

Kittitas County 4-H Dog Project Committee Policy

4-H teaches life skills that lead young people to become self-directing, positive, contributing members of our society. These life skills include positive self-esteem, effective communication, a sense of responsibility to oneself and one's community, sound decision making, and a strong sense of belonging. Dogs, as companion animals, require a long term commitment on the part of the owner or trainer and are an effective project to teach all these skills.

Section I: Governance

1. State 4-H Policy/Council – Kittitas County 4-H Dog Project Council is governed by Washington State 4-H Policy EM 0758E and Kittitas County 4-H Council Constitution, By-Laws, and this policy.
2. Policy Development Enforcement – Dog Project Committee policies are made and enforced by the Kittitas County Dog 4-H Committee in cooperation with the Kittitas County 4-H Council and the Kittitas County Extension staff.

Section II: Objectives of the 4-H Dog Project

1. Learn how to care for and train a dog; which develops responsibility, patience, initiative, and self confidence.
2. Learn how to show and handle dogs safely.
3. Learn show ring rules and etiquette.
4. Learn to be courteous to the public, judges, show and fair officials, and other competitors.
5. Learn to accept the judge's decision gracefully.
6. Learn how to keep good records and to use them to make management decisions.
7. Learn how to prepare and give a public presentation to share skills, information, and new ideas with others.
8. Learn how to judge dogs and dog related items to make good decisions when purchasing items or making decisions regarding care of a dog.
9. Develop a sense of service by participating in community service through club activities.
10. Develop leadership skills, self-reliance, cooperation, and sportsmanship through club activities.

Section III: General Rules

1. Age Requirements for Individual Members

- A. Members must be in the third grade and reached their eighth birthday by January 1 through the 12th grade or who have not reached their 19th birthday before January 1 of current 4-H year (October 1 – September 30).
- B. Exception – In animal projects, it is left up to the discretion of the leader(s) and parents whether members can handle such a project. If the leader feels a child is too young to handle their chosen dog, then he/she will be advised to participate either without a dog or with a borrowed dog of appropriate size.
- C. Age Divisions– apply to current school year or use grade just completed in events through September.
 - a. Junior – 3rd grade through 5th grade
 - b. Intermediate – 6th grade through 8th grade
 - c. Senior – 9th grade through 19 years old by January of the current 4-H year.
- D. 4-H members must be enrolled in the Dog Project to participate in 4-H Dog Shows.

2. Dog Care Project Requirements

- A. Access to Dog: Each member is expected to have access to one or more dogs. This means a member may own, borrow, rent, or lease a dog for a project. This should be indicated in the 4-H Record Book. The dog must be under the 4-H member's care and training at least 60 days before a qualifying show, as stated in EM0758, *Washington State 4-H Youth Program Policy*.
- B. Two members may share a dog as their 4-H project. There must be an agreement in each member's record book about the shared dog. However, the two members may not show in the same class or lot at an event.
- C. Dogs may be any breed, mixed or purebred, except wolf or coyote hybrids.
- D. Dogs that are spayed or neutered are allowed.
- E. Blind and /or deaf dogs are allowed. Dogs that are lame or have some other handicap may be used if the 4-H member brings a statement from a veterinarian stating that use as a 4-H project dog will not have any adverse effects on the dog's health.
- F. Dogs **must** have proof of Rabies Vaccination before training with other dogs. This should be provided to Leaders as soon as possible after joining 4-H. Other vaccinations may be recommended by your veterinarian. It is strongly recommended, for the protection of all dogs, that they are current on all other vaccines as well. Those are: Distemper, Hepatitis (CAV-1), Adenovirus (CAV-2), Leptospirosis, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus, Coronavirus, as well as the highly contagious Bordatella vaccine (kennel cough).
- G. Bitches in season are allowed. When in season, bitches must wear doggy britches. The show superintendent must be notified, at check-in, if a bitch is in season.
- H. Dogs that exhibit aggressive, and/or unsocial, and/or problem behavior, that cannot be controlled by their handler, are a serious safety issue. Handlers **must** be able to control their dog whether on or off leash. Leaders and Superintendents have the **immediate** authority to excuse or place restrictions on such dog's participation in 4-H activities. Leaders and Superintendents will inform 4-H Staff of their decision and the appropriate plan of action will follow. Every effort will be made to see that the member is not excluded or excused. Alternative suggestions will be offered to the 4-H member and family if at all possible.
- I. To participate at the Washington State 4-H Fair, the dog must qualify in a Dog Project Committee approved qualifying show or at the Kittitas County Fair and participate in those same events at the Kittitas County Fair. Kittitas County Fair is a five day event and members choosing to attend Fair need to be present all five days. An Exception Request is in place for anyone to utilize, for modified participation at the Kittitas County Fair, should they feel the need to do so. The Exception Request should be in letter form and be sent to the superintendent(s). The request will be considered by the superintendent(s) and a written response granting or denying the request returned to the person requesting the Exception.

3. Show and Ring

- A. Ribbons and Awards: The Danish System of Awards will be used at 4-H Dog Shows and Fairs.
- B. Conduct: The provisions of this rule shall apply to the dog owner, 4-H exhibitor, and members of their family.
 - 1.No one is allowed to coach the member while in the ring. It is important that the member direct all their attention to the judge. Comments from outside the ring are distracting and diminish the opportunity for the member to learn.
 - 2.The ring is off limits to everyone except working show personnel.
 - 3.The judge may be approached by the member only and should not be approached until judging is completed. Approach the judge for information only, not to dispute a placing.

4. Any infractions of the above may cause the dismissal of the member from the class and maybe from the show.

5. The Show Superintendent reserves the right to dismiss any member or person from any 4-H class of the show for any misconduct or infractions of the *Washington State 4-H Dog Program Guidelines*. Excused members may forfeit all awards received at the show or in the class.

C. Protests: When an individual is assisting with a 4-H show, no one should interrupt or interfere in any manner. If someone does not agree with what is being done, comments may be made in writing to the Superintendent. A judge's decision, representing his/her individual choice, cannot be protested unless it is alleged to violate the rules. Each protest must be lodged in writing by at least two members and an adult. Each member must be from a different club and/or county. In classes with a single member, a single member may protest. The protest must be filed with the appropriate show superintendent within 12 hours of the time of the cause and the protest. A fee may be charged and accompany the protest which is refundable, only if the protest is upheld. The protest will be acted upon by a committee selected by the fair manager. The committee decision will be final.

4. Ground Rules for Members and Adults

Breaking any of the following rules may result in member dismissal by the show superintendent from a show or fair and forfeiture of all awards.

- A. Volunteer staff must adhere to the policies affecting volunteers in *Washington State 4-H Youth Program Policy*, EM0758.
- B. All volunteers, members, and parents must adhere to the Washington 4-H ethics code; see *A Valuable Partnership*, C1000.
- C. No alcoholic beverages.
- D. No drugs.
- E. No smoking or tobacco products.
- F. No abuse of dogs.
- G. No coaching of members while they are in the ring or showing their dogs. Comments from outside the ring are distracting and diminish the opportunity for the member to learn.
- H. This project is a member project and therefore, adults may not groom or school a dog while on the show grounds. All dogs are to be cared for and groomed by the member. In cases where the member is having difficulty, other member may help or assist. Parents and leaders may not assist except in safety situations. Leaders and Parents may help verbally.
- I. The ring is off limits to everyone except working show personnel.
- J. Members may approach the judge for information, not to dispute a placing, and only after judging is completed. Parents, leaders, and adults may not interfere but can be there for support.
- K. Show personnel may dismiss a visibly ill dog from participation.
- L. All members must participate in Herdsmanship if offered.
- M. Leaders will ask a member of their club to leave the show grounds with their dog if their behavior is unacceptable. A Superintendent may do the same.
- N. Only dogs entered in novice and higher classes may be off leash at any time and these only in the show or practice ring.
- O. At a benched show, there is no eating or drinking in the benching area.
- P. Prong, spike, head, and electric collars are not allowed on the show grounds. Retractable leashes and muzzles are not allowed either.
- Q. Dogs may be shown with minor, non-contagious ailments. However, this is a show management decision and a veterinarian's certificate may be required.

R. Dress Code: For member participation at any 4-H function, please refer to the *Washington State 4-H Dog Program Guidelines*, SECTION II: GENERAL RULES, D. 4-H Ground Rules for Youth and Adults, 18. DRESS CODE. For appropriate Showmanship, Obedience, and Agility ring attire, please see the event or discipline guidelines.

Section IV: Herdsmanship

The purpose of Herdsmanship is to teach exhibitors how to care for their dogs and their equipment to the best of their ability at a show, fair, and at home. It also provides an excellent opportunity for 4-H members to educate the public about dog care and training through the use of decorations and educational material.

1. Herdsmanship Rules

1. No eating, drinking, or gum chewing in the benching area.
2. Each dog must have suitable benching equipment:
 - a. A tethering chain which is short enough to prevent the dog from falling off the bench with two bolt snaps; one attached to the bench hook, the other attached to the collar of the dog.
 - b. A buckle or non-slip collar or harness. No slip collars are allowed on the bench.
 - c. A wire crate may be used instead of tethering on the bench.
3. There must be one member present for every six dogs.
4. There must be one adult present for every six members practicing herdsmanship.
5. At benched show, no one except 4-H members, their families, and their leaders are allowed in the benching area.
6. Crates, cages, and exercise pens are not allowed at State Fair except for Agility trials and then wire crates only.
7. No lactating bitches or bitches within three weeks of whelping.
8. No electronics are to be used in the benching area (this includes cell phones, iPods, radios, MP3 Players, or any gaming devices such as Game Boys).

2. Judging Considerations

Herdsmanship judging shall be based upon the following considerations:

1. Members will be judged on their personal cleanliness and neatness. They will also be judged on their friendliness and courtesy to the public, show personnel, and each other. Exhibitors should not block the public's view of the dogs if at all possible. 4-H members on duty should be attentive and ready to answer questions.
2. Herdsmanship judges will check to see that dogs are benched with the proper equipment. Dogs should look comfortable and under control. They should not be barking on the bench. Dogs may be watered on the bench but water must be promptly removed.
3. Benches should be neat and clean. Any equipment not in use should be put away. Exhibitors are required to keep their benching area and the area immediately in front of it clean at all times.
4. Clubs should have a banner for identification. Decorations should be neat and tasteful and should not interfere with the public's view of the dogs. Decorations chosen should not endanger dogs or people in any way.
5. Each club should have some type of educational exhibit. This may include posters, displays, booths, etc. These may be items members have entered as individual educational material displayed.

Section V: Project Completion Requirements

These requirements are required in order to receive an end of year completion pin and get credit for the 4-H year in Kittitas County:

1. Keep a record of their 4-H Dog Project in a 4-H Record Book and turn into the 4-H Council for evaluation prior to fair.
2. Give a public presentation or demonstration on a subject relevant to the Dog Project at the club or county level.
3. Participate in a showmanship event at the club level, at an approved qualifying show, or at the Kittitas County Fair.
4. Be an active member and have missed no more than four business meetings during the year.
5. Because caring for a companion animal is such a big project and there is a lot to learn about 4-H and the Dog Project, first year members are encouraged to complete all of the above during their first year and then add Agility, Obedience, or participating at the Kittitas County Fair with their dogs during subsequent years.
6. ***Attending Kittitas County Fair is NOT a requirement for completing the 4-H year.***

Section VI: Complaints and Grievances: Please see section XII of the Kittitas County 4-H Council Policy.

Please refer to the *Washington State 4-H Dog Program Guidelines* found at <http://4h.wsu.edu/dog/LeadersGuide06.pdf> for the following Sections:

Section VII: Classes and Divisions

Section VIII: Scoring and Qualifying for State

Section IV: Showmanship

Sections X: General Obedience Regulations

Section XI: Obedience Class Descriptions

Section XII: Judging Contest Guidelines

Section XIII: Dog Bowl Guidelines

Section IX: Agility

Additional educational material available at: <http://4h.wsu.edu/projects/dog.htm>

Adopted: October 2008
January 2010

Policy and Procedure: Safety Concern in Regards to a 4-H Project Dog

Policy:

The Safety Alert Team (SAT) is comprised of a Club Leader, Dog Project Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent, Dog Project Leader or their designee, and a 4-H Extension Agent. When a concern over safety is identified in regards to a project dog, a safety alert will be called. At this time, the SAT will investigate the safety concern and initiate an action plan.

Procedure:

To call a Safety Alert

1. A safety alert is an alert called when someone feels there is significant possibility that an animal or person may be injured.
2. Any member, parent, leader, trainer, or judge may call a safety alert.
3. A safety alert is initiated by notifying a SAT member of the safety concern in writing.

Action after a Safety Alert is called

1. The SAT member notified will alert the rest of the team in regards to the concerns.
2. An initial investigation will occur and may include, but not be limited to, interviewing those involved, consulting with professionals in the field that the concern has raised, etc.
3. A discussion between SAT members will then take place to determine what further action is required.
4. The team will then meet with the owners (4-H member and parent(s)/guardian) of the dog in question to determine an action plan, if warranted.

Action Plan

Possible actions that may be taken (but not limited to):

1. Request a Canine Good Citizens Certificate (CGC)
2. Evaluation of the dog by a professional in the field, picked by the SAT, expenses to be paid by the owners.
3. Identified expectations in regards to animal and member behavior.
4. Dog not attending 4-H functions and/or County/State Fair until identified parameters are met.
5. Dog removed from the dog project

Dog Expulsion

1. Every effort should be made to see that the member is not excluded or excused. Alternative suggestions should be offered to the 4-H member and family.
2. It is the right and responsibility of the 4-H Leader to remove any dog from their Club that they feel is a significant safety risk.
3. It is the right and responsibility of the 4-H Dog Project Leader to remove any dog from the program that they feel is a significant risk.
4. It is the right and responsibility of the 4-H Dog Project Fair Superintendent(s) to remove from the Fair any dog that they feel is a significant safety risk.