

COUNTY 4-H YOUTH COUNCIL BYLAWS (TEMPLATE)

This document is provided as a sample to assist counties in developing or reviewing bylaws for youth leadership groups such as County Councils, County Officers, Teen Leaders, or similar youth teams. Counties are encouraged to adapt the content to fit their needs while ensuring expectations are clearly communicated, manageable, and attainable. Bylaws should support youth voice, leadership development, and meaningful engagement, and should not be used to exclude youth.

Bylaws should be reviewed every 3–5 years, or as needed, to remain current and effective.

Using This Sample

Items shown in **{Customization Notes}** are included to guide counties in adapting this document. These sections should be reviewed and modified to reflect local structure, priorities, and needs.

Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development

(Insert County Name – e.g., “_____ County 4-H Youth Council”)

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the “_____ County 4-H Youth Council.”

{Customization Note: Insert the official name of your county youth leadership group. The title may be adjusted (e.g., Youth Council, Teen Leaders, County Officers).}

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The Council serves as a space for youth and adults to work in partnership, with youth leading and adults supporting the learning process.

The purpose of the 4-H Youth Council is to:

1. Promote youth voice and inclusion in 4-H decision-making.
2. Encourage youth-led initiatives aligned with the 4-H mission of positive youth development—fostering competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring.

3. Foster youth leadership and engagement through planning, conducting, and evaluating county 4-H programs and events.
4. Serve as a communication link between clubs, Parent-Volunteer Association, and county Extension staff.
5. Build connections among members from community and project clubs, creating a welcoming environment that supports belonging, program growth, and member retention.

{Customization Note: Counties may add goals specific to local priorities such as increasing teen involvement, strengthening communication, or expanding outreach.}

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership consists of youth representatives selected by each 4-H club, with additional members allowed as approved by the Council and Extension staff.
2. Terms last one 4-H program year (August 1–July 31). Representatives may serve no more than two consecutive terms.
3. A member in good standing is one who is enrolled, participates in meetings and activities, and makes a reasonable effort to contribute to the work of the Council.

{Customization Note: Counties should define the number of representatives per club and the selection process (e.g., club vote, application, or appointment). Additional participation expectations may be added if they remain manageable and inclusive.}

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1 – Officer Positions

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Reporter

Recreation Leader

{Customization Note: Officer roles may be adjusted to fit county needs (e.g., Historian, Technology Coordinator).}

Section 2 – Eligibility

- Enrolled 4-H member, ages 12–18
- In good standing
- Previous experience as a club representative and commitment to attend Council meetings and training

{Customization Note: Eligibility criteria should remain age-appropriate, inclusive, and achievable for interested youth.}

Section 3 – Duties

- **President** – Presides at meetings; coordinates agendas; represents the Council
- **Vice President** – Assists the President; supports committee work
- **Secretary** – Records and shares minutes; tracks attendance
- **Treasurer** – Maintains financial records; prepares budget with staff guidance
- **Reporter** – Promotes Council activities through communication outlets
- **Recreation Leader** – Plans activities that build engagement and team connection

{Customization Note: Duties may be expanded based on the scope of the Council’s work.}

Section 4 – Terms and Elections

- Officers are elected annually by majority vote
- Officers serve one-year terms and may serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same office
- Elections are held at the final meeting of the program year

{Customization Note: Counties may specify voting methods (e.g., ballot, show of hands) and election timelines.}

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

1. The Council meets regularly during the 4-H program year.
2. Meeting frequency is determined by the Council and approved by Extension staff.
3. A quorum consists of a simple majority of members in good standing.

{Customization Note: Counties may define meeting schedules and participation expectations as appropriate.}

ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES

Section 1 – Standing Committees

Examples may include Events, Fundraising, Recognition, Community Service, or other areas identified by the Council.

Section 2 – Special Committees

Special committees may be created as needed for specific purposes.

Section 3 – Committee Roles

Each committee includes youth members and may have a chair, co-chairs, or chair-elect. Committees are open to interested Council members.

An adult advisor or Extension staff member may serve in a mentoring role to support youth leadership and the work of the committee.

{Customization Note: Counties may define committee structure, leadership roles, and how members are selected or assigned.}

ARTICLE VII – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee consists of the elected officers and the Extension advisor(s).

Responsibilities include:

- Preparing meeting agendas
- Supporting planning and coordination of Council activities

- Addressing items requiring timely action between meetings

{Customization Note: Counties may adjust Executive Committee structure and responsibilities based on local needs.}

ARTICLE VIII – FINANCES

1. Funds support Council activities and 4-H youth development.
2. If applicable, the Treasurer will present an annual budget for approval.
3. Financial practices will follow county and state guidelines.

{Customization Note: Financial procedures may vary by county. Include additional requirements such as signatures, audits, or spending limits if applicable.}

ARTICLE IX – CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Members follow the 4-H Code of Conduct and applicable policies.
2. Concerns regarding behavior will be reviewed, and appropriate action may be taken, including removal if necessary.

{Customization Note: Counties may reference or link to their specific Code of Conduct documentation.}

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

1. Amendments must be submitted in writing to the membership at least one meeting prior to a vote.
2. Amendments are approved by a two-thirds vote of members present.
3. Amendments take effect immediately unless otherwise stated.

{Customization Note: Counties may require additional approval (e.g., Extension staff review and/or PVA) before implementation.}

Adoption Statement

These bylaws were adopted by the _____ County 4-H Youth Council on _____ and will guide the operation of the Council.

President: _____

Secretary: _____

Extension Advisor: _____