

## Michigan State 4-H Shooting Sports Program Safety Practices and Policies



### 1. 4-H Age policy

- 1.1. Michigan 4-H Youth Development Programs are open to young people aged 5 through 19. The “4-H age” will be determined by a young person’s age as of January 1 of the 4-H program year (which runs from September 1 through August 31).
- 1.2. 4-H Cloverbud members ages 7-8 may participate in BB gun and basic archery training. Participation is at the discretion of the Certified Instructor and the participant must be under direct adult supervision (one on one).

### 2. Adult Supervision Policy

- 2.1. There must be two or more adults present when working with 4-H youth. It is required that at least one Certified Shooting Sports Instructor be present during any shooting activity.
- 2.2. When working with youth ages 9-19, the youth to adult ratio should be no more than five youth to one adult. Factors such as the experience level of the youth as well as the instructor, equipment limitations and the physical characteristics of the facility must all be considered. Safety must be the overriding factor in determining the proper youth to adult ratio.

### 3. Classroom Safety Policy

Factors that must be considered

- During any hands on learning experience, mistakes will be made. Therefore it is critical to maintain an environment in which a mistake can be made and learned from, without the safety of the students being compromised.
- There are three components that must be present for a firearms accident to occur. They are the Person, the Firearm and the Ammunition. If one of these components is removed, the risk of an accident is greatly reduced.

Based on these factors the Michigan State 4-H Shooting Sports Program Committee has adopted the following classroom safety policies.

#### 3.1. “NO LIVE AMMUNITION WILL BE ALLOWED IN A CLASSROOM WHEN

**FIREARMS ARE PRESENT”**. All students must be made aware of this policy and abide by it. Possession of live ammunition in the classroom is grounds for removal of the student from the program.

- 3.2. Dummy ammo, snap caps and safety trainers may be used for demonstration and gun handling exercises. These should be clearly identified as training aids and easily distinguished from live ammunition.
- 3.3. All Firearms used in the classroom must be checked by the instructor and the student each time they are handled to ensure that the firearm is un-loaded in both the barrel and magazine.
- 3.4. The actions of all firearms should remain open, safeties on and magazines out when not being handled.
- 3.5. Safe gun handling rules must be observed at all times.

3.6. No horseplay or disruptive behavior will be tolerated.

#### **4. Live Fire Safety Policy**

4.1. All youth must demonstrate proficiency in the following areas prior to participating in any live fire exercise.

4.1.1. Firearms safety rules.

4.1.2. Safe gun handling fundamentals.

**4.1.3.** Basic range commands.

#### **5. Mandatory protective equipment/gear**

5.1. Firearms (including BB-gun & Pellet gun)

5.1.1. Eye protection must be worn at all times when on or near the firing line.

5.1.2. Hearing protection must be worn at all times when on or near the firing line while .22cal rifles, muzzle loading rifles or shotguns are being used.

5.2. Archery / 3D Archery

5.2.1. Arm guards and hip quivers must be used.

#### **6. Non-Military Training Policy**

The purpose of the 4-H Shooting Sports Program is to promote youth development through the safe and responsible use of “Firearms” and “Archery equipment”. We teach “Marksmanship and Safety”, we do not train youth in the “Offensive or Defensive” use of this equipment. Therefore it is the policy of the Michigan State 4-H Shooting Sports Program Committee, that:

6.1. The word “**WEAPON**” will not be used in association with this equipment.

6.2. The use of humanoid or tombstone targets will not be allowed during 4-H Shooting Sports events.

#### **7. Paintball Policy**

We teach that pointing any type of firearm including air guns; laser guns or laser sighting devices at any person is inappropriate and dangerous. The sport of “PAINTBALL”, or any other activity which involves participants shooting at each other, is inconsistent with the goals and teaching of the 4-H Shooting Sports program.

**Therefore “PAINTBALL” shall, under no circumstances, be presented as a Michigan 4-H Shooting Sports activity.**

#### **8. Youth and guns position statement:**

The Michigan State 4-H Shooting Sports Program Committee fully supports the National 4-H shooting Sports Committees’ position statement on kids ‘n’ guns.

#### **9. MSU and MSUE 4-H Youth Development Position Statement on Gun Raffles**

- As a youth development program, the goal of a 4-H group to involve youth in the planning and implementation of fundraisers which support 4-H programming. Because youth under the age of 18 cannot be involved in selling or purchasing raffle tickets, we do not encourage counties to do

raffles as a fundraiser . There are many other ways to raise dollars to support 4-H activities locally.

- The liability issues that come into play for 4-H and MSU as a whole do not support 4-H involvement in the raffling of any kind of gun.

**Therefore**

9.1. The Michigan 4-H Shooting Sports Program, Committee, Board and/or Michigan 4-H Clubs will not operate gun raffles as a fund raiser.