

Oregon State University Extension Service

4-H Volunteer Screening and Education Process

Screening Process Rationale:

The Extension Service is committed to providing a safe environment for young people participating in its programs. With this in mind, the Extension Service will provide the needed screening and education for potential volunteers to feel comfortable and safe in taking on various roles within the 4-H Youth Development Program. In addition, extensive media coverage has enhanced our society's awareness of child protection issues. Because of concerns surrounding these issues, most major youth serving agencies have instituted screening, orientation and training processes.

Purpose of screening and education for potential 4-H volunteers:

- To provide a safe environment for young people and adults involved in the 4-H Youth Development Program.
- To help insure the selection and placement of qualified volunteers for the 4-H Youth Development Program.
- To help potential volunteers feel ready for their role as a 4-H leader.
- To help potential volunteers understand the 4-H program in order to make informed decisions about their involvement.

The Oregon 4-H Youth Development Program Screening Process Includes:

- All potential volunteers will be required to complete a 4-H Volunteer Service Application—this includes providing the names, addresses, and phone numbers of three references.
- All potential volunteers need to understand that this volunteer service position is subject to the successful completion of background checks, which may include credit, criminal, and motor vehicle history background checks. Routinely this will include looking for the following types of convictions:
 - Crimes involving offenses against children
 - Crimes involving physical harm to another person
 - Crimes involving a firearm
 - Crimes involving mistreatment or abuse of animals
 - Crimes involving theft or dishonesty—within the past ten years
 - Crimes involving possession of a controlled substance—within the past ten years
- All potential volunteers will be required to participate in a minimum of 2 hours of training related to their volunteer role.
- Individual counties and project areas may have additional requirements related to becoming a 4-H volunteer.

The Oregon 4-H Youth Development Program

4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills.