

# NEW HAMPSHIRE 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS POLICY GUIDELINES

## Purpose

These policies are intended to provide guidance for all County Extension staff as well as all Class I and Class II NH 4-H Shooting Sports Instructors. The intent is to clearly outline the requirements and to provide a degree of standardization for all 4-H shooting sports programs. NH policies are consistent with those of the National 4-H Shooting Sports Foundation.

## NH 4-H Shooting Sports Advisory Committee

This committee serves in an advisory capacity to the State 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinator. Membership is open to all currently enrolled Class I & Class II instructors. Its function is to assist with developing program policy, identify program needs, and help to implement programming. It can also function in an advisory capacity for County Extension Staff.

## Instructor Guidelines

All 4-H Shooting Sports instructors must be both:

1. officially enrolled as New Hampshire 4-H leader and
2. certified as a 4-H Shooting Sports instructor

## Enrolling as a NH 4-H Leader

The enrollment procedure includes an application and possible background check, an interview, and an orientation. All volunteers who are working directly with youth without the presence or direct supervision of paid 4-H staff will complete the enrollment procedure.

Exempted from this policy are volunteers who work under the direct supervision or in the presence of an enrolled leader or staff person for a brief period of time. For example, a guest speaker or workshop presenter visiting a 4-H club would be exempt as long as they are under the direct supervision or in the presence of an enrolled leader or staff person.

A leader may complete the 4-H certification training before enrolling as a NH 4-H leader. However, leaders cannot work directly with youth until officially enrolled except as described above.

## Certification of 4-H Shooting Sports Instructors

All instructors must complete 4-H Shooting Sports certification. No exceptions will be granted even if an individual is experienced and certified by other organizations. 4-H Shooting Sports certification focuses on youth development and specific techniques for a young audience.

An individual may instruct only in the 4-H Shooting Sports discipline(s) for which he or she has been certified. There are three levels of certification: Class I; Class II; and Youth Leaders (see below).

All individuals seeking certification will be evaluated by at least one Class I Instructor(s) in

that discipline. If only one Class I Instructor exists, a Class I Instructor in another discipline (preferably with a Class II certification in the trainee's discipline) may be consulted. If the instructors feel that the trainee is not ready, they can request further training or supervision. Trainees will not be certified without the recommendation of the instructor(s).

### Retaining Certification

To retain certification, 4-H Shooting Sports Instructors must teach, or assist in teaching, a class at least every two years in the specific discipline.

### Levels of Certification

#### Class I

A Class I Certificate authorizes an individual to instruct adults in his or her shooting sports discipline, as well as children.

To become a Class I Certified New Hampshire 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor an individual must be at least 25 years of age as of January 1 of the current 4-H year and:

- 1) successfully complete a 4-H Shooting Sports Certification Workshop that includes at least ten hours of discipline-specific instruction and has been a Class II Instructor in the same discipline for 1 year and
- 2) assist a Class I Certified Instructor of the desired discipline in a workshop and
- 3) give a certification workshop in the desired discipline under the supervision of a Class I Instructor and
- 4) be evaluated and approved by two Class I Instructors of the desired discipline .

#### OR

Prove successful completion of a National 4-H Shooting Sports workshop.

#### Class II

A Class II Certificate authorizes an individual to instruct children in his or her discipline. To obtain a Class II Certificate, an individual must be at least 21 years of age as of January 1 of the current 4-H year and:

- 1) successfully complete a 4-H Shooting Sports Certification Workshop that includes at least ten hours of discipline-specific instruction and
- 2) be evaluated and approved by Class I Instructor(s).

#### Teen Leaders

Certified teen leaders must at all times work under the direct supervision of a certified adult Class I or Class II instructor. Teen leaders must be at least 16 of age as of January 1 of the current 4-H year and:

- 1) successfully complete a 4-H Shooting Sports Certification Workshop that includes at least ten hours of discipline-specific instruction and
- 2) be evaluated and approved by Class I Instructor(s).

## Program Delivery

The 4-H Shooting Sports project lends itself to a number of delivery methods. The goals of the program are to teach both subject matter knowledge as well as life skills such as leadership, confidence, sportsmanship, discipline, and responsibility. There are currently 6 disciplines offered in the NH 4-H Shooting Sports program: archery; black powder; hunting & wildlife; pistol; rifle; and shotgun. The following are the common delivery methods for 4-H Shooting Sports educational programming:

### 4-H Shooting Sports Clubs

4-H Clubs offer programming on an ongoing basis throughout the year. 4-H Clubs can either focus the majority of their project work on Shooting Sports project or involve it as one of many subject areas. Clubs involve a group of adult leaders working with youth. Clubs also typically elect officers, conduct business meetings, participate in county and state level events & activities, and carry out community service activities. All youth and adult participants are considered 4-H members and are enrolled with the local County Extension Office.

### Special Interest Workshops

Special interest workshops have a discrete beginning and ending. They could consist of a 1-day program or a short term series of sessions. For example, the educational program might meet 2 nights/ week for a couple of weeks and conclude with a trip to the range on a Saturday. Sometimes, this delivery is used to meet the needs of a non-4-H group which expresses an interest in the subject matter. In most cases, only one or two disciplines are covered. All such workshops should be coordinated with the local County Extension Office.

### 4-H Camps

Shooting Sports curriculum is an integral part of the programming at NH 4-H Camps.

## Insurance

Liability Insurance The State of New Hampshire provides legal protection for its volunteers. A law (RSA 508:17) limits the liability of volunteers working for nonprofit organizations. This statute protects volunteers from civil liability and any action resulting in damage or injury to any person if:

1. The volunteer had prior written approval from the organization to act on behalf of the organization.
2. The volunteer was acting in good faith and within the scope of his/her official duties and responsibilities.
3. The damage or injury was not caused by willful, wanton or gross negligent misconduct by the volunteer.

Health and Accident Insurance Health and accident insurance should be obtained for special events, activities, and trips. Extension 4-H staff can provide information about low-cost insurance that can be purchased on an annual or daily basis.

### General Safety Guidelines

4-H volunteers are responsible for the welfare of the 4-H members under their supervision. The *Reducing risk for 4-H Volunteer Leaders* fact sheet describes methods to reduce the risk of harm to 4-H members and leaders. Volunteers should contact their county 4-H Extension Educator for additional information and help.

All 4-H Shooting Sports activities should be conducted strictly under the safety guidelines listed in the current *4-H Shooting Sports Guide* for each discipline. These standards apply to all youth and adult participants.

Eye and Ear Protection Proper eye and ear protection are mandatory for all shooters, coaches, and others on the range.

Age 4-H membership is open to all youth who are 8-18. 4-H age is calculated as of January 1 of the current program year. Youth under eight years of age are not eligible to participate in 4-H Shooting Sports projects involving firearms, air guns or archery equipment.

Equipment All equipment used should be in good repair with all safety features in place. It is the responsibility of the certified 4-H shooting sports instructors to check all equipment prior to use. If there is any question about the condition of any equipment, then don't use it. All equipment will be appropriate for the age, size, and ability of the participants.

Transportation of Firearms All firearms must be transported with trigger or mechanism locks properly installed, cased, and out of sight. Ammunition must be stored separately when being transported. These items may only be transported to and from 4-H events by adults. This includes physically carrying the firearm and ammunition from the vehicle to and from the meeting.