

FLORIDA 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS PROGRAM

State Plan

Revised November 2005

Introduction: 4-H Shooting Sports Program

The 4-H Shooting Sports Program should be viewed as a vehicle for achieving youth development... the mission of Extension 4-H youth programs. The 4-H Shooting Sports Program teaches young people the safe and responsible use of firearms, principles of archery and hunting basics. Lifelong skill development is one of the main benefits of involvement in the 4-H Shooting Sports Program and applies to both youth and adults involved in the program. Specifically the 4-H Shooting Sports Program is designed to....

- Provide youth proper training in the use of firearms, archery equipment and other areas of the shooting sports.
- Provide thorough instruction in shooting sports safety.
- Develop life skills such as self-confidence, personal discipline, responsibility and sportsmanship.
- Create an appreciation and understanding of natural resources and their wise use.
- Provide volunteer instructors safe and proper instructional techniques.
- Show volunteer leaders how to plan and manage 4-H Shooting Sports Clubs.

The 4-H Shooting Sports Program is a National program with guidelines provided by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee. This committee is made up of Extension professionals, industry representatives, volunteers and others. The committee plans, organizes and conducts National and regional training programs to certify Level II Instructors (see definition below) in order that they might conduct shooting sports training programs. These Level II instructors are discipline certified to provide instruction to Level I instructors within their respective states.

LEVEL I Instructor - Participants who successfully complete a state training conducted by a Level II instructor. Level I Instructors are discipline certified to work directly with youth.

LEVEL II Instructor - Participants who successfully complete a National or Regional training conducted by the National Shooting Sports Committee. Level II Instructors are discipline certified to provide Level I instruction.

The Florida 4-H Shooting Sports Program follows the National 4-H Shooting Sports Program guidelines via the Florida State Shooting Sports Committee. The Florida State Shooting Sports Committee is comprised of Level II Instructors, Extension Specialists, County Faculty and volunteers. This group is responsible for establishing guidelines specific to Florida, planning events, organizing and conducting Level I trainings and developing educational recourses. The State Shooting Sports Committee will also serve as an approval mechanism for any and all events, trainings or resource development within the program. The 4-H Shooting Sports Program is an official 4-H program open to any individuals that qualify under current age policies (see below).

Shooting Sports Training Guidelines

- All State 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor Trainings (Level I) must be conducted by individuals who are Level II certified by National 4-H Shooting Sports Program Committee.
- County, multi-county, or district Shooting Sports Program Level I trainings must be approved by the State Shooting Sports Committee and be conducted by a team (volunteers or agents) that have received proper Level II training from nationally trained instructors.
- All 4-H Shooting Sports programs conducted for youth must be conducted and supervised by those individuals that have successfully completed a Level I discipline training.

- All aspects of a training activity must be organized prior to the training (i.e. planning, announcing, conducting, evaluating). Responsibilities of county agents, volunteers, and state staff are to be outlined prior to the training event.
- Volunteer responsibilities include, but are not limited to, providing support for and assisting with conducting Shooting Sports discipline training.
- The State Shooting Sports Committee will establish consistency in certification and recognition of participant completion of training programs.

Certification/Training Requirements

- State requirements for certification of volunteers at Level I for all disciplines involves a minimum of 20 hours of training in each of the discipline areas.
- Level I volunteer certification is determined by exam, practicum, and instructor observation. The discipline instructor reserves the right to withhold certification if the volunteer is found to lack effective instructional skills or knowledge.
- The Level I certification period for all disciplines shall be three years from the date of the initial training.
- A Level I instructor can be recertified in a discipline by:
 - 1) Attending one (1) of the state Level I training programs offered.
 - 2) Teaching twenty-four (24) contact hours (min. six (6) hours classroom and sixteen (16) hours range) at any State sponsored 4-H Shooting Sports event or camp.
 - 3) Attending an annual discipline update-training meeting.
 - 4) Attending a State Shooting Sports Committee sanctioned regional training.
- Standard training evaluation will be established and implemented by the State Shooting Sports Committee
- A minimum of two state trainings will be conducted yearly and will be conducted at designated 4-H Camps. Regional trainings will be conducted as needed pending approval of the State Shooting Sports Committee.
- All shooting sports training instructors (Level I and II) will conduct training that comply with established National Shooting Sports discipline teaching guidelines provided during certification training.
- Junior Leaders must be 13 years old as of September 1. They must have completed Level I training and can only assist with Level I instructors.

Shooting Sports Events/Activities Guidelines

- **Insurance:** As with any other UF 4-H Program, there is liability coverage/protection from the University for 4-H Shooting Sports events, activities and club meetings. Information and certificates of coverage can be obtained directly from Helen Sawyer with Environmental Health and Safety, (352) 392-7256 email hsawyer@ufl.edu. Please remember this is insurance against liability claims related to 4-H programming and should cover volunteers, agents and other UF employees directing a 4-H program. This policy does NOT cover facilities/properties that are not directly owned by UF. The American Income Life (AIL) club insurance is a policy related to injuries that might occur during a 4-H event or other activities. The current limit is \$2500 and this would only cover related medical expenses in the event of an injury during an event or club meeting. The AIL insurance is an annual optional coverage available to 4-H clubs through the counties. Contact the county 4-H agent for additional information.

- **Age Requirements:** Participation in the Florida 4-H Shooting Sports Program follows the other State 4-H programs requiring participants to be eight (8) years old by September 1 of the program year. The exceptions to this rule are with the disciplines of shotgun, hunting and muzzleloading, which are **not** entry level/age disciplines. Participation by 5-7 year olds in the Shooting Sports Program will adhere to the State age policy in which they are **not** allowed to participate.

Discipline specific ages are as follows:

Air rifle and archery	8 years old by Sept 1.
Shotgun and hunting	10 years old by Sept. 1.
Muzzleloading	12 years old by Sept. 1.

Note: Participants in the muzzleloading discipline must be 12 years old or older and have participated in the 4-H Shooting Sports rifle or shotgun program for 1 year.

For **competition** purposes the ages and dates are as of January 1 to coincide with the National Shooting Sports Guidelines as follows:

Juniors	8-10 years old as of Jan 1.
Intermediate	11-13 years old as of Jan 1.
Senior	14-19 years old as of Jan 1.

- **Competitive events** through which 4-H members may participate shall be sanctioned through collaboration with public and private “shooting sports” organizations and the State Shooting Sports Committee. Annual events will be planned and approved by the State Shooting Sports Committee.

Guidelines for County 4-H Shooting Sports Program Equipment

- Equipment includes: Bows, arrows, firearms, targets, ammunition and other shooting sports program equipment related to the disciplines of archery, hunting, muzzle loading, rifle and shotgun.
- Storage of 4-H Shooting Sports Program equipment, owned by the counties, is to be determined by the county in accordance with county policy and Florida State law. Florida State law Sec. 790.174 requires that firearms be locked and/or stored in a secure manner to prevent minors from gaining access to them.
- Typical storage areas include but are not limited to county Extension offices, law enforcement offices, private residences and other secure sites.
- Requests for “state” shooting sports equipment to support county shooting sports programs must be done 30 days in advance to the State Shooting Sports Committee through county 4-H offices. Requests must contain names of instructors and the disciplines in which they are certified to teach. An inventory list of all equipment and shooting sports supplies must be completed prior to and upon completion of the training by the county 4-H agent. Storage of this equipment will adhere to the guidelines stated above.

Shooting Sports Educational Resources Guidelines

- Shooting sports educational initiatives are to include: training, competitive events, camps and discipline (shotgun, rifle, archery, hunting, and muzzleloading) specific curriculum.
- Shooting sports educational materials for statewide distribution are to be adopted/developed by the State Shooting Sports Committee.
- Shooting sports curriculum must be approved by the State Shooting Sports Committee before statewide distribution.