



4-H Age FAQ

Purpose:

This document is intended to provide clarification to the California 4-H (CA 4-H) policy on enrollment eligibility by participant age.

1. How is 4-H Age defined in CA 4-H?

4-H Age is the age of an individual as of December 31st each enrollment year. The CA 4-H enrollment year is July 1st through June 30th. A few examples below will help illustrate the considerations and limitations involved based on various participant's 4-H Ages.

Example A: Primary 4-H Member

- **Mary's date of birth is March 20th, 2011.**
- In the 4-H enrollment year 2023-2024, Mary's age as of December 31st, 2023 is 8 years old.
- For purposes of enrollment, Mary's 4-H Age for the 2023-2024 year is 8 years old.
- For the entire program year, Mary is a primary 4-H member and may only participate in 4-H projects permitted for 4-H primary members, per the CA 4-H Project List.
- Mary will turn 9 years old in March 2024.
- Mary is eligible to re-enroll in the 2024-2025 program year, and begin participating in 4-H Activities as a Junior 4-H member (4-H ages 9-10 years old).

Example B: Primary 4-H Member

- **Taylor's date of birth is December 19th, 2019.**
- Taylor will turn 5 years old on December 19th.
- In the 4-H enrollment year 2023-2024, Taylor's age as of December 31st, 2023 is 5 years old.
- For purposes of enrollment, Taylor's 4-H Age for 2023-2024 year is 5 years old.
- Taylor is eligible to enroll as a Primary 4-H Member.

Example C: Primary 4-H Member

- **Shawn's date of birth is January 10th, 2020.**
- Shawn will turn 5 years old on January 10th, 2024.
- In the 4-H enrollment year 2023-2024, Shawn's age as of December 31st, 2023 is 4 years old.
- For purposes of enrollment, Shawn's 4-H Age for 2023-2024 year is 4 years old.
- Shawn is NOT eligible to enroll as a Primary 4-H Member, because they are not 5 years old as of December 31st, 2023 of the 2023-2024 program year.

Example D: Senior 4-H Member

- **Riley's date of birth is August 5th, 2009.**
- In the 4-H enrollment year 2023-2024, Riley's age as of December 31st, 2023 is 14 years old.
- For purposes of enrollment, Riley's 4-H Age for the 2023-2024 year is 14 years old.

- Riley is Senior member in CA 4-H.

Example E: 4-H Youth Member Aged out of CA 4-H

- **Marco's date of birth is December 2nd, 2004.**
- In the 4-H enrollment year 2023-2024, Marco's age as of December 31st, 2023 is 19 years old.
- For purposes of enrollment, Marco's 4-H Age for the 2023-2024 year is 19 years old.
- Marco has aged out of the program for 4-H youth member participation.
- If Marco enrolled in the previous program year, the 4-H program provides a six-month extension of accident/sickness insurance coverage in which Marco is allowed to participate in 4-H activities that were a culmination of their previous program year's participation.
- By policy, Marco is NOT allowed to re-enroll in 2023-2024 as a youth member. The 4-H enrollment system aligns to this and will not accept the youth enrollment based on the date of birth.

2. What is the maximum 4-H Age a member can enroll in California 4-H?

A 4-H member who has a 4-H Age of 18 during a program year, is eligible to enroll in 4-H as a youth member for their last full program year.

3. Can a 4-H youth whose 4-H Age is 19 as of December 31st re-enroll in 4-H for another year of participation as a youth member?

No. This 4-H member has aged out of the program.

However, this youth member is provided a 6-month extension of accident/sickness coverage by University of California after June 30th of their last year enrolled. The extension of coverage is ONLY to allow the youth to participate in culminating events tied to their participation in the previous 4-H program year, e.g., fairs taking place in August, camp.

4. Scenario: A member's county fair is held in August each year. Does the 4-H youth member need to re-enroll to participate and exhibit their previous year's project work at the fair?

No. The 6-month extension of accident/illness insurance coverage exists to ensure the 4-H youth member has appropriate coverage available to take part in the fair as a culminating event tied to their participation in the previous 4-H year.

When the 4-H youth member and their family have confirmed they would like to re-enroll for the current 4-H year, they can do so at that time. Summer fair participation does not determine the need to re-enroll in the current year.

Other factors to consider: This youth member may have aged out and is not be able to return and re-enroll in the program for the current 4-H year. As such, requiring that re-enrollment is unnecessary as the youth has the coverage for the remaining participation they will have at the August fair.

5. Scenario: For the 2023-2024 year, can a 4-H youth member who was enrolled in 2022-2023 year and hasn't re-enrolled for 2023-2024, start participating in a new project year work for 2023-2024 year?

No. This 4-H member is not eligible to begin participating in 4-H activities associated with the current 4-H year. Once this member has fully re-enrolled in the program for 2023-2024, they may begin participating and accident/illness coverage for this participation is in effect.

6. Does the 4-H Age apply to 4-H Adult Volunteers?

No. 4-H Adult Volunteers must be at least 18 to enroll for service as a 4-H Adult Volunteer. Some 4-H Adult Volunteer roles will require an older minimum age, such as 21 based on responsibilities of the role, e.g., chaperones. Note: Some counties may have stricter age requirements for participation as a chaperone.

7. Are Primary member programs available in every 4-H club?

No. Some clubs may not have primary project participation opportunities. While 4-H units may not limit participation based on age, any such exceptions must be approved by the 4-H staff and included in the unit organizing documents (Bylaws and Constitution or Operating Procedures). Additionally, any limitations to 4-H project participation must be based on educational or curricular resources used in the project. For example, primary members cannot enroll in large animal projects. Any limitations must be well publicized and equitably enforced. See 4-H policy, [Chapter 4](#), XI, D. Developmentally Appropriate Programming for additional information.

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