Cowlitz County 4-H Horse Program Policy for Enrollment and Horse Certificates

4-H Enrollment & Horse Certification Requirements:

1. Members and leaders who were enrolled in the 4-H Horse Project the previous year must be re-enrolled *via 4H online* by January 31st and horse certificate(s) turned in by January 31st ***to the Extension office*** in order to show at the Cowlitz County Fair.[Revised to reflect change in county re -enrollment policy, October 2011 and 4h on line enrollment system, 2018-19]

2. New members (not enrolled the previous year) must be enrolled by ***April 1st*** and have horse certificates turned in by ***April 1st*** in order to show at the fair. [Revised to reflect change in county re -enrollment policy, October 2011 and October 2012]

3. Horse certificates **must** be turned in indicating your 4-H horse project(s). Members may submit any # of horse certificates, but must submit at least one horse certificate at enrollment time indicating your 4H horse project(s). The purpose of this policy is set for enrolled project members to enroll in more, not limited horse projects. This policy is not set to change the horses that you take to fair, but to give more opportunity to enroll in more horse projects [March 14, 2006]

4. Horses may be added or substituted between January ***31st*** and ***April 1st*** by turning in a new horse certificate(s). [Revised to reflect change in county re -enrollment policy, October 2011 and October 2012]

A. ***Between April 1st and May 1st, 4H members and/or 4H leaders may petition the horse policy committee (HPC) to replace a horse. After May 1st, petitions to replace a horse will not be accepted unless there is written documentation from a veterinarian related to lameness, severe illness, or death*** [Approved January 2105 Horse Committee]. If the HPC accepts the petition, the 4H member will eligible to exhibit at the Cowlitz County Fair, but will not eligible to exhibit at the Washington State 4H Fair [PNW 4H Horse Contest Guide, ~~pg.5-~~Replacement]

5. The horse certificate signifies that each horse is under the daily care and management of the 4-H member from ***April 1st*** until the Cowlitz County Fair and through state fair, if qualified. See “Project Animal Care and Management” for additional information and expectations. [Revised to reflect change in county re -enrollment policy, October 2011 and October 2012]

**Project Animal Care and Management**

Animals must be under the 4-H member’s regular care and management for at least 90 days prior to the official county exhibit activity. For Cowlitz County 4-H horse members this means April1st for the Cowlitz County Fair. [Washington State 4-H Program Policy Guide~~-EM0758~~].

The purpose of the 4-H horse project is that the member learns responsibility for the care of the horse. Daily care and management means feeding, exercising, and grooming of that horse(s). If the horse is stabled elsewhere, you must provide daily care and maintenance of their horse. It is understood that the 4-H member is learning to train and ride the horse and has responsibility for that horse.

A member may borrow, rent, share, or lease a horse for a project. A shared project animal is defined as only immediate family members or two non-family members sharing the same horse, including care and training responsibilities. Members and parents must recognize that adjustments and/or choices may need to be made to adapt to show conditions or schedules such as when two members are in the same class or are competing for championships [PNW074 4H Contest Guide]. Two 4-H members may jointly care for and show one animal. These two 4-H members may not compete in the same class or lot at an event. [Washington State 4-H Program Policy Guide ~~EM0758~~]]

If the member is borrowing a horse from April 1st through fair(s), there should be a signed lease indicating theagreement with the horse’s owner.[Cowlitz County 4-H Committee Policy]

Background, Intent, and Expectations of the “4-H Care and Management Policies”

There is an expectation that only the 4-H member(s) can personally train their animal 90 days prior to the county designated event and state fair [*PNW 074* 4-H Horse Contest Guide].

For Cowlitz County, this means from April 1st to the end of the 4-H year *[September 30th*].

There are very important distinctions between 4-H and open show and/or breed show activities. One of the major distinctions is that in 4-H, we are evaluating the work of the 4-H member with their project animal, not the work of professionals and/or other adults with that project animal.

If there are **specific** horse behavioral issues for safety’s sake (i.e. rearing, bucking, running off, etc), then the 4-H member should actively seek help from a trainer or other knowledgeable adult. What is not appropriate is for the 4-H member to seek training for non-safety issues (i.e. smoother transitions, correct headset, slower lope, etc) after April1st. However, it is appropriate to actively encourage older and/or more experienced 4-H members to be of assistance to younger or less experienced 4-H members in their training efforts.

In summary, it is the expectation and intent that ***trainers or other adults do not*** ***ride 4-H member’s horses after April 1st***. An exception could be **limited and occasional use** of the project animal by other adults and/or family members for activities such as pleasure riding, community service activities, educational/demonstration activities, etc. Remember, the 4-H member has had an opportunity to seek training and/or help between October 1st and April 1st

* Project Animal Care and Management and Background/Intent/Expectations-approved May 2005 by Cowlitz County 4-H Horse Project Committee.
* Revised February 2010 and May 2013 to reflect State policy changes.
* Revised October 2012 to reflect 90 day rule for Cowlitz County Fair to be aligned with State Policy.]
* Reviewed and updated by J.Leach, January 2019 to reflect state policy changes/updates