



RISK MANAGEMENT FOR 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORK

## Records

This is one publication in the EDIS series *Risk Management for 4-H Youth Development Work*. This series is intended to prepare UF/IFAS Extension 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. The inherent risk of events and activities can be mitigated through planning and preparation. This risk management guide has been created to outline ways to prepare for and deal with the specific risks associated with your program.

Early planning is key to conducting successful events and activities. A helpful tool in this process is the planning guide and matrix from another part in this series, EDIS publication #4HFSV90.1, *Pre-Event Planning Guide and Matrix*. As you work through this matrix, questions may arise that are unique to a specific situation and may not be completely answered by the series. Extension faculty and staff should refer these questions to appropriate personnel. Questions that require time for research punctuate the need for early planning.

Another tool is the Risk Management Checklist, which can be used as a guide when planning an activity or event. Find it in another part of this series, EDIS publication #4HFSV373, *Risk Management Checklist*.

## Public Records

It is important to know in advance what legal rights the public has to the records that are in the Florida Extension offices. According to Florida Statutes § 119.011-12 (2016), “Public records means all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, data processing software, or other material, regardless of the physical form, characteristics, or means of transmission, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any agency.”

Copies of public records can be requested at any time. The exemptions that apply to 4-H are related to youth records. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of individual 4-H members are not furnished under a public records request. Instead, a family mailing list may be provided, which does not detail the number, age, or name of specific 4-H members. 4-H newsletters, fact sheets, web pages, videotapes, and bulletins are open to the public. In general, our mailing lists and most correspondence are open to the public. For additional information, visit [Florida 4-H Policies & Best Management Practices](#).

For records, requests can be made verbally or written. The request should be forwarded to the county and district Extension directors, who will be responsible for accessing the requested information. The records must be given to the requestor in a reasonable amount of time. There may be a charge per page for any copies that are made. Emails may also be considered public

record if they are applicable to the information being requested.

## Records Retention

As youth programs are implemented, participants complete a variety of forms including, but not limited to, enrollment forms, participation forms, registration forms, and so forth. Any information that includes personal information must be treated with confidentiality. Records are subject to Florida public record laws. For more information visit [University of Florida Records Retention Schedules](#).

Retention of most 4-H records is required for a minimum of three or five years with financial records being retained for 10 years. Charters are to be retained permanently. Registration materials should be kept for five years.

## Handling and Storage of Registration Forms, Health Forms, and Volunteer Applications

The Florida 4-H program, must handle and monitor the use of this information in a confidential manner. All forms and applications are to be kept in a locked filing cabinet. Training on the importance of confidentiality should be given prior to any experience where volunteers, staff, or faculty are collecting, storing, or handling health forms or medication.

Printed health forms should be shredded after the event or program has ended since records are held in 4-H Online.

## Reference

Fla. Stat. § 119.011-12 (2016). Public records. [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0119/Sections/0119.011.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0119/Sections/0119.011.html).

## Resources

Florida 4-H Policies & Best Management Practices: <https://florida4h.ifas.ufl.edu/media/florida4h-ifasufledu/docs/Florida-4-H-Policies-Updated-11.01.23---Copy.pdf>

University of Florida Records Retention Schedules: <https://records.uflib.ufl.edu/record-retention/retention-schedules/>