

# Section 1: County Ambassador Program Basics

The position of County Ambassador is open to all qualified 4-H members in all program delivery modes: community club, afterschool club, SPIN club, summer camp, etc.

## Time Commitment

12 – 24 months, as determined by county calendar and program design. The county can design a one-year, two-year, or overlapping time commitment.

### Options to consider:

- **12 months:** manageable for most youth; no time for the incoming team to learn from the outgoing team.
- **16 – 18 months:** provides a period of overlap, where an incoming team can learn from the outgoing team and the outgoing team can mentor the incoming team.
- **24 months:** a combined team of 1<sup>st</sup> year and 2<sup>nd</sup> year adds dimension of growth and improvement, 1<sup>st</sup> years learn from 2<sup>nd</sup> years, and 2<sup>nd</sup> years have another type of opportunity to mentor.

## Program Timeline

This is a recommended timeline to encourage teams to be able to attend the California 4-H State Leadership Conference and start their meetings early in the program year. The timeline can be adjusted earlier to accommodate the interview panel or County schedule.

- Application Release: January
- Application Deadline: March
- Application Review, Interview and Selection April
- Orientation May
- Attend State Leadership Conference July
- First Team Meeting August

### State Leadership Conference

All County Ambassadors are strongly encouraged to attend and actively participate in the California 4-H State Leadership Conference at the beginning of their term, alongside their coaches. The conference offers tailored learning and leadership opportunities specifically designed for County Ambassadors.

## Qualifications

1. County Ambassadors must be between 14 – 18 years old and meet the 4-H membership requirements for the length of the term of service. **On the first day of the appointment to County Ambassador, applicants must be at least 14 years old.**
2. Applicants must have at least one year of prior 4-H membership, which does not need to be consecutive or the most recent year.
3. Applicants must demonstrate leadership experience and skills by documenting the following:
  - a. **Mastery of a project:** A minimum of 6 hours of instruction, supported by a skills statement.
  - b. **Significant leadership roles:** 40 hours, with at least 10 hours within 4-H.
  - c. **Civic Engagement and/or community service:** 30 hours, with at least 6 hours through 4-H.
  - d. **Public speaking engagements:** 10 total, including at least 2 at 4-H events.
  - e. **Involvement in 4-H:** A list of 15 activities, which may include project skill activities, attendance at 4-H events, honors, and recognition. **OR** achieve a Gold Star Rank.

**Note:** Definitions for project skill activities, 4-H events attended, honors, and recognition can be found in the California 4-H Record Book Manual Star Ranks Path, Section 2: Personal Development Report (PDR).

### Documenting Involvement in 4-H

Applicants can use the PDR or the Summary of 4-H Work form to demonstrate completing at least 15 activities items in the Achievement Program.

Applicants may also submit documentation of having achieved a Gold Star Rank to satisfy the above 5 requirements. Documentation can be the signed and dated Star Rank chart, other written documentation, signed by a non-parent adult volunteer, that the achievement was awarded.

Completing a PDR or an Emerald Star I, Emerald Star II or Impact Star Achievement form is not an application requirement for County Ambassador.



## Section 2: Application and Selection

### Application Requirements

Applicants will submit the required application form, substantiating documents, and letters of recommendation to their designated county contact by the date set by their county administrator for the County Ambassador Program. Applications and related documents may be processed by either digital or paper forms. The following are the required application elements:

#### Application

1. **Applicant Information**
2. **Essay Responses**
3. **4-H Resume**
4. **Written Evidence of Leadership Experience and Skills**
5. **Three (3) Letters of Recommendation:**
  - a. **One letter:** from a 4-H youth member.
  - b. **Two letters:** from adults who have knowledge of the applicant's leadership experience, skills, and character. At least one of the letters must be from a 4-H adult volunteer, who has knowledge of the applicant's skills and character demonstrated within 4-H.

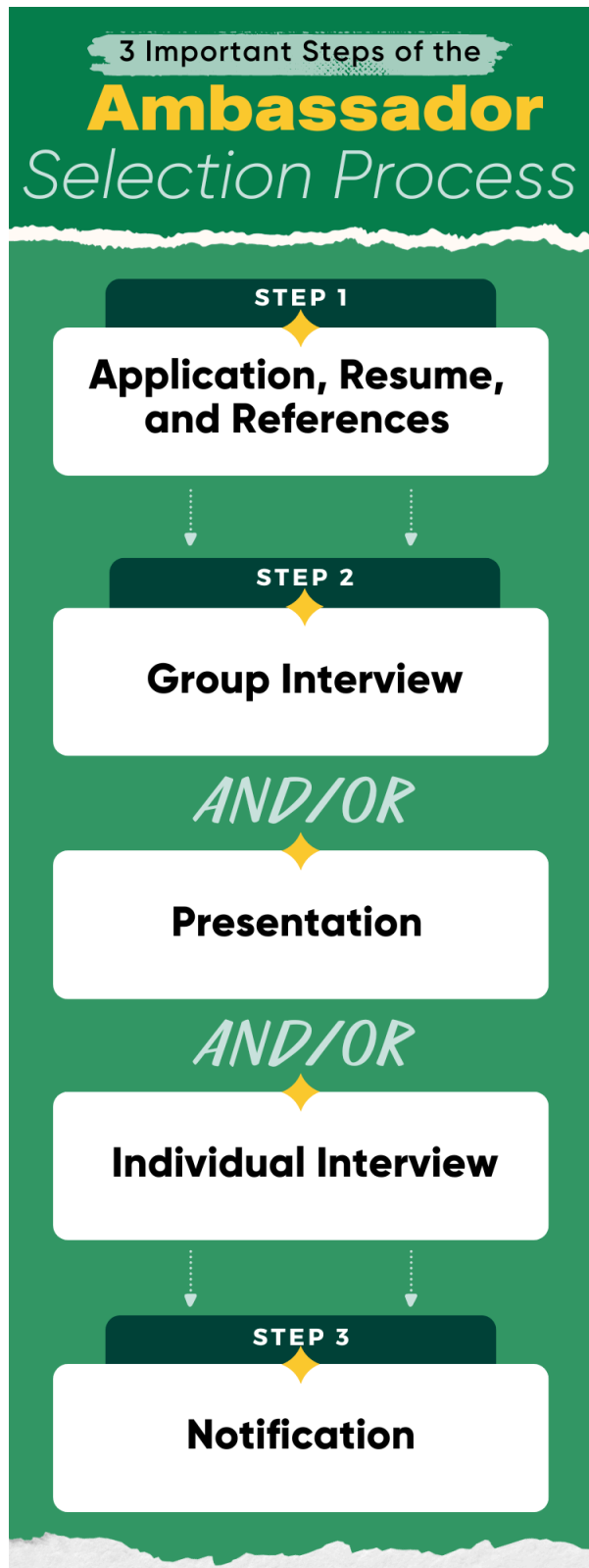
**Note:** Recommendations may not be from a parent/guardian, sibling or other family member residing in the same household as the applicant.

The county designated administrator can determine how Letters of Recommendation are received. Options may include electronic submission, paper forms sent directly to county staff, or in packet form submitted by the member, etc.

The application process CANNOT require any part of the 4-H Record Book except the 4-H Resume and the Star Rank chart as evidence of achieving the Gold Star.

## Ambassador Selection Process

In addition to the application packet, the selection process can include additional steps. The application and notification components are both mandatory.



### Selection Committee

The county's selection committee shall review the applications. The county administrator, 4-H program personnel, if different from county administrator(s), and/or a designated volunteer committee should determine the best mix of people to serve on the review committee.

### Committee Make-up

- At least one member must be a youth member.
- May include any of the following:
  - 4-H program personnel
  - Current Ambassadors
  - Current Ambassador Coaches
  - County I&R Committee members
  - Community members
  - Volunteer Management Organization (VMO) designees

### Application Review

The first review of the application should establish that the applicant meets the qualifying criteria to move forward in the selection process and be invited to attend the interview.

### Interview Process

Each county's selection process may contain any of the components listed below. The county designated administrator and selection committees should choose the interview components that best fit the size and style of their County Ambassador program.

*Evaluation rubrics should be modified to mirror the selection process and total maximum points adjusted.*

**Group Interview**

Often this is a simulated exercise in teamwork that is observed by the interviewers. The exercise usually involves some form of project planning, such as a hypothetical awards ceremony or leadership event. It can also be a series of complex initiative activities that are sufficiently front-loaded and debriefed. The group interview gives some evidence of how well the 4-H County Ambassador candidates will work together if selected.

**Prepared Speech**

A presentation may be delivered to the review committee. The topics from which the applicant could choose should be limited to three.

***Suggested topics:***

- Leadership
- Youth/Adult partnerships
- Service-learning projects
- What is 4-H?
- What is your favorite project and why?
- "To make the best better"

**Individual Interview**

The process may include an individual interview for each applicant with a panel of 2-3 county designees. Due to individual differences in comprehension, and the complex nature of some questions, interview questions should be made available to the applicants in advance. This approach is recommended as it allows applicants to read and comprehend the questions beforehand, especially for those who require both auditory and visual processing. To ensure consistency, the same questions should be posed to each applicant in the same manner.

***Suggested questions:***

- Describe something that you have accomplished in the last year that was hard to do. What challenges did you face and how did you change plans to achieve this accomplishment?
- Describe a conflict you have been in and talk about how you handled it.
- How would someone else describe your leadership style?
- If you could teach everyone in the world one thing, what would it be and why?
- How would you describe 4-H to someone who is not familiar with the program?

**Notification**

Applicants should receive written notification of their selection status on a date determined by the county administrator. The timeline for notification should be communicated to applicants in advance. For those who are not accepted, detailed examples of improvements for future applications should be provided. Feedback should include specific recommendations for enhancing skills in areas where more experience is needed.