



RISK MANAGEMENT FOR FLORIDA 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORK¹

Risk Management Checklist

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This is one publication in the series *Risk Management for 4-H Youth Development Work*. This series is intended to prepare UF/IFAS Extension county faculty, staff, volunteers, and youth to satisfactorily complete the important task of providing best practices in risk management strategies.

Our goal is to conduct educational events and activities that coincide with the 4-H mission and mandates while protecting the safety of participants, sponsors, property, finances, and the goodwill/reputation of the 4-H name. Planning and preparation can mitigate the inherent risk of events and activities. This risk management guide outlines ways to prepare for and deal with the specific risks associated with your program.

Early planning is key to conducting successful events and activities. This checklist will help during event/activity planning. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive but rather to provide a starting point for analyzing the risk management plan. Items are identified as UF Youth Compliance Policy (UF Youth Compliance P), 4-H Policy (P), State Law (SL), or Best Management Practice (BMP).

Child Protection

Ensure the program complies with all UF policies and state laws regarding volunteer and staff background screening, youth protection training, and youth participant reporting. (See Ask IFAS publication #4H444, "UF/IFAS Extension Florida 4-H Youth Protection Policy" for more details.)

- Ensure appropriate [staff-to-participant ratios](#) are in place at all times. (UF Youth Compliance P)
- Ensure appropriate leadership (two authorized adults/two deep leadership) are in place at all times. (UF Youth Compliance P)
- Ensure appropriate screening for staff and volunteers per Florida law and UF compliance standards. (SL & UF Youth Compliance P)

- Ensure that the sufficient adult/child ratio accounts for gender and that appropriate accommodations are available for overnight events. (UF Youth Compliance P)
- Ensure participants have appropriate attire and safety equipment. (BMP)
- Ensure safety by limiting contact between youth participants and individuals not associated with the program. (BMP)
- Ensure appropriate communication and no one-on-one communication between adults and youth participants, including on social media, by telephone, via email, and in meetings outside scheduled activities. (UF Youth Compliance P)
- Ensure volunteers and staff complete Youth Protection training annually through [4-H Online](#). (UF Youth Compliance P)
- **Risk Assessment:** Refer to Ask IFAS publication [#4HFSV90.1](#), "Pre-Event Planning Guide and Matrix," ("what if" scenarios; estimate potential risk; establish strategies to reduce risk) another part in this series. (BMP)
- **Policy:** Refer to [Florida 4-H Policies & Best Management Practices](#). (P)
- **Conduct Requirements:** Ensure all adults and youth participants sign Code of Conduct documents. (Topics include, but are not limited to, possession/use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs; weapons; bullying; hazing; inappropriate use of imaging devices; harmful behaviors; dress code; and the appeals process). (P)

Supervising Adults and/or Teens

- Ensure volunteers and/or chaperones selected through the Florida 4-H volunteer process meet all requirements (includes parents serving in a volunteer role). (P)
- Ensure volunteers abide by child protection procedures/laws concerning screening, privacy, and reporting procedures. (UF Youth Compliance P)

- Orient and train volunteers and/or chaperones for their roles, working with youth, emergency procedures, and event/activity responsibilities. (BMP)
- Ensure all medications for participants have an accompanying medication form, are accounted for, and are secured with a volunteer in Care, Custody, and Control or with medical personnel if on-site. To obtain the form, please contact your local UF/IFAS Extension 4-H agent. (BMP)
- Communicate drop-off and pick-up procedures to parents (using restricted and early release forms). (BMP)
- Establish and implement the process for youth to sign "in" and "out" of a program. (BMP)
- Conduct participant orientation, including rules, policies, guidelines, safety, and emergency procedures. (BMP)

Parents of Participants

- Conduct parent orientation, including program purpose, rules, and policies for participation, safety, emergency procedures, and so forth. (BMP)
- Complete enrollment/registration. (P)
- Sign a permission to participate or informed consent form for the child. (P)
- Understand financial obligations and pay any required costs by their deadlines. (BMP)

Contracts

- Faculty, staff, and Extension volunteers are not permitted to sign contracts. If a contract is required to be signed, please contact 4-H Business Services. (P)

Facilities

Ensure the site chosen meets the following safety requirements:

- Provides a safe environment for participants. (BMP)
- Is accessible for individuals with disabilities and special needs. (SL)
- Has emergency exits that are clearly marked, unlocked, and easily accessible. (BMP)
- Has emergency equipment that is accessible, if needed. (BMP)
- Considers other groups using the facilities and any potential conflicts. (BMP)
- Keeps a lifeguard with appropriate certification present when near water. (BMP)
- Provides separate accommodations for adults and participants. Youth are not permitted to sleep in the room of an adult (over age 18) other than his/her own parent or guardian. (UF Youth Compliance P)

- If possible, provides accommodations with separate shower and bathroom facilities or separate usage times for each gender, youth, and adults. (BMP)

Ensure the site chosen meets the following liability requirements:

- If liability insurance is required by the chosen facility, seek assistance from your county Extension agent in obtaining appropriate liability insurance. (BMP)
- Obtain facility use forms, agreements, and/or contracts from the management of the chosen facility. See the previous section called Contracts. (BMP)

Transportation

Required for All Drivers

- Meet all requirements set forth by the UF Environmental Health and Safety Office for employees and volunteers. (P)
- If transporting youth in a 12- or 15-passenger van, please consult the corresponding [van policy](#).
- Have a copy of the driver's license and insurance on file. (BMP)
- Follow a planned route, possess maps and directions, and have set meeting times and destinations. (BMP)
- Must have the ability to communicate by cell phone or two-way radio. (P)
- Have a copy of all transportation release and health forms of the youth being transported. Find these on 4-H Online in each member's profile. (Volunteers should contact the UF/IFAS Extension county 4-H agent for a copy of participant health forms.)

Required for All Participants

- Complete transportation (part of registration process, found in member's profile) release in 4-H Online.
- Wear seat belts at all times. (SL)
- Refrain from behavior that is distracting to the driver. (BMP)

Food Preparation

- Ensure food is handled, prepared, and stored safely per USDA-FSIS guidelines regarding the [danger zone](#). (BMP)
- Refer to the Ask IFAS topic on [Food Safety](#) in Florida. (BMP)

Liability Coverage, Insurance, and Laws

- Assess that liability coverage is adequate. (BMP)
- Secure accident insurance for all participants. (BMP)
- Secure proper liability insurance before transporting youth. (BMP)

Emergencies

Participant Health-Related Requirements

- Ensure signed Florida 4-H participation form with emergency contact information for each participant (youth and adult) is accessible by the person(s) in charge. (BMP)
- Know where to access emergency healthcare even when traveling out of town. (BMP)
- Have phone numbers of the nearest hospital, ambulance, and law enforcement. (BMP)
- Secure health and/or accidental insurance (i.e., American Income Life).
- Have incident or accident report forms available for use by the person(s) in charge. (BMP)
- If an accident occurs, know to call for help, contact a parent or guardian, contact CED, and contact UF/IFAS Extension Business Services. (BMP)
- Check with Extension agent/staff about 4-H Activity Insurance and Emergency Management Procedures. (BMP)
- Carry and use two-way radios and/or cell phones for emergencies and ongoing communication. (BMP)
- Have current and up-to-date first-aid kit available. (BMP)

Unexpected Situations/Acts of Nature

- Adjust plans according to the storm warning system. (BMP)
- Plan for unexpected weather (have access to shelter, means to contact parents with change of location, etc.). (BMP)
- Make alternative plans. (BMP)
- Identify the nearest shelter in case of the following severe weather or emergencies (BMP):
 - Fire
 - Flood
 - Tornado
 - Hurricane

Additional Resources

Ask IFAS publication 4HFSV90.1, "[Risk Management for 4-H Youth Development Work: Pre-event Planning Guide and Matrix](#)"

[Florida Extension Disaster Education Network](#)

[4-H Online](#)

[Nonprofit Risk Management Center](#)

[UF/IFAS Disaster Preparation & Recovery for Agriculture & Livestock](#)

[UF/IFAS Extension Administration Disaster Preparedness](#)

[UF Youth Compliance](#)

- 4-H volunteers should log into 4-H Online at the link above to complete UF Youth Compliance training, including Youth Protection, annually.

[USDA](#)

Further Reading

Herman, M. L. (2011). *Ready or not ... A risk management guide for nonprofit executives* (2nd ed.). Nonprofit Risk Management Center.

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