

Yellowstone County 4-H Grievance Policy

The County Extension Agent and/or current county committees will make rule(s) interpretation and decisions.

When an individual has given verbal notification of grievance of a rule or policy infraction and the concern is not satisfied, a written request is needed to file a grievance.

Submission of Statement of Grievance:

The party(s) grieving the process or decision shall file a formal written statement of grievance and complete the Grievance/Appeal form.

1. During the Montana Fair, grievances must be filed within 24 hours (1 day) of the incident.
2. The statements must be filed no more than 3 days after the incident if not during fair. A \$50.00 cash or check must accompany the grievance. A check must be made out to the Yellowstone County 4-H Council. If cash is presented a request for receipt should be made. The fee will be returned to the member or parent/guardian if the grievance/protest of the member or parent/guardian is upheld. If the grievance is not upheld in the member, parent/guardian or leaders favor the fee will be forwarded to the 4-H Council and be earmarked for awards.
3. In extreme circumstances, a party may submit a written petition to have the committee consider a grievance after the 3-day deadline. This party must explain why it was not possible to file within the deadline and supply support documentation. The committee must agree unanimously that the grievance should be considered.

The statement shall contain the following information at a minimum:

1. The date of the incident.
2. The name(s) of the people filing the grievance.
3. A complete statement describing the incident including all facts upon which the complaint is based.
4. Any rules, regulations, policies and/or procedures which have been violated, if any.
5. List the names and addresses (preferably with phone numbers) of people who have been involved in the incident and their role in it.
6. A proposed resolution or the result they would recommend.
7. Signatures of those submitting the grievance.

What May Not Be Grieved:

The grievance committee may be convened for the following situations:

- Alleged wrongdoing
- Rule Violations

The grievance committee **WILL NOT** be convened for the following situations:

- Decisions made by judges, which are final.
- Issues related to deadlines for membership enrollments, livestock identification, and/or county fair deadlines, due process will be provided by Extension staff.
- For a rule consideration until it has been voted on by the appropriate committee before.

The grievance should be turned into the Extension Office. The county agent will convene the meeting and notify everyone involved with the date, time and location. The member and a parent/guardian or leader filing the grievance must be present at the hearing to express their concerns. If the procedure

de-escalates to include inappropriate behaviors (i.e.: foul language, improper gestures, threats, etc. as determined by the majority of the grievance committee) the grievance will be immediately dismissed resulting in an elimination of the grievers' rights and loss of the \$50.00 fee.

The committee will determine the results and outcomes of the grievance on the rule or policy infraction and notify in writing or verbally all parties involved within 15 business days of the written grievance. The decision is determined by the majority of the votes cast. Votes will not be publicized. All committee members present must vote, (unless excused for a direct conflict, and will not be included in the vote.) The vote will be a secret ballot. Decisions will be made by the majority of those in attendance.

Written minutes and tape recordings must be kept at the Extension Office for a minimum of one year. A secretary will be included in the meeting to take notes.

If a member of the grievance committee files a grievance/protest they must withdraw from the committee during the process. If wording or technical terms are involved a professional in the field may be present to provide information. The people directly involved in the first decision(s) will attend the grievance committee meeting(s) to provide background information. **The club Organizational Leader of the person filing the grievance will be notified and is strongly encouraged to attend the Grievance Committee Meeting.**

Youth may apply to be on the grievance committee. Up to three youth may be selected based on an application and interview. If positions aren't filled Yellowstone County Ambassadors or Jr. Leaders may serve as the youth representatives.

Steps to file a grievance

Step 1

When a formal Dept. A (Livestock) grievance is filed; voting members of the grievance committee will be a minimum of 5 people that may include members of the following: Superintendent(s), Division Chairmen, Youth (Jr. Chair/Ambassador/Teen Leader/Club Officer), Officer of affected committee (Livestock, Sale/ Sm. Animal), Officer of Council. Committee must be an odd number to avoid a tie vote. Decisions will be made by the majority of those in attendance. Votes will be secret ballot.

All Dept. N issues that arise in the grievance process must be voted on by the Dept. N Superintendent(s), President and Vice President of Council and county youth representatives (Up to 3). Votes will be by secret ballot. The mediator is the County Extension Agent.

Step 2

If a member, or family member parent/guardian or leader is not satisfied with the decision of the committee, they may request a hearing with the Council Committee. The process and procedure must follow the same course as it did in the original grievance but be directed to the Council Committee. Members will include 2 officers of the Council, two senior members (preferably in the project area), and a person outside of 4-H. The mediator is the County Extension Agent. All committee members must vote, (unless excused for a direct conflict, and will not be included in the vote). The vote will be a secret ballot. Decisions will be made by the majority of those in attendance.

The youth involved in the grievance should stay to answer questions and then may be excused from the room during the discussion.

Step 3

Montana State 4-H Grievance Procedure

The party(s) grieving the process or decision shall file a statement of grievance.

The statement shall contain the following information at a minimum:

1. The date of the incident.
2. The name(s) of the people filing the grievance.
3. A complete statement describing the incident including all facts upon which the complaint is based.
4. Any rules, regulations, policies and/or procedures which have been violated, if any.
5. List the names and addresses (preferably with phone numbers) of people who have been involved in the incident and their role in it.
6. Signatures of those submitting the grievance.

Grievance Committee

A committee of 3-5 people will be appointed by the State 4-H Office to:

- 1) Narrow and define the issues related to the incident
- 2) Gather information related to the incident which may include:
 - a) Identifying and obtaining input from people
 - b) Reviewing documents
 - c) Other processes deemed necessary by the committee
- 3) Prepare recommendations for the resolution of the grievance. The recommendations will be non-binding and no testimony used by the grievance process may be used for any other purposes.

The grievance statement should be filed with:

Todd Kenser, Director
4-H Center for Youth Development
Taylor Hall, MSU
Bozeman, MT 59717

Revised 1/16