



Best Practices for Conducting 4-H Events During COVID-19

Texas 4-H volunteers and county agents are critical to ensuring 4-H members, parents, and other volunteers stay healthy and well during programs and activities. During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation, this is especially true. Texas 4-H wants to provide guidance to support programming efforts so members can continue to develop the critical life skills which sets our members apart from youth throughout the state and nation. Below are some suggested best practices to help volunteers keep 4-H members, parents, and other volunteers safe at events, activities, and practices.

Local Guidelines

Check with the local County Extension Office prior to any event or activity for restrictions, requirements, mandates, and/or approvals required or set by local health authorities, cities, and/or county government.

Refreshments, Meals & Snacks

Only pre-packaged foods or meals should be used. Buffets or "potluck" meals must be avoided. Under no circumstance should there be taste testing or food sampling at events. Disposable utensils, napkins, cups, and plates should be used.

Virtual & Distance Program Options



Can this meeting be held virtually?

See this document for guidance.

"Best Practices and Considerations for Virtual (Online) 4-H Meetings"

Currently, group meetings and practices may occur at a capacity up to 50% of meeting space, WITH a limited capacity of 50 people. If the local health authority or county commissioner's court has implemented a mandate of fewer people, then that policy must be followed.

Seating and activity tables should be arranged to maximize social distancing.

It is recommended that activities be individual with social distancing, face masks always worn, and all items are disinfected between participant use.

Consider meeting outdoors if possible.



Guidelines for Attendance & Meeting Locations

Attendance should be taken at all events and lists should be sent to the Extension Office within 10 days of the meeting. These lists must include everyone who was at the meeting (youth members, volunteers, parents, siblings, guests). Participants should provide their own pen/pencil or consider having a person record attendance.

Volunteers and participants should bring their own masks/face coverings; however, it is suggested to have a few on hand for those that fail to do so.

Masks/face coverings must be worn (over the nose and mouth) when it is not feasible to maintain six feet of social distancing from other individuals not in the same household.

10 Positive Steps to stay negative

1. With your CEA, develop a plan that is based on local and state guidelines.
2. Secure location that meets current COVID-19 capacity guidelines.
3. Determine activities that will take place and how best to modify for participant safety.
4. Communicate with your volunteers and participants that if they have any symptoms of COVID-19 or feel ill, they must not attend.
5. Anyone who appears sick or exhibits symptoms/risk factors of COVID-19 must be sent away immediately.
6. Communicate with volunteers and participants to bring their own masks/face coverings; however, it is suggested to have a few on hand for those that fail to do so.
7. Arrange seating and activity tables to maximize social distancing. It is recommended that activities be individual with social distancing occurring, face masks worn, and all items disinfected between participant use. If social distancing cannot occur, face masks must be worn, and all items are to be disinfected between participant use.
8. Regularly touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, tables, chairs, etc. should be disinfected before and after use.
9. For each 4-H meeting or activity, have EVERYONE complete the COVID-19 Screening Form. A hard copy of this document should be kept on file by the volunteer and/or county agent.
10. Make hand sanitizer available for attendees as they arrive.

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.

Activities & Equipment

4-H promotes experiential learning which is often “hands-on.” During Covid-19, activities should be modified to keep all participants safe. Here are some examples of modifications that can be made to activities:

1 Instead of passing around something cool for the children to see, walk around with it and show them at eye-level eliminating the need for them to touch it.

2 Instead of the “take one and pass it along” method of distributing paper, hand papers out one at a time.

3 Everyone should bring their own pen or pencil.

4 Wipe down shared items between each use throughout the activity if there will be only one item for everyone to use such as knives, spatulas, shears, etc.

5 Sharing of equipment should be limited to participants who live in the same household.

6 Send a supply list out prior to the meeting and have participants bring their own supplies.

Sanitation & Disinfection



All participants, spectators, parents, and volunteers should wash or sanitize their hands upon entering the facility. Hand sanitizer and/or soap and water should be readily available at various locations throughout the facility. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer should contain at least 60% alcohol. All sanitizer and disinfectant must be kept out of reach of small children.



Visible signage should be placed throughout the facility to remind everyone of best hygiene practices and social distancing. These include but are not limited to: signage related to washing hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds at all hand-washing stations, maintaining social distance of at least 6 feet, etc.



Volunteers should check with facilities and venues on specific requirements for cleaning/sanitizing facilities after and during use.

Acceptable forms of surface and equipment disinfection include disinfecting wipes, disinfecting solutions, and/or bleach solution. Alcohol based disinfecting wipes should contain at least 70% alcohol. All **safety precautions** must be followed when using disinfectants. If using a bleach solution, follow this CDC recommended bleach solution:

**5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach
per gallon of room temperature water
or
4 teaspoons bleach
per quart of room temperature water**

Bleach solution will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours.

All sanitizer and disinfectant must be kept out of reach of small children.

Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<https://www.cdc.gov/>

Governor's Strike Force to Open Texas
<https://open.texas.gov/>

Texas Extension Disaster Education Network
<https://texashelp.tamu.edu/>

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Transitioning Back
refer to e-mail distributed July 3 from Dr. Angela Burkham

Adapted From

Governor's Strike Force to Open Texas
<https://open.texas.gov/>

Nebraska Extension
<https://4h.unl.edu/documents/COVID-4H-Meeting-Guidelines-052820.pdf>

University of Nevada Extension & 4-H Youth Development
https://naes.agnt.unr.edu/PMS/Pubs/2020-3068.pdf?utm_source=publications&utm_medium=pub-download&utm_campaign=pub-link-clicks&utm_content=3068