

KY 4-H Shooting Sports State Operations Plan

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MISSION AND VISION OF KENTUCKY 4-H

Mission: Kentucky 4-H provides education and life skill development opportunities for youth to grow into confident, capable, and contributing members of their communities.

Vision: 4-H is a community of young people across Kentucky who are learning leadership, civic engagement, and life skills.

SITUATION STATEMENT

The Kentucky 4-H Shooting Sports Program is a part of the KY 4-H Natural Resources Curriculum area. By utilizing firearms and archery equipment as educational tools, this program focuses on fostering life skills and positive youth development through leadership, education, service, and healthy competition. The KY 4-H Shooting Sports Program began in 1988, is based on the National 4-H Shooting Sports Program, and includes disciplines in archery, muzzleloading, pistol, rifle, shotgun, and hunting and outdoor skills. County 4-H

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programs are required to utilize 4-H Shooting Sports Volunteers that have completed the local volunteer screening requirements as well as a certification workshop lead by KY 4-H Shooting Sports Level II Instructors. Additionally, county 4-H programs must follow all policies/guidelines as covered in this state operations plan to operate a program recognized by Kentucky 4-H.

PROGRAM GOALS

- To teach safe and responsible use of firearms and archery equipment including sound decision making, self-discipline, and concentration.
- To promote the highest standards of safety, sportsmanship, and ethical behavior.
- To encourage participation in natural resources and related natural science programs by exposing participants to the content through shooting, hunting, and related activities.
- To enhance development of self-concept, character, and personal growth through safe, educational, and socially acceptable involvement in shooting activity.
- To expose participants to the broad array of vocational and life-long avocational activities related to Shooting Sports.
- To provide opportunities that are accessible by all audiences.
- To strengthen families through participation in life-long recreational activities.
- To complement and enhance the impact of existing safety, shooting, and hunter education programs using experiential educational methods and progressive development of skills and abilities.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

4-H Shooting Sports provides the high-quality program necessary for Positive Youth Development by engaging youth in the safe, responsible use of firearms and archery equipment through comprehensive education, life-long recreation, and healthy competition. Our program should enable youth to:

- Find and explore their spark
- Engage in an effective 4-H program setting
- Develop positive relationships with adults, youth, and peers
- Explore a vast array of 4-H educational, recreational, and competitive activities
- Thrive in multiple settings
- Enhance developmental and long-term outcomes
- Practice safe and responsible use of firearms and archery equipment, enhancing existing shooting, conservation, and hunter education programs
- Explore the National 4-H Mission Mandates
- Model safety, sportsmanship, and ethical behavior
- Strengthen knowledge and life skills

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ADMINISTRATION

The KY 4-H Shooting Sports Program will be administered by the KY 4-H Shooting Sports/Camping Specialist Associate and KY 4-H Program Leader with guidance from the KY 4-H Shooting Sports Advisory Group.

- The KY 4-H Shooting Sports Advisory Group will:
 - Guide the Kentucky 4-H Shooting Sports program through recommendations on policies & ideas for extending educational opportunities.
 - Coordinate state level training, educational, and competitive events as an opportunity for mastery.
 - Develop resources for KY 4-H Shooting Sports program support across the commonwealth.
 - Provide advice on operations, risk management, equipment, and fiduciary concerns.

The KY 4-H Program reserves the right to audit county 4-H Shooting Sports Programs, as necessary.

NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

The KY 4-H Shooting Sports program and all county programs within the state will follow all minimum standards as established by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee. The KY 4-H Shooting Sports program reserves the right to implement additional/stricter standards. These standards and guidelines will be provided within this document.

National Minimum Standards

1. The National 4-H Shooting Sports Curriculum is the established adult teaching curriculum for training adults to teach youth Shooting Sports within the 4-H program.
2. All instructors accept and abide by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Code of Ethics.
3. State, County, and Club level 4-H Shooting Sports programs will have written risk management plans which include items such as emergency response and preparedness, insurance, safe storage of firearms and ammunition, state-level reloading policies, etc.
4. All certified 4-H Shooting Sports Instructors are a minimum of 21 years of age and have completed a state level 4-H Shooting Sports workshop in the specific discipline they will be teaching.
5. State level 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor certification workshops provide a minimum of twelve (12) hours of instruction, including a minimum of nine (9) hours instruction in each specific discipline and a minimum of three (3) hours instruction in teaching youth development, life skills, and risk management.

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6. To maintain certification as a 4-H Shooting Sports Level I or Level II instructor, one must teach or assist in instruction within the discipline certified at least once every three (3) years.
 - A. Level 1 Instructors** – Must be re-certified a minimum of every seven (7) years.
 - i. Re-certification could include any of the following, as determined by the State Coordinator.
 1. Continuing education credits
 2. Updates to curriculum or state standards/requirements
 3. Refresher course on curriculum
 4. Attend a Level 1 training
 5. Other options
 - B. Level 2 Instructors – Must be re-certified after a major revision of the curriculum, as determined by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee, or at the determination of the State Coordinator.
 - i. Re-certification could include
 1. Attend a Level 2 training
 2. Attend an update training hosted by a Level 3 Instructor or a Level 2 Instructor certified using the revised curriculum.
 - C. Level 3 Instructors – Must be re-appointed annually by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee. (effective 10/1/2018)

KY 4-H Shooting Sports Level I Instructors must complete an annual update to maintain certification. Details on this requirement can be found in the [Kentucky 4-H Shooting Sports Volunteer Certification Program Guidelines.](#)

7. Only factory ammunition is used at 4-H Shooting Sports competitive events.
8. **Regarding simulated combat sports (physical or virtual) including but not limited to, paintball guns, air-soft, laser guns, archery tag, eSports.** Pointing any type of gun including paintball guns, air-soft guns, laser guns, archery tag bows & arrows, or sighting devices at any person or any humanoid shaped target is prohibited in any 4-H program activity.
9. Any firearm built or modified to give the impression of a modern military style firearm such as an AR or AK is not allowed in the 4-H Shooting Sports program. Front pistol grips, heat shield/shroud, and magazines extending more than 2 inches below the receiver are prohibited. Examples of unacceptable firearm components are muzzle brakes, recoil compensators, and suppressors. Ported barrels are permitted on shotguns & pistols. Below are visual examples of firearms that would not be permitted.





10. Reactive Targets – Targets which make use of or are composed of (1) live ammunition, (2) explosives, chemicals, or flammable substances, or (3) pressurized containers are never to be used at any 4-H event or activity.
11. Cloverbud age youth are not allowed to participate in any Shooting Sports activity that includes the handling or live-fire of any air guns, firearms, or archery equipment.
12. All 4-H Shooting Sports functions (events, meetings, club practices, etc.) which include the handling or use of firearms or archery equipment requires the physical presence and constant supervision of at least one adult 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor who is currently certified in that respective discipline(s) (adopted 4/2018)

KENTUCKY 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS POLICIES & GUIDELINES

Prohibited Equipment and Practices

In accordance with the National 4-H Shooting Sports Minimum Standards, the KY 4-H Shooting Sports program does not allow the following:

- **Reactive targets** – any targets that make use of or are composed of (1) live ammunition, (2) explosives, chemicals, or flammable substances, or (3) pressurized containers
- **Non-factory ammunition** – the use of reloads is prohibited for both club activities and competitions.
- **Cloverbud participation** – in KY 4-H Cloverbuds are youth between the ages of 5 to 8 (per their 4-H age). Youth must be at least 9 (per their 4-H age) to take part in any 4-H Shooting Sports activity.
- **Simulated combat/Humanoid targets** – the KY 4-H Shooting Sports program does not endorse or promote participation in activities/events using air-soft guns, paintball guns, laser guns, archery tag, or other equipment simulating combat, aiming, or shooting at humanoid targets in any form.

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Requirements for Youth to Participate

The KY 4-H Shooting Sports program is open to all 4-H members 9 to 18 years of age (per their 4-H age) who are enrolled in their county 4-H program. This program is not open to independent study participants. To participate in the .22 and muzzleloading pistol disciplines youth must be at least 12 years of age (per 4-H age) and have a signed [Youth Handgun Permission Form](#) on file and on their person during practice/competition.

While the 4-H Shooting Sports program is open to all individuals who meet the required age qualifications, their use of firearms and archery equipment is subject to the joint approval of their county 4-H Agent, Certified Level I Instructor(s), and Certified Level I Coordinator. This approval is based on the youth's ability to follow instructions, adhere to all safety rules, and exhibit the standards detailed in the [KY 4-H Shooting Sports Essential Standards](#) document.

If a youth is not following these Essential Standards, the 4-H Code of Conduct, or the safety guidelines provided to them, their approval to use firearms/archery equipment can be revoked at any time by a county 4-H Agent, Certified Level I Instructor(s) or Certified Level I Coordinator. Any instance in which approval to participate is revoked by a Certified Level I Instructor(s) or Certified Level I Coordinator will be properly documented and reported to the county 4-H Agent.

Requirements for 4-H Shooting Sports Clubs

- County 4-H programs must have a certified 4-H Shooting Sports Level I Coordinator and a certified Level I Instructor in the specific discipline(s) they wish to offer to have a 4-H Shooting Sports program.
- All Level I Instructors (including coordinators and apprentice instructors) must complete annual continuing education requirements and have updated enrollment information in 4-H Online.
- The 4-H Shooting Sports program will be taught as a club or group project. This program is not open to independent study individuals and must be supervised by a certified Level I Instructor/Coordinator.
- All 4-H Shooting Sports activities/events involving live-fire and handling of firearms/archery equipment must be under the direct supervision of a certified Level I Instructor in that discipline.
- Adult helpers over 21 and Apprentice Instructors must always be under the direct supervision of a Level I Instructor when assisting on the range or during any activity or event involving live fire, hands-on, or safety instruction. These individuals cannot lead range practices alone. It is the responsibility of the Level I Instructor to make sure assistants are qualified to work with youth during these instances.
- If a minimum Level I Instructor is not available for a club meeting involving live fire or hands-on instruction, that meeting cannot be held. The meeting, practice or event should either be cancelled or a program not involving live fire activities should be conducted.
- A member's eligibility to use firearms and archery equipment is subject to the joint approval of their county 4-H Agent, Certified Level I Instructor(s), and Certified Level I Coordinator. This approval is based on the youth's ability to follow instructions, adhere to all safety rules, and exhibit the standards detailed in the [KY 4-H Shooting Sports Essential Standards](#) document.

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- A Level I Instructor(s) has the right to refuse any participant from taking part in a Shooting Sports activity in the interest of safety for the participant, others in the club, spectators, or the public. Any instance in which this happens should be properly documented and reported back to the county 4-H Agent.
- Accident/Liability insurance must be in place for all 4-H members, and coordinators/instructors before youth can handle firearms and archery equipment.
- Youth must be enrolled in 4HOnline to be considered a member of the county 4-H Shooting Sports program.
- 4-H member enrollment (PIE/Code of Conduct) forms must be on file in the county office. Additionally, county Coordinators/Instructors must have a copy of these files in hand during every Shooting Sports meeting, practice and/or event.

Safety Guidelines

- **Safety training/briefings** - Every club should have yearly safety trainings with new and returning members led by Level I Instructors. Additionally, short safety briefings should be held prior to any live-fire or hands on activity.
- **Clear Barrel Indicators** – The use of Clear Barrel Indicators (CBIs) made of fluorescent orange (recommended color) or a similar bright colored material and long enough to visibly protrude from both the breech and muzzle when inserted in the bores is mandatory for all firearms (except muzzleloaders, shotguns and lever action BB guns). CBIs indicate that the gun is unloaded and the barrel is unobstructed.
- **Equipment** – All firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment used by members for live fire activities will be inspected by the certified Level I Instructors within that discipline to verify they are in good working order and safe to use.
- **Eye protection** – Adequate eye protection (shooting glasses, safety glasses/goggles or polycarbonate prescription glasses) is required for participants and instructors during all live fire activities. Eye protection is recommended for archery. Instructors may ask spectators to wear eye protection for specific disciplines as well.
- **Ear protection** – Ear protection is required for participants and instructors during all live fire activities within the muzzleloading, .22 pistol, .22 rifle and shotgun disciplines. Ear protection is recommended for air rifle and air pistol. Instructors may ask spectators to wear ear protection for specific disciplines as well.
- **Footwear** - any participant while on the shooting line or shooting in any outdoor shooting event is required to wear shoes that completely cover the feet, including soles. Examples of footwear that are not acceptable include, but are not limited to: sandals, clogs, Croc™ style shoes, slippers, house shoes, flip-flops and bare feet.



Volunteer Certification Requirements

The purpose of the volunteer certification program is to prepare and equip 4-H volunteers with the information and resources needed to work with Shooting Sports project groups and clubs. Several key points are summarized below. For additional information or to view all guidelines regarding certification see the [*KY 4-H Shooting Sports Volunteer Certification Program Guidelines*](#) document.

- **Definitions:**

- **Level I Coordinator** – volunteer, 21 years of age or older, who has successfully completed the certification workshop in the Coordinator discipline
 - **Level I Instructor** – volunteer, 21 years of age or older, who has successfully completed the certification workshop in one or more of the offered Shooting Sports disciplines (archery, pistol, rifle, muzzleloading, shotgun, hunting skills)
 - **Apprentice Level I Instructor** – youth/volunteer, 14 (as of their 4-H age) to 20 years of age, who has successfully completed the certification workshop in one or more of the offered Shooting Sports disciplines (archery, pistol, rifle, muzzleloading, shotgun, hunting skills)
 - **Level II Instructor** – certified Level I Instructor who has successfully completed the National 4-H Shooting Sports Certification Workshop and serve as trainers for new Level I Instructors. Can still serve as a Level I Instructor within their home county and are held to the same recertification requirements.
- To offer Shooting Sports disciplines as part of the county 4-H program, the county must have in place at least one volunteer serving in the role of Certified Level I Coordinator, and one volunteer serving in the role of Certified Level I Instructor per discipline they wish to offer.
 - Certification is available for the following Shooting Sports disciplines: archery, coordinator (adult volunteers only), hunting & outdoor skills, muzzleloading, pistol, rifle, and shotgun. A volunteer must complete separate certification workshops for each discipline that they want to lead.
 - Certified Coordinators/Level I Instructors can only be certified in one county.
 - A volunteer can be certified in multiple disciplines (such as archery, shotgun, rifle, etc.), but the certification for all must be in the same county.
 - **Individuals between the ages of 14 (per 4-H age) and 20** may attend the certification workshop and serve as Apprentice Level I Instructors within their county. However, Apprentice Instructors are NOT permitted to run live fire practices/events without the direct, in person supervision of a Level I Instructor in the same discipline.
 - Youth who do not receive six hours of education under the oversight of their Coordinator/Level I Instructor(s) and Extension Agent in any one year have not fulfilled the requirement for participation and are NOT eligible to participate or compete in Shooting Sports events or activities during that 4-H year.
 - To maintain certification status, each Coordinator, Level I Instructor, and Apprentice Instructor must complete an annual program update each year. The program update will be available by March 1 each



year and must be completed by April 30 of that year.

- The supervising county Extension Agent is responsible for ensuring that the certified volunteer is entered into the 4-H Online statewide volunteer database.
- The supervising county Extension Agent must complete a Certification Verification Form for each Coordinator, Level I Instructor, and Apprentice Level I Instructor each year stating that they have completed all certification requirements. This form is to be kept with the volunteer's files at the county Extension office.

Storage & Transportation

All firearms and archery equipment are to be stored and transported in accordance with [the *KY 4-H Shooting Sports Storage and Transportation Policy*](#). Several key points are summarized below.

- 4-H program equipment, including but not limited to firearms and archery equipment are solely for the use in 4-H Shooting Sports activities. They may never be used for personal purposes.
- Extension Staff shall maintain a written inventory of all equipment including but not limited to firearms, archery equipment, and ammunition regardless of where it is stored. Inventory lists should at minimum include location of equipment, serial number, make and model, gauge/caliber, and any other identifying marks. Date of acquisition, purchase price/estimated value, and related information should be listed as appropriate. ([Equipment Inventory Template](#) provided).
- Equipment inventory must be visually audited **annually** (or more often if requested) by local and/or state Extension personnel responsible for the 4-H Shooting Sports program.
- A copy of the inventory shall be posted in the storage area/vault and a copy kept on file by the county Agent and/or state specialist and the club coordinator.
- A copy of the registration and/or invoice for purchase and source of funding for the purchase of 4-H firearms should be kept on file in the Extension office when available.
- A sign-out process will be used to record any checking out of equipment, including who/when/what/when returned. ([Equipment Check-out Template](#) provided)
- Only approved, current certified instructors shall be authorized to pick up and return equipment.

Responsible actions for Purchasing, Disposal, Loss, Theft, or Missing Firearms and Archery Equipment

- **Purchase of Firearms and Archery Equipment:**
 - Firearms and archery equipment may be purchased by certified instructors, as authorized by the county 4-H program, through grants or funds provided by a 4-H association, like entity, or personal funds for use in a county program.
 - Authorized individuals will be required to complete and sign the BATF Form 4473 when purchasing firearms through a dealer with a Federal Firearms License. This process will include a background check.

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- The purchase of air rifles, air pistols, muzzleloading firearms, and archery equipment are not subject to Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) regulations.
- After any firearm or archery equipment purchase a [4-H Shooting Sports Transfer of Ownership Form](#) should be completed by the purchaser and county 4-H Agent. This document states that the firearm/archery equipment purchased is for the use and will be the property of the named county 4-H program. One copy should be kept on file in the county 4-H office, and one kept by the authorized purchaser.
- **Lost, Missing, or Stolen Firearms and Archery Equipment:**
 - Lost, stolen, or missing firearms and archery equipment must be reported to the local police department within 24 hours of the discovery. Once reported, notify the Area Extension Director and KY 4-H Shooting Sports State Coordinator. Inventory records should be updated to reflect the loss/theft and reference the case number assigned to the report.
- **Disposal of Firearms and Archery Equipment:**
 - If a firearm or archery equipment needs to be removed from use due to an inability to repair it or for safety concerns, that equipment must be disposed of. Safe disposal of a firearm requires it be rendered inoperable. Firearms and archery equipment can be cut, with saw or torch, or shredded in such a manner that they cannot be reassembled.

Failure by a volunteer to follow all policies and guidelines involving storage, transportation, and purchasing/transferring of firearms and archery equipment could result in their removal as an approved volunteer.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is a necessary component of all 4-H programs and is especially vital for 4-H Shooting Sports. All county 4-H Shooting Sports programs should have a risk management plan on file for club activities/practices. Risk management plans should provide a resource for staff/volunteers on how to mitigate risk and next steps in the case of an emergency. Components of a risk management plan include:

- Club Name and details
- Objectives of the program
- Location(s) of meetings/practices
- Contact Information for leaders
- Safe Practices
- Medical/Emergency Information
- Emergency Action Plan
- Travel Considerations
- Supporting Documents



Separate risk management plans should be created specific to any event/activity (county competition, team travel, etc.) taking place outside of normal club programming. A [Kentucky 4-H Shooting Sports Club Risk Management Plan Template](#) is available for county program use.

Additional risk management procedures include:

- Following all policies and guidelines as outlined in this document.
- Keeping a written inventory of all equipment including but not limited to firearms, archery equipment, and ammunition, regardless of where it is stored, that is audited annually. Inventory lists should at minimum include location of equipment, serial number, make and model, gauge/caliber, and any other identifying marks.
- All firearms and archery equipment stored and transported in accordance with the [KY 4-H Shooting Sports Storage and Transportation Policy](#).
- Accident/Liability insurance in place for all 4-H members and coordinators/instructors before youth handle firearms and archery equipment.
- 4-H member enrollment (PIE/Code of Conduct) forms on file and in hand during every Shooting Sports meeting, practice and/or event.

APPENDIX

- Equipment Inventory Template
- Equipment Check-out Template
- Transfer of Ownership Form
- Risk Management Template

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Equipment Inventory		QTY	Make	Model	Action	Caliber/Gauge	Serial #	Location Stored	Notes		

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Equipment Check Our Log					
#	Item Description	Name of Borrower	Date/Time Borrowed	Date/Time Returned	Signature
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					

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Kentucky 4-H Shooting Sports - Transfer of Ownership Form

This form is intended to be used after a firearm/archery equipment has been purchased by a designated county volunteer for the use by said county's 4-H Shooting Sports program.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please print, using ink or type.
2. Fill out in duplicate for each item being transferred.
3. Keep a copy for personal records (volunteer) and for county 4-H program files.
 - a. These forms should be kept with all inventory paperwork.

Transferor Information		
First Name: _____	Last Name: _____	
Email: _____	Cell Phone Number: _____	
Address: _____		
Firearm/Archery Equipment Information		
Make/Brand: _____	Serial Number: _____	Caliber: _____
		Type (bow): _____
Description (handgun, shotgun, genesis bow, etc):		
Transferee Information		
Program Name: _____	4-H Agent Name: _____	
Email: _____	Office Phone Number: _____	
Office Address: _____		
Intended Use of Equipment:		

By signing below both parties attest that the above listed firearm/archery equipment was purchased by a designated volunteer leader for the sole purpose of use within a county 4-H Shooting Sports program. This paperwork is to be kept by both parties as documentation that from the date of signature the above listed firearm/archery equipment is no longer the property of the transferor and is now the responsibility of the listed county 4-H Shooting Sports program.

Transferor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Transferee/County Agent Signature: _____ Date: _____



Kentucky 4-H Shooting Sports: Club Risk Management Plan Template

This template is meant for use by county 4-H Shooting Sports programs and should be tailored to each club’s specific needs. This template is based on information provided in the Kentucky 4-H Shooting Sports State Plan and Kentucky 4-H Risk Management Checklist for 4-H Clubs, Meetings, Activities & Events.

Club Information	
Club Name:	County:
Disciplines Offered: Archery Hunting Skills Muzzleloading Pistol Rifle Shotgun	
County 4-H Agent(s):	
Club Level I Coordinator:	
Club Level I Instructor(s) (include name & discipline(s) certified):	

Objectives of the (insert county club name):

- EX: Practice safe and responsible use of firearms and archery equipment, enhancing existing shooting, conservation, and hunter education programs.

Location:

- Include all locations utilized for both club meetings and practices.

Contact Information:

Include phone numbers for all individuals who may need to be contacted in the event of an incident, including but not limited to: Level I Coordinator, County 4-H Agent, head Level I Instructor for discipline specific practices, etc.

Safe Practices:

- EX: Level I Instructors will hold a brief safety meeting with all youth prior to all practices.
- EX: 4-H member enrollment (PIE/Code of Conduct) forms will be secured by the 4-H Agent, Level I Coordinator, or designated Level I Instructor during all Shooting Sports meetings, practices and/or events.
- EX: A first-aid kit will be kept by each Level I Instructor on their range.

Medical/Emergency Information:

Include phone numbers for all local emergency medical services including but not limited to 911, poison control, and urgent care.



Emergency Action Plan

This section should outline the protocol to follow during an emergency situation. Examples provided below.

- Injury on the Range:
 - The Level I Instructor will be alerted of any injuries occurring on their range. If injury is severe the Instructor will call 911 for further assistance.
 - If not present, the County 4-H Agent should be contacted and kept up to date on the situation.
 - Incident Reports and Accident Claim information forms should be completed by those present who witnessed the event.
- Severe Weather:
 - During an outdoor event, should there be lightening observed, activities will cease for 30 minutes. All should return to their vehicles or onsite building. If after 30 minutes, no other incident of lightening has been observed, the activity may resume.
 - During an outdoor event, if the rain becomes so heavy that safety is compromised at the shooting line, the Range Officer may call Cease Fire until the weather allows safe shooting.

Travel Considerations

All county and state guidelines will be followed when volunteers provide transportation to 4-H club members as part of a 4-H club activity.

Supporting Documents

- Attach a copy of your club firearm/archery equipment inventory
- Attach a club meeting/practice schedule with locations listed
- Attach a copy of lease, rental agreement for any practice locations

