



GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Grievance Committee Process

PURPOSE

The 4-H grievance process provides a vehicle by which to respond to 4-H members' concerns relating to all 4-H activities.

WHAT MAY AND MAY NOT BE GRIEVED

A grievance committee may be convened for the following situations:

- Alleged wrongdoing.
- Rule violations.

A grievance committee **will not** be convened for the following situations:

- Decisions made by judges, which are final.
- Issues related to deadlines for membership enrollment, livestock identification, and/or county fair pre-registration; due process will be provided by Extension staff.
- Code of Conduct-related violations, which will be addressed by staff according to the established process.

WHO MAY GRIEVE AN ISSUE

Any Minnesota 4-H member and his/her parent/guardian.

WHO RESPONDS TO THE GRIEVANCE

The grievance committee of 5 members will be selected from the larger grievance committee pool and will have youth and adult representation.

PROCESS FOR FILING A GRIEVANCE

- During the county/state fair, grievances must be filed within 24 hours (1 day) of the incident. These must be turned in to Extension personnel.
- Any other grievances that are not at county/state fair must be filed within 3 days of the incident. These must be turned in to Extension personnel.
- The University of Minnesota Extension 4-H Youth Development **Grievance Form** must be filled out and signed by the 4-H member(s) and their parent(s)/guardian(s) filing the grievance. There is no limit to the number of people signing the grievance, but they must be directly impacted by or involved in the situation.
- The grievance form must be submitted with \$50 at county level/\$100 at state level (cash or money order only). The money will be returned if the decision is ruled in favor of the person(s) filing the grievance.

- If there are testing costs associated with the grievance, the individual(s) filing the grievance are responsible for paying the testing costs. Testing costs commonly involve investment of \$200 or more. Testing costs can be estimated for the party filing the grievance and that amount must be paid up-front.

AT THE GRIEVANCE HEARING

- The grievance committee will address the written grievance via a face-to-face meeting or by utilizing technology. It is the choice of the individual(s) filing the grievance whether or not they are present at the meeting. Only those individual(s) directly impacted by or involved in the situation being grieved may speak at the hearing.
- Participants in the grievance hearing are expected to act in a civil manner. Use of profanity or other inappropriate behavior by either party will not be tolerated and may result in termination of the hearing.
- All parties are expected to provide documentation/evidence at the hearing. If individuals are uncooperative and refuse to provide/bring requested information, the grievance committee may terminate the grievance process or the grievance may not be determined in favor of the uncooperative party.
- After all relevant information is presented, the committee will meet privately to discuss the issue and come to a decision. Decisions will be based on a majority rule. Committee members are expected to keep discussions confidential.
- Once a decision has been determined, the individual(s) filing the grievance will be notified of the decision of the grievance committee by Extension staff. Decisions made by the committee will be final.
- The resolution of the issue will be filed in writing and kept as a permanent record of the hearing at the Extension Office.

ROLE OF THE EXTENSION OFFICE STAFF

Extension staff members will forward grievances to the committee promptly and will convene all meetings at which grievances are heard to ensure that all sides are heard and all options/alternatives are considered. Extension staff will facilitate the meeting but will not have a vote in the final decision. Extension staff will notify the individual(s) filing the grievance of the decision.

WHO WILL BE CALLED UPON IN CASE OF A GRIEVANCE

The committee members called upon in case of a grievance will be drawn from the grievance committee pool, which consists of 4-H members (9th grade and above) and volunteers who meet the requirements outlined in the grievance committee position description and who have agreed to serve on the grievance committee by signing the **Grievance Committee Member Contract**.

AUTHORS

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