

Membership and Enrollment

It is the policy of University of Georgia Extension to extend equal opportunities for membership and participation in 4-H activities to any youth residing in or attending school in the state of Georgia. As a partner in education, Georgia 4-H bases its eligibility on the Georgia Department of Education's standards. Effective August 1, 2015, grade level shall determine participation in Georgia 4-H Programs, both in competitive and non-competitive events.

1. Membership Classifications

National 4-H Headquarters recognizes that students ages five through twenty-one may be members in 4-H programs. Each state designates the levels of membership for its 4-H program. There are five levels of membership within the Georgia 4-H Program:

- Cloverbud is a 4-H offering in some counties for children grades kindergarten through third grade. These youth may participate in special programs offered by the county. Program offerings vary by county. Youth younger than the age of five are not considered 4-H'ers.
- Cloverleaf – fourth through sixth grade.
- Junior – seventh and eighth grades.
- Senior – ninth through twelfth grade. Senior 4-H'ers may compete through the 4-H year in which they graduate or qualify for a national contest.
- Collegiate 4-H is open to 4-H members as they graduate high school. They are not eligible to participate in events upon high school graduation.

2. Grade level classification

Youth attending public or private institution

For youth who attend a public or private educational institution, grade level is determined by the grade in which youth are currently enrolled. For youth who attend a non-graded system or attend home school, grade level will be determined as described in the Age and Grade conversion chart.

Non-Graded or Home-School Youth (not enrolled in public or private school)
 Youth who have not graduated high school, or are enrolled in schools that do not assign grade levels, or are home schooled shall be assigned a grade level based upon the following Age to Grade conversion chart. 4-H grade will be determined based on the participant's age as of September 1 of the current 4-H year.

| Age on September 1 | 4-H Grade |
|--------------------|-----------|
| 5 | K |
| 6 | 1 |
| 7 | 2 |
| 8 | 3 |
| 9 | 4 |
| 10 | 5 |
| 11 | 6 |
| 12 | 7 |
| 13 | 8 |
| 14 | 9 |
| 15 | 10 |
| 16 | 11 |
| 17 | 12 |

3. Youth with special circumstances may be allowed to enroll in 4-H or seek an exception to the eligibility guidelines with the approval of the State 4-H Leader. The exceptions could include the following:
 - Youth who have reached his or her nineteenth birthday by September 1 but are still enrolled in high school.
 - Youth in a non-graded system who have special circumstances for advancing a grade or repeating a grade may enroll in a grade other than the one specified.
 - Youth who have not reached his or her eighteenth birthday by September 1 but have graduated high school and are not enrolled in a secondary institution.
 Requests should be made to State 4-H Leader Arch Smith with a statement of circumstance and requesting an exception.
4. Each event in Georgia 4-H will have a grade level established. This grade requirement may be found with the eligibility requirements for those events.
5. Requirements for national competitions require that each contestant must have passed his or her fourteenth birthday and may not have passed his or her nineteenth birthday by January 1 of the qualifying year.

georgia4h.org

Grandfathering Clause

The 4-H'ers in twelfth grade and graduating in 2015 will be allowed to participate in competitive events in 2016 based on the 2015 eligibility rules. If they are not nineteen by January 1, 2016, they are able to compete in the 2016 4-H year beginning August 1, 2015. This is for competitive events only and for the 2016 4-H year only.

4-H'ers who would have been eligible to show livestock in the 2016 4-H year because of their ninth birthday falling before January 1, 2016, will be allowed to show in 2016. This is for the 2016 4-H year only.

Revised 5/2015

georgia4h.org