Introduction

Minnesota 4-H clubs are educational organizations under the Regents of the University of Minnesota. This model constitution and bylaws state the required provisions of all Minnesota 4-H clubs. Options are provided in certain places within the model; clubs will need to select one of the examples or a variation thereof. Clubs may also add additional provisions that align with the model and Minnesota 4-H policies, rules and best practices. Prior to voting for adoption, present the documents at two meetings, regular or special, for consideration of the members. Attach a copy of the constitution and bylaws to the annual 4-H club charter as adopted and each year changes are made.

Minnesota 4-H Youth Development
4-H Club: _____________________

Constitution and Bylaws
(Developed from the Model Constitution and Bylaws – Minnesota 4-H Clubs)

Constitution

Article I—Name

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the _______________________ 4-H Club. The club is located in ______ County, Minnesota.

Article II—Purpose

Section 1. The exclusive purpose of this club shall be to provide learning and leadership experiences for members through club meetings and project work. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, this organization shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this organization.

Article III—Membership

Section 1. Membership is offered to any boy or girl in kindergarten through one year past high school in accordance with the University of Minnesota equal opportunity policies. Youth in 3rd grader and older shall enroll as regular club members. Youth in kindergarten through 2nd grade will be eligible for membership in Cloverbuds. Individuals become members of this club by completing an enrollment form and enrolling in one or more 4-H projects.
Section 2. Voting rights are granted to all members.

Article IV—Leadership/Officers

Section 1. (Use this section to designate how the club will determine youth leadership. If the club has a checking account, at minimum the club must have a president, secretary and treasurer.)

Example 1: The officers of this club shall include the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and reporter. (Other officers might include recreation leader, song leader, historian, corresponding secretary, etc.) Eligibility for each office and term of office is described in the bylaws. Each officer shall perform the regular duties of these offices.

Example 2: This club will be led by a team of members designated each month to plan the next month’s meeting and program.

Section 2. (Use this section to designate adult leadership. Choose 1 of the three examples.)

Example 1. The club shall be under the direction and guidance of at least two adult volunteers with as many other volunteers as needed to properly advise and assist in carrying out the club program. Volunteers will meet the current requirements of the University of Minnesota Extension for adult volunteer leadership before serving in this role.

Example 2. The club shall be under the direction and guidance of an organizational partner who is providing staff and volunteers to properly advise and assist in carry out the club program. Partners will meet the current requirements of the University of Minnesota Extension for collaboration before serving in this role.

Example 3. The club shall be under the direction and guidance of a staff member hired for this purpose with as many other volunteers as needed to properly advise and assist in carry out the club program.

Article V – Committees

Section 1. The Executive Board of this club will include the officers and adults (designated in Article V) to provide guidance to members regarding the operation of the club. (Describe additional members, if appropriate.) The executive board shall carry out the responsibilities as outlined in their position description.

Section 2. Guidelines for standing and special committees will be designated in the bylaws.

Article VI—Meeting and Quorum

Section 1. The club shall hold regular meetings during the year.

Section 2. All meetings shall be conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order (or another agreed upon group process.)
Section 3. A simple majority (one half plus one) of members must be present to make official business decisions of the club.

Article VII – Umbrella Organizations

Section 1. 4-H clubs are the youth development outreach program of the Cooperative Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, implemented through state land grant universities.

Section 2. The 4-H clubs qualify as educational organizations under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) and are tax-exempt pursuant to the group exemption (GEN5929) granted to Regents of the University of Minnesota. To use the 4-H name and emblem and be recognized as a 4-H club in Minnesota, the club must meet the requirements of the 4-H charter with the renewal application submitted annually and approval granted by the University of Minnesota’s State 4-H Program Director or designee. Provisions of the constitution and bylaws required for inclusion under GEN5929 must be used without alteration and updated when the change is directed by the University of Minnesota’s State 4-H Program Director or designee.

Section 3. The club and adult leaders will be under the general direction of the University of Minnesota Extension, 4-H Youth Development staff providing oversight in the county, region and state.

Article VIII — Amendments

Section 1. Adoption of a proposed amendment to this constitution shall require a two-thirds vote of members present at the second meeting at which the amendment is presented.

Article IX – Dissolution Clause

Section 1. The club will be dissolved if it fails to reapply to use the 4-H name and emblem through the annual Minnesota 4-H chartering process or if staff determines that the club is no longer fulfilling its purpose. The club may also choose to dissolve; this requires a two-thirds vote of members present at the second meeting at which the motion is presented.

Section 2. Upon dissolution of the 4-H club, assets shall first be used to pay any debts of the 4-H club. Remaining assets shall be distributed to the County Federation/Council for the exclusive purpose of program development directly related to the enrichment of the 4-H youth development program. If there is no 4-H youth development program, assets shall be distributed only to one or more organizations that are tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.
Bylaws

Article A – Club Operations
(Related to Constitution Article II)

Section 1. The club motto shall be, “To Make the Best Better.”

Section 2. The club emblem shall be the four-leaf clover with an H on each leaf.

Section 3. The Minnesota 4-H Club pledge:

I pledge
My Head to clearer thinking,
My Heart to greater loyalty,
My Hands to larger service,
My Health to better living,
for my family, my club, my
community, my country, and my world.

Article B – Selection of Leadership/Officers
(Related to Constitution Article IV)

Section 1. (Use this section to define if your club will be electing officers on a yearly, quarterly or some regular basis.)

Example 1: The officers of this club shall be elected by ballot at the designated annual meeting and shall hold office for one year or until their successors have been elected and qualified.

Example 2: The officers of this club shall be selected quarterly, by volunteering or by ballot if more than one member volunteers for an office.

Section 2. (Use this section to describe how volunteer leadership will be selected. Examples are similar to the election or volunteering options described for officers in Section 1. Include term.)

Section 3. Vacancies of adult or youth leadership shall be ___(appointed, elected) by ____.

Section 4. Elections will be decided by a relative majority. (The candidate who receives the most votes on a single ballot will be declared the winner.) Absentee voting will not be allowed.

Article C - Standing and Special Committees
(Related to Constitution Article V)

Section 1. (Use this section to list committees that are consistent from year to year and describe purpose, membership, and selection of the chair.) Standing committees of the 4-H club shall include: (e.g. bylaws, budget). Committees shall be responsible for the duties as described in their position descriptions.
Section 2. Special committees will be created as needed to conduct business. The president has the authority to ask for volunteers and/or to appoint committee chairs and members.

Article D – Meeting Schedule
(Related to Constitution Article VI)

Section 1. The club will meet no less than six times per year on dates, times and locations determined by the membership with a copy of the meeting dates provided to the University of Minnesota Extension office. The annual meeting will be held in _____.
(Indicate how the meeting dates will be set.)

Example 1: The regular meetings of this club will be held at ____ on the ____ of each month. The date can be changed by a majority vote at the previous meeting.

Example 2: A calendar of meetings will be developed by the officers, or a team of youth and adult volunteers selected by the club, and distributed for approval of the members at _________ (i.e. the beginning of each club year, quarterly).

Section 2. Special meetings of the 4-H club may be called by the Executive Board, adult leadership or the County 4-H Program Coordinator with one week’s notice.

Section 3. The yearly club program plan will include a combination of education, recreation and business. At meetings where business is transacted, the following order of business will guide:

1. Meeting called to order.
2. Pledge of Allegiance and the club pledge.
3. Roll call.
4. Minutes of last meeting.
5. Treasurer’s report.
6. Reports from other officer and committees
7. Unfinished business (if any).
8. New business (if any).
9. Announcements (if any).
10. Adjournment.

Article E – Member, Parent and Volunteer Expectations
(Related to Constitution Article VII)

Section 1. Each member is encouraged to participate regularly in club meetings and activities. Participants and their parents/guardians as well as individuals serving in adult volunteer roles are expected to show respect and cooperation to each other. Each member and volunteer is expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the code of conduct and policies established by University of Minnesota Extension, 4-H Youth Development program.

Article F – Fiscal Operations
(Related to Constitution Article VII)
Section 1. The club fiscal year will coincide with the Minnesota 4-H Youth Development program year of October 1 through September 30. The club will follow all University of Minnesota fiscal policies as well as state and federal regulations. The club is exempt from federal income tax pursuant to the group exemption number (GEN5929) granted to Regents of the University of Minnesota. This 4-H club must retain a copy of their Employer Identification Number (EIN). This 4-H club is exempt from Minnesota sales and use tax as a nonprofit organization (tax ID number 3289179) for purposes of purchasing items in support of 4-H activities.

Section 2. Program expenses will be projected in the annual budget, approved at the annual meeting. Approval at a club meeting will not be required for payment of normal program supplies and expenses, so long as it is part of a line item in the budget and proper documentation has been submitted.

Section 3. (If members and/or volunteers may be reimbursed for 4-H expenses use this section.) Members and volunteers may be reimbursed for expenses incurred in participating in 4-H learning and leadership opportunities. The names of the events, amounts that may be fully or partially reimbursed, and conditions for reimbursement include: _____ (list information requested, ensuring the events, amounts, and conditions align with the policies and rules of Minnesota 4-H.)

Date accepted and/or amended by local club:

________________________________________________________________

Date received by the University of Minnesota Extension:

_________________________________________