



4-H Youth Development (4-H YDP) staff are available to assist members and adult volunteers, address and create solutions to problems and for consultation and interpretation of policy and procedure. When there is a complaint regarding an individual, situation or event, a County Complaint Form should first be filed with the 4-H YDP staff so appropriate action can be taken.

Final decisions regarding the 4-H program in a county and the appointment of volunteers are the responsibility of the University of California Cooperative Extension County Director.

### **How to file a Complaint Form**

1. Use the Complaint Form to report all non-medical incidents that pose no health & safety concerns, potential violations of California 4-H member or adult volunteer code of conduct, violations of UC 4-H YDP policy, or local county 4-H YDP policies.
2. Complete all sections of the Complaint Form. Incomplete information can delay addressing the incident.
3. Briefly describe the complaint. Include additional information as necessary to complete the report.

### **4-H YDP Process for Addressing Complaints:**

All relevant information must be reported to 4-H YDP staff, using the Complaint Form within 30 days of the incident. This information will be reviewed by 4-H YDP staff to determine the appropriate actions necessary to resolve the complaint.

1. The 4-H YDP staff will review the complaint.
  - If the complaint is regarding an infraction of local county 4-H council policies, 4-H YDP staff will refer the complaint to the county 4-H council president for review and possible review by the 4-H Council Review Board. See [4-H Council Complaint Review Board Procedures](#).
  - If the complaint is regarding the UC policies and procedures, the 4-H YDP staff will determine who will review the complaint: the 4-H YDP staff, county director or the 4-H Council Complaint Review Board.

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2. Involved parties will be notified that a written complaint has been received. All involved parties will have 30 days from the date of notification that a complaint has been received to explain their version of the incident via the Complaint Response Form.
  3. At the end of the 30-day response period, the appropriate review team will review all information and evaluate the complaint and make recommendations for resolution using the following as appropriate:
    - a. The 4-H Adult Volunteer Code of Conduct
    - b. Adult/Parent Behavior Guidelines
    - c. 4-H Member Code of Conduct
    - d. University of California Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development Program Policy Handbook
    - e. County 4-H Youth Development Program Policies
    - f. 4-H Club Constitution, Bylaws, and Project Rules
    - g. 4-H County Constitution and Bylaws
    - h. Local 4-H Council Policies

If the county director is the reviewer, the report will be shared with 4-H staff who will work with the county director to notify the complainant and others as appropriate.

4. Taking into consideration the severity of the incident and any past incidents, the following actions may take place in accordance with the policies set forth by the University of California 4-H Youth Development Program Policy Handbook.
  - a. A letter will be filed and sent to all identified parties detailing the findings of the inquiry.
  - b. A letter will be filed and sent to the individual(s) identifying the specific course of action to ensure that the situation does not continue and identifying specific expectations for continued participation in the 4-H YDP and consequences if the changes in behavior are not sustained.
  - c. Should the review find that the infraction is so severe that an adult volunteer should be suspended or removed, the 4-H YDP staff and county director should follow the processes outlined in Chapter 6 Suspension or Removal of a 4-H Volunteer.
5. The county director's decision will be final.