

Utah 4-H State Contest

4-H Pet Advocate Contest Rules

The Pet Advocate contest creates an environment where learning is fun. 4-H members exhibit their knowledge and understanding of companion animals as pets, hobbies, and careers. Participation will help youth understand what being a “pet advocate” is all about.

The Pet Advocate Contest is a skillathon that tests youth on practical skills, general knowledge, and includes a case study presentation. The contest has 4 – 6 stations dependent on number of participants, space, and time allowance. Each station falls into either the *case study* or *general knowledge and practicum* category. A minimum of one station will be a *case study*, and a minimum of 3 stations will be *general knowledge and practicum*.

Participants compete as individuals OR teams of 2 – 4 and will be scored and awarded as two separate contests. Throughout the event, teams work together to complete each station. Anything needed to complete the stations will be provided. Notebooks, index cards, or any electronic devices will not be allowed.

Each station is worth a total of 50 points and must be completed within a 15-minute period.

Case Study Stations

Case Study stations are a team effort to evaluate different case scenarios and come up with a plan of action or solution. Topics will involve companion animal careers (limited to grooming, training, running a facility, and veterinarian medicine) and laws or legislation involving companion animals. At this time, the case studies will be written and turned in. Teams will be given their case study at the time they enter their station. They should be in paragraph format (topic sentence, body, and conclusion) with complete sentences. *The rubric for the case study is coming soon.* Scoring is based on knowledge of the topic, innovation in a solution, and accuracy in information. Example case studies are below:

- Your neighbor’s dog has bitten you. They claim to have given him his rabies shots at home. How do you respond to your neighbor and what should you do?
- You see a dog panting inside of a hot car. According to Utah Law, what should you do?
- You are working as an assistant for a grooming facility. A potential client comes in with a cat that has bald patches, is very sensitive around his ears, and has a foul odor. What do you think is wrong and how would you proceed with the owner?
- A family member wants to buy a 3-week-old baby rabbit advertised in an online classifieds site. What advice do you give them before they bring their new pet home?
- You see two pygmy goats running down the side of the road. What do you do and who do you contact?

General Knowledge and Practicum (15 minutes)

General Knowledge and Practicum stations will include a written exam worth 30 points and a 20-point practicum. Stations for the 2019 contest will be based on one of the seven following companion animal categories: cats, dogs, guinea pigs, miniature horses, miniature livestock (including only goats and sheep), potbelly pigs, and rabbits.

The written exam will test the general knowledge of the participant and include anything involving the care

and proper ownership of companion animals as found in the resource books. The exam will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer, or any combination. Questions may include breeds, equipment, interpreting a feed label, general health, and husbandry.

The practicum will be the hands-on portion of the station. Participants will be judged on a practical skill or series of skills involving the care and handling of the category animal. Each teammate may participate in the practicum and help each other, but only one teammate will be scored (the scored teammate must identify themselves to the station manager and announce when they are ready to be scored). Only one teammate has to complete this portion of the exam. Some skills may include (but are not limited to) putting on a harness or halter, putting on a muzzle, measuring the correct portion of feed for their pet, correctly taking the temperature, or bandaging a leg. *The rubric for the practicum is coming soon.* Scoring is based on competency, general knowledge, and technique.

NOTE: Each station will focus on one companion animal category. For example, students will not see a station that includes information on both dogs and cats (but they may have a station that consists of goats and sheep). Categories may be used at more than one station (for example, you may have 2 dog stations) but only ONE station will include the full written exam. A second station should be a more advanced or multi-step practicum equaling 50 points. The advanced practicum may include questions pertaining to the equipment and skills being tested. (for example, the participant may have to write a short answer on why they would or would not use a certain type of lead on a cat and then demonstrate properly fitting the harness/lead).

Resource Materials

Cats: The Cat Handbook by Karen Leigh Davis [Amazon Link](#)

Dogs: Dog Resource Handbook through Ohio State [Ohio State Book](#)

Guinea Pigs: The Guinea Pig Handbook by Sharon L Vanderlip [Amazon Link](#)

Miniature Horses: The Book of Miniature Horses by Donna Campbell Smith [Amazon Link](#)

Miniature Livestock: Sheep Resource Handbook & Goat Resource Handbook from Ohio State [Ohio State Book](#).

Potbelly Pigs: Pot Bellies and Other Miniature Pigs by Pat Storer [Amazon Link](#)

Rabbits: The Rabbit Handbook by Karen Parker [Amazon Link](#)

*Please note: we understand that these resources can quickly add up! We did our best to find quality resources that were either available through your County office or your local library. In an effort to be consistent, our 4-H Pet Advocate youth studying dogs or livestock will all be studying from the same materials as youth involved in those specific project areas.

Keep in mind these contests are done as a *team* so it is not necessary for each team member to have their own copy of the resource books.

Other Information:

Tie-Breaking: Ties for highest over-all score for either the individual or team contest will be broken by the highest practicum score (with the winner of the tie being the individual or team with the highest combined practicum score of all stations), then by the highest general knowledge score, and finally by the highest case study score. If a tie still occurs, the general knowledge portion of a randomly selected station will be used. Whichever team or individual missed a question first will be the loser of the tie.