

# **ANR Cooperative Extension Risk Assessment Best Practices**

## **4-H – Volunteer & Community Reactions/Complaints**

### **A. Community Reactions/Complaints**

1. Promote ongoing communication with stakeholders through newsletters, sitting on commissions, developing local collaborations
2. Increase public education through local media about our mission as an organization
3. Be available and receptive to input from local community
4. Be proactive in anticipating local community reaction
5. Provide training to all staff about the process for handling community issues
6. Clarify the role of various ANR offices in handling community complaints
7. Anticipate community reaction to changes in policies, practices, or programs and address concerns up front, rather than waiting for complaints to occur.

### **B. Volunteer Reactions/Complaints**

1. Provide a printed Code of Conduct
2. Make the policy manual accessible in printed and Web-based formats
3. Provide comprehensive local volunteer orientation/training
4. Clarify the volunteer complaint process
5. Avoid issuing new policies mid-year which can upset or confuse volunteers
6. Be explicit about actions and be consistent in the application of consequences
7. Look at conflicts that occur around money-making projects; analyze fund-raising issues for appropriate solutions
8. Provide conflict resolution training to county staff and volunteers
9. Explore models for a statewide conflict resolution process
10. Create a new section in policy manual about conflict resolution
11. Provide training to all staff and volunteers regarding 4-H/ANR policies
12. Develop procedural guidelines (with examples of behavior and consequences) to allow for standardization of actions throughout state
13. Provide coordination for multi-county, regional, and statewide activities to clarify roles, responsibilities and accountability
14. Stress the importance of accountability for volunteers as agents of the University
15. Have a standard operating procedure for dealing with removal of volunteers, including sample letters and timelines
16. Make volunteers responsible for their own conflict resolution and hold them accountable for resolution