



4-H Youth Development

MARYLAND 4-H MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES

University of Maryland Cooperative Extension administers the 4-H youth development program.

The mission of the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development program is to develop youth to reach their fullest potential as capable, competent, caring, and contributing individuals. Each county and Baltimore city in Maryland conducts 4-H youth development programs to accomplish this goal. To affirm Maryland Cooperative Extension's position concerning membership and to establish guidelines in this area to fulfill the above mission, the following philosophy and process statements are provided:

I. MEMBERSHIP POLICIES

- A. Membership is open to all without regard to race, color, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, or national origin.
- B. The 4-H enrollment year is January 1 through December 31. In order to receive credit for the completion of one year of membership and be eligible for participation in regional, state, and national competition, a 4-H member must enroll no later than June 30th. In order to enter in the Maryland State Fair, a 4-H member must be enrolled by May 1.
- C. The 4-H age divisions, as of January 1 of the current year:
 - 1. Clover members are 5-7 years.
 - 2. Junior members are 8-10 years.
 - 3. Intermediate members are 11-13 years.
 - 4. Senior members are 14-18 years (Includes youth with disabilities beyond age 18 if enrolled in a high school program.)
- D. The county of residence is the primary county for 4-H enrollment.

II. 4-H Membership across County Lines

- A. Youth and adults are expected to join 4-H in their county of residence or receive approval for membership outside their county of residence. Members may belong to more than one club in order to obtain special project information, participate in special activities, or for convenience of travel even if the club is located in a neighboring county or state. Members must declare official membership in one city or county and one state and may only compete in that city or county or as a representative of that city or county. 4-H membership in two counties in the same project simultaneously is not permitted.
- B. Consideration for membership in a county other than the county of residence will be given only in situations where a positive educational experience will result. In this case, the approved request procedures must be followed and the 4-H professionals in either counties or city/county must be in agreement that the change should occur.

III. Multi-Club Membership within the County

- A. Members may belong to more than one club in their county of residence in order to obtain special project information or to participate in special activities.
- B. Members in more than one 4-H club are expected to follow the by-laws and guidelines of each club to which they belong.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENTS U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS