

Boulder County 4-H Horse Project and Show Rules

(Revised 10/6/25, Approved: 11/03/25)

1. The Boulder County 4-H Horse Program follows the most recent update of the Colorado 4-H Horse Show Rule Book (LA 1500J) with the following additions.
2. To participate in the Boulder County Fair, members must be enrolled by the last Friday in April. Members are eligible to show at the Boulder County Fair only those horses identified for the member on 4-H Online on or before the last Friday in April.
 - a. The only exception is in the case of a death of all identified project horses after the last Friday in April. Substitution will be considered upon presentation of a certificate of death no later than four (4) days before check in of the Boulder County Fair Horse Show. Death certificates must be presented to the county 4-H Extension Agent overseeing the horse program by the above deadline.
 - b. Replacement 4-H horses must be selected from currently or previously identified horses in the Boulder County 4-H Horse Program by another current or previous 4-H member. The member requesting the replacement must provide acceptable documentation showing that the horse has been identified.
 - c. Rule from the Colorado State 4-H rule book about sharing horses in members above level 1 are still in effect. Rule # 4D under General Rules and Requirements.
 - d. Classes may be limited due to scheduling conflicts among members utilizing the same horse. e) Following the rules above, a replacement horse may also be proposed for other 4-H horse shows held after the Animal ID deadline. This also requires notification at least 4 days before the show. The same replacement horse shall be used in all subsequent shows of that season.
3. These are in addition to the rules outlined on page 3 of the Colorado 4-H Horse Show Rule Book 2024 edition under General Rules and Requirements. A horse may only be IDed/shared as a project horse by no more than two unrelated 4-H members, except in a horse-death hardship case where an additional member may be added to show the horse in a different discipline from that of the existing member. (One shows Western, the other shows English, and both may exhibit the horse in showmanship). Immediate family members may share and ID the same project horse between any number of siblings (each sibling must turn in an ID on the horse). Since the horse is being shared within the immediate family, the same horse may also be IDed/shared by one non-family member. It is expected that 4-H members include all IDed horses in their E-record Book. For all non-owned horses it is recommended a lease agreement be in place to establish responsibilities for care.
4. Completion of the 4-H Horse Project requires the following: participating in a horse judging activity, giving a demonstration, participating in the community service project, exhibiting a project horse, attending required 4-H club meetings, actively participating in the club program and completing a horse record book.
5. If a member passed a horsemanship rating test, he or she **must** attempt the written test. It is expected that members take the written test within 30 days of passing their riding test. Failure to take the written test means the member is ineligible to show at Boulder County Fair until the test has been taken. Upon passing a horsemanship rating test, the members will compete at that level in Boulder County 4-H shows and at the Boulder County Fair.
 - a. The Colorado State Fair requires members to show at the level with which the member holds a complete advancement level card.
 - b. Advancement level cards will not be given until the member has passed both the written and riding tests.
 - c. Members may retake both the written and riding tests until they have been passed.
 - d. Members must pass both the riding and the written tests at one level before taking the riding or the written test at the next higher level.
 - e. It is highly encouraged that members take the written test prior to taking the riding test.
 - f. It is noted that if a member needs special accommodations in taking any test, they should let the Extension Office know prior to planning to take a test. Reasonable accommodations can be made

- with appropriate advance notice.
- g. All Level tests (Riding and written) must be completed by **June 30, 2026**. The level deadline for the state fair will also be **June 30, 2026**.
 - h. Level testing (riding and written) for end of the year awards must be completed by **June 30, 2026**.
6. A member's riding level for Boulder County Fair will be determined by the riding level passed **by June 30, 2026**.
7. Administration of advancement level tests:
- a. Copies of **all** written and riding tests are to be turned in to the County 4-H Extension Office by leaders or raters within 30 days of the testing date.
 - b. Member's advancement level is designated by the records on file in the Extension Office.
 - c. Level 1 written tests may be administered by horse project leaders or State-certified raters. Level 2, 3, and 4 written tests shall be administered, by appointment, in the Extension Office by Extension staff.
 - d. Level 1 riding test may be administered by any club leader or state certified rater.
 - e. Level 2, 3, and 4 riding tests must be administered by State-certified raters who are not leaders in the member's club.
 - f. Parents shall not rate their own children.
 - g. Trainers or instructors shall not rate their students/clients.
8. Advancement levels are rated separately for Western and English disciplines. A member may be eligible to compete at different levels in different disciplines. Competency tests will be administered for Ranch Horse, Roping, Jumping, Gymkhana, Driving, and Trail Riding.
9. Please refer to the **most recent** Colorado 4-H Horse Levels Program Advancement Guidelines for the updated policies on advancement through the levels program. The only addendum is the following stricter guideline for our county program.
- a. Boulder County 4-H horse members will be expected to continue to compete at their highest level rated in a discipline regardless of acquiring a new project horse.
 - b. An appeal to this policy can be done in writing to the Boulder County 4-H HLC and is subject to approval.
10. If a member is required to attempt to rate to the next level in any discipline for any reason, failure to do so will result in ineligibility to show at the Boulder County Fair in all disciplines.
- a. Any horse project member who receives a Division High Point Award or Reserve Division High Point Award at the Boulder County Fair 4-H Horse Show must attempt to rate to the next level before **June 30, 2026**. Such rating is recommended to be done by a State-certified rater who is not affiliated with the member's club.
 - b. Exception to the level up rules are for level 4 Riders as there is no level to advance.
11. Walk/trot classes are for unrated riders in their first or second year of exhibition. However, therapeutic riders or riders with disabilities may compete in walk/trot classes and are not limited to years of competition.
12. New members or unrated members with a new horse **could be asked to** pass a Pre-level 1 safety test prior to, or at the first 4-H club or county riding event. (4-H club leaders or state level raters can administer these safety tests).
13. Members must have passed a Level 1 or above riding test in the appropriate discipline and **for** the appropriate competency tests to enter the following classes at club 4-H Horse Shows or the Boulder County Fair 4-H Horse Show:
- a. English Control
 - b. Western Riding, Reining or Trail
 - c. Dressage and Western Dressage tests
 - d. Gymkhana (and Gymkhana Competency Test)
 - e. Ranch Horse Beginner Classes **(cow-work with Introductory Ranch Competency Test)**
 - f. **Beginner over fences (and Intro Beginning Over Fences Competency Test)**
14. Members must have passed a Level 2 or above riding test in the appropriate discipline and the appropriate

competency tests to show in the following classes at club 4-H Horse Shows or the Boulder County Fair 4-H Horse Show:

- a. Over fences classes- (must also pass the Jumping Competency Test)
 - b. Show Hack classes
 - c. Classes including working with cattle. (must also pass the appropriate Ranch Horse Competency Tests)
15. Up-to-date horse record books shall be submitted to a designated club leader (not to be the member's parent) prior to June 30, 2026. Horse leaders shall check the record books to ensure they are up-to-date prior to accepting entries for Boulder County Fair. Members with records that are not up-to-date and those having no record book are not eligible to show at the Boulder County Fair. Completed 4-H Horse Record Books are due to the Extension Office by the second Thursday in September to be eligible for record book judging, project completion and to participate in the Boulder County Fair the following year.
 16. No one but a 4-H member may school horses under saddle during the Boulder County Fair 4-H Horse Show (except in the Nelson Road practice arena).
 17. If any unsportsmanlike conduct or action is committed by an exhibitor, or by any other person on his or her behalf, that exhibitor may be expelled from the show and forfeit all awards, as determined by show management. Abuse of a horse is considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
 18. Exhibitors or parents may not approach the judge for discussion until the show has been completed. In addition, the judge shall not be approached without the consent of show management. Any exhibitor, parent or leader acting in a disrespectful manner to the judge or other show personnel will be asked by show management to leave the show grounds. All prizes and fees will be forfeited.
 19. Standard Colorado 4-H score sheets for western riding, reining, trail, English control, and working ranch classes shall be used at Boulder County Fair and shall be posted or available for review after the performance. Classes that are scored shall be in compliance with the State Rule Book.
 20. It is the intention of the 4-H Horse Program that members only show their project horses in all 4-H classes. After the Boulder County 4-H animal ID deadline (the last Thursday in April), members may ONLY show project horses that they have ID'd in 4-H classes.