



## Creating Operating Guidelines for your Group or Committee

### Why are operating guidelines necessary for a group or committee?

Operating guidelines are critical for a group or committee because they serve as the foundation for how the group functions. They are also necessary for the chartering process which is required of any group to have a formal affiliation with 4-H and be given permission to use the 4-H name and emblem. The Wyoming 4-H programs suggests the use of operating guidelines for group and committees. Operating guidelines can be adapted for groups that tend to change based on the needs of the county 4-H program.

### The committee or group operating guidelines should include:

- What is the name of group?
- The purpose or why the group is formed? Be sure the purpose is in line with the Wyoming 4-H Mission, Vision, and Values from the Wyoming 4-H Policy Manual.
- Statement of how this committee or group is accountable to the 4-H Educator?
- The statement of non-discrimination.
  - *The 4-H committee must comply with all federal and state laws including those regarding non-discrimination. The University's policy has been, and will continue to be, one of nondiscrimination, offering equal opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment on the basis of their demonstrated ability and competence without regard to such matters as race, sex, gender, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, political belief, or other status protected by state and federal statutes or University Regulations. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication or program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact their local UW CES office. To file a complaint, write to the UW Employment Practices/Affirmative Action Office, University of Wyoming, Department 3434, 1000 E. University Avenue, Laramie, WY 82071.*
- The membership/structure of the committee
  - Will it include youth and adults?
  - Will it have a limited number of people? How are those people chosen?
  - Only certified leaders or 4-H members can vote as part of your committee.
- Defined officers or leadership positions and their roles if there are any?
  - President, Vice President, etc. OR Chair, Vice Chair, etc.
  - How will leadership roles be chosen?
  - Will both youth and adults serve in these roles?

- How decisions are made? (Majority votes, consensus, etc.)
- How decisions are recorded?
- The statement on financial operations:
  - This committee will comply with annual reporting including using, completing and filing the *Wyoming 4-H Annual Treasurers' Report, Annual Financial Report, Annual Inventory Report, and Annual Financial Review Form*, with the UW 4-H Educator.
- The required dissolution clause.
  - *Upon Dissolution, 4-H funds and property, must be relinquished to a 4-H affiliate with a charitable educational purpose such as another 4-H committee, the County 4-H Council, County 4-H Foundation, or the Wyoming State 4-H Foundation for future use in 4-H programming. Distribution options must be discussed and approved by the County 4-H Educator.*

What to do after the guidelines are developed?

After the guidelines are developed they should be handed out to each member of the group or committee and reviewed annually with the group.

Adapted from “Developing 4-H Committees or Group Guidelines or Bylaws,” Wisconsin 4-H Community Clubs.