

## 4-H Volunteer Leaders' Series

# Election of Officers

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The election of officers is important in every 4-H club or group. Clubs or groups are made up of people with different ideas and abilities. The only way to get things done is for someone to lead. Every club or group needs leaders, and a good way to get leaders is by electing them.

### Qualifications of Officers

Before officers are elected, your group should spend some time discussing the things you are looking for in your leaders. You might want to think about such things as regular participation, experience in the club or group, ability and willingness to serve as an officer.

By setting standards for officers, your group can avoid a popularity contest in the election of officers. The best leader of your club or group might not be the most popular person or the best athlete.

### Nominating Committee

Most 4-H clubs elect a president, vice president, secretary, reporter, photographer, song leader and recreation leader. Usually, a 4-H club will have a constitution and bylaws that tell how to go about electing officers.

The method that is used most often is the nominating committee. A nominating committee can be either elected by the group or appointed by the president. The nominating

committee will nominate one or more persons for each office in the club or group.

When a meeting is called to elect officers, the nominating committee will present the names it has selected for election by the group. Before the names presented by the nominating committee are voted on, the presiding officer will ask for nominations from the floor. This means that any member has the right to nominate someone other than the ones presented by the nominating committee. Remember, nominations do not require a second, and a member may nominate only one candidate for each office.

Any member can offer a motion to close the nominations. A motion to close the nominations requires a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

### Voting on Nominations

Your club or group will probably decide for itself what method of voting it will use to elect officers. Usually, the bylaws will fix the percent of vote necessary for election to office. If there are no rules for you to follow, you can use one of several methods. Your presiding officer may call for a show of hands, a standing vote or a secret ballot to decide who the officers will be. In this case, a simple majority will elect a person. Usually, when more than one nominee is being voted on, the names are voted on in the order in which they were presented to your group.



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## Installing Officers

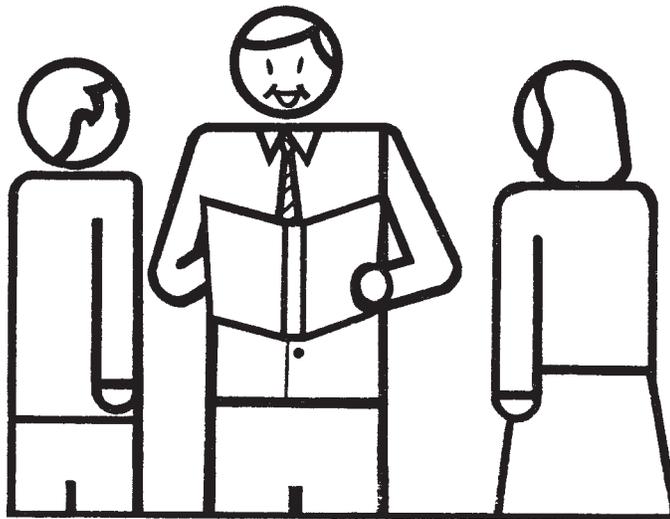
Newly elected officers are usually installed with a special ceremony conducted during a regular meeting. Through a special program, the officers are called before the group and the outgoing officers and the organizational leader read the requirements for the office to the newly elected officers. The person reading the requirements asks each officer if he or she understands the duties of the office to which they are elected, and if they will accept the responsibilities of the office. This should be a time when all members pledge their support to the newly elected officers of the club or group.

## Things To Do

1. After your 4-H club has elected officers, plan an installation ceremony. Find out how other clubs or groups install officers. Ask your leader

to help you plan the installation ceremony. (See fact sheet "Initiation Ceremonies – Officers.")

2. Clubs need rules to guide the members in their activities. Write a set of rules for your 4-H club. (Rules are sometimes called a constitution.) Choose a name for the club; then write the rules that will govern your club. The rules will include the number of officers and their duties, the committees needed, how often the club will meet, etc. When you have finished writing the rules, ask for a club meeting to discuss them. If the members approve, ask them to officially adopt the rules for your club. (See 4-H Club Secretary's Book, C-402, for a sample constitution.)



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