

*Oregon 4-H Youth Development Program*  
**Contextual Staffing for a New Century**

**Goal**

The Oregon 4-H Youth Development Program seeks to increase the number of field-based FTEs devoted to 4-H youth development programming while maintaining or strengthening the professional status of youth work.

**Key Assumptions**

4-H is different from other youth organizations because of its links to the land grant university system. Programs utilize best practices derived from contemporary research and knowledge.

A paid 4-H professional must be located in every county. This may be a tenure-track, fixed-term, or professional faculty position. Job class is determined by the “work to be done.” All faculty may use the “agent” title.

Counties are unique in terms of their staffing needs. Therefore, it should not be assumed that 4-H would be staffed identically in every county.

The mix of 4-H positions housed in a particular county is determined by numerous factors (program needs, population, geography, funding, investments by other program areas, supervisory responsibilities) and determined in consultation with the staff chair.

Core competencies for the field are articulated in the taxonomy of 4-H Professional Research, Knowledge, and Competencies (4-HPRKC, 2004). The subset of skills required by any one individual is determined by their position description.

**Position Types**

In Oregon, **tenure-track faculty** are responsible for quality assurance in 4-H. Roles can include staff training, program design, curriculum development, evaluation, and the generation of scholarly products that advance the field. They may or may not have responsibilities beyond the county in which they are housed.

**Renewable-term faculty (including instructors)** provide 4-H with the flexibility to respond to time-sensitive issues through grants and contracts. These may or may not have expectations for scholarly or creative activity.

**Administrative and professional faculty** are responsible for the day-to-day administration, coordination, and management of 4-H programs.

**Program assistants** hold classified positions and operate under the direction of faculty. They are primarily responsible for program delivery.

Other **support staff** perform functions described in their position descriptions.