TO: All 4-H Members 11-19 Years Old by January 1, 2015
FROM: Eva Beeker, Program Instructor – 4-H Youth Development
RE: 4-H Exploration Days Registration Instructions

DATE: March 11, 2015

Attention! Please read this letter before reading the 4-H Exploration Days Registration Book. This letter contains very important information regarding payment of your Exploration Days registration fee. Please be aware that the payment procedure described in this letter must be followed in order to speed processing of your registration. Incorrect and/or incomplete registration forms will be returned to you for correction and/or completion, and will delay your registration. Note: Be sure to see the information on the Exploration Days bus!

What: 4-H Exploration Days will provide you with an exciting opportunity to:
- Explore life on a college campus!
- Meet and make new 4-H friends!
- Participate in your choice of over 180 different "hands-on" learning sessions (classes)!
- Learn new ideas and skills you can use to enhance community service activities in your 4-H club and community!
- Participate in a wide variety of leisure/recreation activities!
- Have fun!!!

Eligibility: All 4-H members 11-19 years old by January 1, 2015, plus all interested 4-H leaders are eligible and encouraged to participate!

When: Wednesday, June 24 - Friday, June 26, 2015

Where: All 4-H Exploration Days participants will be housed in one of three Michigan State University dormitories reserved for this event (Akers, Holmes and Hubbard Halls). The vast majority of Exploration Days “sessions” (classes) are held on campus. Free bus transportation is provided for participants in sessions that take place off-campus.

Registration Cost: The total conference registration fee is $165.00 per participant (4-H'er or leader). This amount covers registration, meals and lodging in a Michigan State University dormitory and a 2015 4-H Exploration Days theme T-shirt! This year’s theme is Explore the Possibilities!

Session Fees: Some “sessions” have fees for materials or facility rental. Check the description of each session you are interested in to find out if the session has a session fee. Participants will be invoiced for session fees (where applicable) once the State 4-H office has made session assignments.

Registration Deadline: The deadline for submitting the three (3) required Exploration Days registration-related forms (listed directly below) plus your registration fee payment to the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office is Friday, April 24, 2015.

The three (3) required forms needed for registering for 4-H Exploration Days include:
1. 4-H Exploration Days Registration Fee Payment Work Sheet
2. 4-H Exploration Days Registration Form (pg. 22 of the Registration Book)
3. 4-H Exploration Days Authorization Form (pg. 23 of the Registration Book)

4-H Member Scholarship: The St. Joseph County 4-H Youth Council will provide an $82.50 4-H member scholarship to each 4-H member who submit all required registration materials plus their registration fee balance to the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office by Friday, April 24, 2015. Members whose registration materials and payment are received after the registration deadline has passed will not be eligible to receive a scholarship, and will be mailed an invoice for the additional $82.50 due.

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Member Conduct Expectations: 4-H members receiving a 4-H Youth Council scholarship will be expected to participate fully in the program, including attending all assigned sessions and required County Meetings and Youth/Chaperon Huddles held during the event, and to conduct themselves according to the established Code of Conduct printed on page 20 of the 4-H Exploration Days Registration Book. Members violating these expectations/rules will be subject to loss of their educational scholarship at the discretion of the St. Joseph County 4-H Youth Council. Each violation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Leader/Chaperon Scholarships: The 4-H Youth Council will also provide an $82.50 4-H leader/chaperon scholarship to each leader/chaperon who meet the scholarship eligibility requirements and who submit all required registration materials plus their registration fee balance to the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office by Friday, April 24, 2015. Leaders whose registration materials and payment are received after the registration deadline has passed will not be eligible to receive a scholarship, and will be mailed an invoice for the additional $82.50 due.

Leader/Chaperon Expectations: Individuals receiving a leader/chaperon scholarship will be expected to serve as chaperons and to provide assistance as needed, to the 4-H Youth Agent, CCA’s (County Conference Assistants - “head” male and female chaperons) and county delegates. All adult participants (except CCA’s and session instructors/ helpers) must serve as either a session host or activity host during Exploration Days, and must complete the “Host Registration Choices” form on the reversed side of the Registration form.

Registration Procedure: Start by reading page 5 of the Registration Book for complete “how to” instructions for filling out the Registration Form found at the back of the Registration Book. Please note there are four (4) “session times” during 4-H Exploration Days:

1. Afternoon “session time” on Wednesday, June 24
2. Morning “session time” on Thursday, June 25
3. Afternoon “session time” on Thursday, June 25
4. Morning “session time” on Friday, June 26

If you register for and receive a full session, you will attend this session for all four (4) “session times”, for a total of nine (9) hours. If you register for and receive both a first-half session and a second-half session, you will attend the first-half session on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning, and the second-half session on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning. You will spend a total of five (5) hours in each half session. Note: The full and half “session times” differ in length. See page 5 of the Exploration Days Registration Book for times.

You will have the opportunity to indicate your first eight (8) session choices on your registration form. You may choose either full or half sessions for your eight choices, but do not mix full and half sessions on the same choice! (See the top of the right column on page 5 of the Registration Book for an example of how to correctly record full and half session choices.)

Important Exploration Days Registration Policy! The Exploration Days registration form provides you with the opportunity to sign up for eight (8) session choices in order of preference. The reason the State 4-H Office requests that you supply eight choices “up front” is due to the fact that many sessions “fill up” (reach maximum participant capacity) very quickly (i.e. within the first few days of registration). Therefore, please be sure to select and record eight (8) session choices on your registration form before submitting it to the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office!

The registration policy that will be used depending on how many session choices you supply on your registration form:

- If you do submit eight (8) session choices as requested by the State 4-H Offices, and all eight session choices are full, Tonya Barrington, 4-H Program Aide, will contact you regarding your need to either make additional session choices from the remaining “open” sessions, or cancel your registration if there are no “open” sessions that appeal to you.
- If you do not submit eight (8) session choices on your registration form as requested, and all the session choices you did submit are filled up by the time we submit your registration to the State 4-H Office (via the internet), we will assume there are no other sessions you’re interested in attending, and will simply cancel your registration and return your payment as quickly as possible.

**Process “Start Date”:** The State 4-H Office will start accepting registrations by way of the Exploration Days registration website (accessible by county MSU Extension offices only) on **Tuesday March 17**. Therefore if you want to make sure you have a good chance of receiving your first choice session(s) you’ll want to submit your registration materials to the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office just as soon as possible (and if you’re really serious about this by March 17!)

**Extremely Important!** The sooner you submit your completed registration materials to the St. Joseph County MSU Extension Office the better! Many of the most popular sessions fill up within the first few days following the start of registration, so DON’T DELAY! Register EARLY and increase your chances of receiving your first choice session(s)!

**Payment Procedure:** The St. Joseph County MSU Extension office is requesting that members, leaders and parents registering for 4-H Exploration Days pay the total registration fee balance ($165 less applicable scholarships) at the time of registration. Note: See below for a description of the various scholarships that may be applied against the Exploration Days registration fee.

Please find a Registration Fee Payment Work Sheet that must be completed and submitted with your registration form! Registration forms submitted without a completed Registration Fee Payment Work Sheet attached will be returned.

The Registration Fee Payment Work Sheet provides each participant with a handy form for indicating any scholarships and/or special fee reductions (i.e. serving as a session instructor or session helper) to be subtracted from the $165.00 registration fee in determining the registration fee balance that must be submitted with the registration form.

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Scholarships Available: Following is a list of the different kinds of 4-H educational scholarships, which may be applied against the $165.00 registration fee:

- **4-H Youth Council Scholarships:**
  - 4-H member scholarships in the amount of $82.50 each are available all members who complete the registration process.
  - 4-H leader/chaperon scholarships in the amount of $82.50 each are available to all leaders/parents who complete the registration process.

- **UPDATED FOR 2013** 4-H Club Scholarships: Club scholarships will no longer be deducted from the total amount due. It is your responsibility to check with your club organizational leader(s) to find out if your club provides 4-H scholarships, and if so, the dollar amount of the scholarship that you may be directly reimbursed for.

- **Other Scholarships:** 4-H leaders and teen leaders who serve as either session instructors or session helpers receive a reduction in their registration fee from the State 4-H office in return for their help in putting on the event. **Note:** Session instructors and helpers have already been secured for the 2015 4-H Exploration Days program. Call the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office for information about how you can get involved as a session instructor or helper in 2016.

Authorization Form: The form is printed on page 23. All youth participants must complete all sections of this form (i.e. Sections 1 - 3). For adult participants completion of sections 2 - 3 is optional but mandatory for section 1.

Parent/Guardian Signatures: Please be aware there are three (3) different boxes within the registration materials where parent/guardian signatures are required:

1. Section 1 – Event Rules (pg. 23, Registration Book)
2. Section 2 – Parent/Guardian Consent (pg. 23, Registration Book)
3. Section 3 – 4-H Overnight Housing Permission (pg. 23, Registration Book)

Refund, Cancellation and “No Show” Policy: Due to the tremendous expense involved in planning and coordinating 4-H Exploration Days, the State 4-H office has set the following refund/cancellation deadlines (also explained on page 3 of the 4-H Exploration Days Registration Book).

**Note:** Neither 4-H Youth Council scholarship funds nor 4-H club scholarship funds may be applied against the cancellation/no show fee.

- **Now until May 4, 2015** - Fully refundable (of the amount you paid at registration) will be available for cancellations made before 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 4, 2015.
- **May 5 - June 5, 2015** - The State 4-H office will charge any registered participant who cancels after May 4, but before 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 5, 2015 a $80 cancellation fee.
- **June 6, 2015 and after** - The State 4-H office will charge any registered participant who cancels June 6, 2015 or after (or who is a “no show” for the event) a $100 late cancellation/no show fee.

Required Exploration Days Orientation Meeting: Any 4-H member who fails to attend his/her choice of the two (2) Orientation Meetings offered (see schedule below) will forfeit his/her $82.50 4-H Youth Council Scholarship, and will be invoiced for an additional $82.50 which will be due and payable by Friday, June 5, 2015 in order to participate in the event. Therefore, if you want to be sure and maintain your scholarship, remember to add your choice of Orientation Meeting dates to your family calendar right away, then be sure and attend the meeting! **Note:** Two 4-H members have lost their 4-H Youth Council Scholarships when they failed to attend an Orientation Meeting. Don’t let this happen to you!

Members may attend their choice of Orientation Meetings to be held on the following dates in the Spartan Conference room, MSU Extension Office, Centreville: **Tuesday, May 26, 6:30 p.m. or Thursday, May 28, 6:30 p.m.**

The purpose of the Orientation Meeting is to provide members, leaders and parents with essential information needed for participation in the event, introduce County Conference Assistants and County Chaperons, explain participant conduct expectations and obtain information on roommate preferences.

Help/Additional Information: Please do not hesitate to call the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office at 269/467-5521 if you need help with and/or additional information on how to register for 4-H Exploration Days.

ERB/tb
Enclosures
Cc: 4-H Club Organizational Leaders

“Keep in Touch” with 4-H Exploration Days via the Internet by going to [http://4h.msue.msu.edu/events/4-h_exploration_days](http://4h.msue.msu.edu/events/4-h_exploration_days)