



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
4-H National Headquarters

# **4-H Name and Emblem – Applicant Handbook (Revised 2017)**

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*Many people and organizations are interested in using the 4-H Name and Emblem. This handbook explains the relevant federal regulations and application procedures to become an authorized user of the 4-H Name and Emblem. Please read this information carefully before applying for authorization.*

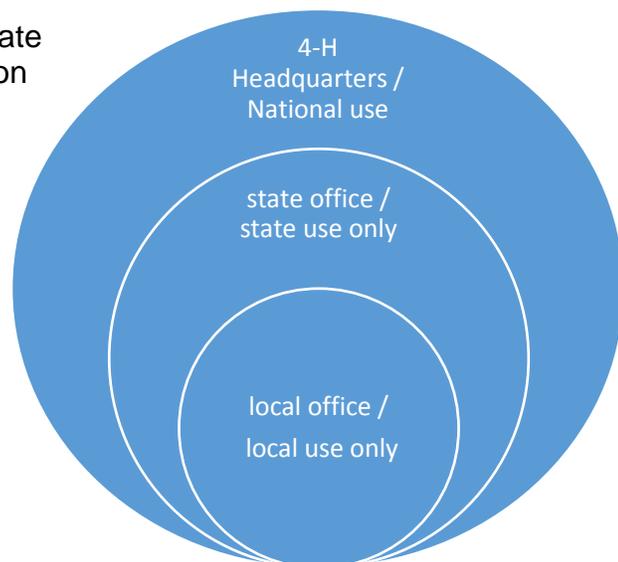
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## Introduction

The 4-H Youth Development Program is the youth education and outreach component of the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) at land-grant institutions and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). CES creates and implements 4-H youth development programs under the Smith-Lever Act, 7 U.S. Code 341.

The 4-H Name and Emblem is a federal mark, with protections and standards that exceed that of trademarks and copyrights. Using the 4-H Name and Emblem requires proper authorization. Under Public Law 722, Title 18, U.S. Code 707; **anyone engaging in unauthorized use or misuse of the 4-H Name and Emblem is subject to federal prosecution.**

To use the 4-H Name and Emblem within a single state only, contact that [state's 4-H office](#) for its authorization process. If your request for authorization involves more than one state in the production, promotion, sales, and/or distribution of the 4-H Name and Emblem, you must submit an application to 4-H National Headquarters. The [application form](#) is available on the 4-H National Headquarters [website](#). Applications are reviewed against the criteria explained in this handbook, usually within 3-5 business days. The 4-H National Headquarters [publishes](#) the names and entities authorized to use the 4-H Name and Emblem.



## Overview of Expectations when Requesting 4-H Name and Emblem Authorization

Successful applicants must:

- Enhance 4-H's outreach and educational platforms, programs, or activities.
- Preserve or promote trust in the 4-H brand.
- Be appropriate for an association with a federal government program, based on reasonable judgement as evaluated by 4-H USDA or 4-H Extension staff.
- Require no endorsement or implied endorsement by 4-H. Allow 4-H to independently determine how to acknowledge the authorized user, which will be in a value-neutral manner that will not endorse or promote the authorized user.
- Comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
- Not expect an exclusive association with 4-H or restrict 4-H from participating in similar arrangements with others.
- Not have any associations with products or services that are not in the public interest or that could harm the health of the American public, or that are in any way inconsistent with positive youth development or any other component of 4-H.

## Foundational Criteria for using the 4-H Name or Emblem

### DESCRIPTION

There are several foundational criteria that must be adhered to regardless of the intended use of the 4-H Name and Emblem. Additional criteria also apply, depending upon the specific intended use. In all situations, USDA and/or CES retains the right to control use of the 4-H Name and Emblem through its ability to provide, deny, or revoke domestic authorizations.

All usage of the 4-H Name and Emblem must be for educational or character building purposes, uphold the dignity of the 4-H Name, and provide a benefit to the 4-H Program. All uses of the 4-H Name and Emblem must contribute to the appropriate learning and positive development of the youth and adults involved in the 4-H Program, align with the principles of 4-H and positive youth development, and/or refrain from anything that contradicts positive youth development. The use must support 4-H programming, provide a sense of belonging to the 4-H community, and the benefit to 4-H must be equal to or greater than the benefit received by the authorized entity.

Authorization will be denied if there is any direct or implied endorsement, exclusivity, or other exploitation of the 4-H Program or those involved with the 4-H Program. No unfair advantage can be taken of the 4-H name, emblem, its employees, volunteers, or youth for the purposes of benefiting a product, person, organization, etc. This includes any statement or action of support for a specific product, person, organization, etc., by 4-H, or the restricting of authorization to a single or select group of people, product, business, etc.

### REMINDER

The 4-H Name and Emblem is a federal mark. Authorization for their use is guided by federal regulations and has much stricter criteria than most trademarks and copyrights.

Individual franchisees or consultants will not be authorized. Applications must come from the company headquarters.

### DECISION CHECKLIST

- ✓ USDA and/or CES may properly control the use of the 4-H Name and Emblem
- ✓ The use of the 4-H Name and Emblem is educational and/or character building in nature
- ✓ The use of the 4-H Name and Emblem benefits the 4-H Program
- ✓ The use of the 4-H Name and Emblem upholds the dignity of the 4-H Program
- ✓ The use of the 4-H Name and Emblem does not exploit the 4-H Program, its employees, volunteers, or participants
- ✓ The use of the 4-H Name and Emblem does not provide any direct or implied endorsement of any person, company, product, or organization
- ✓ The use of the 4-H Name and Emblem does not provide or imply an exclusive relationship with any person, company, product, or organization
- ✓ The use of the 4-H Name and Emblem is limited to a specified timeframe

## Using the Name 4-H

### DESCRIPTION

The official 4-H Name includes 4-H, 4-H Youth Development, and 4-H Youth Development Program. When using the term “4-H,” it is to be written as numeral “4,” separated from a capital “H” with a hyphen (not a dash, slash, or space). It is well documented in English usage, as well as in the most familiar style manuals, that you should never begin a sentence with a numeral. To comply with this rule, it is best to re-word the sentence slightly so it does not begin with 4-H. However, as 4-H is a proper noun, “4-H” may be used to begin a sentence or headline if re-wording is not feasible.

Avoid separation of any of the elements of the 4-H Name at the end of sentences. This can sometimes be difficult because some software programs override user commands. Often, these overrides do not become visible until after printing or posting to a Web page: careful scrutiny of text after trial printing or posting is advised. The 4-H Emblem may not be used in place of the word “4-H” in a title or text, or to replace an individual letter within a word.

### DECISION CHECKLIST

- ✓ The text is written as *numeral hyphen capital letter*
- ✓ The emblem is not being used as a replacement for text
- ✓ The context of the use is accurate with correct content

4-H

## Using the 4-H Emblem

### DESCRIPTION

The official 4-H Emblem is a green four-leaf clover with a white letter “H” in each leaf and the stem turned to the right. The Emblem may be two-dimensional (flat) or three dimensional (with shadows that show depth and perspective). The 4-H Emblem may not be altered in any way.

Use of the emblem includes the responsibility to communicate the significance of the 4-H Name and Emblem as a government-owned emblem that is protected by federal statute. The insignia “18 U.S.C. 707” provides the legal obligation to correctly inform the public of the federal protections and consequences of potential misuse.

The 4-H Emblem may be used for artistic materials such as jewelry or fine art and may be made of metal (e.g., copper, bronze, gold, or silver), glass, leather, or wood without conflicting with the color specifications for the 4-H Emblem. Ceramic, plaster, paper, fabric, or any materials that are colored or painted must comply with the color specifications and all other guidelines. Use of the emblem on fabric must accurately represent the 4-H Emblem in authorized colors. The 4-H Emblem is not open to reinterpretation or reconfiguration, regardless of its intended use, including the development of materials such as jewelry, sculpture, signage, crafts, or other fine art.

Animation of the 4-H Name and Emblem is allowable, provided that the animation is in keeping with the guidelines in this document and that at the end point of the animation (where the animated loop stops or begins to repeat if an ongoing loop), the 4-H Emblem appears in a manner that meets all guidelines for its use.

### APPLICATION TIP

Make sure you contact [4HNE@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:4HNE@nifa.usda.gov) to obtain the **official** 4-H Emblem rather than taking a potentially unofficial (incorrect) emblem from a general web search.

### DECISION CHECKLIST

- ✓ The official emblem with legal insignia is being used in its entirety
- ✓ The emblem has not been altered (including tilting, flipping, or color adaptation)
- ✓ No portion of the emblem has been covered by text or another image
- ✓ The emblem is not integrated into another’s logo or image



## Products and/or Services Using the 4-H Name or Emblem

### DESCRIPTION

Authorization is required for the manufacturing, promoting (cross reference section on marketing/media criteria), selling (cross reference section on fundraising criteria if appropriate), and/or distribution of products or services using the 4-H Name and Emblem. This includes sales or re-sale of 4-H products and other paraphernalia by individuals. Products and services must be those that the Cooperative Extension Service is not able to provide for itself and are needed to support the educational, character building, or recognition efforts of the 4-H Program.

- Educational Examples: Notebooks, pens, flags, and other meeting supplies
- Character Building Examples: Clothing, bags, hats, jewelry, and other items that help create a sense of identity and belonging
- Recognition Examples: Trophies, ribbons, pins, certificates, and related items

The 4-H Name and Emblem may not be used on or in association with the following types of products or services. (Note: This list is subject to revision)

- Animal Feed
- Beauty Products
- Beverages
- Food
- Insurance
- Luxury Items
- Pesticides
- Solvents
- Weapons

### REMINDER

A non-endorsement statement must accompany the use of the 4-H Name and Emblem on or in connection to products and services.

*Example: "No endorsement of this product or service is granted or implied by 4-H, the U.S. government, or any of its organizational units or employees."*

### APPLICATION TIPS

- In stating the purpose of your request, be sure to include how this product or service supports 4-H.
- If custom designs are part of the request, be sure to include a statement of how 4-H Emblem criteria will be ensured in these designs.
- If it is not possible to include the insignia ("18 U.S.C. 707") on the product (i.e., jewelry, metal work, etc.), be sure to include the packaging insert that includes this information as part of your sample.

### DECISION CHECKLIST

- ✓ CES does not have the capacity to provide this product or service
- ✓ Product or service supports the educational, character building, and/or recognition efforts of 4-H
- ✓ Product or service is not on the unallowable list

## Marketing and/or Media using the 4-H Name or Emblem

### DESCRIPTION

Any use of the 4-H Name and Emblem in promotional materials or in the production of books, publications, films, audio-visual materials, websites, apps, social media platforms, and other technologies is subject to review in both initial proposals and final drafts. The 4-H Name and Emblem must be clear, distinct, and set apart from any commercial product message or reference when the media is part of or relates to promotional materials. The 4-H Name and Emblem cannot be integrated into or joined with other company name or logos/images to create a larger design. The materials cannot include any commercial product or service testimonials or preferences by anyone associated with the 4-H program.

Authorization is not required to use the 4-H Name and Emblem in exhibits, displays, etc. that are designed primarily to pay tribute to the 4-H Program. Authorization is not required to use the 4-H Name and Emblem in print and non-print media such as newspapers and periodicals **when such use is primarily for educational or informational purposes**. All 4-H Name and Emblem standards for proper use must still be followed.

### REMINDER

A disclaimer must be used when the 4-H Name and Emblem is used to link to an official 4-H website in keeping with the policies and guidelines in this document.

*Example: "No endorsement of this website is granted or implied by 4-H, the U.S. government, or any of its organizational units or employees. This site contains advertisement links to third party sites. 4-H is not responsible for the information found through these links, nor does it endorse the sites or their content."*

### APPLICATION TIP

Along with providing all the text and graphics relating to 4-H in the sample, provide the context in which this information will be used. This may be the overall synopsis of a movie or book where 4-H is referenced, or the purpose of a website where information about 4-H is being shared. Initial proposals through final drafts are all subject to review.

### DECISION CHECKLIST

- ✓ Use of 4-H is separate from product or service messaging
- ✓ Testimonials about the product or service are not stated or implied by 4-H

## Fundraising With the 4-H Name or Emblem

### DESCRIPTION

Fundraising activities, including sponsorships, using the 4-H Name and Emblem may be carried out for educational purposes, but these activities must have the approval of the appropriate authorizing entity (local, state or national). All monies received from 4-H fundraising programs, except those necessary to pay reasonable expenses, must be used to support the 4-H educational program. All fund development efforts must follow federal and state laws, and any related policies of the land-grant institution connected with the effort.

Donor or sponsor identification (cross reference section on partnership criteria) and involvement with a 4-H contest, awards program, or event will be considered only when a written agreement between the Cooperative Extension office receiving the support and the donor or sponsor is in place. The agreement must define the type of award, purpose of the award, criteria on which the award will be given, and/or the rules and regulations under which a contest or awards program shall be conducted. Donors of 4-H awards or sponsors of a 4-H contest cannot require the use of or refer to specific brand name products or services as criteria for an award or in conducting a contest. Donors or sponsors should not be referred to as the “official” donor or sponsor of 4-H as it implies both endorsement and exclusivity.

The monies received and the expenses paid at auctions or similar fundraising sales events connected to 4-H are subject to federal tax laws and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations. Due to the complexity of Internal Revenue Service regulations, all 4-H members, organizations, and contributors involved in these sales and events are strongly encouraged to seek guidance from their tax advisors regarding their specific accountability and situation.

### REMINDER

In connection with 4-H fundraising purposes, a disclaimer statement must be used on promotional materials for products or services offered for sale.

*Example: “No endorsement of the product or service by 4-H, the U.S. government, or any of its organizational units or employees is implied or intended. Profit from this fundraiser will be used to support 4-H educational programs.”*

A disclaimer statement is also needed in connection to sponsorships and/or donations.

*Example: “\_\_\_\_\_ is a sponsor/donor of the [The name of a specific club, county, or state may be inserted here to identify the 4-H program being supported.] 4-H Youth Development program and has provided funding, goods, or services in support of 4-H programming. Acceptance of this sponsorship/donation does not imply endorsement by 4-H, the U.S. government, or any of its organizational units or employees of any firm, product, or service.”*

#### APPLICATION TIP

- When uploading the examples for your request, be sure to include all promotional items that will be used in the fundraiser.
- As appropriate, be sure to indicate the 4-H or CES entity with whom the written agreement is in place

#### DECISION CHECKLIST

- ✓ All funds raised further 4-H programming
- ✓ Distribution of funds is clear
- ✓ Written agreement is in place (as appropriate)

### Partnerships with 4-H

The 4-H Name and Emblem may be used in conjunction with the names, emblems, and word marks of other organizations and programs when 4-H is a partner, co-author, or in some other official relationship that includes a written agreement. Since the 4-H Program itself is a partnership, the written agreement and materials related to the partnership must indicate the specific 4-H partner (4-H National Headquarters – USDA/NIFA, National 4-H Council, or land-grant institution) this partnership is based. The nature of the relationship among the entities must be clearly defined and include a non-endorsement statement. The 4-H Emblem is to be given prominence consistent with its role in the relationship.

To avoid the appearance of endorsement, the 4-H Emblem may not be incorporated into a larger design of a program, product, or service that is protected by trademark, service mark, copyright, or other similar laws. The 4-H Emblem may not be incorporated into any other organization's logo or emblem. The 4-H Emblem may not be used or integrated into a larger design in such a manner that it becomes difficult to recognize or distinguish, or that is not consistent with the graphic guidelines for use of the 4-H Emblem.

## Terms and Definitions

4-H National Headquarters – Housed at USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA); provides management and authorization for the 4-H Name and Emblem.

CES – Cooperative Extension Service; housed at the land-grant institutions; provides 4-H Name and Emblem authorization at the local and state level.

Character Building – That which promotes a pattern of behavior, thoughts and feelings based on universal principles, moral strength, and integrity.

Developmentally Appropriate – Ensuring that goals and experiences are suited to their learning and development and challenging enough to promote their progress and interest, and based on the research of how youth learn and develop.

Insignia – The phrase “18 U.S.C. 707”.

NIFA – National Institute of Food and Agriculture, an agency within USDA.

Positive Youth Development – An intentional, pro-social approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances youth’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.

USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture; legislated by Congress to manage the 4-H Name and Emblem.