

## 4-H Membership Across County Lines

### Why request 4-H membership in another county?

Ohio youth are expected to affiliate with the 4-H program in their county of residence. OSU Extension programs are typically supported at the local level by taxes, and so it makes good sense that a child would participate in the county program into which their parents or guardians are supporting with taxes. However, there can be circumstances in which membership in a county other than where they live may be a practical and reasonable request.

Common situations or conditions **found acceptable** for asking such a transfer of membership include the following:

- The school district in which the child attends is located across two counties. The child's school friends may therefore be members in a county other than where the child resides.
- The county of residence does not offer the 4-H program being sought, typically shooting sports or special interests program. In those cases, a youth can request membership across county line to participate in a program not available in the county of residence.
- The parents of the child are no longer married to each other and live in two different counties. The request for membership in the county in which the 4-H project work will be completed is reasonable.
- The request is being made before each county's membership enrollment deadline, and the youth in question is a member in good standing.

Reasons that are **not appropriate** for granting a transfer of membership include:

- The Junior Fair Livestock auction prices are typically higher in the other county
- The Parents and/or grandparents of the 4-H member were members of the club in the other county, and so it is hoped the youth can have membership in the same family legacy.
- The camp or county fair schedule in the other county fits the family's vacation plans better.
- The county fair schedule in the other county fits better with the youth's school schedule.
- If animal projects are involved, the animal will be housed on someone else's property in the other county. If this is in fact the case, the 4-H member is encouraged to select a different project entirely.
- The 4-H membership has been banned or suspended for rule infraction in the county of their membership. Suspended membership is the suspension of Ohio 4-H membership, and thus the suspended member is not eligible to transfer membership to another county to avoid enforcement of consequences for rules infractions.

### How to request Cross County Line Membership:

Parents seeking 4-H membership for their child in a county in which they do not reside, should complete the appropriate request form (insert the URL where this is found), and submit it to the County Extension 4-H Professional in the County of Request. That professional will contact the professional in the county of residence, discuss, and decide. Allow 30 days for the communications and decisions to be made and for the parents to receive notification.



The decision to allow or deny Cross County Line Membership will be made by the county 4-H professionals in the County of Request and the County of Residence, and will be fully supported by the State 4-H Office.

Once granted, the Cross County Line Membership is typically expected to be continuous in that county. In most counties, families will not be required to request continued Cross County Line Membership each year. However, the 4-H professional in the county maintains the right to request annual renewal.