

ANR Cooperative Extension Risk Assessment Best Practices

Volunteers – Managing Volunteers

A. Policies & Procedures

1. Make the 4-H Policy Handbook available on the Web and in hard copy
2. Provide 4-H YDP statewide office support, guidance, and coordination of processes
3. Perform background investigations (fingerprinting)
4. Re-enroll and renew leader cards annually
5. Have close oversight and supervision of volunteer groups
6. Shut down ineffective or failing programs/activities
7. Promote and enforce the Volunteer Code of Conduct
7. Facilitate training and discussions with volunteer groups
8. Provide creative program direction
9. Focus on accountability and ethics in administration of volunteer programs
10. Ensure that there is written backup prior to issuing "directives", policies, or instructions

B. Volunteer Training & Activities

1. Involve volunteers in statewide committees
2. Insure staff attendance at sectional/state 4-H leader councils (sharing information, answering questions, etc.)
3. Provide statewide coordination of training efforts
4. Minimize parent involvement except at the formal volunteer level
5. Ensure volunteers follow all rules
6. Provide all volunteers with appropriate orientation and training
7. Work with individual differences, understanding that not all volunteers can deliver the highest quality program or are capable of running programs independently
8. Have more effective and systematic orientation and training of volunteers by developing training material "templates"
10. Provide broader training for financial responsibilities
11. Provide Web-based training modules for volunteer training

C. Volunteer Management

1. Hold volunteers and youth members responsible for their behavior
2. Use Handbook and policies when overseeing volunteers/members
3. Provide controls and oversight of 4-H club bank account and other financial operations
4. Audit financial resources to ensure compliance with policies and institute regular periodic reporting

ANR Cooperative Extension Risk Assessment Best Practices

5. Require leaders and members to have 4-H identification cards for statewide activities
6. Expand staff resources to assist with increased expectation for effective volunteer management
7. Provide effective coordination of statewide activities
8. Systematize the way policy gets disseminated (i.e., follow a clear, consistent process)
9. Recognize the importance and value of volunteers

D. Volunteer Evaluation/Discipline

1. Implement an evaluation processes for volunteers
2. Discipline volunteers at an earlier stage of infraction
3. Pull leader cards when necessary because of inappropriate conduct
4. Recognize volunteer contributions (e.g., benefits of MGP, educational aspects, etc.)
5. Create opportunities for more staff/volunteer interaction
6. Shut down ineffective or failing programs
7. More clearly define for volunteers and staff the responsibility that each has for the success of the program
8. Communicate that volunteering is a privilege and not a right
9. Inform UC administration on the positive benefits of volunteerism -- how volunteer-based programs benefit UC
10. Recognize the importance and value of volunteers