

OKLAHOMA 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS POLICY

Revised June 2010

Revised June 2007

Original 1994

I. SITUATION STATEMENT

The Oklahoma 4-H Shooting Sports Program started in 1982. During that time it developed into a 4-H Shotgun Sports Program with 17 counties in Oklahoma having a program. The program was revised in 1994 to include the following disciplines (archery, air rifle, air pistol, black powder/muzzleloading, shotgun, hunting, and coordinator).

The program revision in 1994 was modeled after the National 4-H Shooting Sports Program and is administered by a nationally certified state committee consisting of Extension staff and volunteers. Since 1994 leader training/certification workshops have been offered annually. A database of those persons who have successfully completed the training is maintained by the State Shooting Sports Coordinator in the State 4-H Office.

By 2007 the Shooting Sports program had grown to be one of the largest 4-H projects in the state with over 600 adults having attended one or more discipline training workshops and over 4,500 youth enrolled in the Shooting Sports Project. In 2006, the state sent teams to the National Contest in all of the major disciplines and as a result of the significant growth a review of the policies and rules for the various contest was in order. These following policies emerged from that review.

The program is designed to:

- Give youth thorough, safe instruction and training in the use of firearms and conservation.
- Enhance self-confidence, personal discipline, sense of responsibility, and sportsmanship.
- Provide volunteer instructors safe and proper instructional techniques and methods to teach youth.

The program relies on state 4-H certified/trained instructors to conduct classes in the various disciplines. Shooting Sports has the potential of being a high liability activity. Therefore the program requires 4-H certified/trained instructors to adhere to the safety rules and regulations as dictated by the program to decrease the liability of such an educational experience.

The 4-H program is a Youth Development education program which uses a prevention education model that emphasizes positive youth-adult interaction and peer leadership. It uses skills and disciplines of safe shooting and hunter education to assist young people and their leaders in attaining knowledge and developing essential life skills. It creates an environment for a caring relationship between a young person and a significant adult, whether this is a family member, other adult or teen volunteer. These activities provide the opportunity for immediate gratification to the youth and satisfaction and self worth to the adult/teen leader who acts as teacher and role model for younger 4-H youth members.

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. To enhance development of self-concept, character and personal growth through safe, educational and socially acceptable involvement and shooting activity.
2. To teach safe and responsible use of firearms and archery equipment including sound decision making, self discipline and concentration.
3. Promote the highest standard of safety, sportsmanship and ethical behavior.
4. To encourage participation in natural resources and related natural science programs by exposing participants to the content through shooting, hunting, and related activities.
5. To expose participants to the broad array of vocational and life-long avocation activities related to shooting sports.
6. To strengthen families through participation in life-long recreational activities.
7. To complement and enhance the impact of existing safety, shooting and hunter education programs using experiential educational methods and progressive development of skills and abilities.

III. PHILOSOPHY

1. The program is open to all 4-H members. However, the following minimum ages for participation will apply. Age determination is based upon the OK 4-H Membership Policy. **Membership starts upon enrolling on the youth's 9th birthday, or at any time thereafter. Beyond your first year of membership, age will be determined based upon the youth's age on January 1 of the current calendar year. For example if a youth turns 12 on January 10th, he/she would still be considered to be 11 for that entire year. Youth can participate in contests beyond county level 30 days after enrollment AND after successfully completing the appropriate discipline training.**

<u>Discipline</u>	<u>Age Requirement</u>
Air rifle	9 years
Archery	9 years
Hunting & Wildlife	9 years
Living History	9 years
Shotgun	10 years
Air pistol	12 years
.22 rifle*	12 years
.22 pistol**	14 years
Black powder/ muzzleloading	14 years

* Youth must have successfully completed the Air Rifle project training **prior** to participation in .22 rifle.

** Youth must have successfully completed the Air Pistol project training **prior** to participation in .22 pistol.

2. Instructors have the right to refuse any participant from the shooting sports activity in the interest of safety for the participant and others in the class.
3. When conducting educational events at camps or other functions 4-H shooting sports trained/certified instructors; or employees of agencies where firearm training is required, should be used. (For example, demonstrations by Oklahoma Dept of Wildlife, law enforcement or other related agencies are appropriate when done in a safe and secured environment.)

IV. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Oklahoma 4-H Shooting Sports Program is administered through the State 4-H office with the assistance of a State 4-H Shooting Sports Advisory Committee. The committee includes county Extension educators, representatives of the State 4-H staff, volunteers, industry representatives, wildlife conservation department representatives, and instructor discipline representatives.

The committee will -

- **recommend** administrative policies and procedures
- **develop** program guidelines for counties to follow
- **conduct** a minimum of one State 4-H instructor certification program annually
- **develop** informational materials and brochures to publicize the program
- **provide** lesson plans and instructors notebook to each certified instructor on satisfactorily completing the State 4-H Training program
- **recommend** participants for national certification training from written applications submitted to State Coordinator
- **provide** orientation of county staff and volunteers to the 4-H Shooting Sports program.
- **initiate** and assist with resource development in partial support of programming.
- **conduct or oversee** educational and competitive events youth and educational events for adults.

V. INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Each county or extension unit **must have a certified County Coordinator for the 4-H Shooting Sports Program.** The program requires the use of National 4-H certified/trained instructors to conduct certification in the various disciplines (archery, air rifle, air pistol, .22 rifle, .22 pistol, shotgun, black powder/muzzleloader, hunting & wildlife, and living history). Extension employees, including 4-H volunteers, are granted a level of protection under Article VII, Section 701 (the Governmental Tort Claims Act) of Oklahoma Statute when they are functioning within the realm and scope of their duties. In order to help Extension professionals and volunteers understand what normal and reasonable duties might be, all coaches must be certified. No person may be certified as an instructor until the following requirements are met.

1. 21 years of age (exception is archery which is 18 years of age) on or before January 1 of the current year.

2. Attend and successfully complete a state recognized 4-H Shooting Sports certification workshop which will include a minimum of 12 hours of instruction. Eight (8) hours must be within the discipline (including range safety) and four (4) hours in 4-H Youth Development.
3. **Requirement for 1st time participants!** You must attend the four (4) hour 4-H Youth Development portion of the workshop. Certification will not be granted if you do not attend this session. This requirement is only for first time participants.
4. Persons previously trained in a discipline who seek certification in a new discipline after July 1, 2007 must attend the four (4) hour youth development training as part of the instruction in a new discipline. Additional Youth Development sessions after receiving certification are optional.
5. No felony convictions.
6. The instructor in each class reserves the right not to certify a person if he/she feels the candidate will not be a competent instructor.

VI. RENEWALS AND RECERTIFICATION

1. To maintain certification a 4-H Shooting Sports instructor must teach or assist in teaching a class every two years. This requirement must be documented through reporting by the county Extension office.
2. Once certification lapses instructors must repeat the training at a state 4-H training session to be re-certified. This is to include the youth development portion of the training.
3. Renewal will be required of all instructors when new teaching materials become available or when a program change is initiated by the State 4-H Shooting Sports Committee which requires an update.

VII. DUTIES OF CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS

1. To provide **basic** instruction to students.
2. To conduct a minimum of 10 hours of teaching OR complete the 4-H Shooting Sports curriculum lesson plans, whichever is greater. These 10 hours **do not** include time spent in a Hunter Safety course.
3. Follow position description provided during certification workshops.
4. To report all classes conducted and students trained to the County Extension Educator who will provide annual reports to the State 4-H Office or the State 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinator..
5. Keep focus of program on 4-H philosophy and goals.

VIII. REPORTING

A summary of classes shall be reported to the county Extension educator prior to a team or individual participating in a state level 4-H shoot. The County Extension Educator should maintain this information and report it annually through a group enrollment report. Certification forms can be obtained from your local county Extension office.

Annual Training Report Forms are to be completed upon conclusion of a shooting sports program and should be sent by December 31 each year. Extension educators are to sign the form and return a copy to the instructor, retain a copy in the Extension office and return a copy to the State 4-H Office to the State 4-H Program Leader or specialist assigned to work with the Shooting Sports program. This reporting of teaching activities will continue the certification of instructors who were teaching or assisted with the teaching.

IX. HUNTER SAFETY EDUCATION VERIFICATION

As of June 14, 2002 all participants must complete the Hunter Education Safety Program to be eligible for the 4-H Shooting Sports Program. Youth enrolled in the Shooting Sports Program are strongly encouraged to successfully complete a Hunter Safety course before shooting a firearm; if training is not available at the time of enrollment, youth must successfully complete a Hunter Safety Course within one year from the date of enrollment to continue to participate in the county. They must have a Hunter Safety Card/Number before competing in any 4-H competitive shooting event. The county Extension Educator and Shooting Sports Coordinator must verify by signature on a registration form listing Hunter Identification numbers before youth can compete in any event.

Shooter eligibility will be verified on the day of the shoot during registration.

X. FUNDING

1. Grants – due to state laws regarding the possession of firearms on university campuses and because 4-H is part of the land-grant university system, all grant funds used to secure firearms **must** be handled through Ag. Sponsored Programs at Oklahoma State University. Individuals or entities that fail to secure approval for acquiring funds and who then do receive funds assume a higher degree of liability and are not recognized by the 4-H Program and are not authorized to use the 4-H name and emblem in the state of Oklahoma.
2. Firearm Exemptions – to purchase and possess firearms, approval must be granted by the President of University. To receive approval an application must be made which details the purpose of the request, a safety plan and a process of accounting for the use, storage and maintenance of the firearms.

XI. 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS PAINTBALL GUN POLICY

The purpose of the 4-H Shooting Sports Program is to promote youth development through the safe and responsible use of Archery equipment and firearms. Pointing any type of firearm including air guns, laser guns or laser sighting devices at any person or any humanoid or tombstone target is inappropriate and dangerous. Therefore the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee and the Oklahoma State University 4-H Shooting Sports Committee are unequivocally opposed to such use in the 4-H program.

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