

# Washington County 4-H Shooting Sports Club

**GUN SAFETY, GUN RESPECT, AND LIFE SKILL BUILDING IN  
PROGRESS**

**4-H Club Chartered September 2022**

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***I pledge.....***

***My HEAD to clearer thinking,  
My HEART to greater loyalty,  
My HANDS to larger service, and  
My HEALTH to better living  
For my club, my community, my country and my world.***

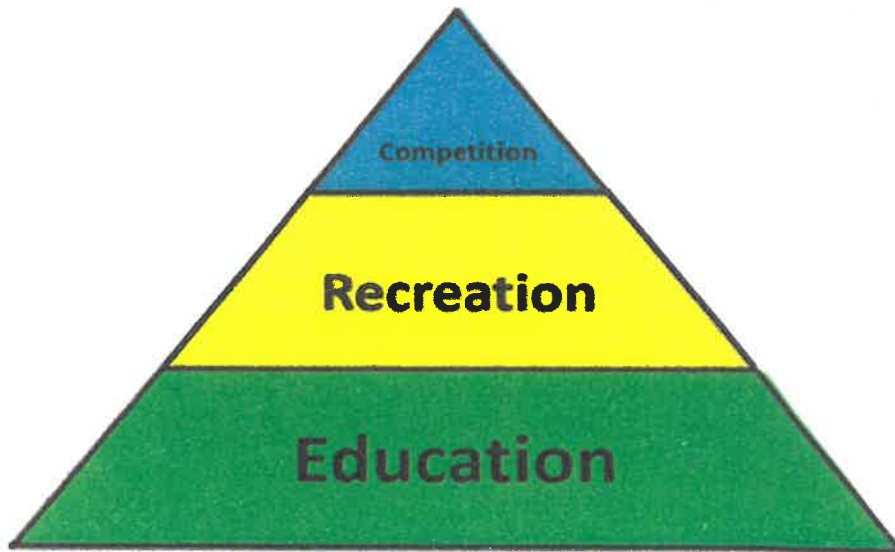
Welcome to the Washington County 4-H Shooting Sports Club we are looking forward to an exciting year of growth and development. You will learn important life skills through safe and educational experiences while learning firearms safety, function, and ethical firearm ownership lead by trained and certified 4-H instructors. This club is an affiliate of Nebraska 4-H and can be your primary or secondary 4-H club.

## Club Objectives

To enable youth to:

1. Find and explore passions and interests
2. Engage in an effective 4-H program setting
3. Develop positive relationships with adults, youth, and peers
4. Explore a vast array of 4-H educational, recreational and competitive activities
5. Thrive in multiple settings
6. Enhance developmental and long-term outcomes
7. Practice safe and responsible use of firearms, enhancing existing shooting, conservation and ethical firearm ownership.
8. Explore the three National 4-H Mission Mandates (STEM, Healthy Living, Civic Engagement)
9. Model safety, sportsmanship and ethical behavior
10. Strengthen knowledge and life skills

This pyramid illustrates our three program priorities and the degree of emphasis needed to ensure an effective 4-H Shooting Sports program. While competition appears at the top, it comprises a relatively small portion of the pyramid and is not our primary emphasis.



**Washington County 4-H Shooting Sports Club (WC4HSS ) member minimum age and requirements for live-fire activities**

- Clover kids (under 8 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year) may not join Washington County 4-H Shooting Sports Club.
- BB Gun: All 4-H Club members with current Washington County BB gun Certification may participate in shooting practices and county fair competition.
- Air Rifle: Second year WC4HSS club members with current Washington County BB gun / Air Rifle Certification may participate in shooting practices and county fair competition.
- .22 caliber rimfire rifle: 4-H Club members 11 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup> of current year AND have passed the Nebraska Game and Parks Hunter Education AND with current Washington County Shotgun / Rifle Certification may participate in shooting practices and county fair competition.
- Shotgun: 4-H Club members 11 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup> of current year AND have passed the Nebraska Game and Parks Hunter Education AND with current Washington County Shotgun / Rifle Certification may participate in shooting practices and county fair competition.

BB gun and air rifle discipline follows the age division below for competition:

- Novice: 8 years old
- Junior: 9 to 10 years old
- Intermediate: 11 to 12 years old
- Seniors: 13 to 15 years old
- Advanced: 16-18 years old

Rimfire rifle and Shotgun discipline follows the age division below for competition:

- Junior: 11 to 14 years old
- Seniors: 15 to 18 years old

**WC4HSS as a club will only participate in shooting competitions for Washington County Fair projects.**

**WC4HSS will not pursue or be affiliated with any outside club, county, or national shooting competitions unless as a club we vote on attending the competition**

**WC4HSS club members may attend and shoot any events on their own, as a person and not as a representative of WC4HSS. Club members must provide their own equipment for any shooting competitions outside of a WC4HSS club shoot.**

**PROPER MINDSET**

What do these items have in common?



Do you see tools? Do you see weapons? Do you see both? The reality is that these are all tools used within various 4-H projects. They can only change, based on the intent of the person using them. When used in a positive, productive manner, they're tools. If intentionally used to harm another, each item could become a weapon.

Some people believe that 4-H should not be teaching youth about the use of firearms. They believe that with knowledge comes the potential these items could be misused. The manner in which we express ourselves to others when talking about the 4-H Shooting Sports program can have a profound effect.

If instructors, members or even parents refer to firearms as weapons, we only further reinforce a negative perception of 4-H Shooting Sports. We collectively need to eliminate the "W-word" from our vocabulary when working with or discussing the 4-H Shooting Sports program with others.

**Regarding simulated combat sports including but not limited to, paintball guns, air-soft, laser guns, archery tag. Pointing any type of gun including paint ball guns, air-soft guns, laser guns, laser paintball, archery tag bows & arrows or sighting devices at any person or any humanoid shaped target is inappropriate in any 4-H program activity.**

## **Rationale for Introducing Youth to Firearms**

1. Teach safe and responsible use and ownership of firearms
2. Significant adults in the life of a young person
3. Opportunity for quality family involvement
4. Positive peer groups for kids
5. Respect the power of firearms and archery equipment
6. Education that emphasizes respect of other people

Sport	2014 Total Annual Participation	Number of Injuries Annually (2013)	Injury Rate
Football	5,286,000	354,300	6.7%
Wrestling	805,000	38,900	4.8%
Basketball	9,694,000	359,300	3.7%
Softball	2,622,000	53,000	2.0%
Soccer	9,828,000	171,000	1.7%
Baseball	6,711,000	106,100	1.6%
Hockey	743,000	11,200	1.4%
Gymnastics	2,809,000	33,000	1.1%
4-H Shooting Sports	338,621*	0.12**	Less than 0.00004%

\* 2014 enrollment

\*\* 4 injuries from 1980 – 2013 \* 6 Injuries in 38 Years

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### MEMBERSHIP

- Youth ages 8-18 as of January 1<sup>st</sup>
- Enrolled as a Youth Member in Washington County 4-H by January 1<sup>st</sup>

### DUES

- Dues must be paid by January Club Meeting
- \$20.00 per year per family for BB gun, Air rifle and .22 caliber rimfire fire. \$20.00 per year per family add on for shotgun sports.
- Membership dues go towards equipment upkeep and materials. The additional shotgun dues pays for the clays used at the range.

## **PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS**

- Each shooter must complete 2 practices in each discipline to compete in that discipline at fair.
- Each shooter must be current on the discipline 3-year Washington County safety certification. Each shooter will have a coach evaluation for each discipline they will compete in prior to live fire practice or competition events. Evaluation will cover general firearm knowledge, safety, parts of the firearm and live fire to receive or renew their 3-year certification.
- Attendance at practice will be tracked from sign-in sheets.
- Discipline practice dates and locations will vary and will be announced.

## **MEETINGS**

- Classroom instructional meetings will be held on the FIRST or SECOND Tuesday of each month from 6:30pm to 7:30pm at the Blair Youth Trap Range, 14001 County Road P33, Blair, Nebraska 68008. Monthly meeting time and place may change depending on the trap club schedule. Emails will be sent monthly on the learning subject matter along with confirmation of meeting time and location.
- Live-fire instructional meetings and practice, TO BE DETERMINED. Information will be emailed for specific details.
- Parents are also encouraged and invited to attend the youth meetings to keep up to date on events.
- The orientation "Kick-Off" meeting is the first meeting in January.
- Youth officer elections are held in February.
- Each meeting will start with a youth member lead Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H Pledge

## **CLUB LEADERSHIP**

Club Leaders are a valued and essential part of the 4-H program. The Washington County 4-H Shooting Sports program includes both youth and adults in leadership roles. The Nebraska 4-H Youth Development Policy emphasizes that the 4-H Clubs belong to the membership and the youth members should make the decisions. It clearly states the importance of "Youth involvement in leadership and decision making".

Our Club strongly believes and supports this vision and encourages youth involvement at all levels. We believe adult leaders should serve as advisors and that the club's youth members should be involved in making the club's decisions.

## **YOUTH OFFICERS**

The officers of the Club shall include president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, reporter, and historian. Their duties shall be as follows:

- The president will preside at all meetings, uphold the constitution and adhere to parliamentary procedure. The president shall appoint committee chairs and members.
- The vice-president shall preside over the club in the absence of the president. The vice-president shall assist the president and serve as a link to all committees.
- The secretary shall write minutes of each meeting and report at the next meeting. The secretary will also keep attendance records and write club correspondence.
- The treasurer shall be responsible for all club funds and property, along with the adult finance chairman. The treasurer will keep an accurate record of the receipt and expenditures of all funds and give a report of the club's finances at each meeting.
- The reporter/historian shall write news reports of all meetings and activities and send them to the county 4-H office, local newspapers, radio stations, etc. They shall collect newspaper and county newsletter clippings, photos, etc., for a club scrapbook/bulletin board/history.

## **COMMUNICATION**

- All communication will be sent out through the club Yahoo email, [WC4HSS@yahoo.com](mailto:WC4HSS@yahoo.com).
  - Information about meetings and practices will be emailed directly to the club member email that is on file with the club coaches.
  - Live-fire event links will be sent out through the Washington County 4-H Office. You will be able to sign up for specific practice line times via Sign-up Genius, these links will be sent out approximately 2-3 weeks before each practice.
- Please use your judgement if the weather is questionable. Notify the discipline leader via phone or email if you do not feel safe traveling to practice due to the weather.

## **RECORD BOOK**

- Each member is encouraged to keep a 4-H Shooting Sports Record Book during the year. Completed Record Books are due into the Extension office October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- These record books will be treated as other record books within Washington County with ribbon placements and recognition at the Achievement Ceremony.
- Link to Nebraska State Shooting Sports Record Book: just google:  
[4h.unl.edu > documents > shooting sports record book](http://4h.unl.edu/documents/shooting-sports-record-book)



## **DRESS CODE**

- Please refer to the Fair book for specific dress code requirements for shooting competitions for the Washington County Fair.
- At practice and competitions, participants will be required to wear shoes that completely cover their feet. Examples of footwear that are not acceptable include, but are not limited to, sandals, clogs, flip flops, and bare feet.
- Any clothing with pictures, caricatures, designs, messages, writings, or other embellishments with direct or indirect references to alcohol, tobacco, sex, sexual connotations, drugs, gambling, or profanities are prohibited.

## **SAFETY RULES**

- **All firearms shall be treated as if they are loaded**
- **No horseplay or disruptive behavior will be tolerated.**
- While on the firing line, firearms may be handled/touched only with the permission of the range leader.
- All firearms must be unloaded and have the action open with a CBI when not shooting.
- Firearms are to remain unloaded until a member is on the firing line and has received instructions from the range leader to load/fire.
- All firearms will be carried with the muzzle pointed in a safe direction. The position and direction of firearm muzzles should be such that accidental injury to others cannot occur.
- Listen and obey all range commands immediately.
- Dry firing of firearms is permitted only on the firing line with the range leader's permission.
- Eye and hearing protection is each participant's responsibility and must be worn.
- When not shooting a firearm, it will be placed in a gun rack, stored in a case, or locked in a vehicle.
- When members are carrying/transporting personal firearms (not actually shooting the firearm) the firearm is to remain unloaded, and the action is to remain open if possible and **MUST** be transported in a gun case or sleeve.
- Always keep your finger out of the trigger guard area until your firearm is ready to be shot.
- If you or another shooter needs assistance, ask a junior leader, range leader or adult volunteer for assistance
- No eating or drinking while on the practice line
- Wash your hands with cold soap and water after handling ammunition.
- Any use of a cell phone while on the firing line is prohibited.
  - It is allowed for the certified range leader to keep a cell phone on his/her person for emergency purposes.

**The 4-H Shooting Sports program has a great safety record, but as with any shooting sports activity there are inherent dangers that require stringent safety practices to be followed. There will be no tolerance of any unsafe practices, actions or behaviors by youth members or adults during 4-H activities.**

**All members, including youth, adult leaders and volunteers have the responsibility to always keep the range safe.**

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

4-H Shooting Sports is a Privilege not a right. Youth may be removed from the shooting line for unsafe activities or safety violations and may not return to the shooting line until cleared. Certified Range Leaders have the right to remove any member that violates safety protocol from the practice line, range or building.

Depending on the severity of the offense, the 4-H club Leaders(s) may also decide to meet with the member and his/her parent/guardian to discuss the situation and importance that the member comply with expectations and policies. Violation of any Code of Conduct or Safety Rules may result in an immediate dismissal from the club meeting, practice, competition, and / or permanent dismissal from the Washington County Shooting Sports program.

## **EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES**

The club has a limited number of BB guns, air rifles and safety equipment available. All shooters are welcome to use club equipment as it is available. Club members may bring their own equipment as long as it meets the requirement of the program.

If you wish to bring your own firearm the following rules apply:

- Firearms need to be brought in a case. Keep your firearms cased until presented at the range.
- ALL personal firearms will be safety-checked by a coach or Certified Range Leader each time prior to allowing use on the range.
- Rimfire and shotgun projects will have specific equipment requirements that will be outlined in classroom meetings.

Any Certified Range Leader has the right to examine any item of a shooter's equipment including bb gun, air rifles, shotguns, ammunition, and other equipment to ensure proper accordance with required specifications.

## **COMPETITIONS**

- Each competition may have its own rules that youth will be responsible to know and obey.
- There are competitions in other counties during the year in most of the disciplines. Washington County 4-H Shooting Club will not participate in outside events. The club may change this policy in the future as the club progresses.
- Parents are encouraged to drive their own children and attend meetings/events. If parents are not able to drive and attend, reach out to your discipline leader as rides are sometimes available.
- Competition can teach many valuable lessons, however, competitive shooting at the local, district, state or even national level is NOT the primary goal of Washington County Shooting Sports programs. Participation in competitive events is optional and not required of members. 4-H Shooting Sports competition serves as an evaluation of how well 4-H youth have developed their skills. It is important to keep in mind the purpose and focus of our 4-H Shooting Sports program - POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT.

### **Washington County Fair**

- There are both shooting and static projects that youth can compete in at fair, refer to the annual fair book for specifics on static projects.
- All members who wish to participate in the Washington County Fair live-fire competitions MUST:
  - Be a member of the Washington County 4-H Shooting Sports Club
  - Sign up for disciplines(s) within 4H online
  - Register pre-fair entries to shoot at the Washington County Fair by date assigned by the Extension Office.
  - \*\*\*Youth must be enrolled in specific shooting sports disciplines to participate. Exhibitors may only enter in the department/class that corresponds with the 4-H projects they are enrolled in. Refer to the Fair book for the most recent guidelines.
    - Each shooter is required to attend 2 practices per discipline and be current on their 3-year certification to be allowed to shoot at fair.
  - Exhibitor information can be found on the Washington County Fair Website.

No early shoots will be held. Participants wishing to take part in the Washington County Fair Shoot must do so on the date scheduled for each discipline, no exceptions.

