



## 4-H CANINE PROJECT GENERAL INFORMATION

### 4-H Project General Description

**A 4-H project consists of 6-8 hours of sequential learning experiences (over a period of at least a few days or weeks) exploring a general subject with the guidance of a leader or mentor.**

*Translation...* A dog project leader or the club's team of dog project leaders is/are planning/organizing/facilitating 6-8 hours (at least) of dog topic related activities to help members learn about dogs and/or meet their dog project goals.

- **For recognition of project work, members must be members in good standing and keep a member record and project record** (see page three for record book details).
- 4-H members ages 8+ may handle dogs. If Cloverbuds wish to gain exposure to dogs and animal care, an adult needs to be holding and in control of the dog. Cloverbud activities should be limited to feeding, petting, and stroking the dogs. Caution should be exhibited when entering a kennel or other area where dogs are loose, especially for the Cloverbuds. Those that handle dogs should heed the cautions and best practices.

### Dogs that may not participate

1. A wolf or wolf-hybrid or coyote or coyote-hybrid may NOT participate in 4-H. Wolf-hybrid," means an animal that is the progeny or descendant of a domestic dog (*Canis familiaris*) and a wolf (*Canis lupus* or *Canis rufus*). "Wolf-hybrid" also means an animal that is advertised, registered, licensed, or otherwise described or represented as a wolf-hybrid by its owner or an animal that exhibits primary physical and behavioral wolf characteristics
2. No dog shall be eligible to participate with a physical condition that is detrimental to the health of the dog including pregnant dogs or dogs that have recently whelped. Exceptions may be made with written confirmation from a veterinarian that the dog is able to participate.

### Aggressive dog policy

Any dog who attempts to bite or attack a human or another dog will be immediately removed from class or show. At training, the situation will be reviewed by the county dog committee and includes input from dog training instructors, the county extension staff and the family of the 4-H'er involved. They may rule to put the dog on probation, work individually with the dog and handler or, in severe instances, expel the dog from classes and 4-H exhibitions for a period of time.

Expelling a dog is a rare occurrence but could be necessary for the safety of other members and dogs. Should a dog actually be expelled, it must be remembered that the action is against the dog and not the 4-H'er. The county educator will look at many solutions and encourage the 4-H'er to attend classes without the dog and train it at home. Solutions may include using a different dog, including leasing a dog from another person. 4-H'ers will always be welcome in every other phase of the project including dog bowl, project meetings, exhibiting educational displays, etc.



It is also important to note that you are legally responsible for the actions of your dog. Everyone in class should have appropriate liability insurance (usually a part of your homeowners or renters insurance policy) for your own protection. Safety is of paramount importance!

***From the Vermont Agency of Agriculture – web page <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/animal-health-0/animal-health-regulations/rabies-rules-and-recommendations>***

In Vermont, owners are required to have their dogs, cats, and ferrets vaccinated by their veterinarian against rabies in accordance with the vaccine manufacturer's recommendations, unless exempted by a veterinarian.

Rabies vaccinations must be performed by a licensed veterinarian or under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian, which shall mean that the veterinarian has examined the animal, has authorized its immediate vaccination against rabies, and is on the premises at the time the animal is vaccinated. The person who administers the rabies vaccine must be employed in, or working at, the same veterinary practice as the supervising licensed veterinarian. All rabies certificates must be signed by the licensed veterinarian.

Rabies vaccination must be administered to domestic pets prior to the age of 4 months unless in the judgement of the veterinarian the animals' medical condition would prevent the development of adequate immunity to rabies. Animals so exempted must be inoculated against rabies as soon as their medical condition permits. The vaccination should be administered at least 30 days prior to the event and be current within the previous 12 months. Vaccination less than 30 days can be accepted for younger animals not old enough to vaccinate in sufficient time prior to the event.

State law requires that all dog owners license any dog over 6 months of age with the Town Clerk between January 1 and April 1 of every year. To obtain a license the owner must present proof that the dog has been vaccinated against rabies, pay the appropriate fee and, in the case of spayed/neutered dogs, provide proof of sterilization.

### **Project information specific to the dog project:**

- Sharing dogs for Educational purposes is allowed.
- For showing 4-H, the sharing of project dogs is not allowed.
- Members may be part of a club or be independent members
- Owing or leasing dogs is not required.
  - *Project leaders may help members find dogs to purchase or lease*
  - *Members are not required to take handling lessons*

Members may choose to enhance the club project meeting learning in the dog project area by participating in the following if/when available:

- Clinics, dog shows, workshops
- Regional Day with a dog presentation
- Fairs/Field Days with a dog presentation
- Community Service Projects
- Career Exploration



To find other information, rules, and documents like lease forms, approval forms, and record books related to the dog project go to the dog section on the 4-H projects page: [www.uvm.edu/extension/4-hevents](http://www.uvm.edu/extension/4-hevents)

### General information about record books

- Record books document project work and also include goals and a reflection piece to summarize the project experience. Most 4-Hers use the standard Record Books available through the 4-H program. Members may use alternative formats for records but must have prior approval from their 4-H Educator.

### Dog-Record Books

- **Members who own or lease a dog usually use the Dog Project Record Books**
- **Members without dogs may use the generic 4-H Project Record**
- **Dog members** may use the **Dog Project Record** or pages of it if they have been tracking, for learning purposes, the care and expenses of dogs that they do not own or lease. Project leaders would help determine if such an approach makes sense based on project goals.

### Out of State 4-H Opportunities for

Eastern States Exposition

#### Lease stipulations to consider:

*This is a partial list suggesting areas that should be considered and resolved before signing a lease/loan agreement. When including an item in an agreement, clearly state the item and the roles of the renter/borrower and owner (that is, who does what, who pays for what), being as specific and concise as possible.*

1. Animal Health - veterinary fees, drugs, vaccinations, etc.
2. Liability - injury to the animal, injury by the animal
3. Feeding - costs, types of feed, source of feed
4. Returns to 4-H'er - for labor, for management,
5. Housing - specifications
6. Exhibiting\* – transportation, disposition of premiums and awards
7. Arbitration of disagreement

*\*4-Hers are expected to tend to the animal's needs*