

Making 4-H Accessible for Club Members with Disabilities: Inclusion, Accommodations & Using the Winning 4-H Plan

OSU Extension Disability Services & 4-H Resource Sheet

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The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA requires Ohio State Extension to make all aspects of 4-H, including programming, projects, facilities and activities, accessible to people with disabilities. Access and inclusion are created through a combination of creating accessible programming, events, interactions and spaces, with a goal of allowing the individual maximum independence, and minimal intervention from others (Advisors and Educators). The learning and experiences that a club member gains through 4-H are as/more important than a "perfect" final project, or a blue ribbon at the fair.

Creating access is more than ensuring the club member can attend the fair, it includes choosing an appropriate project, holding meetings and activities in accessible spaces, and including all club members in all activities.

Planning for Access

When planning an event, program or meeting, review this accessibility checklist to see if your event will be welcoming to everyone who attends.

Property

- Is the property/event welcoming to everyone of all abilities?
- Is there accessible parking & entrances?
- Could a person in a wheelchair access the event, property, public bathrooms, barns, and activity/program areas?

Website and accommodations requests

- Is the website accessible to people who need technology to read a website?
- Is there information about how people could request accommodations listed on all publications, website and advertisements?

There may be differences between 4-H accommodations and the accommodations in secondary schools.

Participation in 4-H is voluntary, and 4-H is required to provide reasonable accommodations and access. Secondary school is mandatory, and schools may need to alter requirements, and provide accommodations to ensure that students can be successful.

What is an accommodation, and do I have to approve it?

An accommodation is an adjustment or change that makes the site, project, and/or event accessible to a person with a disability. You are responsible for providing reasonable accommodations. To determine what is reasonable, you should first consider what is not reasonable.

A request is not reasonable and does not have to be granted if it:

- Requires a substantial change or alteration in the curriculum
- Requires a substantial change to an essential element of a course or program
- Fundamentally alters the nature of the service provided
- Poses an undue financial hardship or administrative burden (considers OSU resources - not just Extension or your county resources)
- Poses a direct threat to the health and safety of self or others

If the accommodation requested changes the program so much that it is no longer the program, that is not reasonable and does not have to be approved.

Common accommodations

- Typed responses or use of scribe for longer passages in project book
- Help with _____ (ex. reading, writing, math)
- Extra time for _____ (ex. reading, writing, response answering questions, taking test)
- Rephrase or reword questions as needed for understanding
- Break down tasks/questions to simple instructions
- Directions/questions provided orally
- Hand over hand to perform skill/task
- Reduce the number of questions/items performed
- Use of interpreter (sign language)
- Project books/materials provided in pdf, enlarged print, or other format. *Please contact Laura Akgerman.4 to request project books in alternate/electronic format*
- Use of service animal or seeing eye person when deemed safe (in show ring)
- Change of location to quieter setting for interview/judging/task performance
- Use of device, tool or mechanism that helps them perform the task



Winning 4-H Plan

The Winning 4-H Plan is designed to assist Extension professionals and volunteers by providing training and resources that aid them in developing accommodation plans to meet the needs of Ohio 4-H youth with disabilities. It was developed in 2004 by Ohio 4-H Educators Nicola Eyre and Connie Goble, and was updated in 2012.

Notification for General Public on [ohio4h.org](http://www.ohio4h.org) at

<http://www.ohio4h.org/about/join-4-h>

Forms in Intranet under Resources

<http://www.ohio4h.org/intranet/resources>

Notebook in County office (2012 - if you still can find it)

Items from notebook are in Buckeye Box at

<https://osu.box.com/v/OSUW4HP>

Not all disabilities need a W4HP. It is the option of the family to have a plan, or not have a plan.

Basic procedures

- County Educator receives request form
- Meet/discuss request
- Determine accommodations
- Send notification of approved accommodations
- Review annually

Writing the Winning Plan:

- Initial Meeting with the Parent/Guardian - What do You need to Know?

Good Sample questions:

- What further information do I need to know about the disability?
- How does the disability impact _____ (the activity or interaction necessary for 4-H club & project)
- Are there accommodations needed for club meetings, camp, program times?
- What do other club advisors/members need to know?
- How do you plan to complete the project, participate in the activity?
- Are the projects selected within the ability and scope of what they can do?
- We do not need proof of the disability; there is usually not a reason to ask for proof. Don't keep an IEP or other documentation; it will not be used to determine appropriate accommodations in 4-H.

If you have questions, concerns, need a project book, or suggestions on making an event or activity accessible please contact Laura at akgerman.4@osu.edu, or call 614-292-0622.

Keeping 4-H Inclusive: Tips for Educators and Volunteers

- Do follow the Golden Rule & treat the member the way you want to be treated (or the way you want your child treated - just like everyone else)
- Do ask if the member needs accommodations to participate in meetings & activities
- Do ask if the member needs help with a task or activity (only if it is obvious they need help)
- Do expect and require appropriate behavior and interaction from the member and their family
- Don't assume the member needs help - let them ask!
- Don't promise or refuse an accommodation, let the Educator do it!
- Don't treat the member different from other members
- Don't call attention to accommodations or ways the member is different

Service Animals

Only dogs or mini horses are "service animals" and protected by the ADA.

There are only two questions you can legally ask about a service dog:

(1) Is it required because of a disability?

(2) What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

You cannot ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog.

Emotional support or therapy animals are different, not protected under the ADA, and may still be appropriate in 4-H settings.

The handler must have control over the dog at all times, must clean up after the dog, and is responsible for the dog's behavior. The handler/owner of a bad tempered or misbehaving service dog is responsible if the dog bites or harms someone.

Saying "yes" to an accommodations is easy. You will write it up in the Winning 4-H Plan. You can say "yes" with parameters. Saying "yes" to one person does not set a precedent.

You cannot say "no" without checking with someone else: E-mail Kirk Bloir.1, cc your county & regional director. Kirk may pass the request to Laura Akgerman.4, and she may need to consult with Scott Lissner, OSU ADA Coordinator.

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For Deaf and Hard of Hearing, please contact the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences using your preferred communication (e-mail, relay services, or video relay services). Phone 1-800-750-0750 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. EST Monday through Friday. Inform the operator to dial 614-292-6891.