



UNIVERSITY
OF WYOMING
EXTENSION

County Coordinator Resource Guide

University of Wyoming Extension
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
Revised 2015

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Duties and Responsibilities

An employee shall be assigned by job description as county coordinator in each county to carry out administrative tasks. This is not an administrative appointment but an assignment subject to annual evaluation and periodic review. County coordinators are appointed by the Director of Extension in consultation with commissioners from the county. County coordinators serve at the will of the University of Wyoming Extension (UWE) Director. Shared leadership and development of administrative capacity of all UWE educators is an important philosophy of UWE. The rotation of the county coordinator role among UWE employees is encouraged.

All educators are required to submit a Self-Evaluation Tool which can be found on the UWE Website: [County Coordinator Application](#), for the assignment of County Coordinator when the five-year term in their respective county is up. This is a leadership position that all educators should learn from, understand, and experience at some point in their Extension career. It is the intent of UWE administration that the duty of County Coordinator should be rotated among all eligible educators within the county, so that all might share in the opportunity to build leadership capacity. Extension Administration will review self-evaluation tools and appoint county coordinators.

County coordinator is a partial time assignment. Thus, each county coordinator will have at least one other major assignment. It is expected that most county coordinators also serve as an area educator or 4-H/Youth educator. The responsibilities of the county coordinator include:

- Serve as a UW Extension (UWE) contact with the county government. Work closely with the associate director responsible for the county to build a positive relationship with the county commissioners, county clerk, and other county officials. In most counties this will mean service as one of the cadre of county department heads.
- Administer the budget of the county extension program. Provide leadership to county team members for cooperative development and management of the county budget. This requires working with county government and others in the office, as well as decision-making for budget allocation and expenditures. This also includes the oversight of other county resources such as vehicles, building space, etc.
- Supervise the employees assigned to the county extension program such as the support staff and program associates or assistants who are county employees. The associate directors will generally supervise university extension educators.
- Coordinate all county UWE programs. Engaging, assisting, and supporting are the key words describing this responsibility. Encourage effective programming for all initiatives in the county. Facilitate efforts with area educators and county assigned 4-H educators to assess county educational needs and to coordinate educational resources. Coordinate appropriate UWE and university resources to solve client problems in the county. County coordinator responsibilities include Cent\$ible Nutrition and other soft-funds driven programs. The coordinator will be a part of the decision making team for any UWE programs using county provided resources from her/his county.
- Serve as the lead educator for county program interactions with UWE administration, UW administration, County Commissioners, and other state and local groups.
- Provide leadership for intra-office communication including regular staff meetings and initiation of office activities that build team communication among staff.

Since county coordinator duties are an assignment, performance in those duties is a matter for annual evaluation and extended term and promotion processes. County coordinator assignments will be made based on skills, performance in the position, and UWE needs.

All who hold the assignment of county coordinator will receive a small stipend for added duties and will lose the stipend when their service as a county coordinator ends.

Evaluation Components for All County Coordinators

Administrative/Supervisory

As part of the annual performance review, individuals with county coordinator appointments will be evaluated on effectiveness in the following administrative responsibilities.

- **Policies and Procedures:** Understand and articulate the mission and strategic plan of the University, College of Agriculture, and UWE; have a working knowledge of university, college, and county policies and procedures and assure that they are applied in a consistent manner; keep staff (professionals, para-professionals, volunteers, support staff, etc.), county commissioners, and other appropriate publics informed of new policies and procedures; periodically review established policies and procedures with staff and appropriate publics; periodically review affirmative action policies and compliance procedures with staff and appropriate publics; initiate policy change as appropriate and necessary.
- **Program Development and Management:** Understand the extension program development process and promote a team approach among county, area and state staff, program associates, academic professionals, and faculty in the development, implementation and evaluation of programs. Set program priorities; encourage supervised staff to be innovative in program development, delivery, and outreach efforts.
- **Fiscal Management:** In cooperation with personnel, provide leadership in the development and presentation of a budget to support extension programs; manage budget so all personnel have support to conduct programs as resources allow; monitor the budget to assure proper management of finances; provide for the development and maintenance of all fiscal records as required; and, as appropriate, explore external funding.
- **Human Resource Development:** Management style provides for fair, consistent and open communication; is approachable; supports professional growth (training); maintains positive work environment; provides new staff orientation; evaluates supervised staff in a fair and consistent manner; takes appropriate action regarding position vacancies; assures that equal employment opportunity policies and practices are followed in all hiring opportunities.
- **Office/Facility Management:** Oversee the management of office operations to provide adequate support for all extension programs as resources allow; work to comply with ADA standards; if appropriate, oversee the operation and maintenance of auxiliary facilities, 4-H centers, satellite offices, etc.

See the UW Extension Performance Appraisal Guide and County Coordinator Appraisal Instrument for further explanation of ratings and criteria. Both can be found under employee resources on the UWE Web site: https://www.uwyo.edu/employee_resources/forms/ces-forms.asp.

Policies and Procedures

Upon Appointment: New county coordinators, in consultation with the UWE associate director assigned to the county, should meet county commissioners, the county clerk, county attorney, and other county officials pertinent to the extension office. These may include budget office or assistant under the county clerk, human resource manager if applicable in the county, county commissioner secretary, and/or risk manager.

UW Extension Policy Manual: All employees of UWE should be familiar with the UW Extension Policy Manual, revised 2015. A copy should be located in each office and is available on the UWE Website: [UWE Policy Manual](#). As new policies are developed or current policies are changed, updated pages are sent to each county office. The county coordinator or their designee should keep the policy manual up to date. The county coordinator should periodically review established policies and procedures with staff and appropriate publics.

County Policies: The county coordinator should understand county policies and keep staff updated on policies and procedures in the county. If appropriate, represent UWE at county department head meetings. Inquire with the county clerk or county attorney on procedures for taking business to the county commissioners. Written policies for county employees should be accessible in the office for all staff. The county attorney or human resource manager can provide information regarding hiring procedures and policies in place when hiring county employees. These individuals can also explain county policy regarding at-will employment, disciplinary procedures if needed, and the process to terminate county employees. Prior to any personnel action with county employees, check with the appropriate county official. The UWE associate director should be informed of any action regarding employees in the UWE office.

Memorandums of Understanding: UWE and county governments sign memorandums of understanding (MOUs) every five years which outline the cooperative agreement to maintain UWE office(s). These MOUs describe the role of UWE in providing educators for the county and the county responsibility for office space, furniture, equipment, travel funds, supplies, and support staff, etc. The MOUs outline liability held by the county and UW. County coordinators are asked to take the MOUs forward to county commissioners. It is common practice for MOUs to be reviewed by the county attorney and UW legal counsel. Copies of the MOU should be on file in the county extension office. The county and UWE also maintain signed copies.

Salary Agreements: All counties in Wyoming provide partial salary for the 4-H/youth educator and in some cases other educators based in the county office. Any contractual agreement where the employee is paid and supervised by UWE requires a salary agreement. This document is generated by the Administrative Business Office (ABO) in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR). County coordinators are responsible for obtaining county commissioners' signatures. County contributed salary is billed quarterly through the CANR ABO. Consult the associate director assigned to the county and/or UWE director for questions regarding salary agreements.

UWE Personnel Driving County Vehicles: Some counties provide county vehicles for UWE use. Vehicles should be used in accordance with county policies. If county commissioners, county attorney, or county risk manager inquire about UW liability with county vehicles, contact the administrative office. An addendum can be added to UWE/County MOU to define auto liability issues.

Risk Management: All UW employees are protected by UW liability insurance. When UWE utilizes outside facilities for programs or activities, i.e. school gym for achievement night or a carnival, the facility may require proof of liability insurance from UW. Contact the UWE associate director assigned to the county for information.

County or UW Holidays: UW educators follow the UW holiday and Election Day schedule. If a particular holiday is celebrated by a county and the state on two different days, it is not observed on both days by university employees. County coordinators must annually inform the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Administrative Business Office (ABO) and associate directors of a county's holiday schedule.

Civil Rights/Affirmative Action: All UWE employees have a responsibility to comply with civil rights and affirmative action guidelines. All employees should know the location of civil rights files and the content of the files. The county coordinator should review affirmative action policies and compliance procedures with staff and appropriate publics. Any hiring action in the county office should follow affirmative action guidelines and county policies regarding advertising, interviewing, and hiring procedures.

Contracts: Any document that requires a signature representing UW must be reviewed, approved, and signed by the manager of University Procurement Services, UW legal, UW risk management, or the Dean or Director as deemed appropriate. UW Employees should direct all such documents through the office of the Director of Extension who will facilitate subsequent processes until completed and returned.

Program Development and Management

The Planning Process: The county coordinator has the responsibility to provide leadership to ensure that all extension programs are implemented to meet the needs of the county. The county coordinator should use a team approach among county, area, and state specialists to implement and evaluate programs. The first step in program planning is needs assessment. Utilizing input from area stakeholder focus group meetings and from stakeholders in the county, including county commissioners, commodity groups, 4-H Councils, community organizations and partners, county and area team members, and state initiative teams, the county coordinator should facilitate communication of county needs to area educators to assist with the implementation of programs.

Area Program Success: The county coordinator has a vital role in implementing area programs in the county. The county coordinator should facilitate dialogue with area educators to provide programs for the county. In the role of county coordinator, contact area educators to learn what programs they have available and what issues the state initiative team is focusing on. Encourage regular communication with area team educators to keep abreast of new programs and to share clientele needs identified in the county. The county coordinator can assist area educators in identifying and connecting with key clientele groups and/or individuals in the county. The county coordinator can provide information regarding facilities available for educational programs and activities and provide support and assistance in publicizing programs in the county. The county coordinator should work with support staff in the office to enable production of program materials such as handouts for area programs delivered in the county.

Review and become familiar with the CES Strategic Plan 2002 and other planning documents such as the academic plans and the 2015 – 2020 Plan of Work to understand initiative team foci and priority issues of UWE. Documents can be found on the UWE Website under Extension Plans: [Extension Plans](#).

Fiscal Management

County budget preparation:

County coordinators have the responsibility to prepare and submit county budgets to county commissioners by dates established. By state statute, department budgets must be submitted by May 1 each year; some counties may require earlier submission deadlines. The county clerk can provide specific information regarding format and submission deadlines. County budgets generally cover salary for support staff and any other county paid employees, one-half of the salary of the 4-H/Youth educator, travel, supplies, office facilities fees (if applicable), utilities, equipment and repair, professional development, and county vehicle maintenance (if applicable). When there are salary increases for UW employees, the salary adjustment will be included in the annual salary agreement and must also be reflected in the proposed county budget.

As county coordinator, know your budget in detail. Learn the dynamics of the county budgeting process so you can discuss and make suggestions. If you are new to this role, ask the county clerk, other department heads, or commissioners to discuss the status of the budget with you.

Management of the budget: It is the responsibility of the county coordinator to provide oversight on all UWE county expenditures. Again, know the budget. Ask questions of the county clerk if you do not know what allowable expenditures are. Learn reimbursement procedures, including time lines, required documentation for purchases, and overall county process. Schedule time to read through and approve county vouchers. Encourage and when appropriate identify and seek additional county funds and external non-tax funds (grants or other) to support programs. Become familiar with UWE resources available to county staff for training. Submit budget forms to the state UWE Administrative office when requested.

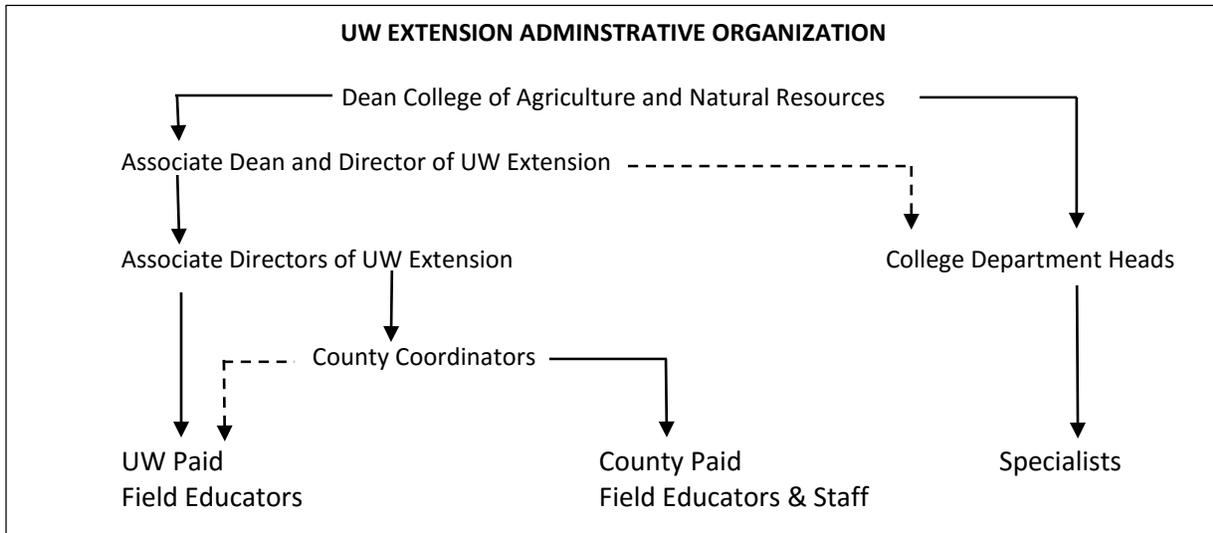
Salary increases for county paid employees: Check with the county clerk or human resource manager to learn procedures for salary increases. Many counties establish the percentage of increase for the entire county; some may have a merit-based system and salary matrix in place. The county clerk is the elected official in each county with responsibility for the county budget. This individual or appointed budget officer in the county will be a useful resource on budget development. Consult with the UWE associate director about UW employees partially or fully funded by the county for salary increases before submitting budget requests.

Budget meetings or hearings are generally held following budget submission to discuss office requests and answer questions posed by county commissioners or the county clerk regarding the UWE office budget. UWE county budgets are not mandated by statute or legislation. Be prepared to justify any increases requested; become familiar with expenditures. Work closely with the support staff in the UWE office with responsibility for administrative duties. Attend county open budget hearings, usually held in July prior to final approval of the budget, to hear an overview of the total county budget. All UWE employees should have knowledge and input into the county budget. Staff meetings should be held prior to submission of the budget to discuss the request and prioritize, if necessary, any new items. If the county budget is set up with individual program line items, ask educators to identify their budgetary needs. There is no substitute for outstanding programs which show impact being delivered in the county when requesting increases in funding or new funds.

The page that follows outlines county budget information requested annually by UWE following approval of the annual budget.

Human Resource Development

Under the administrative model (characterized below), area educators, 4-H Educators, and other county based educators who are university employees report to an associate director. Cent\$ible Nutrition educators normally are supervised by the CNP program manager. Field educators, program associates, and staff who are county employees generally report to their county coordinator. Associate directors supervise county coordinators. County coordinators have a close working relationship to other educators working in the county program because they have responsibility to organize and oversee the county extension program.



County coordinators should utilize a management style that provides for fair, consistent and open communication. County team members may look to the county coordinator for guidance. They should be approachable, and support professional growth (training) and development.

The county coordinator generally supervises county-paid staff including support or administrative assistants, county paid horticulture assistants, and any other fully county-paid staff. Become familiar with county policies and procedures regarding performance reviews and any disciplinary actions in place with the county. When county employee vacancies occur, the county coordinator will oversee hiring and training following county policies. Take advantage of county offered supervisory or management training. Seek out opportunities for supervisory training from other sources. Open communication is important to a positive work environment with all employees in a county office. Discuss expectations with support staff in a two-way dialogue. Each employee in the office should be considered a valued member of the extension team. Team work is an important component of UWE. Discuss as a staff ideas to strengthen team work in the county office.

The county coordinator has the lead role in establishing a policy of professionalism and teamwork in the office. If personnel issues arise, the county coordinator should communicate with the associate director who works with their county for guidance or assistance. The county coordinator should notify the UWE administrative office whenever there is a change in support staff or other county personnel.

Establish a regular staff meeting schedule. Staff meetings are an excellent opportunity to learn what other educators are working on and to provide input and support for all extension programs. Support staff should participate in staff meetings to keep up to date on programs and schedules of educators in the office. In addition to educator schedules, staff meetings should be utilized to discuss county demographics, methods to publicize programs, how to reach underserved audiences, and to discuss new UWE or county policies and procedures. Civil rights procedures should be discussed and documented in minutes. Staff meetings are also an avenue for training of all staff members. Staff meetings documented by minutes should be held at a minimum of quarterly in the county office. Minutes of meetings should be forwarded to the appropriate associate director at the state office.

Staff meetings are a good time to discuss the Professional Scheduling Policy with office personnel. For this policy to be effective and to help promote a team atmosphere, there needs to be an understanding of the policy and open communication regarding educators' use of professional scheduling. It is important that support staffs assist clientele responsibly in the absence of an educator. This means being able to assure them of the educator's return and to present a unified front to the public. County support staff can be the best asset to an educator in this way. County coordinators are encouraged to support participation from county personnel in ESCAPE – Extension Secretary Conference, a Professional Experience. This is an annual professional development opportunity open to all support staff who work with UWE.

County coordinators should communicate regularly with the associate director who supervises personnel in their county. The UWE associate director can provide guidance and assistance on personnel and supervision issues.

The county coordinator has a key role in new employee orientation. The section of the new employee orientation guide relevant for county coordinators is attached. County coordinators are members of new employees' mentoring teams. They provide guidance on county policies, and office procedures, in addition to sharing knowledge of key clientele and issues of importance in a county.

Office/Facility Management

The county coordinator oversees management of office operations to provide adequate support for all extension programs as resources allow. This includes management and maintenance of all facilities including county office, satellite offices, and/or 4-H centers. The county coordinator is responsible for working with the county to see that all facilities comply with American with Disability Act (ADA) standards. UWE must document that reasonable effort has been made in updating all facilities to ADA standards. UWE facilities should provide a safe working environment for employees.

If vehicles are provided by the county or UWE, discussion with the office team should be initiated to determine how vehicles are reserved, and if every educator does not have access to a vehicle, how to prioritize use in the event of two or more educators needing the vehicle on the same date. Maintenance of vehicles is the responsibility of the county coordinator or their designee. All employees driving personal, county, or UWE vehicles are required to complete an UW form to request driving privileges annually. See the UWE Website for a complete copy of the UW vehicle policy and driving request forms: [Official Vehicle Policy Information](#).

New UWE Employees – ORIENTATION GUIDE

COUNTY COORDINATOR

Prior to First Day

- Equip office i.e., computer, phone, voice mail system, desk supplies, file space, storage, etc. If \$2,500 equipment fund is available when employee arrives, allow them to choose equipment to help them do their job. (This is one time funding.)
- E-mail or call to welcome them onboard. Contact information can be obtained from staff development coordinator.
- Schedule dates for onsite visits during their first two weeks on the job with the Associate Director and Federal Relations/Staff Development.
- Get office keys for new person. Facilitate parking permit.

First Day Orientation

- Be there first to welcome new employee to the office.
- Introduce UWE staff and any other personnel who may share office space such as Weed & Pest or fair staff.
- Tour of office: show where office supplies are located, restrooms, storage, etc.
- Share any office protocols, i.e., regular staff meetings, coffee breaks.
- County policies: explain county coordinator responsibilities, go over any applicable county policies such as vouchering county mileage and expenses, use of county vehicles if available, budget allocations, and general fiscal philosophies of county government.
- Talk about working with support staff; appropriate uses, delegation, lead time.
- Share their official title, University Extension Educator, _____ Area; or 4-H Youth Educator - _____ County and explain use on enclosures and letterhead.
- Set up voice mail, if available in the county office. Share standard office answering message – “UW Extension, _____ County, this is _____. How can I help you?”
- Help acquire e-mail address if county addresses are different than UW. A UW e-mail address will be generated when the hiring paperwork goes through human resources the first week on the job.
- Suggest things to do to get program up and running, such as:
 - Begin visiting with clientele immediately, both individuals and groups.
 - Prepare a one-page introduction to give to people.
 - Consider developing a short survey asking for input on area issues and needs to accompany them on visits to gather information for educational programming.
- Explain UW travel allotment for area work. Provide mileage records and forms for area travel reimbursement.
- Share overall Extension vision, mission and philosophy.
- Explain Extension team concepts – staff team, area team, initiative team, issue team.
- Share UW phone list for reference and area list.
- Let them know that the Staff Development Coordinator will order business cards and a name tag once an e-mail address is established. These supplies are ordered through UWE Communications & Technology. Encourage educators to wear their UW name tag as a marketing tool for UWE.
- Provide a prepared contact list of 4-H Community Club leaders, 4-H key leaders, and council members.
- Provide a list of county and/or UW holidays when the county office may be closed.

First Two Weeks

- Introduce to:
 - County commissioners and other personnel in nearby offices such as in other county offices, if appropriate.
 - Key stakeholders in extension and in their program area.
- Staff Development and Federal Relations Coordinator will demonstrate contact reporting to reinforce learning the software.
- Share UWE Strategic Plan. Refer to Strategic Plan: [2002 UW Extension Strategic Plan](#).
- Identify key contacts for subject matter information such as state specialists, program related connections, initiative team chair.
- Describe already existing program efforts done by or with other agencies in the area and encourage them to begin building agency relationships.
- Hold a staff meeting.
- An initial press release will be generated by Staff Development Coordinator through UWE C&T prior to employee start date. Arrange for local media coverage or interviews with local news reporters.
- Encourage training opportunities.
- Provide training on general office functions that all staff should be able to handle, i.e., soil tests, water tests, hay/forage/feed tests, etc.
- Share ideas on how to develop a record keeping system of contacts, items that require action etc. Share methods to document conflicts or concerns with clientele.

First Month

- If this is an area position, encourage educators to go to other counties in the area to introduce themselves to UWE staff, get names of key stakeholders, begin meeting clientele in that area, and get to know other staff as well as the area better.
- Check with Staff Development Coordinator to arrange for employee to attend UW benefit orientation on campus. UW Benefit sign up materials will be mailed from UW HR after start.

Ongoing

- Check with new employee occasionally to answer further questions and see how they are doing.