

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY PROCESS

Procedures for securing Academic Eligibility Information and Excused Absences
for 4-H Members to participate in 4-H Event or Activity

This procedure applies to ALL 4-H events or activities (competitive or non-competitive) and all 4-H members in public, private, and/or home school that requires a 4-H member to be absent from school. For instance, if a 4-H member is a member of a state planning task force and needs to miss a day of school to participate, the 4-H member would have to be eligible according to the Texas Education Code to be excused from school.

There are two ways a County Extension Office can request academic eligibility for 4-H members. One is on an individual basis using the Declaration of Eligibility Form (Attachment F) for times when only one or two 4-H members may be needing an absence. The second option is for times when a large number of youth may be needing an excused absence, such as a county or major stock show. The steps below outline how the county office needs to proceed with each of the processes.

| BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR | |
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| August/September | County Extension Agents should meet with school officials to <u>determine the steps</u> the agent needs to take to assist 4-H members in obtaining excused absences to participate in 4-H events and to determine eligibility of 4-H members for competitive events. |
| 30 DAYS PRIOR TO ANY 4-H EVENT/ACTIVITY NEEDING ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY CHECKED | |
| Declaring academic eligibility for small number of 4-H members | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that all members needing an excused absence are ACTIVE 4-H members. 2. Complete the County Agent section of the Declaration of Eligibility Form. Provide the form to either the 4-H member and request they submit to the school for completion, or have the 4-H parent/guardian complete the first section, return back to the County Extension Office and then submit as a group to the respective school campuses. 4-H member then returns completed form back to the County Extension Office within the timeframe given by the office. |
| Declaring academic eligibility for large number of 4-H members | <p>Extension agents should prepare a document on official letterhead which includes the items listed below and submit to each school/campus requesting eligibility status for each 4-H member.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Name of 4-H member(s) involved b. School they attend c. Current grade level in school d. Dates of proposed absence(s) e. Name of event f. Educational value g. Chaperone <p>List is returned back to County Extension Office by school/campus.</p> |
| RESPONSE FROM SCHOOL ON DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY | |
| Eligible | The school should respond to CEA if there are any students who are academically eligible. County Extension Office should follow up with the school/campus if no response is received. |
| Ineligible | If a 4-H member is academically ineligible for a 4-H competitive event, the agent must notify the 4-H member, their parents and the sponsoring agency, by letter, of this situation. If the parent has any questions, they should be referred to the school administrator for the family and school to resolve eligibility issues. |

If county Extension faculty and schools develop and agree on procedures they deem more efficient and effective and still ensures 4-H's compliance with the Texas Education Code requirements, they should inform their District Extension Administrator/County Extension Director of the plan to be followed.

DECLARATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM INSTRUCTIONS

4-H'ers should complete a separate form for each competitive event/activity in which they plan to participate. The original form should be returned to the county Extension office by the deadline established by the County Extension Office.

NOTE: Schools requiring a copy of this form should make their copy before returning it to the student.

Parent/Guardian Section

1. Parent/Guardian will select the information being requested. It is either:
 - Academic eligibility information only. (Used to verify academic eligibility only for 4-H competitive events/activities.), or
 - Academic eligibility information and authorization to receive an excused absence from school. (Used to verify academic eligibility as well as receive authorization to receive an excused absence. This would be used for events held during school hours such as stock shows, state and national 4-H contests and events, etc.)
2. Complete the date and name of activity. (Used to notify school officials of exact dates/times a student would be participating in a 4-H activity or representing 4-H at an event.)
3. Parent/Guardian signature is required. The signature of the parent/guardian confirms that this person is aware of the academic eligibility and excused absence requirements of the Texas Education Code.

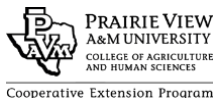
County Extension Agent Section

1. Extension Office will complete this section and certify the youth is a 4-H member and his/her participation in the event.
2. County Extension Agent (with adjunct faculty status) will sign the form.

School Principal/Designee Section

1. Principal, or designee, will indicate the 4-H members eligibility status, options are:
 - Academically eligible to participate
 - Not academically eligible to participate
2. The principal or designee will indicate whether or not an excused absence will be granted.
3. Principal, or designee, will sign and date the form in order to be valid.

4-H family should follow instructions provided by the
County Extension Office on returning form to the
Extension Office by the given deadline.



Texas 4-H Youth Development Program

DECLARATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

This form is requested in accordance with the requirement of the Texas Education Code and in cooperation with the Texas Education Agency and local school board policies.

Instructions: Complete one form per activity. 4-H member should return original form to the County Extension Office

PARENT/GUARDIAN SECTION

In accordance with 4-H policy, provided by our local Extension office, I respectfully request:

(CHECK ONE)

Academic eligibility information only.

Academic eligibility information and authorization to receive an excused absence from school.

Date of Activity: _____ Name of Activity: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT SECTION

I hereby certify that _____ is a member of 4-H in _____ County and is scheduled to participate in this activity representing 4-H. He/she will be under the supervision of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service faculty or agency's designated volunteer leader.

_____ Date

_____ Signature of County Extension Agent

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OR DESIGNEE

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY (CHECK ONE)

I do certify that the student is academically eligible to participate in the above mentioned activity.

I do not certify the student because he/she is **NOT** academically eligible to participate in the above mentioned activity.

EXCUSED ABSENCE (CHECK ONE)

An excused absence will be granted.

An excused absence will **NOT** be granted.

Does not apply.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS (CHECK ONE)

Face-to-Face (on campus)

Virtual Option

Homeschooled

_____ Date

_____ Signature of Principal or Designee

_____ Name of School