

October 28, 2022

Dear Potential Master Gardener Volunteer:

We are pleased that you're interested in applying to be a Master Gardener Volunteer with Ohio State University (OSU) Extension! I'm glad that you are interested in learning more about horticulture and serving the community. This letter provides some important information about OSU Extension's volunteer process.

The basic premise of the Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) program is to provide 50 hours of training in horticulture to interested volunteers in exchange for 50 hours of horticulture service back to the community. The volunteer hours are generally performed in conjunction with activities of the county Master Gardener group. Our current Muskingum County Master Gardeners are looking forward to a new member like yourself.

As a result of state legislation, effective November 1, 2002, OSU Extension implemented a new volunteer selection policy and procedures. All individuals who are interested in volunteering with OSU Extension must adhere to these new selection procedures.

This application contains several items.

1. The first step in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer is to complete the enclosed application and return it to: OSU Extension, 225 Underwood St., Zanesville, OH 43701 by January 13, 2023. You will need to include the names and addresses of three individuals who could provide a reference.
2. Please read, sign and return the volunteer standards of behavior form along with your application. A job description of the position along with some MG policy information is also enclosed.
3. The next step in the process is to schedule a short interview with me. We will review your application, discuss your interest with the Master Gardeners and answer any questions you might have.
4. The final step in the process is for you to complete an online criminal history background check. This is a state requirement for all OSU Extension volunteers including Master Gardener Volunteers and 4-H Advisors. I will give you specific information on how to conduct a background check at the interview.



Once you have completed all of these requirements, you will be notified of your acceptance into the program.

There are two ways (tracks) to participate in MGV training and you may choose which ever suits your learning goals. See the attached schedule to review these options. During the training year, you are given the title “intern” and must complete all training and volunteer requirements before becoming a member of the program.

Cost of the program will be \$115 which includes all handouts, Master Gardener manual, and first year membership dues. Do not send money along with your application. We will collect money at the first class. Volunteers are responsible for costs associated with the background check

Don't be intimidated by the application process. All new OSU Extension volunteers including Master Gardeners and 4-H advisors across the state must follow similar procedures.

I'm looking forward to your participation in the Master Gardener Volunteer program. Feel free to contact me at 454-0144 or martin.2422@osu.edu if you have any questions about completing the application or any of the requirements. If you are aware of others who might be interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer, have them contact me for an application. Thanks for your interest.

Sincerely,

Clifton Martin

Extension Educator, CCA

Agriculture and Natural Resources

CFAES Extension

225 Underwood St, Zanesville, OH 43701

740-454-0144 Office

martin.2422@osu.edu / muskingum.osu.edu

2023 Muskingum County Master Gardener Volunteer Training Schedule

You may choose one track to participate in Master Gardener Volunteer training.

Track One: Conventional classroom.	Track Two: Online.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live in-person classes beginning Thursday, February 9 and concluding April 7 (no class on Mar 16 or April 6) • Class time is 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm • Location: 225 Underwood St, Zanesville • Recommend attending some regular monthly meetings to get to know existing members and projects • Quizzes, exercises, videos, lectures given during class time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online, self-paced using modules prepared in Canvas • Cohort begins during the week of Feb 9 • Must commit to attending five (5) Muskingum County Master Gardener Volunteer Meetings in 2023. Meetings occur at 7:00 PM on the second Wednesday of each month, excluding December. • Requires computer access and ability to navigate web-based materials. • Online content includes quizzes, exercises, videos, reading assignments. • Guidance given for course pace and goals for completing modules



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

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

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name:

_____ (first) _____ (middle) _____ (last)

Address: _____ **City:** _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: Day: () _____ **Best Time to Call:** _____

Eve: () _____ **Best Time to Call:** _____

Email:

Length of time at this address (years): _____

Have you participated in Ohio State University Extension activities or programs previously? (list most recent involvement)

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

II. VOLUNTEER INTEREST

Why are you interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer?

What is your gardening philosophy?

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

Employer

Position/Title

Year

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

Organization

Volunteer Role

Year

Other special skills, training, interests (i.e. bird watching, crafts, desktop publishing, etc.):

III. PERSONAL REFERENCES

Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor or a felony?

____ Yes ____ No

If yes, please give date, nature, and disposition of offense:

Please note: A criminal record will be considered as it relates to specifics of the volunteer position for which you are applying. A criminal record may prevent an individual from volunteering, depending on the nature of the offense.

References

List non-family members who have knowledge of your skills, abilities and qualifications. Individuals should have worked with you on projects and activities and/or have direct experience with or knowledge of your qualifications. Please provide complete addresses and phone numbers.

Name: _____	Relationship: _____
Address: _____	City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Home Phone: _____	Work Phone: _____

Name: _____	Relationship: _____
Address: _____	City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Home Phone: _____	Work Phone: _____

Name: _____	Relationship: _____
Address: _____	City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Home Phone: _____	Work Phone: _____

I authorize the contact of listed references and understand that I am required to submit to a fingerprint criminal background check prior to final consideration of my application to volunteer. I understand that misrepresentation or omission of required information is just cause for non-appointment as a volunteer with Ohio State University Extension. I understand that I serve at the pleasure of the Ohio State University Extension and agree to abide by the policies of the Ohio State University Extension and individual program areas and to fulfill the volunteer responsibilities to the best of my ability.

Applicant Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please return the application by the date requested. Contact us if you have any questions or wish further information (740-454-0144 or martin.2422@osu.edu). Thank you.

OSU Extension, Muskingum County
225 Underwood St.
Zanesville, OH 43701



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

CFAES provides research and related educational programs to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis.
For more information:
<http://go.osu.edu/cfaesdiversity>

Master Gardener Volunteer Position Description

General Description

The Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) role is to support OSU Extension, Muskingum County in meeting the needs of our citizens in the area of consumer horticulture by assisting with educational programs, diagnosing plant problems, making cultural and pest management recommendations, and other various opportunities.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Answer consumer's telephone inquiries and assist office visitors with plant/insect samples for identification or diagnosis.
- Assist with establishing and maintaining demonstration gardens at the Extension facility.
- Assist teachers, 4-H volunteers, and/or children with gardening education projects in school or club settings.
- Interpret information from Extension bulletins and fact sheets for the general public.
- Distribute Extension information to the public at such events as garden center plant clinics, county fair, Home and Garden Shows, etc.
- Assist with Extension educational programming, such as talks for garden clubs, Extension sponsored workshops, etc.
- Keep records of consumer contacts and volunteer activities.

Time Required

Volunteer hours may vary from week to week, will generally be needed during regular work hours, although some evening and weekend opportunities exist. A total of 50 hours must be donated during the intern year.

Qualifications

The MGV must show an interest in, enthusiasm for, and some knowledge of gardening. He/she must be able to communicate with the public by phone and deal courteously with visiting public and Extension program participants. He/she must be able to read, write and comprehend the information presented in the training sessions, and be able to communicate that information to the gardening public. He/she must provide his/her transportation to training and volunteer activities.

Location: County office and various locations around the county.

Support Provided

In addition to the Ohio MGV Manual, MGVs have at their disposal office reference materials and Internet resources to assist in answering questions and requests for information. If the MGV is unable to assist a consumer, questions and requests are referred to the Extension Educator or other appropriate staff.

Mentor

Clifton Martin, Extension Educator, will provide coordination, supervision and support to the MGVs. He will assign, review and evaluate volunteer activities.



Volunteer Standards of Behavior: Master Gardener Volunteers (signature copy)

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 with integrity.
- 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 possess or consume intoxicating substances including drugs or alcohol while responsible for the care, custody, or control of youth participants.
- 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, nondiscrimination policies, 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.



Continued from page 1

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. If I have been background checked and have had a break of service for less than 12 months, I will disclose any convictions that occurred during the break within three business days of commencement of participation in activities and programs with minors. If the break in service is longer than 12 months, I must be background checked again.
- 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 red-flag behaviors, 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 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 at the OSUE's sole discretion.

Continues on page 3...



**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 _____

