

Harris County 4-H Ambassador Program



Developing leaders for
the club,
the community,
the country,
& the world...

Information Handbook for 2009 Applicants

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Introduction

For a very long time 4-H professionals have recognized that capable, older 4-H members are the program's best spokespersons. Nothing sells the 4-H program better than 4-H members doing excellent 4-H work where the public & key people can see, hear & examine what 4-Hers are doing.

The 4-H Ambassador Program formalizes this process. It helps 4-Hers improve their ability to tell the 4-H story & it helps bring 4-H members & key audiences together.

The 4-H Ambassador Program is emphasizing, interpreting or telling the real 4-H story because:

- Families want to know if 4-H really can help their children.
- Key leaders & elected officials want to see positive youth development taking place.
- Public funds are limited – 4-H must show it is effective in youth development.
- And, because 4-H is effective, we do have a youth development story to tell.
- And, 4-H Ambassadors can tell it best.

Purpose of the Ambassador Program

The Texas 4-H Ambassador Program was started to project a clear & accurate image of the Texas 4-H Youth Development Program. More specifically, the purpose of a 4-H Ambassador program is to:

- Tell & show key audiences what the 4-H Youth Development Program is & who it impacts.
- Then these audiences will understand the impact 4-H is having in the lives of young people & how the 4-H Program is addressing key youth issues in the community & state.

Secondary purposes of the program are to:

- Develop leadership & communication skills among 4-H'ers selected to be Ambassadors.
- It also emphasizes the importance of good character.
- Families & youth become more aware of 4-H & the benefits it offers.
- Elected officials become informed about & involved in the 4-H program.
- Current & potential donors become informed about 4-H & have the opportunity to support program efforts of interest to them.
- The 4-H Ambassador team improves their presentation & public relations skills.
- The 4-H image among selected audiences is changed or improved through program efforts such as community service & increased exposure in mass media.
- New 4-H members & families understand the 4-H program, become aware of 4-H opportunities & develop personal 4-H goals.

Eligibility Requirements for Ambassadors

The role of a Harris County 4-H Ambassador is quite demanding & requires older 4-H boys & girls who are dedicated, mature, dependable, & very interested in the purposes of the Ambassador Program. The number of 4-Hers selected each year to serve as Ambassadors is determined by the Ambassador Advisory Committee & the County Extension Agent who supervises the Ambassador Program. The number is based upon need, program demands, yearly goals for the Ambassadors, & the number of eligible applicants.

The following eligibility requirements must be met by applicants:

1. Must have completed at least 2 years in 4-H including the current year.
2. Must have completed a minimum of three 4-H projects.
3. Must have participated at the county &/or district level in a minimum of 6 activities covering 3 different types of events. These events are: method demonstration/4-H presentation, 4-H contest, 4-H project exhibit or workshop, 4-H camp, exhibiting at county fair, 4-H leadership lab, citizenship, public relations (speech, poster display, radio, newspaper article).
4. Must have served as a 4-H officer or committee member at the club or county level.
5. Must have served as a junior or teen leader in an activity or project with adult leader supervision.
6. Must have participated in at least 1 community service activity as an individual, as a group member, or in a club type project.
7. Must be at least 14 years of age & no older than 18 years of age by the due date of the application.
8. Must be academically eligible (passing all classes).
9. Must be in good standing as a 4-H member.
10. Must submit a completed Ambassador Application & go through an individual interview with a panel of selected judges or on video tape.
11. Must agree to the "Obligations & Expected Involvement & Activities" as stated in this source book.
12. Must apply each year to become a Harris County 4-H Ambassador; applications are due to the Harris County 4-H Office by **June 1, 2009**.

Eligibility Requirements for Ambassadors in Training

The role of a Harris County 4-H Ambassador in Training is the same as that of Ambassadors, but is designed for youth who do not have the years of experience yet.

The following eligibility requirements must be met by applicants:

1. Must be enrolled in a 4-H club.
2. Must complete a minimum of three 4-H projects in the current 4-H year.
3. Must participate at the county &/or district level in a minimum of 6 activities covering 3 different types of events in the current 4-H year. These events are: method demonstration/4-H presentation, 4-H contest, 4-H project exhibit or workshop, 4-H camp, exhibiting at county fair, 4-H leadership lab, citizenship, public relations (speech, poster display, radio, newspaper article).
4. Must serve as a junior or teen leader in an activity or project with adult leader supervision.
5. Must participate in at least 1 community service activity as an individual, as a group member, or in a club type project.
6. Must be at least 14 years of age & no older than 18 years of age by the due date of the application.
7. Must be academically eligible (passing all classes).
8. Must be in good standing as a 4-H member.
9. Must submit a completed Ambassador in Training Application & go through an individual interview with a panel of selected judges or on video tape.
10. Must agree to the "Obligations & Expected Involvement & Activities" as stated in this source book.
11. Must apply each year to become a Harris County 4-H Ambassador; applications are due to the Harris County 4-H Office by **June 1, 2009**.

Obligations & Expected Involvement & Activities

OBLIGATIONS

Every Harris County 4-H Ambassador & Ambassador in Training has the following obligations & must agree to fulfill the obligations to their best ability. These obligations are:

- To work with the 4-H Ambassador advisors & other 4-H Ambassadors as a team member
- To contact their County Commissioner & State Representative between September 1 & June 1, either by mail, phone or personal visit
- To attend the monthly Ambassador meeting, usually held the third Wednesday of the month at 7 PM at the Extension office
- To maintain a positive attitude & represent the Harris County 4-H Program throughout the year as requested by the County Extension Agent
- To write thank you notes to all individuals as requested
- To never use alcohol, drugs or tobacco products during the year as a Harris County 4-H Ambassador
- To maintain scholastic eligibility (passing all classes)
- To meet all commitments for which the Ambassador volunteers & to complete those commitments with excellence

EXPECTED INVOLVEMENT & ACTIVITIES

All 4-H Ambassadors are required to participate in & to complete certain activities & to be involved in a wide variety of programs, training, civic group events, 4-H promotional activities, community service & citizenship opportunities. Ambassadors are expected to agree to fulfill these commitments & to sign a "contract" showing they agree to do so. The expected involvement & activities are:

- Prepare a speech & present it to 2 different audiences (not 4-H) by May 15, 2010.
- Contact 2-3 different 4-H clubs & attend one of their 4-H club functions (meeting, banquet, etc.) & speak to them regarding the Harris County 4-H Ambassador Program by May 15, 2010.
- Complete 2 different 4-H projects by May 15, 2010; 1 of these projects must be a citizenship/leadership project.
- Complete 3 special programs with other 4-H Ambassadors in a leadership role (ex: hosting a county youth leadership program or training).
- Participate in all of the required activities & training sessions which include:

August	County Officer Training	All Ambassadors
September	Harris County 4-H Awards Program	All Ambassadors
October	National 4-H Week Special Event (1 day)	All Ambassadors
December	Community Service Project	All Ambassadors
March	Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo	All Ambassadors
Monthly	Ambassador Meeting	All Ambassadors

Note: Months listed above are approximate & may change as planning is completed.

AMBASSADOR UNIFORM

All 4-H Ambassadors are required to wear the approved Ambassador uniform. The reasons for this are that our Ambassadors represent the best of 4-H to a wide variety of people & to important key people, elected officials & decision-makers in Harris County. Often they are requested to present speeches to groups in other counties. Our Ambassadors are also frequently in the “public eye” & giving presentations to civic & business groups where appearance is important.

There is a cost to the Ambassador for the uniform. The green blazer is approximately \$85.00 & must be special ordered through our office. Uniform scholarships are available if needed. The uniform consists of:

Formal Uniform:

Gentlemen

Ambassador blazer & crest
White dress shirt
Black dress pants
Black tie
Black dress shoes or boots
Black socks

Ladies

Ambassador blazer & crest
White shirt (as selected by group)
Black skirt (length selected by group)

Black shoes (no open toe shoes)
Skin-tone hose

NOTE – This formal uniform will always be worn when appearing before elected officials or other key people or when making important presentations to other influential audiences.

Less Formal:

No blazer
Monogrammed polo shirt
Dress khakis, light tan*
Black jeans (clean, not torn)
Black shoes or boots

No blazer
Monogrammed polo shirt
Dress khakis, light tan*
Black jeans (clean, not torn)
Black shoes or boots (closed toe & heel)

NOTE – This less formal uniform is never worn when appearing before elected officials or other key people. It can be worn when doing 4-H club programs or at events that require climbing. Selection of the shirt & pants to wear will be done during the Ambassador Meeting prior to an event or activity.

Casual Uniform for All Ambassadors:

Monogrammed polo shirt with jeans or walking shorts with approval
Athletic shoes

Ambassador Crest:

All ambassadors wear the crest on the left pocket of the green blazer. This is a special ordered crest that was custom-designed just for the Harris County 4-H Ambassadors. It is to be worn with pride. Crests are purchased for the Ambassadors.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Ambassadors are highly motivated, interested, mature & dependable individuals. Problems requiring disciplinary actions rarely occur. In an effort to keep the Harris County 4-H Ambassador Program as one of excellence, disciplinary actions have been developed.

If any Ambassador fails to comply with the "Obligations & Expected Involvement & Activities" section of the application, disregards the uniform requirements, fails to fulfill responsibilities, or represents the Ambassador Program in an unacceptable manner, then the Ambassador will have an opportunity to explain their actions to the County Extension Agent who supervises the Ambassador Program. A written summary of the problem will be made by the Extension agent & kept on file. Immediate termination from the Harris County 4-H Ambassador Program could result, depending on the nature of the violation.

All Ambassadors will receive 1 warning when they do not fulfill an obligation or they miss an event for which they volunteer. If this occurs a second time, the Ambassador will meet with the County Extension Agent to review the situation & their service as an Ambassador. The result may be probation or termination. If an Ambassador is dismissed, he/she will not be able to re-apply for the Ambassador Program for a period of one year.

HARRIS COUNTY 4-H **AMBASSADOR** APPLICATION

Due to 4-H Office by June 1, 2009

Name of 4-H Member:

(First)

(Middle)

(Last)

Address:

(Street or Route)

(City)

(Zip)

Age as June 1, 2009: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Club: _____ Years in 4-H: _____

Did you do a 4-H record book in 2008? _____ Program area? _____

Information for completing the sections below: The requirements which you will record below may have been fulfilled throughout your 4-H career, NOT just during the current year.

4-H PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

4-H Projects Completed, including appropriate records submitted (minimum of 3):

1)	4)
2)	5)
3)	6)

4-H Activities Completed (total of 6 or more activities; at least 3 areas of participation shown below):

A. Method Demonstration, Illustrated Talk, Share The Fun Presentation, or Public Speaking at the County Level

1) Title: _____ Year: _____

2) Title: _____ Year: _____

3) Title: _____ Year: _____

B. 4-H Contest at the County Level

1) _____ Year: _____

2) _____ Year: _____

3) _____ Year: _____

C. 4-H Project Exhibit or County Fair Entry

1) _____ Year: _____

2) _____ Year: _____

3) _____ Year: _____

D. 4-H Camps

1) _____ Year: _____

2) _____ Year: _____

3) _____ Year: _____

E. County Leadership Lab/Officer Training or District 4-H Leadership Lab

1) _____ Year: _____

2) _____ Year: _____

3) _____ Year: _____

F. Citizenship Activities (Examples: advocating for youth issues with elected officials, City Beautification Week, local proclamation for 4-H Week, assist with cultural festival, observe Flag Day)

1) _____ Year: _____

2) _____ Year: _____

3) _____ Year: _____

G. Public Relations Efforts (Examples: speeches, poster displays, radio, newspaper articles, project shows, club exhibits, television, special projects)

1) _____ Year: _____

2) _____ Year: _____

3) _____ Year: _____

H. Other Activities or Efforts (Examples: fund raising, state or national Congress, etc.)

1) _____ Year: _____

2) _____ Year: _____

3) _____ Year: _____

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

During their 4-H years, the 4-H member must have exhibited leadership skills in both of the following areas:

A. 4-H club officer or committee member at the club or county level

Please list:

B. 4-H junior or teen leader in any activity or project with adult leader supervision

Please explain:

COMMUNITY SERVICE

The 4-H'er must have participated in one or more community service activities or projects either as an individual, as a group member, or in a club type project. Please complete the appropriate sections.

A. Individual: _____

B. Group Member: _____

C. Club Type Project: _____

“My signature indicates that I have carefully read, understand, & agree to comply with the requirements, & that I will to my best ability fulfill the obligations as a Harris County 4-H ambassador.”

(4-H Member Signature)

(Date)

“As the parent/guardian of the 4-H member, I have carefully read and understand the requirements & that I agree to fully support my child in their commitment as a Harris County 4-H ambassador.”

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

(Date)

“As the 4-H club manager/leader of the 4-H member, I have carefully reviewed this application & verify that the information is accurate, and that I will provide guidance and encouragement as a volunteer leader to this 4-Her while he/she is serving as an ambassador.”

(4-H Manager/Leader Signature)

(Date)

Please submit this application form with the “Ambassador Interview Request” form.

HARRIS COUNTY 4-H **AMBASSADOR IN TRAINING APPLICATION**
Due to 4-H Office by June 1, 2009

Name of 4-H Member:

(First) (Middle) (Last)

Address:

(Street or Route) (City) (Zip)

Age as June 1, 2009: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Club: _____ Years in 4-H: _____

What projects are you involved in &/or have an interest in?

What types of leadership positions have you held before?

Why do you want to be an Ambassador?

What qualities do you possess that would make you a good Ambassador?

“My signature indicates that I have carefully read, understand, & agree to comply with the requirements, & that I will to my best ability fulfill the obligations as a Harris County 4-H ambassador.”

(4-H Member Signature)

(Date)

“As the parent/guardian of the 4-H member, I have carefully read and understand the requirements & that I agree to fully support my child in their commitment as a Harris County 4-H ambassador.”

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

(Date)

“As the 4-H club manager/leader of the 4-H member, I have carefully reviewed this application & verify that the information is accurate, and that I will provide guidance and encouragement as a volunteer leader to this 4-Her while he/she is serving as an ambassador.”

(4-H Manager/Leader Signature)

(Date)

Please submit this application form with the “Ambassador Interview Request” form.

HARRIS COUNTY 4-H AMBASSADOR INTERVIEW REQUEST

Due to 4-H Office by June 1, 2009

Name: _____

Phone #: _____ 4-H Club: _____

Please indicate below your preference for the 4-H Ambassador Interview and sign at the bottom of the form.

_____ Yes, I do want a personal interview with the judges at the Harris County Extension Office on July 13, 2009.

_____ No, I am not available for a personal interview, but do request a videotaped interview to be conducted by an Extension agent.

I am available for the videotaped interview on any of the dates and times as listed below:

1st Choice - Date: _____ Times: _____

2nd Choice - Date: _____ Times: _____

3rd Choice - Date: _____ Times: _____

"I understand that a personal interview can be more beneficial to my interview and to my opportunity to express myself, my ideas, and my 4-H accomplishments. If I have chosen a videotaped interview as indicated above, I understand that there are limitations to this type of interview, and I accept this method of interview whatever those limitations. I also accept the decision of the judges."

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: _____

HARRIS COUNTY 4-H AMBASSADOR SCORE CARD

NAME: _____

PERSONAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT (35 points)

SCORE

☆ Different knowledge and skills learned through 4-H projects and activities

☆ Committees worked with and served on

☆ Offices held (elected and/or appointed) _____

SCOPE OF PARTICIPATION (30 points)

☆ Project variety

☆ Participation in club, county, district events and contests

☆ Method demonstrations, talks, exhibits, camps, labs

☆ Citizenship and public relations activities _____

LEADERSHIP SKILLS (15 points)

☆ Participation as officer or committee member at club and county levels

☆ 4-H junior or teen leadership or helping others in the club or at county level

☆ Leadership potential with training and opportunities provided _____

COMMUNITY SERVICE (10 points)

☆ Individual community service activities

☆ Participation in club and/or county level community service activities _____

INTERVIEW (10 points)

☆ Ability to communicate; to express thoughts, ideas and opinions

☆ Eye contact and projection of self

☆ Appropriate attire for interview _____

TOTAL SCORE _____

COMMENTS: _____

JUDGE'S SIGNATURES:
