

Charter, Constitution & Bylaws



Who Owns the 4-H Clover?

The 4-H club name and emblem are held in trust by the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States Department of Agriculture for the educational and character - building purposes of the 4-H program and can be used only as authorized by the statute and in accordance with the authorization of the Secretary or designated representative.

The 4-H club name and emblem may be used by authorized representatives of the United States Department of Agriculture, the Cooperative Extension, the land grant institutions, and the National 4-H Council.

Extension Administration may grant authorization for the use of the 4-H club name and emblem for educational or informational uses that the Cooperative Extension deems to be in the best interest of the 4-H program and that can be properly controlled by the Cooperative Extension.

Excerpts from: *The 4-H Name and Emblem: Guidelines for Authorized Use*, USDA.

Why Do Clubs Need a Charter?

The State 4-H Leader and 4-H Extension Educator are authorized to grant use of the 4-H club name and emblem, within

intended uses, to local 4-H clubs and groups. The 4-H Charter is a written agreement signifying a club's use of the 4-H club name and emblem and insuring they are providing a positive youth development experience for their youth. Every MN 4-H club is expected to complete and submit the *4-H Charter Application* (Toolkit 1) to the County Extension Office by November 1st . New clubs may form and Charter at anytime throughout the year.

What Does it Mean to be Chartered?

- Your club has the privilege of identifying itself as a 4-H club or group by using the 4-H club name and emblem.
- You agree to provide a positive youth development environment that upholds the dignity and educational purposes of the 4-H program.
- Your club and/or its members will be able to be a voting member of the County 4-H Council or Federation (varies by county).
- Screened volunteers of the club are covered by the University of Minnesota Liability Insurance.
- Your club will have the privilege of using the 4-H name and the 4-H clover symbol.

- Your club will have the right to raise and collect funds in the name of 4-H with the approval of 4-H staff.

How Do Clubs Become Chartered?

1. Applications will be distributed by the Regional Office to club leaders.
2. Leaders will meet with the club to make sure everyone understands the purpose and requirements for chartering.
3. Completed applications from existing clubs must be turned into the County Extension Office by November 1st to be recognized as a 4-H club for the current program year. However, new clubs can be formed and chartered at anytime throughout the year.
 - If forms are not received by the due date, a staff member from the local office will contact the club leader.
4. Club leaders will be notified upon approval of the application.

Forms that must Accompany the 4-H Charter Application:

- *Annual 4-H Group Financial Report* (found in the treasurer's handbook and Toolkit 1b)
- Signed Equal Opportunity Statement (Toolkit 1a)
- Program Planning Guide for upcoming year (Toolkit 1c)

4-H Club Constitution and By-Laws

Each 4-H club is encouraged to develop a constitution and bylaws. This document reflects the organizational makeup of the 4-H club. It describes when and where the club meets, what officers the club elects, etc. The entire 4-H club is responsible for writing and approving the constitution and bylaws. It is important that members, parents and volunteer leaders have input in how the club operates.

After completing the constitution and bylaws, forward a copy to the local Extension Office.

The constitution and bylaws should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Refer to *Sample 4-H Club Constitution & Bylaws* (Toolkit 3).

