



## **UF/IFAS Youth Protection Policy: Youth Registration and Volunteer Background Screening Requirements & Procedures**

*Revised March 21, 2016*

### **Youth Protection Policy Overview**

To protect youth and adults involved in UF/IFAS programs for youth, UF/IFAS has established mandatory volunteer background screening and youth registration procedures to meet requirements of the State of Florida via the Department of Children and Families (DCF); and the University of Florida Office of Youth Conference Services (OYCS). All youth participation in UF/IFAS-sponsored programs is defined as UF/IFAS 4-H Youth Development and shall be promoted as such and reported via the 4HOnline enrollment system in lieu of the OYCS database. This policy and corresponding procedures apply to all camps and activities led by IFAS faculty/staff/volunteers for youth, either on or off campus. The policy does not apply to programs that IFAS faculty assist with if they are not responsible for supervising the youth attending (such as when contributing to another organization's event).

### **All IFAS Educational Programs Involving Minor Youth Will be Labeled as 4-H Youth Development**

All youth programs supervised by IFAS will be promoted and reported as 4-H Youth Development. This will enable the sponsoring unit to continue to receive the credit for youth activities and help IFAS 4-H more accurately capture the youth educational activities being offered across the state in order to comply with Florida law and UF requirements.

When programs are not led by an Extension faculty member with a 4-H Youth Development appointment, 4-H programs offered by other IFAS faculty can be identified and promoted in one of the following ways:

- A UF/IFAS 4-H Youth Development Program sponsored/offered/presented by the [Department of XX, the XX Research & Education Center, the XX grant].

This improved linkage aims to foster stronger partnerships across research, teaching, and extension.

IFAS gains the expertise in youth development, experiential learning, age appropriateness that 4-H Youth Development faculty can provide. 4-H gains broader technical expertise such as STEM and many technical subject matter experts. In the process, UF/IFAS broadens its base to reflect the current needs of Florida youth and families and remain relevant to diverse audiences.

See the IFAS branding guide (<http://ics.ifas.ufl.edu/branding.shtml>) for proper use of graphic elements and use of 4-H name & emblem (or <http://florida4h.org>).

### **Register Youth in 4HOnline Enrollment System in Lieu of UF Office of Youth Conference Services Database**

- All youth participating in 4-H programs supervised by IFAS must be reported via 4HOnline (<https://florida.4honline.com>).
  - If IFAS is providing supervision of youth, the youth participants must have individual profiles promptly, completely, and accurately entered in 4HOnline. The profiles must also be connected to the specific program in 4HOnline.
- Keeping up-to-date information about 4-H participants is required for compliance with UF policies.
- In accordance with Youth Protection Requirements for UF-affiliated youth activities, all youth being supervised by IFAS must be reported individually in 4HOnline, regardless of program hours.
- 4HOnline allows for youth to be entered individually as short-term youth when youth should not be reported to the ES-237 report (e.g. Family Nutrition Program youth).

## Online UF Youth Protection Training (# YCS800)

Employees and volunteers working with minors in UF-affiliated youth activities are required to successfully complete UF's Youth Protection Training (# YCS800) on an annual basis.

Volunteers can access the training at:

<https://oycs.ufsa.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/YCS800-updated.swf>

The training lasts about 20 minutes and includes a brief quiz that must be completed successfully. Faculty and staff can access the training through the training and development on the myUFL website [my.ufl.edu](http://my.ufl.edu). Visit <https://oycs.ufsa.ufl.edu/compliance/training> for more information about the Youth Protection Training.

## Background Screening Requirements

During the 2015 legislative session, the Florida Legislature amended section 402.301(6), Florida Statutes, (SB7078 – section 5, chapter 2015-79, Laws of Florida), which requires certain membership organizations, including Florida 4-H, to complete 435 Level 2 background screenings through the online Background Clearinghouse Results Portal for all employees and volunteers.

- Background checks are required for all faculty, staff, and volunteers who will be supervising 4-H youth and/or volunteering more than 10 hours in a month. Background checks should be completed before the individuals begin to work with minors during Florida 4-H Programs.
  - Individuals screened from April 1 to August 31 will be screened through the Background Clearinghouse Results Portal. Individuals will be screened under the OCA (Controlling Agency Identifier): 03010753Z and the ORI (Originating Agency Identifier): EDCFSC30Z. DCF considers this to be the Summer Camps time period.
  - Individuals screened from September 1 to March 31 will be screened through the Background Clearinghouse Results Portal. Individuals will be screened under the OCA (Controlling Agency Identifier): 03010876Z and the ORI (Originating

Agency Identifier): EDCFGN10Z. DCF considers this to be the non-summer, after school/enrichment time period.

- Applicants requiring 435 screening will also need to complete the Affidavit of Good Moral Character (must be notarized) and submit it to the UF/IFAS faculty or staff leading the program.
- A break in service of over 90 days will require rescreening and clearance prior to beginning work with youth. For episodic volunteers (who serve specific functions throughout the year), it is not considered a break in service as long as they remain a registered 4-H volunteer and their appointment remains in good standing with the IFAS faculty/staff who has appointed them.
- Individuals who have been background screened through the Clearinghouse and/or have a compliant clearance letter from DCF must be rescreened every 5 years to remain in compliance with the law.

Details about screening procedures are contained later in this document.

## Costs

Although UF Human Resources Services pays for screening of UF employees, the costs of background screening for volunteers and county employees are the responsibility of the county Extension program or respective IFAS units. Each county has the option to include these costs as part of its operating budget, recover them via event registration fees, or pass these costs on to volunteers if necessary.

## Screening Exceptions & Special Circumstances

### *School Teachers Serving as Volunteers*

Currently employed school teachers and school employees in the state of Florida who have been screened in accordance with Chapter 1012 of the Florida Statutes within the past 5 years are exempt from background screening. Verification on school letterhead or sent via official email is required, stating the person has been screened under the Chapter 1012 standards within the past 5 years and they are a current employee. Please Note: Signed and notarized Affidavit of Good Moral Character forms are required prior to working with minor participants. Private school teachers and

employees are screened under the Volunteer and Employee Criminal History System (VECHS). They are not exempt from being screened through the Clearinghouse.

#### ***Law Enforcement and Corrections Officers***

Currently employed law enforcement and corrections officers in the state of Florida are exempt from background screening requirements for summer camps only. Verification on law enforcement letterhead or sent via official email is required prior to beginning service. Please Note: Signed and notarized Affidavit of Good Moral Character forms are required prior to working with minor participants. Law enforcement and corrections officers are not exempt from background screening requirements for the non-summer months.

#### ***Volunteers Serving in Schools***

Volunteers serving in schools in Florida are subject to whatever documentation and/or screening required by the school. No additional mandatory screening is required by IFAS 4-H but may be required at the discretion of the IFAS faculty/staff responsible for the 4-H program being offered in the school. Please Note: signed and notarized Affidavit of Good Moral Character forms are required prior to working with minor participants.

#### ***Parents/Guardians Attending Events with their Own Children Without Responsibility for other Minor Youth***

A Parent/guardian attending a 4-H event with their own children, without responsibility of other minor youth, is exempt from screening.

#### ***Teen Counselors***

Youth age 18 and under who serve as “junior camp counselors, Counselors in Training, etc.” are not required to have a background check because they are not supervising other minors. These youth are considered to be members of the program, participating in a leadership tract.

#### ***Volunteers Helping with Events Led By Others***

No background screening is required for volunteers who work less than 10 hours in a month and are always in the presence of screened employees and/or volunteers when in contact with youth. These volunteer helpers are never left unsupervised around minors and do not serve in a supervisory capacity.

Examples include event judges, guest educators/presenters, and parents serving snacks or helping with a craft at a club meeting.

#### ***Volunteers with Proof of Recent Screening***

At the discretion of the IFAS faculty/staff leading the program, a volunteer of another organization with proof of a recent background screening compliant with Florida law, including a signed and notarized Affidavit of Good Moral Character form, is exempt from further background screening. 4-H registration, orientation and YCS800 Youth Protection training is required.

#### ***Reporting Child Abuse, Neglect or Abandonment***

State of Florida law requires a state university administrator (as defined in the UF policy on Mandatory Reports of Abuse), upon receiving information from another institution employee, to report known or suspected child abuse, neglect or abandonment (including physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse) that occurred on university property or at a university-sponsored event directly to the Department for Children and Families (DCF). University of Florida staff are required to abide by the Mandatory Reporting rules as outlined in Section 39.205, Florida Statutes. See the OYCS website for more information regarding this topic. The website is located at <https://oycs.ufsa.ufl.edu/reporting/>.

#### ***Interactions with Youth***

Interactions with youth (AKA: Two deep policy): 4-H faculty, staff and volunteers will avoid private one-on-one interactions with youth. Program coordinators will ensure that they always have two authorized level two enrolled individuals present during any interactions with youth. In situations that require personal conferences the meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults. This policy includes the transportation of youth participants as part of a 4-H program. One of your two authorized adults should be 21 years of age or older.

If situations happen to arise in transportation for 4-H activities or 4-H club meetings where the policy can not be met, please email the State Program Leader for 4-H Youth Development and the Associate State Program Leader for 4-H Youth Development and explain the situation- so potential alternative strategies can be identified.

## Background Screening of UF Employees

Background screening is required of new University of Florida employees and is the responsibility of the employer. Therefore, UF Human Resources Services or employee supervisors will notify employees of any additional background screening required of existing employees.

## Records Retention

IFAS employees responsible for 4-H youth programs need to retain copies of all application items and screening results. These must be available for DCF or other authorities to examine during an audit. (Keep the information separate from the individual's personnel file, if applicable.)

Verification of Background Checks shall be kept on file for a minimum of five years.

Because of the sensitivity of the information collected, UF training on storage of confidential information is recommended for all faculty/staff handling this information.

## References & Resources

- This policy is posted at <http://florida4h.org/policies>.
- For more information about the UF Office of Youth Conference Services, visit <https://oycs.ufsa.ufl.edu>.
- Information about the DCF Clearinghouse is located at <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/backgroundscreening/>.

## Need Help?

Leadership for 4-H Youth Development programs is provided at the following levels by these individuals. They can help with understanding 4-H or with the 4HOnline enrollment system.

For names and contact information, see <http://florida4h.org/directory> or the IFAS staff directory.

County:

- County 4-H Agent

Extension Administrative Districts:

- 4-H Regional Specialized Agents

Statewide/Campus:

- Volunteer screening support: State 4-H Information and Volunteer Management Coordinator
- 4HOnline assistance: State 4-H Information and Volunteer Management Coordinator
- 4-H communications and proper use of name & emblem: State 4-H Communications Coordinator
- 4-H curriculum materials: Youth Curriculum & Evaluation State Specialized Agent
- 4-H youth program risk management support: Associate Program Leader for 4-H Youth Develo

## 435 Level 2 Screening Process for 4-H Volunteers\*

Steps	Links, Documents and Notes
1. Volunteer submits a volunteer application using 4HOnline or Agent enters paper application into 4HOnline.	<a href="http://florida.4honline.com">http://florida.4honline.com</a>
2. Agent interviews volunteer and begins orientation with volunteer.	<a href="http://florida4h.org/staff/volunteering/screening/forms/VOLUNTEER_INTERVIEW.pdf">http://florida4h.org/staff/volunteering/screening/forms/VOLUNTEER_INTERVIEW.pdf</a>  <a href="http://florida4h.org/volunteers_/resources/orientation">http://florida4h.org/volunteers_/resources/orientation</a>
3. Agent makes a file folder for volunteer to be stored in locked cabinet (if not uploading documents to 4HOnline).	Volunteer documents are not subject to requests for public information. If uploading documents to 4HOnline, mark out whole or partial SS#s on all documents before uploading.
4. Agent checks references on volunteer and places reference forms/notes in volunteer file or uploads documents in 4HOnline (under the Additional Information section of the volunteer profile).	<a href="http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/Vol-Ref-Form.pdf">http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/Vol-Ref-Form.pdf</a>
5. Agent verifies volunteer is not on the Florida Dept. of Law Enforcement Sexual Offender website.	<a href="http://offender.fdle.state.fl.us/offender/homepage.do">http://offender.fdle.state.fl.us/offender/homepage.do</a>
6. Volunteer views Youth Protection Training and passes training quiz. Agent will keep documentation in the volunteer file.	<a href="https://oycs.ufsa.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/YCS800-updated.swf">https://oycs.ufsa.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/YCS800-updated.swf</a>
7. Volunteer signs "Affidavit of Good Moral Character" in front of a notary and returns form to agent.	<a href="http://ccrain.fl-dcf.org/documents/6/78.pdf">http://ccrain.fl-dcf.org/documents/6/78.pdf</a>
8. Agent registers to use the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) Clearinghouse database. **	<a href="http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/AHCA-Reg-Guide.pdf">http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/AHCA-Reg-Guide.pdf</a>
9. Agent searches for volunteer in AHCA and either a) connects to previous volunteer screening in AHCA or b) inputs volunteer information into the AHCA clearinghouse database and generates <u>LiveScan Request Form</u> for Volunteer. Volunteer takes form and ID to a Vendor that offers 435 LiveScan screening and photo.	<a href="http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/AHCA-Input-Guide.pdf">http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/AHCA-Input-Guide.pdf</a>
10. Agent receives email from DCF regarding screening clearance determination and sends appointment letter or rejection letter to volunteer.	<a href="http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/volunteers.shtml">http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/volunteers.shtml</a>
11. Agent updates volunteer profile in AHCA if Letter of Appointment Issued.	<a href="http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/AHCA-Profile-Guide.pdf">http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/AHCA-Profile-Guide.pdf</a>
12. Agent updates volunteer 4-HOnline profile (under the Additional Information section) to document volunteer file created and screening & training completed.	<a href="http://florida.4honline.com">http://florida.4honline.com</a>
13. Documents to keep in volunteer office file or upload to volunteer profile in 4HOnline.	-Signed Receipt of ACHA Privacy Policy -Signed and Notarized Affidavit of Good Moral Character -Documentation of 435 Level 2 Screening Completed and Volunteer Cleared to Work with Youth (can be printed from the ACHA volunteer profile [bottom of the page]) -References and Interview Notes

\*This document is in accordance with the UF/IFAS Youth Protection Policy.

\*\*As of September 1, 2015, Agents will register to use the ACHA database for both Summer Camps and Non-Summer Programs.

435 Level 2 Screenings for volunteers will be available year-round. The ACHA Registration Guide PDF has been updated for Non-Summer Programs.