



OSU EXTENSION
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

**Oklahoma
State 4-H
Leadership Council**

Revised 10/2021

Bylaws

Preface

This document is meant to serve as the guiding principles and policies for the Oklahoma State 4-H Leadership Council. It is not designed to be the governing document of the Oklahoma 4-H program. The primary source of general policy regarding the Oklahoma 4-H program can be found in the Oklahoma 4-H Policy Guide (Lit # 5) available annually on line at <http://4h.okstate.edu/>.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be “Oklahoma State 4-H Leadership Council,” though it is often referred to in these bylaws as “the Council.”

ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVES

The objectives for the State 4-H Leadership Council include:

- Serving as a role model, representative and spokesperson for the Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development Program at the three Land-Grant Universities.
- Upholding the high ideals, values and moral standards of the Oklahoma 4-H program.
- Traveling within the district and state to fulfill responsibilities.
- Serving as a “Youth Advisory Committee” to the state 4-H program.
- Serve as an active and contributing member of state activity and events committees.
- Planning, conducting and evaluating Council-led state events.
- Seek opportunities to expand and diversify audiences and programs of the Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development Program.

ARTICLE III – COUNCIL MEMBERS

SECTION 1 - Membership

- A. **Membership** – Categories consist of president, vice president, secretary, reporter, recreation Leader, three representatives from each district, and two 1890 Langston 4-H youth representatives. All members are elected for a one year term, serving from the conclusion of State 4-H Roundup the year they are elected until the conclusion of State 4-H Roundup the following year.
- B. **Advisor** – The advisor will be selected by the Assistant Director of 4-H Youth Development. The advisor’s roles are to:
- Serve as an mentor and educator.
 - Assist the team in obtaining the training and education necessary to carry out their responsibilities.
 - Challenge individual team members to master the practice of self-responsibility, organization, time management and communication.
 - Work in partnership with the team as they take responsibility for setting goals and committee work.
 - Encourage healthy partnerships with county staff, parent-volunteer associations, county officers/teen leaders, 4-H clubs, district 4-H program specialists, district officer teams, State 4-H Ambassadors and state staff.

SECTION 2 – STATE COUNCIL QUALIFICATIONS

- A. Individual has demonstrated the life skills of self-responsibility, organization, time management and communication.
- B. Candidate has an active status in the 4-H enrollment system, held or is holding a local and/or county 4-H office, has served as an active and contributing member of committees at the local/county/district level, is a certified 4-H volunteer, and has completed a county report form/medal form or record book. (Certified volunteer status is required because Council members often work directly with youth without adult supervision.)
- C. Candidates for president must be 17 years of age. Candidates for other Executive Officer positions (Vice-President, Secretary, Reporter and Recreation Leader) must be 16 years of age. Candidates for the office of District Representatives must be 15 years of age. Age will be determined by the candidate's age as of the first general assembly at Roundup.
- D. Candidates for executive positions may run for office up through the Roundup immediately following high school graduation or its equivalency. Candidates for the office of District Representatives may not run for office after they have graduated high school or completed graduation equivalency prior to Roundup.
- E. Candidate must complete State 4-H Leadership Council application.
- F. Candidate must participate in an orientation via the 4-H enrollment system prior to the filing deadline.
- G. Candidates must have Oklahoma residency and live within the geographic boundaries of the state during the term elected to carry out duties of the position. Candidate must be a county delegate and attend State 4-H Roundup the year seeking office.
- H. Representatives must be an active 4-H member within the district they are running to represent. Each District will elect 3 representatives. The Northeast and Southeast Districts will elect 3 at large positions. The West District will elect one representative member from the Northern Region, one representative member from the Southern Region and one at large representative.
- I. If a current Council member wishes to run for another term, expectations of his/her current position must be documented and met.
- J. Candidates for president, vice president: Only current or past State 4-H Council members, State Ambassadors, or district officers are eligible to run for these positions. A Council member may only serve one term as president and council members may only serve two terms as a district representative.
- K. Candidates for secretary, reporter, and recreation leader: 4-H members who meet the qualifications to be a State 4-H Council member as described in Article III, Section 2 are eligible to run for these positions.

SECTION 3 - DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

Council members are expected to serve as positive role models for their peers. As such, they are expected to strictly adhere to all items listed and inferred by the Oklahoma 4-H Code of Conduct and any other published policies or rules governing 4-H affiliated events and activities.

Team members must agree to fulfill and perform their duties and responsibilities as outlined for their leadership position, participate in training, attend regular business and committee meetings, follow through with team goals and projects, and participate in state and district events.

A. Duties Defined

District Representative's Responsibilities

1. Willingly accepts all duties of a district representative for the time elected (a one year term).
2. Serve as liaison within a district. Representatives will visit counties as requested to help with county programming, "visits" and/or "appearances."

3. Communicate on a regular basis with county youth and adult leadership teams to encourage participation in 4-H programming.
4. District representatives will be responsible for submitting district reports and materials to the reporter for 4-H publications, social media and the state 4-H website.
5. Serve as an active participant on state and district (as requested by district 4-H program specialists) committees. This includes planning, conducting and evaluating events and activities.
6. Attend Council meetings, either through a conference call, online or on-site meetings.
7. Represent Oklahoma 4-H by participating in county, district and state activities and events.
8. Perform duties delegated by the president or advisor.
9. Complete all reporting procedures required of team members in a timely manner.
10. On those occasions when the state and district 4-H program coordinators seek youth representation on programmatic committees, Council members will be appointed to represent the State 4-H Leadership Council.
11. Council members may be asked to serve as ex-officio members of the state 4-H boards and associations. As an ex-officio member, the individual will participate in meetings as a liaison for the State 4-H Leadership Council.

Langston University Representative:

1. Assist in coordination of county and state activities.
2. Encourage 1890 program participants to attend and become involved with county and state 4-H events and activities
3. Attend to duties as are necessary to carry out the Langston 4-H program.
4. Serve as a liaison between the 1860 and 1890 Land Grant University 4-H Youth Development Programs.
5. Serve as an active participant on state and district committees by planning, conducting and evaluating events and activities.
6. Attend State 4-H Executive Board meetings.

B. Responsibilities Defined

Annually a *Timeline of Responsibilities* is published for the State 4-H Leadership Council. The list is not all encompassing, but it includes regularly occurring responsibilities that have been assigned priority levels.

Level 1 Required - All team members required to participate.

Level 2 Requested - Want the team represented and/or participation in the project or program. All members must attend at least two.

Level 3 Recommended - Important to you as an individual or the team because of visibility or group spirit.

SECTION 4 - OFFICIAL UNIFORMS

1. **Formal Dress** shall include kelly green blazers, white shirts with sleeves, green-and-white striped ties, black dress slacks or black sheath style dress, black socks or appropriate hosiery and polished black shoes.
2. **Informal Uniform** shall consist of an orange polos or button-down shirts with the Osage 4-H shield worn with khaki pants, capris or skirt. Green polo worn with appropriate jeans, capris, or skirts. Shoes should be appropriate for the event and be clean and free from visible wear.
3. **Casual Uniform** shall include the Leadership Team T-shirt, nice jeans or jean shorts/Capris/skirt/skort. Shoes should be appropriate for the event, clean and free from visible wear.

4. Whenever formal and/or casual uniforms are worn, the 4-H Code of Conduct should be upheld. The uniform should never be worn in a location that would bring into question the integrity of the 4-H Youth Development Program.
5. Official uniforms should be worn for “official” 4-H functions or out of respect to 4-H alumni, volunteers, extension/university personnel or local, county or state government officials.
6. At no time should any part of the uniform be worn to promote any cause other than 4-H.

SECTION 5 - PERFORMANCE

A. Absences

- 1) **Excused** – Only by communicating with the advisor **and president in person, by e-mail or by telephone (excluding text messaging)** can a Council member (not a parent, sibling or educator) request an excused absence. The request must be at least one week in advance of a quarterly business meeting, mandatory conference call, training, activity and/or event. No other form of communication will be acceptable. Excused absences will be defined as a justifiable/reasonable event that was unavoidable. A total of four excused absences will be allowed per year (Roundup through Roundup). No more than one of the four can be a quarterly business meeting.
- 2) **Unexcused** – Unexcused absences will be defined as 1) negligent planning, 2) poor time management on the part of the Council member and 3) not requesting an excused absence at least one week in advance of a mandatory meeting/activity/event. Council members who accrue three unexcused absences – including any combination of quarterly meetings, mandatory conference calls, Centra meetings and/or Level 1 activities and events – in a single year will go before a review board to determine if they should continue their term of office.

- B. **Progress Review:** A quarterly evaluation of each team member will be conducted by the advisor. Each Council member will be responsible for filling out a quarterly report form and submitting it to the advisor.

C. Unsatisfactory Performance, Misconduct or Violation of Published Rules/Guidelines/Policies

1. **Unsatisfactory Performance:**
 - Disregarding the responsibility of or the refusal to make county visits, complete assignments, participate in committee work, attend business meetings and required activities and events.
 - Refusing to accept supervision or to cooperate with other members of the Council, team advisor/district/state staff, county educator and/or district specialist.
 - Showing lack of leadership, character and/or ethics through inappropriate, discourteous or unsportsmanlike behavior or language.
2. **Misconduct:** Physical or verbal abuse of youth or other adults, substance abuse, committing a criminal act, misuse of funds, irresponsible handling of animals, vehicles or machinery and any other items spelled out in the 4-H Code of Conduct or any other established rules or guidelines for sanctioned 4-H activities.
3. **Violation of Published Rules/Guidelines/Policies:** Any action conflicting with the Oklahoma 4-H Code of Conduct, 4-H Volunteer Behavioral Guidelines or any other established rules/guidelines/policies for sanctioned 4-H activities is grounds for immediate dismissal. In some cases, a 4-H Leadership Council member may be suspended from duty until an investigation is completed. Decision on immediate removal or suspension will be made by the advisor in consultation with the state 4-H program leader until the alleged violation has been given due process.

SECTION 6 - TERMINATION OF A COUNCIL MEMBER

- A. Council members who fail to fulfill the duties as described in Article II, Section 3 may be removed from office following procedures described in Article III, Section 5.
If found to have executed unsatisfactory performance, accrued excessive absences, been involved in misconduct or a violation of published rules/guidelines/policies, the Council member will forfeit his or her position.
- B. If a “Plan of Improvement” (POI) cannot be reached, the team member may choose to resign from the position, or they will be suspended from all activities. Steps may be taken to terminate the Council member through a review board.
- C. If significant effort is not put forth to accomplish the defined goals in the established timeline of a POI or into maintaining an acceptable level of performance for the remaining portion of the individual’s term, the Council member may choose to resign from the position. Otherwise, he or she will be suspended from all activities, and steps may be taken to terminate the Council member through a review board.
- D. A Council member who allegedly violates the Oklahoma 4-H Code of Conduct and any other published policies or rules governing 4-H-affiliated events and activities as a 4-H member will forfeit his or her office following the findings of a review board.
- E. Once a vacancy is established, the procedures for filling vacancies Article V, Section 3 will be followed.
- F. **Review Board** - Voting members of the review board for the State 4-H Council will include: one district 4-H specialist not from the respective district, one state 4-H specialist/assistant state 4-H specialist, the state 4-H program leader, and two State 4-H Leadership Council members, all of whom will be appointed by the state 4-H program leader. The Council member’s Extension educator may be present but will not have a vote.
 - 1. In the occurrence of unsatisfactory performance, a review board will only be called after a Plan of Improvement has been attempted without significant and consistent improvement/success, which is defined as meeting 80 percent of expectations as outlined in the Plan of Improvement.
 - 2. In the event three unexcused absences are accrued within a single year, a review board will be convened.
 - 3. In the event more than four excused absences are accrued within a single year, a review board will be convened.
 - 4. In the event a member of the Council is found to have been in violation of published rules/guidelines/policies or misconduct, a review board will be convened.

ARTICLE IV – Administrative Positions

SECTION 1 - ELIGIBILITY

Members interested in filing for the administrative positions of president or vice president must have satisfactorily fulfilled the responsibilities and expectations of a Council member or district officer.

SECTION 2 - OFFICES

Administrative Positions are defined as president, vice president, secretary, reporter and recreation leader. The following list of position responsibilities is not all encompassing. Individuals serving in administrative positions may be asked to perform other duties as necessary to complete Council business.

President’s Responsibilities

1. Knowledgeable and accountable for each individual's responsibilities and activities as part of the team.
2. Communicates regularly with the team advisor(s) and team members in an effort to provide the training, tools and materials necessary for representatives to carry out their responsibilities.
3. Works with all members of the team to assemble and provide an agenda one week in advance of the state executive board meetings. Presides at meetings.
4. With the assistance of the state executive board, provides a published agenda to council members no later than one week prior to a quarterly business meeting or any other meeting deemed necessary for conducting Council business. Presides at meetings.
5. On a quarterly schedule, addresses the performance and concerns of individual council members and/or the council as a whole.
6. Appoints committees and committee chairs.
7. Coordinates and appoints team members to perform timely duties/assignments or special requests.
8. Ex-officio member of various state boards associated with the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service and Oklahoma 4-H Program.
9. Attends to such duties as are necessary for the growth of the Oklahoma 4-H program.

Vice President's Responsibilities

1. Serves in the absence of the president.
2. With cooperation of committee chair(s), coordinates the team's committee work and reporting. Keeps the president, advisor, secretary and representatives informed of committee progress and needs.
3. Regularly communicates with district representatives in an effort to provide the training, tools and materials necessary for them to carry out their responsibilities.
4. Assist president on questions of parliamentary procedures.
5. Perform all duties delegated by the president.

Secretary's Responsibilities

1. Records minutes of all state 4-H executive team meetings. Types and sends minutes (electronically or by mail) **within two weeks** of each meeting.
2. Keeps written record of all committee reports and actions.
3. Keeps Extension staff and district 4-H officer teams informed of all business and projects.
4. Composes official correspondence of the organization.
5. Works with the reporter to maintain an electronic history of the Council's accomplishments and activities, meetings (copies of minutes and agendas), and correspondence.
6. Performs duties delegated by the president.

Reporter's Responsibilities

1. Provides articles and information for state newsletters (Focus on Youth and 4-H Foundation publications) and the Oklahoma 4-H website resulting from committee work and information collected by district representatives.
2. Works with district representatives and district reporters to collect and communicate the 4-H story by coordinating the submission of information or stories to 4-h.org.
3. Works with the state 4-H marketing coordinator, Oklahoma State University Agricultural Communications Services and other media outlets to market 4-H events and activities.
4. Works with the secretary in maintaining an annual electronic history of the team's accomplishments and activities. Provides a quarterly report and update to the advisor and team.
5. Works closely with district representatives to ensure 4-H is being promoted through various media, including newsletters, newspapers, social media and websites.

Recreation Leader's Responsibilities

1. Assists with group singing and recreational activities at state 4-H events or any other special gatherings that are part of the state 4-H program.
2. Provides new ideas for group games and activities.
3. Illustrates enthusiasm and creativity in all activities.
4. Provides the State 4-H Council opportunities to have fun as they work to accomplish their responsibilities.

ARTICLE V – ELECTIONS

SECTION 1 – FILING

Applications and filing information will be posted on the Oklahoma 4-H website and provided to county Extension offices. The candidates for State 4-H Leadership Council positions will be posted on the Oklahoma 4-H website prior to the election. Candidates are required to complete the application packet by the designated date.

In the event no one files by the deadline for one of the administrative positions, candidates who have filed will be given an opportunity to re-file for the open position prior to finalizing the ballot.

SECTION 2 – CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION RULES

- A. *Behavior of Candidates* - All candidates must strictly adhere to all items listed and inferred by the Oklahoma 4-H Code of Conduct and any other published policies or rules governing 4-H affiliated events and activities.

Candidates who allegedly violate the Oklahoma 4-H Code of Conduct and any other published policies or rules governing 4-H affiliated events and activities will appear before a review board.

- B. *Speeches and Campaigning* -

1) **Speeches-**

- a) Candidates for administrative positions (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Reporter and Recreation Leader) will be required to present speeches at Roundup. Speeches for the office of President shall not exceed four minutes; all other candidates may not exceed three. Candidates for District Representative must contact their District Program Coordinator to find out if speeches are required.
- b) Candidates for administrative positions will participate in a town hall meeting at Roundup and answer one question posed by the voting delegates.
- c) Props and Costumes – Candidates **may or may not** choose to wear a costume, with the term “costume” defined as the style of dress typical of a certain country, period, profession, character, etc. Props may be used during candidate speeches, but only if no extra time is required for setting up the prop and only if the prop can be carried on stage by the candidate without assistance.

Candidates for administrative positions may carry their speech on stage as either an 8.5” x 11” piece of paper or on smaller note cards.

Candidates for administrative positions may use no more than five PowerPoint slides with their speeches. A template of five PowerPoint slides is available to candidates, or they may create their own. District Representative candidates need

to contact their District Program Coordinator to find out if PowerPoints are required.

Candidates for recreation leader may use a musical instrument or accompaniment CD that does not require additional set up on stage.

- d) Candidates for administrative positions will be required to submit their campaign speeches (in writing) and their PowerPoint presentations to the State 4-H Office two weeks prior to the date of the election. Candidates are also encouraged to work with their educators to develop and edit their campaign speeches and PowerPoint presentations prior to submission to the State 4-H Office.
- 2) **Campaigning** – Campaign materials and literature will not be permitted at any state/district 4-H events prior to State 4-H Roundup.

No campaigning or campaign materials shall be displayed inside an election area at Roundup.

3) **Campaign Literature/Materials** –

- a) Any form of social media campaigning is permitted by the candidate as long as there is no negative campaigning or defamation of character reported. Any inappropriate messages are grounds for removing the candidate from the ballot. The candidate is also responsible for the actions or messages of friends, colleagues and associates campaigning on his or her behalf.
- b) Campaign materials such as buttons, stickers, clothing, business card, candy, trinkets, etc. are not permitted.
- c) Campaign materials will be limited to 1 poster NOT TO EXCEED 22" X 28" on an easel (provided by the candidate) at Gallagher Iba Arena (or other designated area). No tear off materials, flyers or gifts may be attached to the poster(s).
- d) Posters will be checked by the state election board designate and will be removed if they violate election guidelines.

C. ELECTION OF STATE COUNCIL POSITIONS

- 1) **District Representative Elections** – The balloting for district representatives will be conducted under the supervision of the District Program Coordinator(s) at Roundup during district rallies. Each Roundup participant will cast **one** ballot voting for three candidates for district representatives. The three candidates with the most votes will be elected. In the event of a tie between candidates, run off voting will be conducted at the district rally. Each district will elect 3 representatives. The Northeast and Southeast Districts will elect 3 at large positions. The West District will elect one Northern Region representative, one Southern region representative and one at large representative.
- 2) **State 4-H Leadership Council Administrative Positions** – The balloting for administrative positions will be conducted under the supervision of the state election board at Roundup. All Roundup delegates will complete a ballot during their county caucus and turn in to county voting delegates and/or educators. The votes will be tallied to determine who the county voting delegates will cast votes for on an official ballot.
- 3) **State Election Board** – The balloting for state administrative positions will be conducted under the supervision of a state election board consisting of:

- (a) One State 4-H Council member (must not be seeking an office)
- (b) State staff person with Roundup election responsibilities
- (c) District 4-H educator or designate (one from each district)

Majority Vote - When there are more than two candidates for an administrative office and if one candidate does not receive a majority (50% plus 1) of the votes cast, a runoff election shall be conducted between the two candidates receiving the most votes.

Tie Vote - In the event of a tie vote, the following procedures will be followed:

- (a) A re-count will be conducted to confirm the tie.
- (b) If a tie is confirmed it will be broken by following Robert's Rules of Order.

Write-in Candidates - No write-in candidates will be considered.

4) **County Electorate System at State 4-H Roundup**

Voting Delegates - Each county will have **three** votes. The voting delegates' names will be submitted by the county Extension office with their Roundup registration materials.

SECTION 3 - VACANCIES

The State 4-H Leadership Council shall be responsible for declaring a vacancy with the approval of the state specialists and district program coordinators. All vacancies shall be filled by a vote of the Council.

District Representative - In the event a district representative moves outside of his/her district, he/she will become a district representative within his/her new district and complete his/her term of office.

Administrative Positions - In the event the position of president is vacated, the vice president shall become the president for the remainder of the term. In the event of a vacancy for all other administrative positions, the vacancy will be filled by electing a current member of the Council to complete the remainder of the term.

An individual selected to fill the unexpired term will have an option to run for a full term if he/she meets the qualifications.

ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS

SECTION 1 - Quarterly Meetings

The Council will hold quarterly meetings face to face to conduct business and training. A quorum shall consist of simple majority (*50% plus 1*).

SECTION 2 - Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the president, advisor or three members of the Council. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call/agenda. Meetings may be conducted by phone, other electronic means or on site. Members shall be provided at least 14 business days notice. A quorum shall consist of simple majority (*50% plus 1*).

ARTICLE VII - EXECUTIVE TEAM

The executive team is defined as the president, vice president, secretary, reporter and recreation leader. This team shall prepare the quarterly agenda and training, review committee work and

make necessary re-assignments or appointments, and receive and review correspondence for presentation to the Council and provide an appropriate response to the party. The agenda for each quarterly meeting will be made available to Council members one week prior to the each State 4-H Council meeting.

ARTICLE VIII – COMMITTEES

SECTION 1 - Standing Committee Membership

- A. Membership assignments shall change at each training retreat or orientation.
- B. The president will assign members based on the members' interests and experience.

SECTION 2 - Standing Committee Descriptions and Roles

Other standing committees may be established as deemed necessary to carry on the work of the Council. Committees will be established by the executive team.

The standing committees and their general descriptions and responsibilities shall consist of:

- A. **Service Projects** – Select, plan, promote, support, conduct and evaluate statewide projects. The secretary will chair this committee.
- B. **Communications Committee** – Duties will include developing the speakers bureau brochure and the state newsletter and providing articles and information to Focus on Youth and the state 4-H website. District representatives will serve the committee, assisting the state reporter in the researching and writing of educational content; identifying, interviewing and writing news stories; taking photographs; and editing the final copy. The Communications Committee is also responsible for collecting content for the Oklahoma 4-H social media pages. The reporter will chair this committee.
- C. **Roundup Assembly Committee** – Duties will entail planning the assemblies, organizing the videos.

SECTION 3 - Special Committees

Other committees shall be appointed by the president or advisor as the Council or administrative team deems necessary to carry on the work of the Council.

SECTION 4 - Ex-officio

The vice president shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

ARTICLE IX – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern this organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws and any special rules of order this organization may adopt.

ARTICLE X- AMENDMENTS

- A. These bylaws may be amended by a two-third vote at any quarterly or special meeting of the Council with the support of the state and district staff, providing that said amendment(s) has been presented in writing to all members and advisors at least 30 days prior to its presentation to the Council for adoption.

- B. Proposed amendments may be made by the State 4-H Leadership Council bringing proposed amendments to the state and district 4-H program specialists or by the program specialists bringing proposed changes to the State 4-H Leadership Council.
- C. A current version of the State 4-H Leadership Council Bylaws will be posted on the state 4-H website.