

Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Bylaws

Proposed: November 2020 Approved: January 2021

Article I: General

1. The 4-H Year begins October 1 and ends September 30 of the following year. Participation in some programs or aspects of 4-H may be subject to certain age requirements, specific enrollment deadlines, or specified ownership deadlines. New members may enroll at any time in the Ravalli County 4-H program. For fair eligibility, see Article VII, #5 for information.
2. A voting delegate on a committee/subcommittee shall consist of teen project members and project leaders currently enrolled in the project, i.e. beef, sheep, goats, etc. If a vote is needed during the enrollment period, prior year enrollment applies.
3. The Clover: Montana 4-H Project Selection Guide outlines the classification and age ranges for youth members. To move from Junior to Senior level the member must be 14 years old by October 1 of the 4-H year.
4. Bylaws may be amended or replaced at one of the Advisory Council Meetings, provided the amendments or changes undergo the following procedures:
 - a. Changes to the 4-H Council Bylaws are proposed to the Advisory Council and the Extension Agent acting in the ex-officio position for the 4-H Council. Changes include Ravalli County Fair Book and every 4-H Council subcommittee. These subcommittees include: Livestock (including subcommittees), Small Animal, Still Exhibits, Shooting Sports, Food Booth, etc.
 - b. The proposed changes of the 4-H Council Bylaws are published for availability in the 4-H Newsletter and sent by request.
 - c. The proposed changes to the 4-H Council Bylaws are voted on and approved by the majority of the Advisory Council at the next scheduled meeting following publication.
 - d. Bylaws will be reviewed as needed by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee (see Constitution).
5. Deadlines: All Deadlines shall be met and held as final except in cases of unforeseen circumstances such as automobile and dire health-related emergencies. Member involved shall document the unforeseen circumstances themselves to the Extension Office. In the event when the deadline occurs on a holiday or a weekend, the deadline will be extended to the next business day following the deadline.

Article II: Dues

1. All 4-H Members and Leaders will pay Ravalli County 4-H Enrollment Dues
2. Cloverbud Dues: enrollment dues for the Cloverbud members will be \$5.00 to cover donation to Montana 4-H Foundation.
3. Member Dues: fifty percent of the dues listed on the enrollment form will remain in the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory financial account and 50% will be donated to the Montana 4-H Foundation as Ravalli County's contribution.
4. Leader Dues: fifty percent of the dues listed on the enrollment form will remain in the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory financial account and 50% will be donated to the Montana State 4-H Leaders Council. The State Council acts as an advisor to the State 4-H Office just as our 4-H Advisory Council advises the Ravalli County Extension Office.

Article III: Club Requirements

1. A 4-H club must follow the state guidelines to create and maintain a club. There needs to be a minimum of five youth members from three different families.
2. Each club shall have a Constitution/By-laws on file at the Extension Office. Club Constitutions shall not supersede or conflict that of the County or State.
3. Organizational leaders and/or designee are encouraged to attend at least one leader training a year. Leader trainings are directly related to the success of your club.
4. Each club is encouraged to send a club representative to attend at least one 4-H Advisory Council meeting a year to keep club informed.
5. 4-H clubs will be encouraged to hold regular meetings at a frequency approved by county 4-H designated Extension Agent. The minutes will be sent to the Extension Office with the club year end report.
6. All Ravalli County 4-H Clubs must participate in the Ravalli County Council fundraising events: Carnival and Fair Corner Cafe. Participation by all clubs in these fundraising activities assures availability of funds for members to participate in activities of their choice. Exception from County Council Fundraisers must be approved by the 4-H Extension Agent and 4-H Advisory Council. The granting of funding requests will be based on recorded participation in county fundraisers.
7. Club Financial Account: A club is not required to have a checking account but if clubs choose to raise funds, they must complete a 4-H Club and Committee Fundraiser Form with the Extension Office and follow the guidelines outline in Montana 4-H Treasurer Book.
 - a. All bank statements, receipts, cancelled checks, checkbooks, savings account books and the Montana 4-H Treasurer's Book, should be available upon request from the County Extension Agent or his/her designee who should request periodic financial reviews.
 - b. The Annual Summary Financial Report and any supporting documents are due to the MSU Extension Office by the close of first business day in November.
8. Clubs with finances held with the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council will adhere to the following:
 - a. 4-H Council will:
 - i. Provide monthly statements of club's accounts
 - ii. Process invoices twice a month. All claims submitted by the 1st and 15th of every month will be paid within two weeks.
 - iii. Deposit funds in the 4-H Advisory Council financial accounts
 - b. 4-H Clubs will:
 - i. Submit all funds to the 4-H Council at the Extension Office using 4-H council invoice coversheet with receipts attached.
 - ii. All checks must be written to "Ravalli County 4-H" not to the individual club
 - iii. Manage funds by a club treasurer and keep accurate records
 - iv. Complete a Year-End Financial Summer Report by October 30 for the previous 4-H Year, similar to 4-H Clubs with a 4-H financial account
 - v. Pay 1% annual assessment based on yearend balance on Yearly Summary Report to Montana 4-H through the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council
 - vi. If a club requests additional financial accounts from the 4-H Council Treasurer, there will be a \$4 fee per request.

9. If a club decides to separate or dissolve, they must contact the Extension Office for most current Montana 4-H guidelines and procedures.

Article IV: Leader Requirements and Liability

1. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for young people who participate in the program, 4-H leaders that have direct, one-on-one unsupervised contact with youth must participate in a volunteer certification process. This process includes completing a 4-H volunteer application, completing a disclosure and consent form, completing an agreement and standards of behavior form and clearing a criminal background check.
2. Adult volunteers must be at least 19 years of age. Youth volunteers (4-H Age 13 and older) are individuals under 19 years of age, may be 4-H members and must be under the supervision of an adult. Adult volunteers between ages 19-21 are not eligible to serve as chaperons for 4-H activities, events or trips.
3. Volunteer Liability - 4-H volunteers acting in an official capacity for the MSU Extension are, in part, carrying out the business of Extension. To that extent they are covered by Section 2-9 -305, MCA 2005, which provides them with liability protection, not accident or medical insurance, while acting within the course of their official capacity as a 4-H volunteer leader, unless the claim is based upon intentional tort or felonious act.

Article V: Projects

1. For fair eligibility, see Article VII: #5.
2. 4-H projects are for the members to complete on an individual basis with guidance and supervision of a parent, adult, teacher or leader. The 4-H project books are to be encouraged to be completed in a group setting.
3. 4-H project books are to be checked yearly for completion of seven activities that are signed off by club or project leader according to club requirements.
4. Ravalli County Fair Criteria and Rules are County 4-H Bylaws and are found in the Ravalli County Fair Premium Book each year.
5. Project subcommittee policies/guidelines:
 - a. Subcommittees who feel the needs to have policies and/or guidelines, need to have an updated document submitted for approval by Advisory Council and Extension Agent by the January 4-H Council meeting.
6. Self Determined, Independent Study Projects & Leadership requirements:
 - a. Members enrolled in Independent Study, Self Determined and Leadership Projects must submit project plan by May 1 to their Project or Organizational Leader for approval. Project plan must include information as outlined in the [You Decide Curriculum](#) through Montana 4-H.
 - b. Projects that are exhibited at the fair must include the approved project proposal and accompany member with the fair exhibit interview.

Article VI: Awards

1. Request for scholarships must be made using the appropriate form.
2. Funds given to the Council will be used as designated by the donor, if un-designated, the funds will be dispersed at the discretion of the 4-H Advisory Council.
 - a. To commemorate memorials for 4-H families, donation may be sent to the Montana 4-H Foundation upon Advisory Council's approval.

3. Any member, club or leader may nominate designee for Meritorious Services Awards. Nominations are submitted using the appropriate form by July 4-H Council meeting. One adult, one business/organization, and one youth awarded per year.
4. Other awards will be announced, such as 4-H Alumni Nomination and Tribute to Volunteer Excellence.

Article VII: Activities & Events

1. Members must leave and return with the county's delegation/team under the chaperon's supervision. Exceptions would be if the activity requires the member to arrive early, or if the member pre-arranges with the Extension Agent; in which case, the Extension Agent needs parents/guardians signed permission that the member is leaving the chaperone's supervision. *A Permission to Travel by Personally Owned Auto or Permission to Travel with Others* form will need to be completed. Original will stay at Extension Office, copy will be sent with chaperone.
2. Activities and Events are subject to the following:
 - a. 4-H members will be required to repay the Council or designee for any non-refundable fee, deposits, or shared travel cost if the member fails to notify the Extension Office within the stated grace period for cancellations.
 - b. Members sent home from an event must repay Advisory Council or other entities for the full expenses of the event or activity. The member cannot solicit funds from 4-H entities for future 4-H events and activities.
 - c. Members sent home from overnight events are ineligible for other 4-H overnight events for one 4-H calendar year.
 - d. Non-4-H Club members are eligible to attend 4-H events depending on space and funds availability.
 - e. Shooting Sports Leaders will be reimbursed for up to 75% of the training expenses, including registration fee, mileage (see Article VII, 3a) and lodging at the state government rate for event location. Receipts must be turned in for proof of attendance and payment of expenses.
3. Travel expense reimbursement will be at the discretion of the Council and according to the following guidelines:
 - a. Mileage rate will be paid at current state government rate to registered adult chaperones carpooling 4-H members to line-item events. Mileage will be figured using a web-based program such as MapQuest.
 - b. Reimbursement for lodging, meals, etc., will be determined prior to the trip in partnership with the Extension Office. Receipts are required for reimbursement and submitted with a Ravalli County 4-H invoice to the Extension Office within 60 days of the function.
 - c. If costs exceed the budgeted amount, expenses may need to be divided between members and leaders that participated in the trip.
 - d. The driver is responsible for any vehicular damage while on 4-H events or trips.
4. The criteria to attend Congress is as follows:
 - a. Delegates may be selected at county competitive events such as Speech & Demo, Stir-Ups, etc.
 - b. Selection for Judging Teams will be based on accumulated scores at the competitive events.
 - c. Members who participate in county competitions are eligible to compete at Montana 4-H Congress, as allowed by Congress guidelines.
 - d. 4-H Ambassadors and State Award applicants are entitled to attend 4-H Congress without competing in an event.

- e. 4-H members may attend Congress as open delegates one year only and may be responsible for more expenses than competitors.
5. Fair participation by a 4-H member shall only be if the following criteria are met:
 - a. New members must be enrolled by the close of business on March 1 for fair eligibility.
 - b. Members must re-enroll by December 31 for fair eligibility.
 - c. All members must add/drop projects by the close of business on May 1 for fair eligibility.
 - d. 4-H members must be present for the Interview Judging. It is encouraged to attend Ravalli County Fair as an open class exhibitor if you cannot be present for Interview Judging.
 - e. All policies governing the Fair Exhibits will be based on the rules published in the Ravalli County Fair Premium Book each year and the Ravalli County Project Handbook. If discrepancies exist between the Handbook and the Fair Book, the Handbook guidelines are followed.

Article VIII: Appointed Volunteer Positions Funded by Council

1. The 4-H Advisory Council, the Executive Board or Extension Agent may appoint committees when needed to handle an event, activity or special task, as stated in the Constitution.
2. The Advisory Council, Executive Board and/or Extension Agent may, at times, contract with individuals outside 4-H to provide services.

Article IX: Fundraising

1. The Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council with approval from Extension Agent shall operate within a flexible budget based upon available funds. A proposed Council budget will be decided annually, by the Finance Committee, and presented to the Advisory Council for approval at the next scheduled Advisory Council meeting.
2. All Clubs, Committees, Members and Leaders wishing to raise funds in the name of 4-H must fill out a 4-H Club and Committee Fundraising Form.

Article X: Council Owned Equipment

1. The Cotton Candy Machine, Sno-Cone Machine, Popcorn Machine, etc., fall under the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Loan and Usage Agreement. Expenses and expectations are outlined on the form.

Article XI: Grievance Procedure

For those who feel aggrieved due to some action in the 4-H program, the following steps should be taken.

1. A written statement of grievance shall be filed by the party(ies) grieving the process or decision and use the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Grievance Form to include the following information at a minimum:
 - a. The date of the incident
 - b. The name(s) of the people filing the grievance
 - c. A complete description outlining the incident including all facts upon which the complaint is based
 - d. Any rules, regulations, policies or procedures that have been violated, if any
 - e. List of the names and addresses (preferably with phone numbers) of people who have been involved in the incident and their role in it
 - f. Signatures of those submitting the grievance
2. Grievance Committee: A committee of at least three people will be appointed by the Extension Office to:
 - a. Narrow and define the issues related to the incident

- b. Gather information related to the incident which may include identifying and obtaining input from people, reviewing documents, other processes deemed necessary by the committee.
 - c. Prepare recommendations for the resolution of the grievance. The recommendations will be non-binding and no testimony used by the grievance process may be used for other purposes.
3. The grievance statement must be filed to the Extension Office. This report may be submitted without fear of threat or other reprisal against member, leader, sponsor or representative.
 4. The person filing the grievance will be notified by postal mail of the committees' decision and rationale within 30 days of submitting the completed form.
 5. The Extension Agent (s) or his/her designee may interview those involved in the dispute and may conduct any investigation he/she believes is necessary to render a proper decision.

Article XII: Compensation and Conflicts of Interest:

1. All persons associated with this chartered group are volunteers. However, this organization may pay stipends and fees for professional services as needed in support of the Ravalli County 4-H program
2. No adult or youth will use their position with 4-H or the knowledge gained from their position in 4-H for personal financial benefit.
3. This amendment does not apply to 4-H members who desire to list 4-H experience as part of a resume for employment, scholarship applications or consideration for other awards or honors.

Article XIII: Whistleblowers Protection: To maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics, the Ravalli County 4-H program will investigate any suspected fraudulent or dishonest use or misuse of resources. Any allegations of dishonesty will be handled with sensitivity, discretion and confidentiality to the extent allowed for by law. The 4-H organization will use its best efforts to protect whistleblowers against retaliation.

Article XIII: Document retention and destruction: The following procedures for the retention and destruction of Records will be followed.

1. Charter	permanent
2. By-Laws	permanent
3. EIN Paperwork	permanent
4. 990 tax returns	7 years
5. Annual and Audits	7 years
6. Bank Records	3 years
7. Donor Records and Acknowledgement Letters	3 years
8. Grant paperwork	3 years after completion
9. Minutes	3 years
10. Correspondence	3 years
11. Yearly Program Plans	3 years

Copies of all permanent records will be kept on file at the local Extension office. The Extension offices in collaboration with the organizational leader are the designated persons to identify the records that have met their required retention time and will oversee the destruction. All destruction will be by shredding.

Article I: Article XV: Organization: This club is organized exclusively for educational and charitable purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Article II: Article XVI: Use of Earnings: No part of the net earnings of this club shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that this club shall be empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in this constitution.

Article III: Article XVII: Limited Activities: No substantial part of this club's activities shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and this club shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Article IV: Article XVIII: Other Activities: Notwithstanding any other provisions of this constitution, this club shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Article V: Article XIX: Dissolution: Upon dissolution, this club's assets shall be distributed to Ravalli County Extension or Montana 4-H Foundation or its successor, provided that this entity is recognized under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. If this entity is not so recognized, this club's assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state Montana 4-H Foundation, Inc. or local government, for a public purpose. Any such asset not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the club is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.