

The County
4-H
Advisory
Council

Mississippi State
UNIVERSITY
Extension
SERVICE



The County 4-H Advisory Council is a group of men and women who have opportunities to fulfill their desires to serve the young people and volunteers involved in the 4-H youth development program. The Advisory Council is a volunteer group contributing time, energy, and other resources to help build good citizens through 4-H educational programs. It helps interpret 4-H to people in the county and helps the 4-H staff to understand the needs of youth. Council members, working as a team, obtain the resources for an educational program designed to fulfill these needs.

I. Why a Council is Needed and Tasks It May Perform

A. Help identify interests and needs of youth.

The county 4-H Advisory Council is a group that represents the county and has varied experiences with youth. Based on these experiences, Council members are usually knowledgeable in regard to youth problems, programs that might help to solve the problems, and resources available. The Council, therefore, is a key group to the 4-H youth agent in program determination, and they should be given an opportunity for input into the program plans.

B. Review annual 4-H program plans, including budget, and give approval.

1. An important task of the Council is that of reviewing the annual 4-H program plans, with regard to appropriateness (activities directed toward solving the major problems of youth and resources available and acceptable to youth, parents, and general public). Also, members suggest changes to help achieve objectives.
2. Another important task of the Council is to review and approve the county 4-H budget, with regard to appropriateness of budget items and adequacy of funds in accomplishing objectives of the program.

C. Assist in securing resources for the 4-H program.

1. Assist in identifying and/or recruiting volunteers.
2. Assist in identifying and securing resource people needed in different phases of the 4-H program; also to help prepare a resource file that identifies resource people (with appropriate biographical data for each).
3. Serve as organizational chairs for county 4-H activities such as exhibit days, contests, fairs, and shows (county, district, and state).
4. Serve as a resource person for 4-H programs.
5. Identify new members for the 4-H Advisory Council.
6. Organize and conduct county fund-raising campaigns.
7. Plan and conduct fund-raising activities such as barbecue, fish fry, or pancake supper.
8. Secure products for 4-H educational activities and awards such as vegetables for county Horticulture Judging contest or a camera for county Photography Visual Presentation winners.
9. Secure meeting facilities for 4-H activities.
10. Secure land for Community Pride projects and for demonstration programs.

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11. Secure store windows for 4-H exhibits.
 12. Arrange transportation for 4-H exhibits to district and state fairs, shows, and other activities.
 13. Help secure transportation for 4-H'ers to and from activities outside the county.
- D. Help youth and general public to become aware of the educational opportunities in 4-H.
1. Arrange for special services at churches (in their county) on Mississippi 4-H Sunday.
 2. Arrange for special features in newspapers and radio/television programs during National 4-H Week.
 3. Assist 4-H agents in developing a good relationship with all mass media persons.
 4. Inform other business and professional people of the educational opportunities and achievements in 4-H.
 5. Make arrangements for club members and leaders to appear on civic club programs.
 6. Arrange for 4-H to be included in commercial advertisements.
 7. Attend 4-H activities to keep informed on current trends, changes, and achievements in 4-H.
 8. Make presentations organized by 4-H.
 9. Visit 4-H parents and help them understand the objectives of 4-H and how they (parents) may support their 4-H'ers.
- E. Act as liaison between the 4-H youth agent and general public relative to the 4-H programs' appropriateness and accountability.
1. Communicate approval of county 4-H program content by actively supporting the program through interviews, radio and television spots during National 4-H Week, participation in fund- raising, and serving on committees for specific programs.
 2. Arrange for special newspaper features on major changes in the 4-H program.
 3. Communicate to 4-H funding sources (state legislators, boards of supervisors, and private contributors) how funds are used and how the 4-H program has contributed to solving problems of youth.
- F. Participate in recognition programs for youth and volunteers.
1. Provide awards for outstanding volunteers (for example, pins, plaques, jackets).
 2. Provide scholarships for leaders to attend Regional Leader Forum.
 3. Provide awards for county 4-H project winners (in judging and visual presentation contests, record books, scholarships).
 4. Sponsor a county 4-H awards and recognition event.
 5. Attend an awards event and help present awards.
 6. Serve as organizational chair for an awards and recognition event.
 7. Write letters to congratulate 4-H'ers and volunteers on outstanding achievements.

8. Give verbal congratulations to winners in 4-H programs. This may be the most meaningful recognition a person receives.
9. Use mass media in recognizing outstanding achievements.

II. County 4-H Advisory Council Organization

The Council is organized with officers and committees and with plans for maintaining active membership.

A. Membership.

A Council is usually composed of 10 to 25 business and professional people, educators, volunteers, parents, representatives of civic organizations, and other segments of the population. To maintain an active Council, with new members added each year, membership in a newly organized Council might be divided into three parts: One third of the members to serve one year, another third 2 years, and the remaining members 3 years. As other members are added, their memberships would be for 3 years.

B. Officers.

Members of the Advisory Council elect a chair, vice chair, and a secretary-treasurer. These officers usually serve 1 year and perform those duties usually associated with the office. For example, the chair presides at all meetings and over executive committee sessions, with the vice chair presiding in the absence of the chair and performing other duties as requested. The secretary-treasurer keeps minutes and other records and handles monies for the current year. Permanent records may be kept in the county Extension office.

C. Committees.

The following standing committees are usually appointed for a 1-year period; other standing and temporary committees may be appointed as needed (for example, County Contest Committee, Volunteer Recruitment Committee).

1. Executive Committee – to be composed of Council officers and 4-H youth agent(s) and shall conduct business as directed by the Council.
2. Program Committee – to arrange programs for regular meetings of the Council; also coordinates the Council's participation in county 4-H program determination (identifying interest and needs of the youth). The vice chair and 4-H youth agent(s) serve as co-chairs of the Program Committee.
3. Finance Committee – to plan and coordinate fund-raising campaigns in support of the budget approved by the Council.
4. Publicity Committee – to arrange publicity for certain 4-H programs and activities that reflect the appropriateness and achievements of the county 4-H program, achievements of individuals and small groups, and opportunities for youth and adults in the program.
5. Recognition and Awards Committee – to assist in identifying and presenting appropriate recognition and awards to members and leaders.
6. Membership Committee – to determine tenure of members and to suggest new members; the committee will recruit those members approved by the Council.

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D. Meetings

Usually three or four regular meetings per year are adequate, because most work is conducted through committees. Committees may conduct meetings as needed. The county situation will determine, to some extent, the number of meetings a Council will conduct. For example, if 4-H participates in the United Way Fund, it may not be appropriate to plan and conduct a 4-H fundraising campaign. Probably the best way to determine the number of meetings needed and when to conduct the meeting is to identify the things the Council may more effectively accomplish in meetings and when they should be done to provide the greatest support to 4-H. Following are some suggested Council tasks for meetings:

1. Review the county 4-H program plans, help identify interests and needs of youth, and give approval of plans. Develop broad plans for helping execute the 4-H program. This may be done in the spring, when the annual county 4-H plan is being developed.
2. Learn of the accomplishment of the 4-H program during the past year. The 4-H youth agent(s) may want to give this report to all Council members in the spring, before making plans for the new year.
3. Reorganize the Council (elect officers, appoint committees, etc.).
4. Approve 4-H budget and organize for county 4-H fund drive.

III. What a 4-H youth agent may do in support of the Council

- A. Explain to Council members the 4-H program (philosophy, objectives, how it is organized, how it functions).
- B. Provide statistical and research data and other types of program information that will help Council members make sound decisions regarding suggested programs.
- C. Give the Council an opportunity to help identify interests and needs of youth.
- D. Review with the Council the annual program plans and budget, and get approval.
- E. Identify the need for volunteers and help Council members understand the recruiting procedure.
- F. Request help from the Council in identifying resource people and developing a resource file.
- G. Ask appropriate Council members to serve as chair of committees. (Exhibit Day, etc.)
- H. Assist in planning regular Council meetings and committee meetings.
 - I. Assist in planning fund-raising campaigns.
 - J. Help identify needs for public facilities for educational programs.
 - K. Involve Council members in awards and recognition events.
 - L. Help Council members understand the many ways of recognizing youth and volunteers.
- M. Provide information on Mississippi 4-H Sunday, National 4-H Week, and ways the Council may promote 4-H.

- N. Provide current 4-H information that may be used in talks with mass media.
- O. Help identify youth and volunteers who may appear on radio/television programs.
- P. Identify key parents Council members may visit.
- Q. Provide appropriate 4-H accomplishment for reporting to funding sources.

IV. The state 4-H Advisory Council can help the county 4-H Advisory Council

The State 4-H Advisory Council offers these types of support to counties on request:

- A. Counsel with 4-H agents and prospective Council members regarding the value and purpose of a Council.
- B. Help recruit Council members.
- C. Visit a county in support of a new Council.
- D. Participate on Council Programs, when appropriate.
- E. Provide recognition for County Councils.

V. Organizing a new Council

The 4-H youth agent should discuss the ideas of organizing a County 4-H Advisory Council with county staff and gain a consensus that it is a good idea to organize a council. After consensus has been reached, the staff should help the 4-H agent identify one or two key prospective Council members. The 4-H agent or the staff member who might best make the contact should visit with the two prospective members and discuss the following:

- A. Purpose and duties of the Advisory Council.
- B. Structure of the Council, how it functions, and how the Council may be organized.
- C. Ask these individuals to identify others who may serve on the Council, and ask them to contact the prospects.

After the prospects have been identified, two or three key individuals will assist the 4-H youth agent in planning agendas for the organizational meetings. It is suggested an agenda include:

- D. An explanation of 4-H; possibly show a 4-H video or PSA.
- E. A review of local needs.
- F. How the Advisory Council can help with local needs; ask a State 4-H Advisory Council member to do this.
- G. How membership is selected.
- H. Election of officers.
- I. Appoint committees.
- J. Brief statement about the immediate plans for the organization and committees.

(A person may be appointed to preside at the organizational meeting.)

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Sample

Constitution and Bylaws

_____ **County 4-H Advisory Council**

ARTICLE I – IDENTIFICATION

Section 1. The name of the organization shall be the _____
County 4-H Advisory Council

Section 2. The territory of this organization shall be the County of _____,
State of Mississippi.

Section 3. The headquarters and principal office of the organization shall
be located in the county Extension 4-H office or in such place as the Council
shall authorize.

Section 4. The fiscal year of the Council shall be October 1 – September 30.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSES

Section 1. The purpose of the _____ County 4-H Advisory Council is
to assist in the furtherance of the 4-H program. This shall be accomplished by
supporting the Mississippi State University Extension Service programs and
activities for boys and girls of _____ County, 5 to 18 years of age.

Section 2. The Advisory Council may render the following and similar
kinds of assistance, accomplishing the objects set forth:

- A. Help identify the interests and needs of youth.
- B. Review annual 4-H program plans, including budget, and give approval.
- C. Assist in securing human and physical resources for the 4-H program.
- D. Help youth and general public to become aware of the educational opportunities in 4-H.
- E. Act as liaison between the 4-H youth agent(s) and general public relative to 4-H program appropriateness and accountability.
- F. Participate in recognition programs for youth and volunteers.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The membership of the Council shall consist of public, spirited
men and women who have demonstrated their interests in and knowledge of
4-H by promoting programs recognized to be of value and importance to 4-H
members of _____ County. Membership shall be for 3 years, with
approximately one-third of the council membership expiring each year.

Section 2. Membership in 4-H and participation in 4-H activities and
events are open to all, without regard to race, color, religion, national origin,
sex, or disability.

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ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS

Section 1. Three regular meetings of the Council shall be held each year as follows: (Note to agent: Give the month and purpose of each meeting.)

Section 2. Special meetings of the Council shall be called by the chair at any time an additional meeting is required.

Section 3. Those present at any duly called Council meeting shall constitute a quorum. Such quorum may, by majority vote of the members present, transact any business that may properly be brought before the meeting, except as otherwise provided in these bylaws.

Section 4. The meetings of the Council shall be open to all interested persons.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the Council shall be a president, a first vice president, a second vice president, and a secretary-treasurer. All officers shall be chosen from the membership of the Council at the reorganization meeting each year.

Section 2. All officers shall be elected to serve for a term of 1 year, or until their successors are duly elected.

Section 3. In the event any office of the Council becomes vacant for any reason, the Executive Committee shall fill such a vacancy.

ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES

Section 1. The following standing committees shall be appointed for a 1-year period. (Other standing and temporary committees shall be appointed as needed.)

- A. The executive committee shall be composed of the elected officers and 4-H youth agent(s).
- B. Program committee duties shall be to arrange interesting and constructive programs for the regular meetings of the Council.

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B. Advisory Council Offices

Chairman _____

Vice Chairman _____

Secretary _____

Treasurer _____

C. Advisory Council Committees

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN

FINANCE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN

PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN

VOLUNTEER LEADER RECRUITMENT
COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN

OTHER COMMITTEES

CHAIRMAN

II. Annual County 4-H Advisory Council Plans and Achievements

After the council members have reviewed the annual county 4-H program plans, they will determine which tasks will help them achieve the county 4-H program objectives. Goals may be recorded on the left side of pages in this section.

The chairman will want to appoint committees to prepare plans and direct the goal-related activities. As goals are reached, record achievements on the right side of pages in this section.

EXAMPLE OF GOAL

Contact newspaper editor and arrange for a 4-H column to be printed weekly; one feature story to be printed monthly, and news stories printed on six county activities.

EXAMPLE OF ACHIEVEMENTS

45 weekly 4-H columns printed.

10 feature stories printed.

News stories with pictures were printed on the following county activities: judging and visual presentation contests; Exhibit Day; 4-H automotive workshop; 4-H horse show; awards banquet; and fund-raising drive.

GOALS

ACHIEVEMENTS

GOALS	ACHIEVEMENTS

GOALS

ACHIEVEMENTS

GOALS	ACHIEVEMENTS

SCORE FORM FOR COUNTY 4-H ADVISORY COUNCIL SECRETARY'S RECORD BOOK

The State Judging Committee will use this form to evaluate council work reported in the Secretary's Record Book. This form will also help the County Advisory Council understand the emphasis that will be given each section.

I. Organization	Possible 25 points	Score
A. Advisory Council membership represents different segments of county population.		_____
B. Officers elected.		
C. Committees appointed.		
D. Council meetings and attendance records.		
II. Annual County 4-H Advisory Council Goals and Achievements	Possible 75 points	Score
A. Help given in identifying interests and needs of youth and approving county programs plans.	15 points	_____
B. Resources secured for the 4-H program.	25 points	_____
C. Assistance provided in helping youth and general public become aware of the educational opportunities in 4-H.	20 points	_____
D. Participation in recognition programs for 4-H members and volunteers.	15 points	_____
	TOTAL	_____

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Revised and distributed by Extension 4-H Youth Development Staff

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Form 622

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914 JOE H. MCGILBERRY, Director (rep-300-6-04)