



Maryland Cooperative Extension (MCE) Maryland 4-H Performance Animal Lease Program Guidelines



OBJECTIVES:

1. To develop character, knowledge, sense of responsibility and life skills in 4-H youth.
2. To expand the opportunities for youth to participate in an animal project that may not have access to facilities and/or performance animals.
3. To maintain or increase the number of youth carrying performance animals as a 4-H project.
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RULES:

1. The Maryland 4-H Performance Animal Lease Program is applicable to performance animals of the 4-H project areas listed below:
 - a. Horses
 - b. Dogs
 - c. Alpacas
 - d. Llamas
 - e. Pack Goats
2. The program is available to any 4-H member, hereafter also referred to as **4-H'ers**, in good standing in a County/City 4-H program.
3. The **4-H Member** will be required to keep the appropriate 4-H project record(s) on each animal. The record(s) must be submitted to his or her local County/City 4-H Extension Office as required by the County/City 4-H Extension Office.
4. The leased animal(s) must be a bona fide 4-H project. 4-H'ers with leased animals will be required to follow the same requirements for exhibition as 4-H'ers with owned animals.
5. A 4-H member may have up to four (4) total animals in the Performance Animal Lease Program per 4-H year. However, 4-H shows or fairs may limit the number of animals 4-H members may exhibit or may have other applicable rules pertaining to classes for performance animals.
6. An animal from the list of project areas covered by the Maryland 4-H Performance Animal Lease Program may be leased by up to two (2) different 4-H members. However, the animal may not be exhibited in the same class at a 4-H show by more than one 4-H member.
7. The owner of the leased animal(s), hereafter referred to as the **sponsor**, and the 4-H Member should jointly determine **the** specific responsibilities to be carried out by **each party**. The responsibilities should be attached to the Lease Program Form and should list items such as, but not limited to:
 - a. the **4-H Member's** duties and responsibilities while caring for and working with the animal,
 - b. the 4-H Member's access to the animal,
 - c. housing and transportation of the animal,
 - d. a working schedule for carrying out the specified duties,
 - e. any assistance the **sponsor** will provide to the **4-H Member**,
 - f. any insurance requirements, information or provisions

- g. responsibility for expenses incurred with the lease animal such as, but not limited to, feed, veterinary care, transportation, entry fees, etc.

The above are only suggestions. For the protection of all involved, the parties may want to consider entering into a written Lease Agreement setting forth their respective rights and responsibilities. MCE can not advise parties as to what should be included in such an agreement, and parties may want to consult with an attorney in this regard.

8. The **4-H Member** will keep any 4-H premiums or awards received while exhibiting the leased animal(s) during the duration of the agreement – **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
9. During the 4-H year, the **4-H Member(s)** leasing the animal(s) will be eligible to exhibit the leased animal(s) in Maryland 4-H shows. The **sponsor** may enter and exhibit the leased animal(s) in open-class shows. If the **sponsor** is a 4-H member, the sponsor may also be eligible to exhibit the leased animal(s) in Maryland 4-H shows(within the parameters of item 6 in these guidelines). In such circumstance, the animal(s) may only be leased by one (1) additional 4-H Member.
10. The **sponsor** and the **4-H Member** must adhere to the Maryland 4-H Performance Animal Lease Program Guidelines, the 4-H Behavioral Expectations (4-H 418), the Maryland 4-H Code of Animal Science Ethics, and any other County/City and/or State 4-H or MCE guidelines as applicable.
11. The leased animal(s) must be housed and maintained at the facility of the **sponsor, 4-H member, or mutually agreed upon location as approved by the County/City 4-H faculty/staff.**
12. Ownership of the leased animal(s) remains with the sponsor. The title of ownership as stated on the registration certificate of the leased animal(s) (if purebred) will remain **in the possession of the sponsor.**
13. **The Performance Animal Lease Program Form must be signed and filed in the County/City 4-H office by June 1st of the 4-H year and will be in effect through the end of the 4-H year (December 31). The sponsor is expected to and will make the animal available for the proposed purpose to the 4-H Member during the period of the 4-H year.**
14. Participation in the Maryland 4-H Performance Animal Lease Program may be terminated by either party or by 4-H/MCE prior to the end of the project year for reasons such as, but not limited to:
 - a. failure of the **4-H Member** or **sponsor** to carry out responsibilities as agreed by the parties,
 - b. changes in the farming operation for the **sponsor**,
 - c. changes in the circumstances of the **4-H Member** ,
 - d. mutual agreement of both parties,
 - e. on thirty (30) days written notice, or
 - f. failure to abide by and follow the Maryland 4-H Performance Animal Lease Program Guidelines and all other 4-H and/or MCE policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and other requirements or expectations, as applicable. Such failure may also result in the **sponsor** and/or **4-H Member** being declared ineligible to participate in Maryland 4-H Animal Lease Program(s) by MCE/4-H and/or other disciplinary action or sanctions as appropriate.

The date and reason for termination prior to the end of the 4-H year must be given in writing and be placed on file in the County/City 4-H office.

15. The 4-H Member, Parent/Guardian and Sponsor must sign the Maryland 4-H Animal Lease Program Statement of Understanding and Release Form.

