account.

The secretary read the correspondence which was an invitation to the local 4-H Association's Family Fun Skating Day at the Midtown Community Centre on Sunday, February 16, 2014.

The Vice President, Robert Jones, introduced Sarah McNeil, the area Dairy Educator. She spoke to the group about how milk is produced on the farm, how it gets from the farm to the milk processing plant and then to the grocery store and why it is important for us to have 3 to 4 servings of milk a day. She also showed us a video about milk production.

The Vice President then thanked Sarah McNeil for her presentation and gave her a gift.

The club then went to the kitchen and learned how to make homemade ice cream and milkshakes. Everyone got to sample the ice cream and make their own milkshakes.

The President then led the group with the 4-H Motto to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting will be held on February 12th, 2014 at 7pm at the Midtown Community Centre.