

Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Policy Statement

*** The Following Policy Supersedes All Previous Drafts ***

2015

Preamble: *One of the goals of the Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports program is to encourage and support volunteers upon whom 4-H depends to extend its programs for the benefit of the youth of Indiana. A very important liability issue associated with volunteers is the teaching of age appropriate instruction and effective supervision. Thus the certification of 4-H Shooting Sports instructors and coordinators through state-sponsored workshops is essential to the integrity and success of the program. These workshops teach volunteers about program safety and the developmental abilities and maturity of 4-H youth. Purdue University provides liability coverage for adult volunteers while they are acting at the direction of, and within the scope of, their duties in the Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports program.*

Policy statement: The primary goal of the Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports program is to teach young people how to safely and appropriately handle firearms and archery equipment. While it is understood that many parents, choose to involve their children in this activity as a “prelude” to hunting activities, the Indiana 4-H Youth Development Program under **no circumstances** provides authority to volunteers to arrange or conduct hunting activities with (or for) 4-H members.

Certified Shooting Sports volunteers involved with the Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Program must complete the Indiana 4-H Youth Development Application/Screening Process and participate in the State 4-H Shooting Sports Certification Workshop **prior to** participating as a volunteer with the program. All Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Programs must have a 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Coordinator. All 4-H shooting activities must be directly supervised by an Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Instructor.

If a program divides the participants into groups for concurrent shooting sessions, each group must be under the on-site supervision of an Indiana 4-H Certified Shooting Sports Instructor, teaching in **only** the discipline in which he/she holds certification. Associate instructors and other 4-H adult volunteers must be under the direct physical supervision of an Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports certified instructor while engaged in any activity which involves the use of firearms and/or archery equipment.

Tree climbing and activities involving tree stands must be taught by Outdoor Skills discipline instructors who have received training from the state 4-H Shooting Sports team. Teaching and using firearm reloads (cartridges and shells) is prohibited in 4-H Shooting Sports educational activities. For safety reasons, cartridges and shells must be purchased from authorized manufacturers who apply industry standards in the manufacturing and loading process.

Definitions:

- **4-H Shooting Sports disciplines:** archery, outdoor skills, muzzleloading, rifle, pistol, and shotgun.
- **Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports State Coordinator:** Purdue University employee responsible for training 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinators and working with Indiana Extension Educators to provide the 4-H Shooting Sports program to youth across Indiana.
- **Indiana Hunter Education Coordinator:** Indiana Department of Natural Resources employee responsible for selecting and training Indiana State 4-H Shooting Sports Instructors; planning, coordinating and managing training workshops; and certifying Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Instructors.
- **Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports State Instructor:** An adult volunteer or staff person who has been selected by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Hunter Education Coordinators, trained by the state discipline team, passed a probationary period, has joined the state instructor team, attends state instructor team meetings and provides training to county instructors.

- **Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Instructor:** An Extension Educator or adult volunteer who has county background validation and has successfully completed a course of training at an Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Workshop (Sponsored by the State 4-H Youth Development Department and Indiana Department of Natural Resources).
- **Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Coordinator:** A 4-H Shooting Sports Program Coordinator is an Extension Educator or adult volunteer who works primarily with other volunteers to deliver the 4-H Shooting Sports program in the county. Volunteers work under the guidance of their county 4-H Youth Extension Educator.
- **Associate 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor:** An educator or adult volunteer who has locally recognized experience in the 4-H Shooting Sports program and/or youth development and proper county background validation and who has been trained at the local level by an Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Instructor in the discipline which he/she is teaching.

Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Policy Statement (continued)

To avoid potential problems in the event of a claim, Extension office files should contain a complete list of volunteers working on each activity for at least one year after the activity. In order for coverage to respond for either a staff member or a volunteer, it is imperative that potential claims be reported immediately to the local County 4-H Extension Educator.

Compliance Statements

A Shooting Sports compliance statement must be completed and filed with the State 4-H Office each time a new Extension Educator assumes responsibility in a county that conducts a Shooting Sports program. The compliance statement is an opportunity for the educator to verify the following:

- An Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Instructor must directly supervise all 4-H Shooting Sports activities. If a program divides the members into groups for concurrent shooting sessions, groups must be under the on-site supervision of an Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Instructor.
- Adult volunteers who are primarily responsible for a concurrent session, which involves the use of firearms and/or archery equipment, must be Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Instructors in the discipline, which she/he is teaching.
- Associate Instructors and all remaining adult volunteers must be under the direct physical supervision of an Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Instructor while engaged in an activity which involves the use of firearms and/or archery equipment. All adult volunteers and youth engaged in the use of firearms and/or archery equipment must be advised of the basic range safety rules before shooting starts. All Shooting Sports programs must have an Indiana 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Coordinator.

Range Plans

Each county Shooting Sports program shall keep on file with the State 4-H Office a range plan for EACH range utilized for local Shooting Sports workshops and activities. When new ranges are utilized or the configuration of a range is changed, the range plans must be updated. These range plans are critical in terms of liability issues and Purdue University's insurance coverage and protection for the volunteers involved with the program.

NOTE: Purdue University only extends liability coverage to certified volunteers working in their capacity as 4-H leaders and to 4-H members (grades 3-12).