



# *The County* 4-H Advisory Council



# The County 4-H Advisory Council

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 that contributes time, energy, and other resources to help build good citizens through 4-H educational programs. It helps explain 4-H to people in the county and helps the county Extension agents to understand youth needs. 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 young people. Based on these experiences, council members are usually knowledgeable about youth problems, programs that might help to solve the problems, and resources available. The council, therefore, is a key group to the county Extension 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 young people and resources available and acceptable to youths, parents, and the 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. Help secure 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 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 fundraising campaigns.
7. Plan and conduct fundraising 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 exhibit space for 4-H exhibits.
11. Arrange transportation for 4-H exhibits to district and state fairs, shows, and other activities.
12. Help secure transportation for 4-H'ers to and from activities outside the county.

### D. Help young people and the 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 county Extension agents in developing a good relationship with all mass media representatives.
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 at 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 may support their 4-H'ers.

### E. Act as liaison between the county Extension agent and general public relative to the 4-H program's appropriateness and accountability.

1. Communicate approval of county 4-H program content by actively supporting the program through interviews, radio and television spots, and other media outlets

during National 4-H Week, participation in fundraising, 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 youth problems.
- F. Participate in recognition programs for youths and volunteers.
1. Provide awards for outstanding volunteers (for example, pins, plaques, jackets).
  2. Provide scholarships for leaders to attend leader forums/conferences.
  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/social media to recognize outstanding achievements.

## II. County 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 10–25 business and professional people, educators, volunteers, parents, and 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 1 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 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 county Extension agent(s); conducts business as directed by the council.
2. Program Committee: Arranges programs for regular meetings of the council; also coordinates the council's participation in county 4-H program determination (identifying interest and needs of 4-H'ers). The vice chair and county Extension agent(s) serve as co-chairs of the program committee.
3. Finance Committee: Plans and coordinates fundraising campaigns in support of the budget approved by the council.
4. Publicity Committee: Arranges 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 youths and adults in the program.
5. Recognition and Awards Committee: Assists in identifying and presenting appropriate recognition and awards to members and leaders.
6. Membership Committee: Determines tenure of members and suggests new members; the committee will recruit those members approved by the council.

### 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 them 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 accomplishments of the 4-H program during the past year. The county Extension 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 the 4-H budget and organize for the county 4-H fund drive.

### III. What a County Extension Agent May Do to Support 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 young people.
- 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 chairs of committees (Exhibit Day, etc.)
- H. Assist in planning regular council meetings and committee meetings.
- I. Assist in planning fundraising 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 4-H'ers 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 4-H'ers and volunteers who may appear on radio/television programs.
- P. Identify key parents council members may visit.
- Q. Provide appropriate 4-H accomplishments 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 county Extension agent should discuss the idea of organizing a county 4-H advisory council with county staff and gain a consensus that it is a good idea. 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 county Extension 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. Electing officers.
  - I. Appointing committees.
  - J. Brief statement about the immediate plans for the organization and committees.

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

*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 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 (5 to 18 years of age) of \_\_\_\_\_ County.

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 4-H'ers.
- 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 young people and the general public to become aware of the educational opportunities in 4-H.
- E. Act as liaison between the county Extension agent(s) and the general public relative to 4-H program appropriateness and accountability.
- F. Participate in recognition programs for 4-H'ers and volunteers.

**ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. The membership of the council shall consist of public, spirited men and women who have demonstrated their interest 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 is open to all, without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or disability.

**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 for 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.

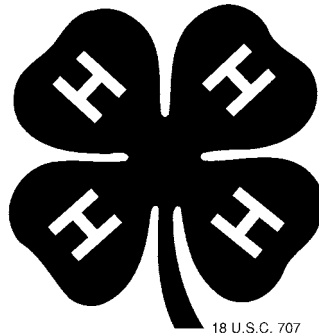
Section 2. All officers shall be elected to serve for a term of 1 year, or until their successors are duly elected.

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 county Extension agent(s).
- B. Program committee duties shall be to arrange interesting and constructive programs for the regular meetings of the council.





B. Advisory Council Offices

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Vice Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_

C. Advisory Council Committees

Program Committee

Chair

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Finance Committee

Chair

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Awards and Recognition Committee

Chair

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Public Information Committee

Chair

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Volunteer Leader Recruitment Committee

Chair

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Other Committees

Chair


**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 chair 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 GOAL	EXAMPLE ACHIEVEMENTS
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.	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 fundraising drive.

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.

<b>I. Organization</b>	<b>Possible points: 25</b>	<b>Score</b>
A. Advisory council membership represents different segments of county population.		
B. Officers elected.		
C. Committees appointed.		
D. Council meetings and attendance records.		
<b>II. Annual County 4-H Advisory Council Goals and Achievements</b>	<b>Possible points: 75</b>	<b>Score</b>
A. Help given in identifying interests and needs of youths and approving county program plans.	15 points	
B. Resources secured for the 4-H program.	25 points	
C. Assistance provided in helping youths 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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**Form 622**

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