



## **UF/IFAS Extension Florida 4-H Youth Protection Policy**

*Revised August 4, 2017*

### **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 and Florida 4-H volunteers 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/>.

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

In accordance with Youth Protection Requirements for UF-affiliated youth activities, all youth being supervised by IFAS must be reported individually in 4HOnline (<https://florida.4honline.com>), regardless of program hours.

- Employees and volunteers associated with the youth activity must have profiles in 4HOnline.
- Youth and adult profiles must be connected to the specific program in 4HOnline.
- Keeping up-to-date information about 4-H participants is required for compliance with UF policies.
- 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)**

All University of Florida-affiliated youth programs are responsible for ensuring that any program employees, volunteers, and other individuals directly in contact with minors under the age of 18 successfully complete an annual Youth Protection Training (course number **YCS800**) offered by the University of Florida. This

training should be successfully completed before interacting with 4-H youth.

The training lasts about 30 minutes and includes a brief quiz that must be completed successfully.

Volunteers can access the training at:

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

Faculty and staff should complete 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**

Level 2 Department of Children and Families (DCF) Clearinghouse background screening is required by state law for anyone who will be supervising youth or working/volunteering 10 hours or more in a month during a Florida 4-H program. Background screening should be completed before an individual begins to work with minors during Florida 4-H programs.

### Non-Summer Member Programs

Individuals who will be working/volunteering in 4-H non-summer member programs (e.g. leading a community 4-H club) will be screened through the DCF Background Clearinghouse Results Portal, using the OCA (Controlling Agency Identifier): 03010876Z and the ORI (Originating Agency Identifier): EDCFGN10Z. These codes are specific to non-summer after school programs.

Out of state checks will be required by DCF for individuals who have lived outside of Florida in the past 5 years. In addition, volunteers screened before July 1, 2016 may require a new screening, depending on type of screening originally completed and type of work with youth. Contact Florida 4-H State Headquarters for more information regarding re-screening volunteers.

### Summer Camps

Individuals who will be working/volunteering in summer

camps will be screened through the DCF Background Clearinghouse Results Portal, using the OCA (Controlling Agency Identifier): 03010753Z and the ORI (Originating Agency Identifier): EDCFSC30Z. These codes are specific to summer camps.

#### Additional Screening Information

- Applicants requiring DCF Clearinghouse screening will also need to complete the [Affidavit of Good Moral Character](#) form (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 an enrolled 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 DCF Clearinghouse must be rescreened every 5 years to remain in compliance with the law.
- Volunteer screening information must be kept updated in 4HOnline and in the DCF Clearinghouse by the person facilitating screenings. If DCF were to audit a 4-H program, they would expect the supervisor to provide copies of DCF Clearance letters and Affidavit of Good Moral Charter forms for individuals working/volunteering in a capacity that requires screening. For information on updating 4HOnline volunteer profiles, contact Florida 4-H State Headquarters.

#### **Screening Exceptions & Special Circumstances** **Public School Board Employees**

Public school board 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 DCF Clearinghouse background screening for only 4-H summer camps. 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). Individuals screened through VECHS are not exempt from being screened through the DCF Clearinghouse.

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

Currently employed law enforcement and corrections officers in the state of Florida are exempt from DCF Clearinghouse background screening for only 4-H summer camps. 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.

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

Volunteers serving during school hours or within a school's afterschool program are subject to whatever documentation and/or screening is required by the school.

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

A Parent/guardian attending a 4-H program with their own children, without responsibility of other minor youth, is exempt from screening. The parent is not acting in a volunteer role during the event.

#### ***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.

#### ***Adults Helping with Programs Led By Screened Individuals***

Background screening is not required for adults who are not responsible for supervising youth during programs and work less than 10 hours in a month, as long as these adults are always in the presence of screened employees and/or volunteers when in contact with youth. These helpers are never left unsupervised around minors and do not serve in a supervisory capacity. Examples of adult helpers include event judges, guest educators/presenters, and parents serving snacks or helping with a craft at a club meeting.

### **Background Screening of Employees**

Background screening is required of new University of Florida IFAS employees and is the responsibility of IFAS Human Resources and UF Human Resources Services. Employee supervisors are responsible for ensuring their existing UF and county employees in their departments are background screened in accordance with Florida law and UF policy. For more information regarding UF employee background screening, contact IFAS Human Resources.

### **Screening 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.

### **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.

Program coordinators should make certain that activities are coordinated in a way that will ensure that appropriate supervision ratios are in place at all times. For more information visit

<https://oycs.ufsa.ufl.edu/compliance/supervision-of-minors/>.

### **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; State 4-H Volunteer 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 Development