Becoming a Volunteer of Record with UConn Extension 4-H

UConn Extension 4-H Volunteer Trainings are conducted at county, state and regional locations. 4-H volunteers receive on-line and face-to-face trainings on UConn Extension 4-H and being an effective volunteer for positive youth development. All 4-H volunteers who will be having custodial care of 4-H youth participants such as supervising, chaperoning or otherwise overseeing minors, must complete a UConn Background Check every four years.

Getting Started Check List

1. ☐ Contact the local 4-H Staff in your county office to discuss your interests and time commitments

2. ☐ Return the completed and signed 4-H Volunteer Application Form to your county 4-H office

3. ☐ Complete the electronic UConn Criminal Background Check (CBC) emailed to you by the UConn Criminal Background Check Coordinator - if supervising youth (custodial care)

4. ☐ Upon receipt of the 4-H Volunteer Application Form and UConn CBC, references will be contacted and a background check will be conducted.

5. ☐ Enroll in 4-H Online and complete the UConn Minor Protection Training (see page 3 for details).

6. ☐ Once step 4 has been completed, a face-to-face Orientation about 4-H and being an effective volunteer will be conducted

7. ☐ Once all the steps have been completed, you will receive a confirmation letter in the mail stating that you are a Volunteer of Record with UConn Extension 4-H

You are not a registered 4-H Volunteer of Record with UConn Extension 4-H and are not cleared to meet with youth on your own as part of 4-H until you have received your confirmation letter.

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4-H Volunteer Application Form

The 4-H volunteers work with other adults, children or groups in a variety of ways. Volunteer opportunities include club leader, project leader, assistant leader, advisory committee member, fair association director/advisor/mentor, camp board member, program committee member and judge/evaluator for a 4-H event or contest.

Complete and return the 4-H Volunteer Application Form which can be found on the Connecticut 4-H Programs website ([www.4-H.uconn.edu](http://www.4-H.uconn.edu)) or the link below will take you directly to the application [http://www.4-h.uconn.edu/resource/form.php](http://www.4-h.uconn.edu/resource/form.php)

**Note:** Once the 4-H Volunteer Application Form is received by the 4-H Office, references will be contacted.

**UConn Background Check**

All 4-H volunteers who will be having custodial care of 4-H youth participants such as supervising, chaperoning or otherwise overseeing minors, must complete a UConn Background Check every four years. This process is completed online. 4-H Volunteers needing background checks will receive an electronic request from the UConn Background Check Coordinator asking them to submit their information electronically. There will still be one paper form that will need to be printed out, completed, signed, dated, and either uploaded to the on-line background check system, mailed, or faxed to Human Resources. The automated e-mail that will be sent when the background check is initiated, will provide instructions for working through the process.

If a Volunteer is unable to utilize the electronic option they will still be able to submit the paper forms packet, however there currently is limited access to the office and staff will be checking for paper forms periodically.

The Background Check webpage and the most recently updated forms can be located at, [http://hr.uconn.edu/cbc/](http://hr.uconn.edu/cbc/). Click on the blue “Gratis, Volunteer, Minor Protection CBC Packet” button on the right side of the page to download the entire forms packet. Completed forms should be delivered, mailed, or faxed directly to Human Resources at (860) 486-6773. The mailing address is UConn Human Resources, 9 Walters Ave., Unit 5075, Depot Campus, Storrs, CT 06269-5075. Please do not e-mail these forms as they contain sensitive information. Forms should be hand signed as electronic signatures cannot be accepted.

**UConn Minor Protection Training**

UConn Extension is very committed to minor protection, and the safety of minors must be of concern at all times.

Beginning October 1, 2019 4-H volunteers with custodial care of 4-H youth will be required to annually complete the UConn Minor Protection training which can be found on the 4-H Online Enrollment System. The mandated reporter training provided by the Department of Children and Families will no longer be required. The Minor Protection video has been produced with the highest level of minor protection training in mind. As you watch the video please keep in mind
that the UConn 4-H Program is registered with the University Minor Protection office. You will not need to register your 4-H activities and events with the University. We also recognize that in youth/adult partnerships, it is not always possible to have multiple people witness a conversation or be part of emailing, texting and social media. Please use common sense and avoid any situation where your one-on-one interaction with a minor may be deemed inappropriate.

**To access the video:**

You must have a profile on the 4-H Online Enrollment System. Please contact your local 4-H office for assistance in setting up your 4-H Online profile. Once you are logged in click on “Trainings” at the top of the page. Then click on “Sign up for a Training” and select the UConn Minor Protection training to begin viewing.

![Image of 4-H Online Enrollment System](image)

**Training Confirmation:**

At the end of the training, a certificate of completion will be available for downloading. The 4-H Online System will also maintain a record of trainings completed.
4-H Volunteer Club Leader Job Description

Position Title: 4-H Volunteer Club Leader
Term of Responsibility: 1 year minimum, but volunteers are encouraged to serve for several consecutive years.

Time Commitment: Average of one hour of planning time for every one hour of club activity. Participate in one or more volunteer development opportunities each year.

Purpose: Coordinate the efforts of other volunteers, families, parents and 4-Hers to plan, conduct and evaluate 4-H club meetings, project groups and activities. Support youth, families, volunteers and 4-H staff in conducting meaningful, educational experiences to help youth grow and reach their fullest potential.

Responsibilities:
As the leader of a 4-H group, it is critical that leaders support the group’s efforts to be in good standing as a Connecticut 4-H group.

1. Offer opportunities which expand member’s horizons, support their successes and enable them to grow from their mistakes. Be dedicated to youth and be sensitive to their abilities and needs.
   - Help members gain life skills such as decision making, problem solving, self-responsibility, accountability, communication, goal setting, citizenship, caring relationships, leadership, healthy lifestyle choices and career exploration skills in project work.
   - Encourage youth leadership through committees, demonstrations, junior leadership and individual guidance.
   - Encourage youth to learn and experiment with new ideas, techniques and skills.
   - Provide feedback to members, letting them know when they are doing a good job and advising them when they need to improve.
   - Praise youth for the progress they make.
   - Inform and encourage members, parents and other volunteers to actively participate in 4-H opportunities.
   - Ensure that club meetings and activities are educational and that youth are learning using the Experiential Learning Model

2. Provide an atmosphere where youth feel safe and learn to appreciate, accept and support the uniqueness of others. Follow all guidelines and policies of University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension 4-H program
   - Help youth feel welcome and safe from physical or emotional harm.
   - Encourage participation and welcome the ideas of youth and parents.
   - Ensure adequate supervision at all club functions.
   - Encourage membership with regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability.
• Support members striving to be a club in good standing following the UConn 4-H Program guidelines listed below:
  • Encourage members to participate in public presentation at the club or district level
  • Complete a community service project
  • Participate in county fundraising activities
  • Promote record keeping through member’s upkeep of record books
  • Have a project evaluated and receive recognition (example – a county 4-H Fair)
  • Publicize club activities through local or social media
  • Meet at least six times a year

Qualifications:
• Become a Volunteer of Record with UConn Extension 4-H
• Complete UConn Background Check and CT Mandated Reporter Training for Community Providers
• Possess a sincere interest in the safety and well-being of youth.
• Possess a sincere interest in working with other volunteers, CES staff, youth, their families and other adults in the community.
• Have the ability to organize, plan, delegate responsibility and carry out assignments.
• Be able to work with minimal supervision from professional staff.
• Be able to communicate with youth, their families and adults.
• Become familiar with the philosophy and guidelines of UConn Extension.
• Be sensitive of confidential matters and information.
• Complete annual club enrollment and reporting paperwork.
• Seek out resources and information to support club work.
• Have time to take on the group volunteer role.
• Be a positive role model for youth.

Resources Available:
UConn Extension provides 4-H Volunteer Club leader training. Subject matter training and technical support is provided through 4-H curriculum, resource library, county and state 4-H program updates, and other resource materials.