

# Staffing/Counseling Protocols and Guidelines

1. The safety and well being of **all** delegates is the primary concern of counselors/staff. The program must be designed and implemented keeping this principle in mind. Programs should also be developmental in nature and fun for the delegates.
2. Supervision requirements of member activities beyond the club level can be found in the [\*Alberta 4-H Policy #12.00 – Supervision of 4-H Member Activities\*](#). Staff/Delegate ratios need to be applied to all activities during the program (with the exception of emergencies or special situations). There should be a difference of at least two years between the ages of counselors/senior staff and the delegates (exception with junior staff).
3. All program rules apply to staff, counselors and delegates at the program. All are referred to as program participants in the remainder of this document. In the case of a breach of rules by a delegate or volunteer counselor/staff, the Program Director must be informed of the situation and will decide on the proper course of action. In the case a breach of rules by the paid program staff or Program Director, the immediate supervisor of that individual must be contacted to handle the situation.
4. Rules must be clearly stated to all program participants at the beginning of a program. With the exception of inappropriate behaviour, the rules serve as the first and only warning to the program participants. A breach of these rules will result in the individual being removed from the program. In the case of inappropriate behaviour:
  - 1) A clear warning must be given to the individual by the counselor/staff present at the incident (if the incident is of an extreme nature, the participant must be taken immediately to the Program Director).
  - 2) If the behaviour continues, the individual must be removed from the situation and taken to the Program Director for an official warning. This process must involve the Program Director and another counselor/staff and must be done in confidence with the individual. The warning needs to be documented immediately.
  - 3) If the inappropriate behaviour continues, the individual will be sent home from the program (documentation required).
5. Where facilities permit, a phone should be made available for all program participants. The phone is available to participants at his or her cost. In the case of delegate phone usage, the Program Director should be consulted before use.
6. All program participants have the opportunity to opt out of games or activities if they are uncomfortable. Counselors/staff must respect their decision, but must also state that by opting out of the activity, the individual must still remain with the group and must not cause any disruption to the activity. Program participants must be promoted to participate in all activities at the program.
7. When teaching a large group game/session there must be at least one experienced counselor/staff present and one other counselor/staff present at the activity. All available counselors/staff should be present at the activity.
8. Meal games and activities (ie. songs, meal themes, etc.) must remain fun. If an individual is uncomfortable in doing a mealtime activity, a counselor must join them in the activity. If the individual continues to be uncomfortable, the he or she may be excused from participation in the activity. If the meal activity is causing a disruption or is making many program participants uncomfortable, the activity must be stopped immediately.
9. When playing games that involve the majority of the group closing their eyes, there must be at least two staff/counselors present. At least one staff must act as an observer (must not participate) to ensure welfare of program participants.
10. For evening supervision there must always be two counselors/staff. The counselors/staff must remain together as they perform supervision. Lights out and quiet means that the program participants in the rooms are not disturbing or causing other participants the loss of sleep.

**Delegate Information**

Last name	First name	Last name	First name
Mailing address		Mailing address	
Town or City	Phone number	Town or City	Phone number

**Incident Information**

Program event		Date of incident	
Program location		Time of incident	a.m. <input type="checkbox"/> p.m. <input type="checkbox"/>
Program director	Location of incident		
Type of incident			
Briefly describe the incident.			
Explain what action staff and, or volunteers took.			

Was a parent or guardian notified? No  Yes

Was the provincial or regional specialist notified? No  Yes

If yes, when?
By whom?

If yes, when?
By whom?

Was any other authority notified? No  Yes

Example: RCMP, AADAC, Social Services and so on.

Was the delegate sent home? No  Yes

If yes, who was contacted?
By whom?
When were the parent (s) or guardian (s) notified?

If yes, by whom?	
Date	
Time	a.m. <input type="checkbox"/> p.m. <input type="checkbox"/>

Witness name
Address

Witness name
Address

Follow-up action by program staff.
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Personal information on this form is used for administration of the 4-H program under the authority of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Information provided is protected under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. If you need more information, contact the provincial 4-H office at (780) 422-4444.

Distribution: Original - 4-H and Agriculture Education Branch Head  
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