

An Organization Manual for County Home Demonstration Council



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The Organization Manual for

County Home Administration (Circular)

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Home Administration Council

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The American Association of Home Administrators is a national organization of home administrators, including county home administrators, city and town home administrators, and private home administrators. The Association was organized in 1905 and has since that time been working for the improvement of the home administration in this country. The Association's main object is to promote the best interests of the home administration by the exchange of information, the holding of conferences, and the publication of a journal and a manual. The Association is now the largest and most influential organization of its kind in the United States.

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An Organization Manual For County Home Demonstration Councils

By Mrs. Maggie W. Barry

Extension Sociologist Rural Women's Organization

The principal objectives of women's county home demonstration councils are to develop leadership, to forward and extend home demonstration work through county-wide cooperation with all rural home makers and serve as a medium through which the agent may receive information from community clubs and give additional help to rural home makers.

County Home Demonstration Council an Advisory Committee

The council has the status of an advisory committee functioning within the limitations imposed by the policies of the state home demonstration staff with all its activities subject to the approval of the county home demonstration agent, the representative of the staff in the county. It is not an independent club. It has no constitution or by-laws. It can not take official action on anything except matters pertaining to home demonstration work and cannot join, as an organization, other groups not directly related to Co-operative Extension Work.

The county home demonstration council is the county wide organization through which the agent carries on all organized group activities related to home demonstration work. Whenever separate groups dealing with a specific activity become necessary these should not be organized as independent councils or associations but as committees of the council. The home demonstration agent can not give continuous official service to home demonstration organizations not related to the council.

The council is the cooperating agency through which the home demonstration agent in her official capacity cooperates with other local groups. This should be done whenever possible through existing council committees. New organizations or committees should not be created unless the work to be performed cannot be efficiently done through already functioning groups or through individual effort.

Relation of the Home Demonstration Agent to the County Home Demonstration Council

A county home demonstration council is a demonstration in organization. This defines the most important relationship and responsibility of the agent to the organization. Each council meeting is a training school for the organization demonstrators, the officers and members, and should contribute something definite to the demonstration as a whole.

As in 4-H Pantry, Wardrobe, or any other demonstration the agent is the instructor of the Council training it to proper procedure, effective functioning through its committees and to an understanding of its responsibility in providing an harmonious working machine through which under the guidance of the agent the benefits of home demonstration work may be extended to all farm families in the county.

The agent should also train the council members how to present each step of the demonstration to the community home demonstration club to which each member belongs so that the clubs also may be demonstrations in good organization procedure and efficient functioning.

In her instruction methods the agent should always strive to stimulate the initiative and the sense of individual and collective responsibility of the council members.

The home demonstration agent is not a member of the county home demonstration council consequently she can never preside over its meetings, introduce or put motions, vote or handle the money of the council but she has all the privileges of the floor in a council meeting.

The council represents the home demonstration clubs of the county and is responsible for all activities related to home demonstration work in the county except those requiring the professional services of the agent. In all its duties the council should have the advice and cooperation of the agent and must have her approval.

The agent cannot give continuous professional service to any organized group in the county not represented in the council. Where state wide cooperation has been established by the Extension Service with outside groups the extent of the service given by the agent is of course determined by the district agent.

Organization

County home demonstration councils are organized by the county home demonstration agent with the advice and under the direction of the district home demonstration agent.

Since the council is a delegate body consisting of representatives from community home demonstration clubs, club organization precedes that of permanent council organization though the agent on entering a county may call together a temporary group representative of the home makers in the various communities to advise them in the organization of clubs in their respective communities. This group is not a county home demonstration council and serves only until such a time as there may be enough club representatives to organize a permanent council.

Every group working together for a common purpose should adopt a few simple rules to which all members pledge themselves to conform so that the group may work together harmoniously and efficiently. The number and character of the rules vary with the size and purposes of the group. It is necessary however for the council to adopt standing rules providing regulations in regard to:

1. Membership
2. Officers
3. Term of office of officers and club representatives
4. Annual meetings and elections of officers
5. Money received and paid out
6. Standing committees, business and special
7. Meetings
8. Voting body
9. Quorum

Because the council must conform to the policies of the home demonstration staff, there are certain requirements that must be included in the rules adopted. These are as follows:

1. Among the club representatives in the council there must be the club president and at least one elected delegate.
2. As the council has the preliminary status of a committee the presiding officer must be called a chairman and there must be a secretary-treasurer. These last two offices may be separated if the council desires.
3. All officers must be elected for a period not exceeding two years and are not eligible to the same office for more

than two consecutive years. This rule should definitely state whether officers are to be elected annually or every two years. Club representatives must serve not less than one year and not more than two. This requirement applies not only to elected delegates but to the club presidents or any other officer that clubs may send as representatives. If a club president is elected for more than three years she can not serve as a representative in the council after the second year. The same applies to any other officer.

The purpose of restricting the term of officers is to give opportunity to other members of the Council to have executive experience. To observe the letter and not the spirit of this requirement is to defeat its purpose. This is done when a Council chairman serves two consecutive years and is immediately elected to a lower office or after a lapse of a year or two is again elected chairman. Such practice results in the executive body of the councils being made up of practically the same personnel from year to year. This rule should not permit an officer to be elected to another office except one higher than the one she has served in. A retiring secretary-treasurer may be elected vice-chairman or chairman. A retiring chairman should never be elected vice-chairman or secretary-treasurer.

4. The annual meeting and election of officers must be held in October or November. Each council decides which month it prefers and the standing rule in regard to the meeting must state the month selected.

The council year runs from January first, to January first. Officers elected in October or November must be selected from the authorized voting body at the time of election and are officers-elect until the following January when they take over the responsibilities of their offices. The same is true of delegates elected by the clubs. Delegates elected are not voting members of the Council until January 1 following their election.

5. The following rule in regard to the council's funds must be adopted as given:

"The treasurer shall receive, hold and disburse all the funds belonging to the county home demonstration council of county. She shall make a full report at each annual meeting and at any other time upon the request of the chairman.

The outgoing treasurer shall, after the annual meeting and before the beginning of the next council year, turn over to the treasurer-elect all money, books and papers of the county council in her custody.

Money paid out by the treasurer must be authorized by a majority vote of the council, except in an emergency the

treasurer is authorized to pay out not more than dollars on a written order for same signed by the chairman to be reported at the next meeting of the council. All disbursements must be made by checks signed by both the council chairman and treasurer."

6. Standing committees are of two kinds, business committees and special committees.

Business committees such as year book, finance and exhibits committees should consist of three council members. Expansion committees should consist of three or four members of the council, as the body may prefer. If desirable, expansion committees of one or more members may be appointed in each club to cooperate with the council committee. Such appointees unless already members of the council do not become so by virtue of their appointment. These four committees, not their personnel, should be listed in the standing rule on committees. This rule should also provide that business committees be appointed by the chairman of the council at the first meeting of the new council year.

The rule on standing committees should include this sentence: "Additional standing committees may be appointed at any time and in any way that the council may determine advisable." This applies to both business and special committees.

Organization of special standing committees will be found under the heading "Duties of Officers and Standing Committees."

7. This rule should require monthly meetings specifying the day, the hour and the place the meetings are to be held and should include this sentence: "The meeting shall close not later than o'clock." Promptness in the beginning and ending of meetings should be strictly enforced and regular attendance continually urged.

8. In this rule the voting body should be defined as:
- a. The membership as provided for in rule 1
 - b. The officers of the council
 - c. The chairman of special standing committees

9. A quorum should always be less than one half the total voting strength. The rule should state the number to constitute a quorum. It should also state how many clubs must be represented in the number present to constitute a quorum. For instance, if a council has a total voting body of twenty, the quorum should not exceed eight, and in this number five clubs should be represented.

10. Where a council desires a parliamentarian the standing rule concerning term of office of officers and club representatives or the one relating to the annual meeting should stipulate the method of selecting the parliamentarian. Parliamentarians are not officers. Their duties are not executive. They should be elected by the voting body or board of directors or executive committee at the same time officers are elected.

The above paragraphs are a guide to the Council in drafting its standing rules. From the information and suggestions given each Council must formulate its own rules except as to the handing of money in paragraph 5. The rule given there must be used as written.

Standing rules are the laws by which a Council is governed and should always be written in the affirmative and positively stated.

While Council organizations should be kept simple and the rules deal only with fundamental things a Council is at liberty to make other rules than those discussed here. Before formulating rules submitted for adoption the Manual should be read carefully especially the instructions under the head of "Organization" and under "General Information."

Duties of Officers and Standing Committees

Officers

Chairman: The duties of the Council Chairman are such as usually pertain to that office. A vice-chairman takes the place of the chairman whenever the latter is unable to serve temporarily or permanently.

The Secretary-Treasurer: The secretary-treasurer has two sets of duties. Performing the duties of secretary she keeps the records of the meetings of the council and compiles reports given at the meetings summarizing them for the home demonstration agent annually or at any other time the agent may call for them. She answers communications of all kinds addressed to the council, sends the contributions to the scholarship fund to the District vice-president of the Texas Home Demonstration Association, sends the name and address of the chairman of the council when selected to the president and treasurer of the Texas Home Demonstration Association and Chairman of special standing committees of the Council to the corresponding state chairmen.

As treasurer, the secretary-treasurer must follow in detail the standing rule regarding the council fund. The county home demonstration agent should never be asked to receive, hold or disburse money belonging to the council.

Business Standing Committees

Finance: This committee plans the council budget and devises ways and means for raising the money to meet it as approved by the council.

Exhibits: Through this committee the council participates in fairs, and plans the educational exhibits that the council decides to sponsor. This committee should be responsible for plans for achievement days and educational tours.

Year Book: This committee, in cooperation with the agent, plans the year book, compiles it, is responsible for its publication, and distribution; and in cooperation with the finance committee plans some method of financing it.

Expansion Committee: This committee, with the advice and help of the home demonstration agent, develops a plan by which home demonstration work or some part of it may be extended to the people of the entire county.

The total number of farm homes planned for should be at least 85% of the white farm families in the county.

Such an extension of work can be successfully done only by responsible representatives from the clubs attending each council meeting so that accurate information may be transmitted from the clubs to the agent and the program of the council be taken back to the clubs.

The finance and expansion committees should have their plans or changes in old plans for the year ready to report to the council at its February meeting. This means discussion of matters pertaining to finance and expansion should be a part of the business program of the January council meeting so that these committees may know the wishes of the body before formulating permanent plans.

Special Standing Committees

Special standing committees are created to take care of the growing activities of the individual councils.

Their duties arise out of the nature of the work they are created to perform hence those duties cannot be defined in detail and their organization cannot follow fixed rules laid down in a manual.

The personnel of the various committees should be selected from the entire membership of the home demonstration clubs according to their fitness for the work regardless of whether they are members of the council, or not at the time of selection. They serve until new selections are made.

The general plan of organization for these committees is a chairman who represents the committee in the council authorized under the standing rule defining the voting body and the chairman of corresponding committees in the clubs or as in the education committee one or two club members from each commissioner's district. Whatever the committee and however organized only the chairman can represent the committee in the council.

The chairman may be appointed by the chairman of the council or elected by the council or the latter may give the committee the privilege as in the present committee on markets, recreation and 4-H sponsors of electing its own chairman who automatically becomes a voting member of the council. The council should create these committees as needed and the motion to that effect should include the method of selecting a chairman.

The organization and plan of work of the committees must have the approval of the county home demonstration agent.

The secretary should in her official record book apart from the minutes list these committees with the date of the councils authorization and their plan of organization and work for the year.

Organization of these committees that have been approved and are in general use at present is given in a separate set of instructions, Special Standing Committee Organization in County Home Demonstration Councils, MS-278 (mimeographed)

Miscellaneous Information

From time to time home demonstration agents and councils have asked for definitions and instructions in regard to specific questions of policy or organization principles. Some of these are sufficiently general in their application to be included in this Manual, and are presented below.

A farm home-maker is a person living in the open country or in a town or village of less than 2500 population and having a home environment that will permit productive activities required for demonstrators and cooperators in home demonstration work.

The officers and voting members of the council must be demonstrators or cooperators. If a club elects its president or council delegate from club members who are not demonstrators or cooperators these cannot represent the club in the council. They may attend the meetings of the council but can not vote or make a motion.

Council meetings are executive sessions. No publicity as to action taken by the council should be given out except by the duly appointed council reporter.

The above does not apply to the occasional open meeting before or after the business sessions that a council may have during the year.

Monthly reports from the local clubs should be in writing and filed with the home demonstration agent. All or part of the report from each club should be represented orally to the council and interesting features discussed.

Annual reports of officers should furnish all necessary information for the agent's annual report, on the council.

All meetings should be conducted in accordance with Extension Service C-54 "Suggested Method of Procedure for Organizations" and the parliamentary law text adopted by the Texas Home Demonstration Association.

When the agent uses a home demonstration club as a medium for helping the people entitled to her service it should be remembered:

a. That home demonstration clubs are independent organizations controlled by a constitution and by-laws of their own making. The agent may serve them in an advisory capacity in regard to methods of procedure but is not responsible for their policies.

b. That the club programs belong to the club but the illustrated lectures for training demonstrators and co-operators, even though given in connection with a club program by the agent or by a demonstrator, belong to all farm families. The agent and the club should see to it that information as to time and place of such illustrated lectures is given out in the community through the press.

c. That, where the home demonstration club has in its membership people who are not farm home-makers as already defined these are reported by the Expansion Committee as "families helped." Such members may not be designated or counted as demonstrators or co-operators, though they may do all the work required of demonstrators or co-operators and attend club meetings and illustrated lectures. Such members are not eligible to enter contests or receive prizes offered for home demonstration work. Such competition would be obviously unfair to farm home-makers.

Reports of Council Meetings

The monthly report of the agent is the principal source of information for the organization specialist as to the functioning of the council.

Regular meetings held with good average attendance of officers and a major proportion of clubs represented are a fairly good assurance that the council is actively alive.

For this reason the first paragraph of every council report should state whether the meeting was regular or called, time and place held, officers, not the name of the person, presiding, total number of members present, number of clubs represented, total number of clubs in the council membership.

The report should state it if a temporary secretary was appointed. This gives a check on the regularity of attendance of that officer. No organization can flourish if its secretary-treasurer is lacking in promptness and regularity or if it tolerates an intermittent chairman.

Committees are the eyes and ears of an organization someone has said. Their reports should be included in the council report either in full or summarized. It is not sufficient to say a committee reported. The important thing is what it reported whether it is a plan of work, a recommendation or something done. Also say how the council disposed of the report.

It is unnecessary to give the names of committee members or officers. State the name of the committee and whether the chairman or someone else made the report. Refer to officers by titles and not by name.

Club activities are not a part of council reports but the plans for carrying on the activities are if there is in them anything related to organization.

If the council decides to give a banquet or a meat canning demonstration do not give the menu or the recipes or to what clubs certain duties are assigned, but give the temporary organization created by the Council to be responsible for the banquet or the meat canning demonstration and later give the results.

Report any outstanding features of the meeting especially if they are related directly or indirectly to organized effort.

4-H Girls Clubs County Council

These organizations have the same general status as that of the women's council and follow the same principles of organization. They are really junior county home demonstration councils. This manual should serve as their guide.

The county councils for 4-H girls clubs and for women's home demonstration clubs are the only home demonstration groups that should use the name "council" so that there may be no confusion in designating relationships.

Adult Organization

The county adult organization set-up which the Extension Service is at present directly or indirectly related consists of three sets of two units each. The first set is made up of organized local groups of demonstrators and cooperators working with the home demonstration agent; and of county home demonstration councils.

The second set is made up of local unorganized groups of farm demonstrators; and of county farm demonstration councils.

The third set is composed of community agricultural associations and of county agricultural associations.

Each of these sets belongs to the type of organization usually described as following the natural laws of growth. They are organic wholes—one unit grows out of the other as do the roots, body and leafage of a tree.

Two of these sets of two units each have their functions limited to one field of action—agricultural and home demonstration work, respectively, as carried on by county agricultural and home demonstration agents under the direction of the Extension Service of the A. and M. College in the counties in which they exist.

The third set of two units functions in any field of rural living as its membership may determine. The relation of the Extension Service to this set is an advisory one only.

Organization of the Three Two-Unit Sets

1. The home demonstration set already established consists of local community home demonstration clubs and a county-wide home demonstration council.

Organization of each unit: The local club is independent—it is controlled by a constitution and by-laws of its own making. The county home demonstration agent is adviser in organization and procedure to this group. The county council has the organization status of an advisory committee. It is very simple in its organic structure, having a few standing rules and committees. The agent is not a member of the council but she is something more than just an adviser. Under her direction the council becomes a demonstration in good organization procedure and in efficient methods of cooperative activity. The council members, the president and at least one elected representative of each club, carry the instruction given by the agent to their respective clubs.

The council as a group cannot join any other organization since it is only a committee functioning within the policies of the home demonstration staff, with its activities subject to the approval or disapproval of the agent and limited to home demonstration work in the county. In a cooperative relationship representing home demonstration work in the county, the Council gives valuable help to other agencies in the county working for similar ends.

The farm demonstration set of two units now being organized is in its structure and ultimate plans and purposes the counter part of the home demonstration set up with the exception of local units. At present the membership of the farm county council consists of one representative from each community working in cooperation with the agent or planning to do so. The representative is selected in a way that meets the approval of the majority of those he represents.

The last of the three two-units sets is made up of the agricultural associations—community and county-wide.

The community agricultural association itself defines the limits of the community in which it functions and the qualifications of its membership. It is controlled by rules and regulations of its own making and is in every sense an independent organization. It has the right to concern itself with any activity related to the life of the community that it desires.

County agricultural associations are planned as a county-wide body made up of delegates from the community associations. The agricultural associations are not Extension organizations and should be entirely free from the control of state or federal agencies. The agents cannot organize them, solicit membership for them, or be members of them, but they can be and are advisers and give a great deal of aid in helping in the planning of the organization structure and in furnishing material for programs.

The question is sometimes asked why have agricultural associations when there are farm and home demonstration organizations. The latter are particular groups of people with only one objective. There is a large potential energy for developing many phases of rural life which they do not use. Agricultural Associations should concern themselves with every activity related to the life of the community: economic welfare; health and sanitation; housing; education, both church and school; and recreation, sports and arts. A live, active agricultural association develops an all round com-

munity life. The councils are concerned solely with the Extension Service and its program for better home making, farming and ranching, which is the basis of the economic life of the community, and they cooperate with the agricultural associations in training for leadership and in developing a richer social and cultural life in the community.

The above statement is a brief summary of the county organization plans, the relationship of the agent to the organizations and of the latter to each other now being used with the approval of the organization specialists and the Extension Service administration.

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