Volunteering with 4-H

Guide to Becoming a 4-H Volunteer

4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills.

Better Living from the Ground Up

From Our Family to Yours
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Welcome!

Dear Future 4-H Volunteer:

Hello! I am pleased to introduce you to the Clinton County 4-H Program. 4-H is the youth development program of Cornell Cooperative Extension Clinton County. 4-H is a learning by doing, hands-on program. It is about linking young people and caring adults to make a positive difference in their lives.

Thank you for considering being one of those caring adults. Your willingness to make a difference is greatly appreciated! With the many project areas and delivery methods to choose from, 4-H offers something for every individual. This guide is meant to be an introduction to the many opportunities that Clinton County 4-H offers. Use it as a springboard for your imagination! 4-H is about youth—its projects can be made to suit most any interest or ability. If you have any questions or suggestion, feel free to contact the Extension Office at (518) 561-7450.

Sincerely,

Alexa King
4-H Youth Development Educator

**CCE Clinton County Office Information**

**Hours**
9 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday (closed on major holidays)

**Website**
http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/clinton/index.html

**Directions to Office from the Northway (1-87)**
Take Exit 38N towards Route 22. At the light, take a right onto Route 22. Go past Buck’s Car Wash and Gas Station, Big Sal’s Restaurant, and Good Guys. Our office is on the right through the last set of doors at the end of the plaza.

**4-H Program Information**

**Local**
4-H Clover Express Blog:
http://ccec4hce.blogspot.com/
4-H Calendar:
http://ccec4hce.blogspot.com/p/calendar.html

New York State
NYS 4-H:
http://nys4h.cce.cornell.edu/Pages/default.aspx
NYS 4-H Animal Science:
http://www.anisci.cornell.edu/4H/index.html

National
National 4-H:
http://www.4-h.org/
National 4-H Headquarters:
http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/
National Directory of 4-H Materials:
http://www.4-hdirectory.org/
The 4-H Program

*The 4-H Youth Development Program is the youth outreach from the Land Grant Universities, Cooperative Extension Services, and the United States Department of Agriculture that promotes the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of school-age youth.*

This definition does not begin to capture the richness or complexity of the 4-H Youth Development Program. Probably the best known aspect of 4-H in New York State is the 4-H Club Program. With community support and a high degree of parental involvement, the 4-H club brings adults and youth together in settings and activities that are ideally suited to foster positive youth development in a comprehensive manner.

However, Cooperative Extension also supports other 4-H programs that focus on one or more aspects of youth development in a variety of other settings including camps, school-age childcare facilities, schools, and community youth organizations of many kinds. Any youth taking part in programs provided as a result of action by extension personnel (professional, paraprofessional, and volunteer) is a 4-H Youth Participant. This includes youth participating in programs conducted through land-grant universities, EFNEP, urban gardening, and other programs that may not actually use the 4-H name and emblem with participants.

**CCE 4-H Youth Development Mission**

The mission of Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development is to create supportive learning environments in which diverse youth and adults reach their fullest potential as capable, competent, and caring citizens.

**4-H Mission Mandates**

**Science: SET (science, engineering, and technology)**

4-H Science programs reach more than 5 million youth with hands-on learning experiences to encourage young minds and help fill our nation’s shortage of young leaders proficient in science, engineering, and technology.

**Healthy Living: Choose Health**

By supporting the physical, mental, and emotional health of our nation’s youth, we help them lead healthy and productive lives into adulthood. Programs address such critical issues as childhood obesity, substance abuse, and physical safety.

**Citizenship: Youth Community Action**

4-H has always emphasized the importance of developing passionate, well-informed citizens who are involved in their communities and help to foster positive social change. Civic engagement helps young people understand the big picture and learn skills that will encourage them to become engaged, responsible citizens and successful leaders.

**What makes 4-H Different?**

Many youth organizations strive to promote positive youth development but 4-H does it in a unique way. In addition to the Cooperative Extension System that supports 4-H through research and tax dollars, it is the 4-H Essential Elements that set us apart.
Each concept is tied to one of our 4 Hs—Belonging to Heart, Mastery to Health, Independence to Head, and Generosity to Hands.

**Concept: Belonging**

1. **Essential Element: A Positive Relationship with a Caring Adult**
   A caring adult acts as an advisor, guide and mentor. The adult helps set boundaries and expectations for young people. The adult could be called supporter, friend, or advocate.

2. **Essential Element: An Inclusive Environment**
   An inclusive environment is one that creates a sense of belonging, and encourages and supports its members with positive and specific feedback. Healthy groups celebrate the success of all members, taking pride in the collective efforts of all participants.

3. **Essential Element: A Safe Emotional and Physical Environment**
   Youth should not fear physical or emotional harm while participating in a 4-H experience, whether from the learning environment itself or from adults, other participants or spectators.

**Concept: Mastery**

4. **Essential Element: Opportunity for Mastery**
   Mastery is the building of knowledge, skills, and attitudes and the demonstration of the competent use of this knowledge and skill by a proficient practitioner. The level of mastery is dependent on the developmental ability of the individual or youth. The development of mastery is a process over time.

5. **Essential Element: Engagement in Learning**
   An engaged youth is one who is mindful of the subject area, building relationships and connections in order to develop understanding. Through self-reflection, youth have the ability to self-correct and learn from experience. The engaged learner has a higher degree of self-motivation and an inexhaustible capacity for creativity.

**Concept: Independence**

6. **Essential Element: Opportunity to See Oneself as an Active Participant in the Future**
   The ability to see oneself in the future is to have hope and optimism to shape life choices, which facilitates the transition into participating in the future.

7. **Essential Element: Opportunity for Self-Determination**
   Believing that you have impact on life’s events rather than passively submitting to the will and whims of others is self-determination. Youth must develop a sense of influence over their lives, exercising their potential to become self-directing, autonomous adults.

**Concept: Generosity**

8. **Essential Element: Opportunity to Value and Practice Service to Others**
   Finding yourself begins with losing yourself in the service of others. Service is a way for members to gain exposure to the larger community and, indeed the world itself.
Application Process

1. Volunteer Enrollment Packet
   - Please read the information in this packet.
   - Make note of any questions you may have.
   - Decide how you would like to volunteer with Clinton County 4-H.
   - Keep this packet for future information.

2. Application
   - Complete the application form in its entirety.
   - Sign the application.
   - Send the completed form into the Extension Office.

3. After the application is reviewed, all references checked, and the necessary background check information completed, you will be notified by the Extension Office of your volunteer status.

4. Orientation with Extension Office

5. After being accepted as a volunteer and completing orientation, you may enroll a 4-H club or begin your volunteer activities.

Volunteer Opportunities

A 4-H Volunteer’s Job

- Help youth develop skills from their experiences in club groups, leadership activities, and projects. Youth remember better if they have the opportunity for “hands-on learning.”

- Teach youth how to think, not what to think. 4-H helps develop creative thinking in young people by giving them a chance to make decisions on their own.

- Recognize and encourage youth so they feel noticed and important. The most significant recognition that can be given is praise or attention letting youth know they are important and what they have done is worthwhile.

- Be the contact person between 4-H members and the Extension Office.

As a 4-H volunteer, you may play several roles. You may be a mentor, guide, advisor, consultant and friend.

4-H Delivery Modes

4-H Youth Development is a process that provides the foundation for several different kinds of youth activities and programs.
Leadership Roles

- Organizational Leaders
  - Organizational Leaders serve as a club or group leader by organizing, enrolling and leading youth involved in the 4-H program.
  - Volunteers may choose to lead a Community Club, which offers a variety of projects, and tends to have members of various ages, and several project leaders. Community club members come together for activities, service projects and leadership training, but they may also meet separately in different project clubs or complete individual projects. These clubs also offer opportunities for older 4-H members to mentor and/or teach younger members.

- Project Leaders
  - Volunteers may choose to lead a group that focuses on one specific project, or is organized around a specific activity or need. The Extension Office has a list of projects and available materials.
  - Project Leaders provide leadership for a specific project area. Project Leaders use their expertise, to teach young people in a variety of settings - clubs, in-school enrichment, afterschool clubs, camps, etc. If they work with an Organizational Leader, a Project Leader’s time commitment is for preparation and time spent teaching the project.

- Activity Leaders
  - Activity Leaders volunteer to organize a 4-H activity or event for young people. Activities and events may include camp, a fashion revue, a community service project, a hiking trip, a showmanship clinic, a talent show, or even a fund-raising activity!
  - Activity Leaders may serve a short-term role for a specific activity. Other examples include:
    - Judges — Serve as an evaluator of 4-H members’ accomplishments at contests and county fairs.
    - Chaperones/Drivers — Take groups of 4-H members to county and/or state events and participate with them.
    - Business Owners — Open their business to 4-H members to explore and learn about a business or industry. For example, veterinary clinics, restaurants, factories and farms all serve as valuable learning environments.
    - Council Members — Serve to oversee certain aspects of the 4-H programs, e.g., fair boards, advisory boards, fund-raising boards, etc.
    - Advisory Committee Members — Advisory Committee members are professional and lay citizens asked to take part in the process of developing and running a solid program for youth and their families in the county.

- Junior Leader
  - A Junior Leader is a teen member, alumni, or community member age 13-20
  - Junior Leaders may have Project or Activity Leader roles (example: Horse Project Junior Leader).
What to Expect

What You Can Expect from CCE Clinton County 4-H:

- Educational materials for use in 4-H youth projects (fees may be associated with these materials).
- Training for new volunteers.
- Training on educational materials and project updates.
- Opportunities to network with other volunteers.
- Involvement of Extension in overseeing the 4-H youth programs.
- Annual evaluation of your program.
- Opportunities for volunteer recognition.
- Updates and information on scholarship opportunities, events, trips, camps and field trips.
- A sounding board for new ideas, questions and concerns you may have.
- That records will be handled as confidential material

What CCE Clinton County 4-H Expects from You:

- To treat people associated with 4-H youth programs with fairness and respect.
- To value youth development as the most important aspect of 4-H.
- To be accepting of the diversity of youth, regardless of race, religion, cultural background, age or sex.
- To contact the Extension Office with any ideas, questions or concerns that need to be addressed.
- To provide the Extension Office with a summary of the achievements of your 4-H club/experience once a year.
- To inform the Extension Office of any training or materials that are needed.
- To inform the Extension Office of the special events, field trips and activities you are involved with in 4-H.
- To work with the Extension Office in enrolling new volunteers interested in working with your group.
- To always have an Organizational Leader in attendance at your club meetings.
- To notify the Extension Office of any changes in your status as indicated on the application form (e.g. change in contact information, your volunteer role or decide to terminate your volunteer involvement.).
- Each year to invite at least one child who needs positive youth development in his/her life to participate in 4-H.
- Honor your volunteer commitment; strive to fulfill the role you have accepted.
- Keep any records required and turn them in on time; distribute materials and support the overall 4-H program.
- Provide a safe environment; not harm people in any way.
- Not use tobacco, alcohol or illegal substances while working with or being responsible for youth, and not allow youth to do so while under your supervision.
- Operate machinery, vehicles and other equipment in a safe and responsible manner.
- To notify the Extension Office of any injury to yourself or youth that occurred during 4-H activities.
Volunteers-the Heart of 4-H!

4-H volunteers work with and support youth in their development of leadership, citizenship, and life skills enabling them to reach their fullest potential to become contributing, caring citizens.

Why Volunteer?

- 4-H is FUN!
- Discover new capabilities and skills while helping others succeed.
- See direct results of your efforts.
- Share in the accomplishments of youth as they learn new skills.
- You can involve the whole family in volunteering with 4-H.
- Your unique life experience can enrich a young person’s life.
- Be a part of making positive things happen in the lives of young people and the community.

Volunteer’s 4-H Pledge

I pledge

My HEAD to give youth the information I can, to help them see clearly and to make wise decisions.
My HEART to encourage and support youth whether they have success or disappointment
My HANDS to help youth; if I cannot be a leader I can help in many equally important ways
My HEALTH to keep young people strong
for a better world through 4-H for our community, our country, and our world.

CCE Association Volunteer Code of Conduct

CCE Volunteers are required to accept and adhere to the following standards of behavior when engaged in assigned volunteer activities.

- Respect and adhere to CCE rules, policies and guidelines that relate to volunteer activity and the program I serve.
- Execute CCE business in an ethical manner.
- Preserve the confidentiality of information (and sign confidentiality agreement if required by my volunteer role) about program participants and CCE internal affairs that have been entrusted to me as affirmed by my signature on the Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement.
- Refrain from using my CCE volunteer status for personal or business financial gain.
- Fulfill my assigned volunteer duties, including completion of required records or reports, in a timely manner.
- Use my time wisely and work cooperatively with Extension staff and other volunteers.
- Participate in required training programs and use the recommended policies and procedures.
- Accept supervision and support from professional Extension staff and/or supervisory volunteers.
- Respect and uphold the rights and dignity of all staff, volunteers, and individuals who participate in CCE programs recognizing that people’s values, beliefs, customs, and strengths differ.
- Encourage participation of and respect for individuals of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives.
- Refrain from the use of alcohol, tobacco and inappropriate language.
- Commit no illegal or abusive act.
- Report all unsafe conditions and accidents to professional Extension staff as soon as possible.
The 4-H Volunteer Application

To apply to become a volunteer, complete and return the following pages to the CCE Clinton County Extension Office.
Volunteer Application

Directions: Please type or print. If you need additional space, attach a separate sheet.
Sign the completed application.

General Information

First Name: _________________________ MI: ___ Last Name: _________________________

Preferred Name: ___________________ Home Phone: (____)____-_______ Mobile Phone: (____)____-_______

Work Phone: (____)____-_______ Other Phone: (____)____-_______ Best Time to Call: _______________

Address: _______________________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: _____ Zip: _______

Email Address: __________________________________________________________ Birthdate (if under 18): ___/___/___

Occupation: __________________________ Level of Education: ____________________________

The following information is optional and for federal Equal Program Opportunity reporting purposes only.

Ethnicity (circle all that apply): Hispanic Not Hispanic Gender: Female Male

Residence (circle all that apply): Farm Rural/10,000 Town/10-50,000 Suburb/50,000 City/50,000

Race (circle all that apply): White Black American Indian Asian Native Hawaiian & Pacific

Volunteer Position

Have you ever volunteered for CCE before? If yes, give dates, program, position.
☐ No ☐ Yes: ____________________________________________________________________________

Date Available? From ___/___/___ to ___/___/___

About when and how many hours/week do you want to volunteer? _________________________________

Which program(s) would you be interested in volunteering with?
☐ 4-H Youth Development ☐ Agriculture ☐ Horticulture ☐ Nutrition ☐ General Office ☐ Anywhere

☐ Other: _______________________________________________________________________________

What kind of role would you prefer?
☐ Teach ☐ Lead a group ☐ Judge a contest/competition ☐ Advise programming/represent the community

☐ Fundraising ☐ Marketing ☐ Chaperone Trips ☐ Other: _______________________________________________________________________________

Interests: Please mark each item according to your level of interest.

I like to

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<th>4: All the time</th>
<th>3: Often</th>
<th>2: A Little</th>
<th>1: Not at all</th>
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<tr>
<td>Take responsibility</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
<td>Speak to groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet people</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
<td>Perform</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camp</td>
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<td>Type and file</td>
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<td>Sell</td>
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<td>Draw and sketch</td>
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<td>Participate in sports</td>
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<td>Teach</td>
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<td>Make decisions</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
<td>Lead discussion groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide transportation</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
<td>Research and analyze</td>
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Experience and Background

List your volunteer, paid, or educational experiences that relate to the volunteer position you seek

Organization/Employer Position/Activity Dates

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________
Describe any education or training that you have had related to the volunteer position you seek. Also describe any special skills, experiences, or licenses, certifications, or other interests you consider relevant.

What do you hope to accomplish by serving as a CCE volunteer?

Accommodations
Given the expectations of the volunteer position for which you are applying, describe any physical or health accommodations that may be needed to allow you to participate in the activity.

Transportation
Do you have an independent and reliable means of transportation to and from volunteer activities?  ○ Yes  ○ No
Do you possess a valid NYS Driver’s License?  ○ Yes  ○ No

NOTE: If the volunteer position you seek requires the transportation of others in your personal vehicle or use of CCE Association vehicles, you will be asked to complete a motor vehicle record request permission form.

Other
Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation?
○ No  ○ Yes: Date(s): ____________________________________________________________________

NOTE: A criminal record will not necessarily bar an applicant. A criminal record will be considered as it relates to the requirements of the volunteer position for which you have expressed an interest.

References
List 3 people, not related to you, that we may contact who have knowledge of your qualifications.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Mailing Address</th>
<th>Daytime Phone Number</th>
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Signature
I affirm that the statements made on this application are true. I understand that misrepresentation or omission of facts requested is cause for my non-appointment or removal as a Cornell Cooperative Extension volunteer. I authorize Cornell Cooperative Extension of Clinton County to obtain from all persons, including those not named here, and/or agencies any records, documents, and other information relative to my suitability to perform the duties of the volunteer position. I understand, if the volunteer position I seek involves unsupervised work with minors, individuals over 65, or individuals with disabilities that a criminal background check including a sexual offender search will be made. I further release all parties supplying said information from all liability and responsibility arising from their supplying said information.

I understand and agree that the volunteer position at CCE for which I am applying, is without compensation or benefits of any kind. I further understand that the provisions of this application do not constitute a contract (either expressed or implied) of employment between myself and CCE. I further understand and agree that if I am offered and accept a volunteer position at CCE, either I or CCE, may terminate the volunteer relationship at any time for any reason or for no particular reason or cause. CCE reserves the right to determine and change its policies and procedures applicable to volunteers at any time for any reason. I understand and agree that my volunteer position is contingent upon, among other things, my signing the CCE Association Volunteer Agreement and acceptance of the provisions of the CCE Association Volunteer Code of Conduct.

(Signature)  (Date)
Background Verification Authorization

All Volunteers working with CCE for more than 1 day during the year need to complete this form.

I, the undersigned, give authorization for Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Clinton County to obtain a copy of my Criminal Record and any Sex Offender Registry. I state that I have provided my true Social Security Number to CCE – Clinton Co for their use to check my background. This authorization is good until revoked by me in writing. This information will only be used to verify my Criminal Record and registry.

I understand that my Social Security Number will be checked against my name for verification and that this form will be kept in a locked file in the CCE- Clinton office.

This check does NOT cover driving for CCE – Clinton. There is a separate form I will use if driving is a part of my volunteer responsibilities.

Name as it appears on Social Security Card:

First Name _______________________ Middle Name: __________________________

Last Name: ____________________________ Name suffix: __________

Other Last names (ex. Maiden Name) _________________________________________

Social Security Number: _______________________________________

Current Address: Street # ____________________________Apt # ________________

Town: ____________________________ County: ___________________

State: ____________________________ Zip Code: ___________________

Date of Birth: ______________________ Sex: __________________

Today’s Date: _____________________

Signature ________________________________________________
Motor Vehicle Record Request Permission Form

If your volunteer role may involve driving as part of scheduled program activity or driving CCE owned, leased, or rented vehicles, please complete this form.

I, the undersigned, give authorization for P. W. Wood and Son, Inc. and Cornell Cooperative Extension to obtain a current copy of my Motor Vehicle Driving Record (MVR). I state that I currently hold a valid Motor Vehicle Driver’s license as indicated below and all information is correct. This authorization is good until revoked by me in writing. This information will only be used to verify my Motor Vehicle Driving Record.

Name as it Appears on License
First Name: ___________________________________________ MI: _____ Last Name: __________________________________________

Address: ___________________________________________ City: __________________ State: _____ Zip: ______

Date of Birth: _______________________________________

State of License: ___________________________ License Number: ___________________________

_________________________________________ (Signature) ___________________________________________ (Date)

Office Use Only
County requesting check (check one):  
___ Potential Employee (if hired please inform The Wood Office)  
___ Current Employee  
___ Volunteer

Form to be returned to Undersigned

_________________________________________ (CCE Authorization Signature) ___________________________ (Print Name)

_____________________________ (Email Address for results)