

Volunteer Standards of Behavior: Master Gardener Volunteers



These Standards of Behavior are accepted by volunteers who commit to an Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program as a condition of their volunteer status. The Standards of Behavior shall guide volunteer's behavior during their involvement with the Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Just as it is a privilege for Ohio State University to work with individuals who volunteer their time and energies to the organization, a volunteer's involvement with OSUE is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right.

The OSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program provides unbiased, research-based educational programs accessible to all Ohio residents. The primary purpose of this Standards of Behavior is to ensure the safety and well-being of all Master Gardener Volunteer Program participants (i.e., target audiences, professionals and volunteers.) Master Gardener Volunteers are expected to function within the guidelines of Ohio State University Extension and the OSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program.

Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteers will:

- Uphold volunteerism as an effective way to meet the needs of youth and adults.
- Uphold each individual's right to dignity, self-development, and self-direction.
- Accept supervision and support from professional Extension staff while involved in the program.
- Accept the responsibility to represent their individual county Master Gardener Volunteer Program and The Ohio State University.
- Conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner, with fairness, honesty, dignity and integrity, and provide positive role models for all with whom they work.
- Respect, adhere to, and enforce the rules, policies, and guidelines established by their individual county Master Gardener Volunteer Program, the State Master Gardener Volunteer Program and OSUE.
- Not engage in abusive behaviors that physically or verbally threaten or harm any Extension program participant, including youth.
- Not engage in any act prohibited by law.
- Comply with all civil rights laws and policies, including but not limited to OSUE equal opportunity, anti-discrimination laws, and program participant policy.
- Perform duties in a responsible and timely manner as outlined in the position description.
- Immediately report any threats to the volunteer's emotional or physical well-being to the county Extension professional coordinating the Master Gardener Volunteer Program.
- Accept the responsibility to promote and support Master Gardener Volunteer activities in order to develop an effective county, state, and national program.
- Handle animals and operate machinery, vehicles, and other equipment in a responsible manner.



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Volunteer Standards of Behavior: Master Gardener Volunteers continued

I understand and agree that as a volunteer:

- In accordance with The Ohio State University policy, *Self-Disclosure of Criminal Convictions Policy 4.17*, I am required to self-disclose criminal convictions within three business days of the conviction.
- I will uphold and support the responsible and lawful use of social media. In so doing, I will not create or post social media content that is abusive, threatening, defamatory, obscene, harassing, or creates a hostile environment.
- I will report any child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect in accordance with university policy.
- I will not intentionally or purposefully place myself in a position alone with a member of a vulnerable population in a one-on-one situation, including, but not limited to sleeping quarters with minors.
- I will not, under any circumstances, physically, verbally, or emotionally abuse or fail to provide the basic necessities of care, such as food or shelter to participants.
- I will endeavor to provide a safe and healthy program/camp experience for all participants.
- My volunteer status is subject to immediate suspension or termination based on any act or omission that Extension determines to be contrary to any portion of these standards or otherwise in conflict with the goals of OSUE.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER TITLE USE AGREEMENT

The title **OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER** is to be used only and exclusively in conjunction with activities associated with the Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program.

- I will identify myself as a "Master Gardener Volunteer" only when engaged in unpaid public service in an Ohio State University Extension sponsored program.
- I will not appear as part of a commercial activity, have association with commercial products, or give implied Ohio State University or Ohio State University Extension endorsement of any product or place of business while serving as a Master Gardener Volunteer.
- In such service, I will use only labeled or Ohio State University and Ohio State University Extension approved recommendations.

I have read, understand, and agree to be bound by the Standards of Behavior and the Master Gardener Volunteer Title Use Agreement outlined above.

- I agree to give the Ohio State University Extension the specified number of hours of volunteer service in approved programs as specified by my county MGV program.
- I understand and agree that any act or omission on my part that contradicts any portion of these standards is grounds for immediate suspension and/or termination of my volunteer status with the Ohio State University Extension program.

Printed Name

Signature

Date



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