

4-H Program Fee

What is changing?

Beginning with 2017-2018 enrollment, starting Oct. 2, Kansas 4-H Youth Development will be asking families to invest in the present and future of the program. With a \$15 annual program-enrollment fee, each child will have access to a wide array of development opportunities at the local, regional and state level. These structured, hands-on, relevant educational programs will continue the tradition and history of Kansas 4-H in building skills, confidence and experiences that 4-H youth will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

Why is this unified investment important?

We're working harder than ever to help young people develop into responsible contributors to their community, state and country.

The program fee is needed because the sources of funding that have historically been enough to sustain and grow Kansas 4-H are not sufficient. Declining state funding has left a gap, and looking forward at our growth ambitions – to expand and enhance our efforts to provide meaningful youth development programs – we anticipate needs for funding.

How will this investment be put to use?

Four primary investment areas were identified by the task force of Kansas 4-H professionals. These would benefit all 4-H learning environments:

- 1) Project support and enhancements (i.e. principles of engaged learning, communicate and connect learning opportunities, updating/refreshing existing project materials)
- 2) Volunteer Development (materials and coaching of volunteers; tools for recruitment, growth, evaluation and accountability)
- 3) Program enhancements benefiting community clubs (including but not limited to updating and refreshing tools for use with youth and volunteer audiences)
- 4) Foundational Supports (accessibility, campus/community partnerships and marketing at statewide events, and materials that can be used by local units)

4-H Program Fee FAQs

Why is this necessary now?

People can invest two things: time and treasure. Across Kansas there is already significant investment of time in 4-H youth development – something we're proud of and grateful for – but not every challenge can be solved by investing more time; some require investment of funds. And we have reached the limit of what we can do with declining funds.

Why \$15 when 4-H has historically been free?

No business improves and grows without investment. We understand that it's frustrating to be asked to pay for something that has always been free. We had a statewide task force that worked hard over the past year to explore all of our options and, once the program-fee concept was agreed upon, ensure the program fee was minimal for each family. With families contributing around the state, this unified investment will multiply and ripple outward in many ways.

What if a family can't afford \$15?

We have scholarships available for families who need it. No child who wants to participate in Kansas 4-H will be denied the opportunity. We plan to provide accommodations to enable ALL young people to fully participate.

Will each county collect and keep the money from its participants and/or receive a specific allocation and choose how to spend it?

No. Individual counties are prohibited by law from collecting the program fee at the county level. To manage all the transactions the same, secure way, and to ensure consistent accounting, the program fees will be collected at the state level, where allocation decisions will be made in ways that provide the best value and programmatic advantages for young people across the state.

Can you give more specific information about what you'll do with these investments?

We have a number of plans that we will be rolling out in the weeks to come. In some cases, the plans are still being formed. We have a number of options we want to provide to 4-H'ers and have not yet finished setting our priorities. We will continue to be forthcoming and transparent (see "How will this investment be put to use?").