



Guidance for Virtual 4-H Meetings

*Jeremy Elliott-Engel, Peter Hooper, Josh Farella, Caroline Werkhoven, Dominic Rodriguez,
Joshua Moore, Ashley Parra*

Virtual 4-H meetings can help keep 4-H members connected and on track with their 4-H projects. A virtual 4-H meeting may feel different than in-person programming. As with in-person programming, there are best practices for keeping youth safe. This guidance is prepared to help you reduce potential risks for virtual meetings which have their own unique considerations.

It is important to note that all platforms on the internet should be considered public. We would all recognize the county fair as a public environment, and we would supervise our child in that environment. The internet is public, and engagement of youth, families, and volunteers should be treated as if you were interacting in public.

Remember, **do not** have one-on-one contact with children in virtual environments. There must be two or more adults present during activities where children are participating (aka rule of three).

The following are expectations for holding a virtual 4-H club or project meeting

- Only UA 4-H authorized adult volunteers (e.g. DCC) may host official virtual or conference call 4-H meetings.
- Ensure a minimum of two adults are in place for virtual or conference calls, and that they are present on the virtual platform prior to the start of the meeting.
- Virtual engagement ratios require no-less than two adults in a virtual meeting, and youth should be supervised at home by their parent or guardian.
- Guest Speakers (any non-guardian or UA authorized adult) attending the virtual meeting should be

registered at <https://arizonace.quickbase.com/db/bpxzg2drx?a=nwr>.

- If a youth directly contacts an adult, a second adult should be included in all responses.
- Members should identify themselves with their first name only.
- Meeting admin should change the label of any attendees who dial in to reflect the attendee's name rather than their phone number, which can be compromised.
- Use only "group chat" and turn off "private chat" in any virtual meeting.
- Turn off "screen sharing" for participants.
- Do not record the meeting.

Virtual Platforms

There are many virtual platforms that you can use for engagement (e.g. Facebook/Instagram Live, Google Meet/Hangouts, Zoom). Arizona 4-H authorized adults may use nearly any platform to share information (doing a Facebook Live, sharing on an Instagram Story, etc.); however, **direct** contact with youth via video calls should only occur via Zoom, a UA approved platform.

Using Zoom

Zoom is the virtual meeting program of the University of Arizona. Official 4-H meetings must be hosted in Zoom. Zoom meetings should have the waiting room feature enabled. The waiting room empowers the meeting host to allow only official individuals into the meeting.

- Password protection is also an appropriate strategy to ensure attendance is limited to 4-H members, families, and guests.
- Ensure that invitations for meetings intended for a limited audience are shared in such a way as to limit attendance (email, text, internal group messaging program). Remember that when you share links to virtual meetings through social media, anyone who has access to the link will have access to the meeting.
- The meeting host should always add another adult as a co-host when using Zoom. The role of the co-host can be used to help manage the chat boxes, monitor the “Waiting Room,” and manage the “Mute” functions. Additionally, adding a co-host is essential to allow for connectivity in case of internet issues with the main host.
- You will log in to Zoom using your UA ID. <https://arizona.zoom.us/>

Tips for Success

During your virtual 4-H meeting, you will want to consider the following to ensure a positive and safe experience for all in attendance.

- Set ground rules for the virtual meeting and share them with all participants at the start of every meeting.
- Mute everyone upon entering to ensure audio quality.
- Please keep track of virtual or conference call 4-H meetings and participation for your county records.
- The secretary or assigned person should take minutes.

Types of Meetings

Virtual meetings can occur at the club, county, or state level. If you are conducting a meeting that is not dealing with club-specific content, please talk to your county-based 4-H youth development professional about the possibility of making it a county-wide or even statewide opportunity. By leveraging the tools at our disposal, we can offer more high-quality positive youth development programming to a broader audience.

Social Media: An Engagement Strategy

Social media is a great strategy for youth engagement, and it poses a unique challenge for transparency. Social media messaging between 4-H members and authorized adults should be treated like communication in-person. If you wouldn't say it in person, face-to-face, and with witnesses, you should not communicate these thoughts via social media where there can be a feeling of anonymity. The adult and youth code of conduct apply to all social media content and messages that transpire between 4-H members and adults affiliated with the 4-H program. Communications on social media must comply to the rule of three by group messaging or messaging parents along with youth.

Accessibility

Keep in mind that not all 4-H members have access to technology to participate in virtual 4-H meetings or conference calls. Since this is the case, virtual or conference call 4-H meetings cannot be mandatory and will not count against attendance policies. Also 4-H members should attend virtual or conference call 4-H meetings independently (or with members of their household) and should not congregate with others for the virtual meeting.

If you need something that is compliant for transcription per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), your county-based 4-H youth development professional can set up the meeting and help you with your ADA needs.

Work with your county-based 4-H youth development professional on options for virtual or conference call 4-H meetings or when you have any questions

Adapted from Rice, J. (2020, March 24). Pennsylvania State Volunteer Update. Pennsylvania State University.

Adapted from Youth at University of Washington (2020). Recommendations for virtual youth programming. University of Washington



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Cooperative Extension

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85721

AUTHOR

JEREMY ELLIOTT-ENGEL

Associate Director, Arizona Cooperative Extension

PETER HOOPER

Associate Area Agent, 4-H

JOSH FARELLA

Assistant in Extension, 4-H Youth Development

CAROLINE WERKHOVEN

Program Coordinator, 4-H Youth Development

DOMINIC RODRIGUEZ

Chief Operations Officer, Arizona Cooperative Extension

JOSHUA MOORE

Assistant Agent, 4-H

ASHLEY PARRA

Program Coordinator, Sr.

CONTACT

ASHLEY PARRA

ashparra97@arizona.edu

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