



RISK MANAGEMENT FOR 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORK

Transportation

This is one publication in the EDIS series *Risk Management for 4-H Youth Development Work*.

This series is intended to prepare UF/IFAS Extension faculty, staff, volunteers, and youth for the important task of providing best practices in risk management strategies.

Our goal is to conduct educational events and activities that coincide with the 4-H mission and mandates while protecting the safety of participants, sponsors, property, finances, and the goodwill/reputation of the 4-H name. Planning and preparation can mitigate the inherent risk of events and activities. This risk management guide outlines ways to prepare for and deal with the specific risks associated with your program.

Early planning is key to conducting successful events and activities. A helpful tool in this process is EDIS publication [#4HFSV90.1](#), “Pre-Event Planning Guide and Matrix,” which is another part of this series. As you work through this matrix, you may have questions that are unique to a specific situation and may not be completely answered by the series. Extension faculty and staff should refer these questions to appropriate personnel. Questions that require time for research punctuate the need for early planning.

Another tool is the Risk Management Checklist, which can be used as a guide when planning an activity or event. Find it in another part of this series, EDIS publication [#4HFSV373](#), “Risk Management Checklist.”

Transportation

Transportation to and from many UF/IFAS Extension and Florida 4-H activities is not part of the activity and is the responsibility of the participant and his/her family. UF/IFAS Extension and Florida 4-H have no ownership or control over any privately owned vehicles.

4-H relies on the drivers’ compliance with 4-H policies and procedures. Drivers transporting youth as part of any 4-H activity must be at least 18 years old, possess a valid driver’s license with a safe driving record and automobile insurance, and otherwise comply with state and local laws.

Driving personal vehicles for UF/IFAS Extension and 4-H events is not a recommended transportation option for staff and volunteers, as personal insurance will be primary. UF’s auto liability policy covers officers, employees, and volunteers who, within the scope of employment, use an automobile that is not personally owned.

Fifteen-passenger vans are no longer the suggested mode of transporting youth. Driving 12- and 15-passenger vans requires special knowledge and a certification through the University of Florida. This University of Florida [policy](#) states that all operators of UF-owned, leased, or non-owned 12- or 15-passenger vans must possess a valid driver’s license and maintain a good driving record. UF/IFAS departments require all operators to take a van operator training session (UF_ENS870_OLT) prior to operating a 12- or 15-passenger van. (Exception: Operators that possess a valid Commercial Driver’s License [CDL] do not need to participate in the training.)

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An Equal Opportunity Institution. 4-H is the nation’s largest youth development organization. Over 230,000 members in the State of Florida help to make up the community of more than 6.5 million young people across America. 4-H is a non-formal, practical educational program for youth. Florida 4-H is the youth development program of Florida Cooperative Extension, a part of the University of Florida/IFAS.

Vehicles will be inspected routinely through annual and operational safety checks. Please refer to the [Risk Management Checklist](#). Vehicles will be removed from service if conditions are found that will impair the safe operation of the vehicle or the safety of its occupants. Seven- and 12-passenger vehicles are recommended.

When transporting youth, the “two-deep” standard, in compliance with UF Youth Compliance policy and the [UF/IFAS Extension Florida 4-H Youth Protection Policy](#), applies during program travel. This includes all travel (including out-of-state travel), except in circumstances where multiple vehicles (caravan) are traveling to the same destination, the vehicles are within sight of each other, the staff have communication with one another, and the staff are never alone with a single participant. Permission to caravan with one adult per vehicle must be obtained from the state 4-H program leader prior to travel.

Find additional information on transportation for 4-H youth development activities in [Florida 4-H Policies & Best Management Practices](#), which will take precedence regarding official policy.

Rental Vehicles

For vehicles rented under the [UF Contract](#), an agreement is signed at the rental agency—this is not a contract, and individuals can sign the agreement when the vehicle is picked up. Insurance is provided as part of the UF contract. Additionally, UF’s auto policy will cover officers, employees, and volunteers while using a rental vehicle within the scope of employment. This insurance functions as excess insurance above what is included in the rental contract. If traveling out of state, verify that insurance is included. For additional clarity or more information, please communicate with your county Extension director and/or your district Extension director. Refer also to UF Procurement’s [general information on rental vehicles](#) and the UF Procurement Travel FAQs and Resources webpage for [rental cars](#).

Employees with a UF purchasing card (PCard) should use the UF Go system for car rentals.

For vehicles, including charter and school buses, rented from a non-UF contract, UF Procurement can provide vendor recommendations. In this case, you may need to purchase additional insurance coverage. Insurance offered by the rental company may be considered secondary insurance to your personal insurance, so make sure you understand the agreement terms. Coming to an agreement may take some discussion back and forth between the vendor and the UF purchasing officer, which will require time. Additionally, these rentals may include a contract that requires a signature. Contact UF/IFAS Extension Business Services/4-H Business Services (ifas-ebs@ifas.ufl.edu) for assistance with contract review and official signature.

Best Practices

Here are some general best practices when traveling:

- Access to health forms in [4-H Online](#) should be available as hard copy in a folder to best ensure privacy with the individual transporting youth. It is recommended that you have a GPS/map or directions, a first-aid kit, a flashlight, and a phone.
- Avoid driving for extended periods at night, when tired, and during extreme weather conditions. Do not drive when taking medication that makes you drowsy. Plan rest stops every few hours; if driving with others, prearrange stopping places along the way.
- When planning longer trips, arrange for relief drivers (who are over the age of 18).
- Make sure you have emergency contact phone numbers for youth and other drivers.
- Never transport youth in flatbed or panel trucks, in the bed of a pickup, or in a camper-trailer.

- Provide a hard copy list to your county Extension director and the administrative staff of who are being transported in the vehicle. Being able to have a quick list for accountability purposes in the event of an emergency is imperative.

Personal Insurance

If you choose to use your personal vehicle for UF/IFAS Extension or 4-H business or hold club programs/meetings/activities in your home or on your property, you should first **contact your insurance company** to discuss sufficient insurance coverage. You may be risking your home, business, vehicle, or personal assets if you do not have sufficient insurance coverage in place.

Resources

Florida 4-H Policies & Best Management Practices: <https://florida4h.ifas.ufl.edu/media/florida4hifasufledu/docs/Florida-4-H-Policies-Updated-06.17.25.pdf>

UF Department of Environmental Health and Safety on 12 & 15 Passenger Van Procedures: <https://www.ehs.ufl.edu/departments/occupational-safety-risk/insurance-and-risk-management/12-15-passenger-van-procedures/>

UF/IFAS Extension Administration: <http://extadmin.ifas.ufl.edu/>

UF Procurement Services on Rental Vehicles: <https://procurement.ufl.edu/contracts-2/rental-vehicles/>