

Guiding Principles: Housing an ISU Extension and Outreach Program Specialist in a County Office

Housing a program specialist in the county provides benefits for ISU Extension and Outreach as well as the extension district. For example, a program specialist housed in the county offers opportunities to increase extension visibility in the community, help draw people to the county office, and become part of the local team to cooperate on programming and strengthen the local presence. They may be available to provide assistance when extra help is needed locally, such as at youth outreach events and 4-H livestock weigh-ins. Program specialists as well as county staff benefit from increased collaboration within the county.

A. ISU Extension and Outreach agrees to the following:

1. Extension Program Leader or supervisor will request assistance from Regional Director to find space to house a program specialist. Request is subject to council approval.
2. Extension will provide program specialists with a personal computer and software; other equipment, such as an LCD projector and projection screen; supplies; and services depending on the availability of fiscal resources.
3. Extension will maintain revolving accounts at the Ames campus for program specialists to manage recovered travel, technical fees, and salary per individual program specialist.
4. When the program specialist is carrying out a specific program supported by grants, contracts, and/or fee income, ISU Extension and Outreach will cover costs as required by the particular grant and will help cover the direct costs of copying, materials, and postage provided by the county office. Ideally these expenses would be agreed to in advance, and recognize that not all expenses may be covered.
5. Program specialists will partner with regional directors and county staff to efficiently collect, store, share, and report data across the entire organization using MyData and other reporting platforms (i.e., 4HOnline, Conference Planning and Management, etc.) that work in conjunction with MyData. Additionally, specialists will be responsible for leading recruitment of target audiences.

B. The Extension District agrees to the following:

1. Upon approval of a request to house a program specialist, the Extension District will provide the specialist access in their county extension office for the following resources:

office space and furnishings (desk, chair, file cabinets, and bookshelf), telephone and internet, office machines (printers, copy machine, and audiovisual equipment), meeting room(s) with associated AV equipment, storage space for materials used for program delivery in the county, and a key to the office building.

2. The Extension District will offer program specialists reasonable assistance in program recruitment (mailings, postage, and supplies) and program materials management (ordering publications, copying, and supplies).
3. If needed, the Extension District will provide reasonable bookkeeping and clerical assistance with processing program registration fees, grants, and contracts. After consultation with the program specialist's program director, the district may provide a revolving account in the county accounting system to process transactions, provide at minimum a quarterly report of transactions with beginning and ending balances, and provide information to settle up expenses to either party, including mutually agreed upon revenue generation, at least quarterly.

ISU Extension and Outreach and the Extension District mutually agree to the following:

Providing county workspace for specialists. It is important for program specialists to have access to workspace in the counties they serve, even if they are not housed in the county. This would include access to a desk or table, a chair, and WIFI. Program specialists should communicate, in advance, with the county office, regarding when they would need access to the workspace.

Providing campus workspace for county staff. County staff are welcome to access workspace when visiting the ISU campus. This would include access to a desk or table, a chair, and WIFI. County staff should communicate, in advance, with the campus unit, regarding when they would need access to the workspace.

Conferring on questions. ISU Extension and Outreach and the Extension District will confer on those questions that may arise with a view to maintaining complete and harmonious relations consistent with the spirit of this memorandum.

Limiting program specialist duties and responsibilities. ISU Extension and Outreach and the Extension District will limit program specialist duties and responsibilities to the role assigned by the appropriate program director, with the exception that from time to time, to build teamwork within an office staff, exchange of work on all sides may be necessary to effectively carry out extension programming.

Discussing staff assistance. In the event the program specialist begins requiring staff assistance, creating a need for the Extension District to hire additional support staff, ISU Extension and Outreach and the Extension District will immediately discuss how this staff person will be funded and will develop

a written agreement to reflect the decision.

Considering a shared workspace. In the event that the Extension District becomes unable or refuses to house a program specialist and that specialist will then be more than 40 miles from an office, a shared workspace should be considered.

For more information

For more information, contact the Assistant Vice President, County Services for Extension and Outreach, 2280 Beardshear Hall, Ames, IA 50011-2046, (515) 294-0013.

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