



Volunteers Working with 4-H Staff

In every county, the 4-H Youth Development Program is planned and conducted by paid 4-H staff. Ideally, the 4-H staff and volunteers work together as a team in carrying out the 4-H mission and in conducting the 4-H program.

The Roles of Volunteers

4-H volunteers are part of a large network of individuals working with 4-H youth throughout the United States. 4-H volunteers are caring adults and teens who serve as positive role models for the youth in our local community 4-H programs.

There are many roles for volunteers which are described in *Selecting the 4-H Volunteer Role Right for You*. Volunteers who work directly with youth are screened and trained to ensure that 4-H standards and expectations are achieved.

Whatever the role you may select as a volunteer, you will interact often with paid county 4-H staff. You may also have the opportunity to work with state 4-H staff. It is important that you understand the role of staff in helping you to do your job as a volunteer.

The Roles of County 4-H Staff

The county 4-H staff is responsible for working directly with volunteers. This includes recruiting, screening, appointing, training, supervising, and reviewing performance of teen and adult volunteers involved in the program. The staff also provides guidance to county 4-H leaders' associations, teen councils, expansion and review committees, and other advisory groups.

Another responsibility is to plan, conduct and evaluate educational programs in cooperation with volunteers. This may include activities and events such as public presentations, fairs, camps, recognition events, animal shows, and others. It may also include school enrichment and after school programs, special interest programs, and programs run in cooperation with other organizations.

The county 4-H staff also promotes the 4-H program through mass media, cooperating with other agencies and organizations, and holding special promotional events. In addition, the staff makes and maintains contacts within the community for educational and financial resources that support 4-H members, clubs, leaders, and programs.

County 4-H Agent

The county 4-H agent is administratively responsible for the total county 4-H program. This means the agent is responsible for overall program planning, reporting, staff training, and the general state of the 4-H program. In addition, the agent has specific program responsibilities.

Every county 4-H agent is also a Rutgers University faculty member in the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS), and in addition to county responsibilities, is assigned university-related duties. These may include research, committees, faculty meetings, and more. By fulfilling these duties, the agent strengthens the link between county and university, and ensures that 4-H members and leaders receive the most current information available.



The 4-H agent reports to the 4-H department chair at the state 4-H office. To become a county 4-H agent, an individual must have a master's degree and three years of experience. Funding for the position is generally provided by both the university and the county. University funding for Extension comes from state funds allocated to the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station.

4-H Program Associate

The county 4-H program associate is a 4-H professional staff member that may be responsible for the leadership and management of an entire county 4-H program or may be responsible for key program areas within the county program. They are full members of the 4-H Youth Development Department and therefore serve as a link between the county and university. They actively participate on state level committees and assist in state-wide projects and events. They are required to have a bachelor's degree, and in most cases, the position is jointly funded by the university and the county.

Other County 4-H Staff

4-H program assistants and consultants provide assistance to the county 4-H agent or program associate in specific program areas based on county needs. Funding and qualifications for these positions are generally determined by the counties or special grant programs. These individuals are supervised by the county 4-H agent.

Clerical workers are provided by the counties. The county 4-H secretary is an important link between the 4-H program and the outside world, as well as 4-H members and leaders. In addition to providing clerical support, the secretary can also answer many questions and serve as an excellent resource.

State 4-H Staff

State 4-H staff includes the 4-H department chair, camp directors, state level faculty and staff, and other support staff. The role of the state 4-H staff is to provide support to the county programs and state 4-H events.

The 4-H department chair is the head of the Department of 4-H Youth Development at Rutgers University. This individual provides administrative leadership and program direction to the total New Jersey 4-H program and reports to the state Director of Extension. Additional support and assistance is provided by administrative staff as needed.

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For more information on New Jersey 4-H, please visit www.nj4h.rutgers.edu.

Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and County Boards of Chosen Freeholders. Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.