

# OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

(Volunteer signature required)

This Standards of Behavior is a contractual agreement accepted by volunteers who commit to the Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program. The Standards of Behavior shall guide the volunteers' behavior during their involvement with the Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Just as it is a privilege for Ohio State University Extension to work with individuals who volunteer their time, energy and talent to the Master Gardener Volunteer Program, a volunteer's involvement in the Program 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.

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 Volunteer Program and the Ohio Master Gardener Volunteer 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 Volunteer program, the OSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program, and Ohio State University Extension.
- Not engage in abusive behaviors that physically or verbally threaten or harm any Extension program participant, including youth.
- Not commit a felonious act.
- Comply with all civil rights laws and policies, including but not limited to OSU Extension equal opportunity, anti-discrimination laws, and program participant protection policy.
- Perform duties in a responsible and timely manner as outlined in the job description.
- Report immediately 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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## **OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION MEMBER/SERVICE RECIPIENT PROTECTION**

- Volunteers will not intentionally or purposefully place themselves in a position alone with a member of a vulnerable population, in a one-on-one situation, including, but not limited to, sharing sleeping quarters with non-related members and/or participants.
- Volunteers will endeavor to provide safe and healthy programs for all participants. In cases of illness or injury, participants will be treated on-site by the appropriate health care provider or taken to an appropriate health care provider if necessary, when a legal parent, guardian or caregiver is not available for consultation.
- Volunteers, 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 members or participants.

## **OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER TITLE USE AGREEMENT**

The title **OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER** title 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 service 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 Standards of Behavior, Member/Service Recipient Protection Policy and Master Gardener Volunteer Title Use Agreement outlined above. I agree to give the Ohio State University Extension 50 hours of volunteer service in approved programs in exchange for 50 hours of horticultural training. 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.

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**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of  
Extension Professional**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**