



## CLAY COUNTY 4-H GRIEVANCE POLICY

### PURPOSE

The Clay County grievance/appeal process provides a vehicle to respond to 4-H member's concerns relating to the Clay County 4-H rules/decisions. This process provides a means for members/parents/guardian's concerns to be heard.

### WHAT MAY BE APPEALED

All 4-H issues may be appealed with the exception of judges' decisions. This may include eligibility, auction eligibility, deadline violations, rule violations, etc.

### WHO MAY APPEAL

Clay County 4-H members and parents/guardians have the right to file an appeal.

### WHO REVIEWS THE APPEAL

The Appeal Committee will consist of 7 members (4 adults and 3 youth) and appointed annually by the Clay County 4-H Board of Directors at their Fall reorganization meeting. The Board of Directors will also select alternates. In case of a conflict of interest, the involved party(s) will be asked to stand down for that hearing. If a conflict of interest exists, the 4-H Program Staff may appoint a person to fill in for that hearing.

### PROCESS FOR FILING AN APPEAL

1. *County Fair Appeals: Appeals must be filed within 24 hours (1 day) of the incident. They must be turned into the 4-H Office at the County Fair.*
2. *Other 4-H activity Appeals: Appeals must be filed within 7 days of the activity and are to be filed at the Clay County Extension Office, 715 11<sup>th</sup> Street North, Suite 107B, Moorhead, MN 56560.*
3. *An appeal form must be filled out and signed by the person(s) filing the appeal. There is no limit to the number of individuals who can sign an appeal.*

*If an appeal has been properly filed, 4-H Extension staff will schedule a hearing with the 4-H Appeals Committee.*

*The appeal form must be submitted with \$25 (cash or money order only). The money will be returned only if the decision is ruled in favor of the person(s) filing the appeal. If the decision is ruled against the person(s) filing the appeal, the money will be donated to the Clay County 4-H Federation.*

## AT THE APPEAL HEARING

1. Only those individuals who have signed the appeal, those indicated on the appeal (in addition to these individuals' parents/guardians), and those with knowledge concerning the appeal will be asked to speak at the hearing. 4-H members are strongly encouraged to voice their own views at the appeal hearing. Parents/guardians are encouraged to allow the 4-H members to represent themselves.
2. Participants in the appeal hearing are expected to act in a civil manner. Use of profanity or other inappropriate behavior by either party will not be accepted and may result in terminating the hearing.
3. The individual(s) filing the appeal will have the opportunity to express their view to the committee.
4. If the appeal is against another party, the named party will be invited to attend by 4-H Staff to provide an opportunity to defend their position.
5. All parties are expected to provide appropriate documentation/ evidence upon request. If individuals are uncooperative and refuse to provide/bring requested information, the Appeals Committee may terminate the appeal process or the appeal may not be determined in the favor of the uncooperative party.
6. After all information is presented, the committee will meet privately to discuss the issue and come to a decision. Decisions will be based on majority rule. Committee members are expected to keep discussions confidential.
7. Once a decision is determined the involved parties will be notified of the decisions of the committee. Decisions made by the committee will be final.
8. The resolution of the issue will be filed in writing and kept as a permanent record of the hearing at the Extension Office.

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE 4-H PROGRAM STAFF?

The 4-H Regional Extension Educator/4-H Program Coordinator or their representative will attend all meetings at which appeals are heard to ensure that all sides are heard and all options/alternatives are considered. The 4-H Regional Extension Educator/4-H Program Coordinator or their representative will facilitate the meeting but will not have a vote in the final decision. Extension staff will forward appeals to the committee promptly. If a conflict of interest exists with a appeal committee member, the 4-H Program Staff may appoint a person to fill in for that hearing.

## COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

This position is of great importance to the County 4-H program. We appreciate your time and commitment. Committee members should possess the following skills to carry out these duties:

- Remain open and impartial
- Keep matters discussed completely confidential
- The ability to be consistent
- During the County Fair, committee members will check-in or have someone check-in for them with the Fair 4-H Office by 4 PM each day of the Fair to see if an appeal has been filed
- Responsible for writing the written resolution to appeal hearings

