

**OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM
(REFERENCE COPY FOR VOLUNTEER)**

The Standards of Behavior is a contractual agreement accepted by volunteers who commit to the Ohio State University Master Gardener Program. The Standards shall guide the volunteers' behavior during their involvement with the Master Gardener Program. Just as it is a privilege for Ohio State University Extension to work with individuals who volunteer their time and talents to the Master Gardener Program, a volunteer's involvement in the Program is a privilege and a responsibility - not a right.

The OSU Extension Master Gardener 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 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 Program.

The OSU Extension Master Gardener volunteer will:

- Uphold volunteerism as an effective way to meet the horticultural needs of Ohio residents.
- Uphold an 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 Program and the Ohio Master Gardener Program with dignity and pride by being positive mentors for those with whom they work.
- Conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner with fairness, honesty and integrity.
- Respect, adhere to and enforce the rules, policies and guidelines established by their individual county Master Gardener Program, the OSU Extension, Master Gardener Program, and the Ohio State University Extension.
- Abide by the OSU Extension Youth Protection Policy; not abuse any program participant by physical or verbal means and report such abuse, if observed, as outlines in the Youth Protection Policy.
- Not commit a felonious criminal act.
- Comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws.
- Perform duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Report immediately any threats to the volunteer's emotional or physical well-being to the county Extension professional coordinating the Master Gardener Program.
- Accept the responsibility to promote and support Master Gardener activities in order to develop an effective county, state and national program.
- Operate machinery, vehicles and other equipment in a responsible manner.

I have read and understand the Standards of Behavior outlined above. I understand and agree that any action on my part that contradicts any portion of these standards is grounds for the suspension and/or termination of my volunteer status with the OSU Extension Master Gardener Program.

**The OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM PEST MANAGEMENT INFORMATION POLICY
(REFERENCE COPY FOR VOLUNTEER)**

Protection of the environment and human health is a concern of everyone. In order to promote wise and effective pest management decisions, the Ohio State University Master Gardeners are asked to subscribe to the following policies. This contract will serve as a formal basis for Master Gardeners when providing pest management information.

1. I understand that as a Master Gardener, the pest management information I provide must be limited to home, lawn and garden problems; questions concerning commercial crop production, commercial pest control and pesticide liability are to be referred to the appropriate Extension professional.
2. I understand that as a Master Gardener, I will provide both non-chemical and chemical pest management information as approved by Ohio State University Extension and allow the client his or her choice of strategies.
3. I understand that pesticides must be applied with care and only to plants, animals or sites listed on the pesticide label. When mixing and applying pesticides, all label precautions must be followed to protect the applicator, other persons and the environment. It is a violation of law to disregard label directions. I will attempt to communicate this information to the client along with the pest management options.
4. I understand that as a Master Gardener I am considered a volunteer representative of Ohio State University Extension. Therefore, OSU Extension will assume liability for the pest management information I provide, only if the information is limited to accurate, documented control options approved by the Ohio State University Extension for home and garden use. I understand that if either myself or the client are not clear on information, we will request clarification from the appropriate Extension Professional.

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Signature of Volunteer

Date

Signature of Extension Professional

Date

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Signature

Date

**OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM
POLICY STATEMENT**

PURPOSE

The Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Program is a volunteer educational program designed to meet the horticultural needs of citizens of Ohio. Its purpose is to train volunteers and utilize their expertise to teach people more about plants, their culture, their importance to the environment and to our quality of life. Master Gardener volunteers provide technical assistance to their county Extension office in order that the consumer horticulture activities and programs can be more effectively and efficiently carried out.

Master Gardener trainees receive formal training from their county Extension office covering a wide range of pertinent horticultural topics. To become a Master Gardener, the trainee must complete the training program, pass the required exams and volunteer a specified number of hours to Extension.

The volunteer commitment may be fulfilled in a number of different ways depending on the determined needs of the county residents. After the completion of the initial required volunteer time, volunteers are encouraged to continue to assist with horticultural program delivery as an Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener volunteer.

The Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Program is supported on the state level by the Ohio State University Consumer Horticulture Team. The State Master Gardener Coordinator, with the guidance of the State Master Gardener Advisory Committee, develops policies and guidelines for the operation of the program, provides some training and recognition materials, in-service opportunities and other resources for counties conducting the program. On the county level, the program is coordinated by an Extension professional who manages the program directly or supervises a Master Gardener program coordinator.

TRAINING

The formal training program is the responsibility of the county Extension professional managing the program. Instructors are Ohio State University faculty, Extension Specialists, Extension Associates, experienced Master Gardeners and other experts.

The training program is a balanced, integrated practical course in plant science. Core topics that are to be part of the training in every county are Orientation to Extension and the Master Gardener Program; Basic Botany and Plant Physiology; Soils and Fertilizers; Basic Entomology; Basic Plant Pathology; Plant Pest and Disease Diagnosis; Integrated Pest Management And Pesticide Use and Safety; Home Lawn Care; Annuals, Perennials and Bulbs; Trees and Shrubs; Home Vegetable Production; Home Fruit Production; Houseplants and Backyard Wildlife Management. Special topics, based on local needs, may be part of the curriculum.

The principle resource for the training will be the Ohio Master Gardener Training Manual or another approved manual that includes the core topics and material appropriate to Ohio. Core training is held during a 2 - 3 month period with advanced training or in-service provided during the year in accordance with local needs and resources. An annual state-wide one-day conference is offered to assist in fulfilling in-service requirements.

ATTENDANCE

Each Master Gardener trainee is expected to attend every class session. The trainee is responsible for initiating provisions to make up any missed sessions. A limit on the number of allowable absences may be made by the county Master Gardener coordinator.

EXAMINATIONS & QUIZZES

Every trainee must pass any quizzes and examinations with a cumulative average of 70% or better. There may be closed-book exams that test the trainees=knowledge of broad plant science principles, as well as open-book exams to test the trainees=ability to retrieve information from reference materials.

CERTIFICATION

Upon successful completion of the Master Gardener training program, each volunteer will receive a Master Gardener Intern badge. Upon fulfillment of the volunteer commitment, the participant will then receive an official Master Gardener certificate and name badge.

VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

The Master Gardener training course consists of a minimum of 50 hours of instruction. An equivalent number of horticulturally significant volunteer hours is required to become a certified Master Gardener. Normally, only unpaid service in Ohio State University Extension-sponsored activities count toward the requirement. Other volunteer activities may be counted after receiving prior approval by the local coordinator. The required volunteer hours should be completed within one year of completion of the training course.

Each Master Gardener will have a completed application, signed Master Gardener volunteer agreement, pest management information policy, OSU Extension Standards of Behavior and a service record on file at the local Extension office. This information is treated confidentially. Volunteers' records are kept in separate files in a secured place and are accessible only by trained extension staff.

It is the responsibility of the volunteer to make sure that the information on their application (i.e., address, driver's license number) and their service record is kept current and accurate. This is necessary for liability reasons and for the protection of the volunteer as well as program clientele.

USE OF THE TITLE

The title "Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener" is to be used only and exclusively in the Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Program. OSU Extension Master Gardeners are expected to identify themselves as such only when doing unpaid public service work under the auspices of the Ohio State University Extension. Master Gardeners are advised not to advertise their place of business during Extension-sponsored activities and are not to be listed as Master Gardeners on the advertisements of businesses that they own or where they are employed. Since Ohio State University Extension is a source of unbiased, research-based information, appearing as a commercial activity, having association with commercial products or giving implied University endorsement of any product or place of business is improper.

PESTICIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

OSU Extension Master Gardeners, when performing Master Gardener activities, are considered unpaid staff of Ohio State University Extension. Master Gardeners are trained by Extension personnel and other experts and are provided with Extension publications. In addition to their training, Master Gardeners receive diagnostic support from the Plant and Pest Diagnostic Clinic at OSU, the Consumer Horticulture Team and from various Extension specialists. When it is necessary to make recommendations which include the use of pesticides, Master Gardeners must follow labeled or OSU Extension recommendations. They are not to rely on their own personal experience, that of others, or common garden folklore.

RE-CERTIFICATION

Once an individual has completed the necessary requirements and is certified as an OSU Extension Master Gardener, this does not mean that he/she is automatically a Master Gardener for life. Master Gardeners must be re-certified each year to remain on the "Active" list and maintain the Master Gardener title.

Master Gardener Re-Certification is achieved by fulfilling the following requirements:

1. Donating a minimum of ten (10) hours of volunteer service each year AND,
2. Completing a minimum of six (6) hours of in-service training by any of the following options:
 1. Participation in State, Regional, National or International Master Gardener Conferences.

2. Participation in county-sponsored advanced training sessions.
3. Participation in any other programs approved by the local coordinator for re-certification.

INACTIVE STATUS

An inactive Master Gardener is one who is unable to commit to an additional 10 hours service plus 6 hours advanced training at present, but would like the opportunity to re-certify themselves in the future. The following policies apply:

1. An inactive Master Gardener is one who is in good standing, having completed the original commitment of training, exam and volunteer service.
2. The inactive Master Gardener must attend or have attended six (6) hours of acceptable horticulture training for each year of inactive status (See Re-certification #2).
3. An inactive Master Gardener may re-certify within three (3) years as long as the above criteria are met. Individuals on inactive status for more than three years, in addition to meeting the above requirements, must also retake and pass the final exam.

OUT-OF-STATE

Master Gardeners who are certified in another state may be admitted into the OSU Extension Master Gardener Program by meeting the following criteria:

1. Acquire a current Ohio Master Gardener training manual
2. Acquire An Ohio Master Gardener name badge
3. Score a minimum of 70% on a final exam administered by the county Master Gardener coordinator.
4. Meet the re-certification requirements listed above.

DISMISSAL OF A MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER

Repeated and consistent disregard for the policies and guidelines established by the Ohio State University Extension and the OSU Extension Master Gardener Program are grounds for dismissal as a Master Gardener Volunteer. When the county Master Gardener coordinator finds it necessary to dismiss a volunteer, the volunteer must be informed in writing of the termination of his/her volunteer status. This notice of dismissal will become part of the volunteer's confidential file.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM VOLUNTEER

OBJECTIVE: To help expand Ohio State University Extension educational programs in home horticulture to the people of Portage County.

REQUISITES: Ability to read, write and organize materials.
Ability to communicate with the public by telephone.
Ability to work with and take direction from Faculty and Secretarial Staff.
Provide own transportation.

DUTIES: Update Master Gardener fact sheet notebook with new materials.
Inventory Home Horticulture fact sheets.
Inventory ~~A~~Known Control fact sheets.
Package and submit home horticulture samples to University for diagnosis.

SUPERVISION:

The County Extension Agent, Chair and Master Gardener Program Assistant will provide supervision with assistance from the secretarial staff.

**OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

(All sections must be completed for consideration as a Master Gardener volunteer)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

County _____

Length of time at this address (in years) _____ If less than one year at this address, please list
your _____ previous
address _____

Driver's license # _____ Social Security # _____

Date of birth (month/day/year) _____

Phone Day _____ Best time to call _____

Evening _____ Best time to call _____

Have you participated in Ohio State University Extension activities or programs previously? YES NO

If Yes@, list most recent involvement _____

If you have been a Master Gardener in another state, please list the state, county, year of training, and
program supervisor's name _____

VOLUNTEER INTEREST

Why are you interested in becoming a Master
Gardener? _____

What is your gardening philosophy? _____

Previous work experience (list current or most recent experience first)

Employer	Position Title	Year
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Special skills, training, interests (i.e., birdwatching, crafts, computer graphics, etc.) _____

Previous volunteer experience (list current or most recent experience first)

Organization	Volunteer Role	Year
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Type of activities you in which you are interested (check as many as apply to you)

Gardening hotline

Committee member

Public presentations

Community gardens

Demonstration gardens

Working with adults

Beautification projects

Newsletter

Working with children

Horticulture therapy

Middle manager

Other interests _____

Indicate days and times you are available to volunteer:

Monday ___ morning ___ afternoon ___ evening

Tuesday ___ morning ___ afternoon ___ evening

Wednesday ___ morning ___ afternoon ___ evening

Thursday ___ morning ___ afternoon ___ evening

Friday ___ morning ___ afternoon ___ evening

Saturday ___ morning ___ afternoon ___ evening

We frequently have more applicants than volunteer positions and consequently must choose among equally qualified individuals. Please explain why you think you would make a good Master Gardener volunteer.

PERSONAL REFERENCES

Have you been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony in the last seven years? YES NO

If *Yes*, please give date, nature and disposition of offense _____

Please note: A criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from being a Master Gardener volunteer; a criminal record will be considered as it relates to specifics of the volunteer position for which you are applying.

References: Name **two persons not related to you** who have knowledge of your qualifications. Please provide complete addresses and phone numbers.

Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

—

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____

Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

—

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____

I authorize the contact of the above-listed references. I understand that the misrepresentation or omission of information requested is just cause for nonacceptance as a Master Gardener volunteer trainee. If accepted as a volunteer, I agree to abide by the policies of the Ohio State University Extension and the OSU Extension Master Gardener Program and to fulfill the volunteer responsibilities to the best of my ability.

Applicant Signature

Date

Please return the application to OSU Extension - Portage County, ATTN: Terry White, 6970 St. Rt. 88, Ravenna, OH 44266. Contact us at (330) 296-6432 if you have any questions or wish further information. Thank you!

**YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY AND GUIDELINES
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
(REFERENCE COPY FOR VOLUNTEER)**

SCREENING AND TRAINING OF EXTENSION PERSONNEL AND VOLUNTEERS

1. Volunteers (age 18 and over) working directly with youth and having two or more contacts per year with youth will acknowledge by signing the Ohio 4-H Standards of Behavior that they have read, understand and agree to abide by the Youth Protection Policy and Guidelines. Extension personnel and staff will acknowledge by signing the Agreement Form that they have read, understand and agree to abide by the Youth Protection Policy And Guidelines.
2. At the discretion of each County Chair and appropriate staff, a criminal record check pertaining to any prior child abuse, felony, domestic violence, petty theft, etc., may be conducted and placed in his/her personnel file prior to the involvement of any or all potential Extension personnel and volunteers who work with youth.
3. All Extension personnel, staff and volunteers will be provided with the appropriate materials and orientation concerning:
 - ☑ Youth Protection Policy and Guidelines of the Ohio State University Extension;
 - ☑ Identifying signs of possible child abuse and/or endangerment;
 - ☑ Legal requirements for responding to the suspicion of child abuse.

RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUTH

4. Extension personnel, staff and volunteers will endeavor to provide safe and healthy programs for youth. In cases of illness or injury, youth will be treated on-site by an appropriate health care provider or taken to an appropriate health care provider if necessary when a parent or guardian is not available for consultation.
5. Extension personnel, staff and volunteers are encouraged to avoid, where possible, being along with a single youth, including sharing sleeping quarters with non-related youth.
6. Extension personnel, staff and volunteers will not, under any circumstances, discipline youth by the use of physical punishment or by failure to provide the basic necessities of care, such as food or shelter.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

7. According to the Ohio Revised Code 2151.421, anyone may report child abuse or neglect to the Children's Services Board. In addition, this law also imposes upon the following persons a legal reporting obligation by stating that such persons ~~When~~ when acting in their official or professional capacity are required by law to report knowledge or suspicion that a child under eighteen years of age or a physically or mentally handicapped child under twenty-one years of age has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child:

- ☑ attorney

- Ž physician, including a hospital intern or resident, dentist, podiatrist, practitioner of a limited branch of medicine or surgery
- Ž registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, visiting nurse, other health care professional
- Ž licensed psychologist, licensed school psychologist
- Ž speech pathologist or audiologist
- Ž coroner
- Ž administrator or employee of a child day care center, administrator or employee of a certified child care agency or other public or private children's services agency
- Ž school teacher, school employee, school authority
- Ž social worker
- Ž person rendering spiritual treatment through prayer in accordance with the tenets of a well recognized religion.@

8. Although Ohio State University Extension professionals are not listed in #7 above, OSU Extension encourages all Extension personnel, staff and volunteers to report forthwith, either by telephone or in person, suspected cases to the Children's Services Board, the County Department of Human Services exercising the Children's Services function or a municipal or county peace officer in the county in which the abuse or neglect is suspected to have occurred. (Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.421 (A) and (B)).
9. When Extension personnel, staff or volunteers file a report as described in paragraph #8 (above), such person shall then immediately inform either the agent responsible for the program and/or the County Chair or their immediate supervisor about the incident so reported. This information shall proceed through Ohio State University Extension administration until the District Director, the appropriate Assistant Director, Associate Director and Director have been informed of the situation.
10. Ohio law provides that anyone reporting suspected child abuse or participating in a judicial proceeding resulting from such reports is immune from any civil or criminal liability that otherwise might be imposed as a result of such actions when taken in good faith. (Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.421. (G)).
11. A person who knowingly makes or causes another person to make a false report that alleges that any person has committed an act or omission that resulted in a child being abused or a neglected child is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree. (Ohio Revised Code Sections 2151.421(H)(3) and 2941.14).
12. Extension personnel and volunteers will be familiar with and follow the reporting procedure described by Ohio law, including reporting the names and addresses of the youth and his/her parent(s) or the person(s) having custody of the youth, if known; the youth's age and nature and extent of known or suspected injuries, abuse or neglect or of the known or suspected threat of injury, abuse or neglect; and any further information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the known or suspected injury, abuse, or neglect (Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.421(C)).
13. Extension personnel, staff and volunteers shall not contact the parent(s) and youth involved in a reported suspected child abuse incident unless instructed to do so by the appropriate legal authorities.
14. When an incident that involved Extension personnel, staff, or volunteer is reported to the Children's Services Board, the County Department of Human Services exercising the Children's Services

function, or the appropriate municipal or county peace officer, the immediate supervisor in consultation with the appropriate Extension administrator, will remove the person from all activities involving direct contact with youth until the matter is resolved.

15. Extension personnel, staff and volunteers will handle suspected child abuse information in a confidential manner. Involved Extension personnel, staff and volunteers will discuss matters pertaining to suspected abuse with only the immediate supervisor and the Children's Services Board, the County Department of Human Services exercising the Children's Services function, or the appropriate municipal or county peace officer.

This policy has been approved by the Ohio State University Extension Administrative Cabinet in consultation with Gary E. Brown, Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Affairs, The Ohio State University.

08/05/92

**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

(TO BE SIGNED AND RETURNED)

The title "Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener" 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" only when engaged in unpaid public service in an Ohio State University Extension-sponsored or approved 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 and understand the Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Program Policy Statement and agree to give the Ohio State University Extension fifty (50) hours of volunteer service in approved programs in exchange for fifty (50) hours of horticultural training.

Signature of Volunteer

Date