



## Membership and Enrollment

It is the policy of University of Georgia Extension to extend equal opportunities for membership and participation in 4-H activities to any youth residing in or attending school in the state of Georgia. As a partner in education, Georgia 4-H bases its eligibility on the Georgia Department of Education's standards. Effective August 1, 2015, grade level shall determine participation in Georgia 4-H Programs, both in competitive and non-competitive events.

### 1. Membership Classifications

National 4-H Headquarters recognizes that students ages five through twenty-one may be members in 4-H programs. Each state designates the levels of membership for its 4-H program. Eligibility for Georgia 4-H involvement is designated by positive youth development principles and will be determined for each program/activity/competition. The information provided on each program/activity/competition will describe the grade requirement for eligibility. Programs will be designated for youth no younger than kindergarten and no older than high school graduate. Collegiate 4-H is open to 4-H members at the end of the 4-H year after they graduate high school. They are not eligible to participate in events upon high school graduation once the 4-H year is complete on July 31.

### 2. Grade level classification

*Youth attending public or private institution*

For youth who attend a public or private educational institution, grade level is determined by the grade in which youth are currently enrolled. For youth who attend a non-graded system or attend home school, grade level will be determined as described below:

*Non-Graded or Home-School Youth (not enrolled in public or private school)*

Youth who have not graduated high school, or are enrolled in schools that do not assign grade levels, or that are home schooled, shall be assigned a grade level based upon the following age to grade conversion chart. 4-H grade will be determined based on the participant's age as of September 1 of the current 4-H year.

[georgia4h.org](http://georgia4h.org)

Age on September 1	4-H Grade
5	K
6	1
7	2
8	3
9	4
10	5
11	6
12	7
13	8
14	9
15	10
16	11
17	12

3. Youth with special circumstances may be allowed to enroll in 4-H or seek an exception to the eligibility guidelines with the approval of the State 4-H Leader. The exceptions could include:

- Youth who have reached their eighteenth birthday by September 1, but are still enrolled in high school.
- Youth in a non-graded system who have special circumstances for advancing a grade or repeating a grade may enroll in a grade other than the one specified.
- Youth who have not reached their eighteenth birthday by September 1 but have graduated high school and are not enrolled in a secondary institution.
- Youth in the twelfth grade who graduate mid-year may request to continue participation through July 31.

Requests should be made to the State 4-H Leader with a statement of circumstance and requesting an exception.

4. Each event in Georgia 4-H will have a grade level established. This grade requirement can be found with the eligibility requirements for those events.
5. Requirements for national competitive event, including national conference, require that each contestant must have passed his or her fourteenth birthday and cannot have passed his or her nineteenth birthday by January 1 of the qualifying year.

This document will go into effect August 1, 2017 and supersedes any other information about programs/activities/contest that has been published.

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