



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**  
EXTENSION

1100 S. Detroit Street  
Bellefontaine, Ohio 43311  
937-599-4227



Dear Potential Master Gardener Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in the OSU Extension (OSUE) Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) program. Volunteers are an integral part of our organization and make a significant contribution to consumer horticulture programming throughout Ohio. The following is important information about the OSUE volunteer selection process. All individuals interested in volunteering with OSUE must follow these selection procedures.

All potential volunteers will:

- (1) Receive a copy of the Master Gardener Volunteer Program Policy Statement.
- (2) Receive a position description.
- (3) Complete an application and return.
- (4) Provide at a minimum of two references.
- (5) Complete an interview with OSU Extension staff (you will be contacted).
- (6) Complete a background check.
- (7) Review and sign the Volunteer Standards of Behavior, the Master Gardener Volunteer Pest Management Information Policy, and the Activities and Programs with Minor Participants.

All these informational documents must be filled, signed, and completed prior to completing any work as part of the Ohio State University Extension Master Gardeners.

If at any point you have questions about the process, contact your local Extension agent and they will respond to your inquiry.

Please know that all personal information is kept secure. The release of this information will follow The Ohio State University and OSUE operating procedures and will be in accordance with Ohio law.



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

**POLICY STATEMENT**

**PURPOSE**

The Ohio State University Extension (OSUE) Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) Program is an educational program designed to meet the consumer horticulture needs of Ohio citizens. Its purpose is to train volunteers and utilize their expertise to teach people more about plants and pests, their culture, and their importance to the environment and to our quality of life. MGVs provide technical assistance to their county Extension office in order that consumer horticulture activities and programs can be more effectively and efficiently delivered to Ohio's gardening public.

MGV trainees receive formal training from their county Extension office covering a wide range of pertinent horticultural topics. To become an MGV, the trainee must complete the training program, pass the required exams, and volunteer a specified number of hours to OSU 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 training and volunteer hours, one becomes a certified OSUE MGV. Volunteers are encouraged to continue with the program by recertifying and assisting with the horticulture program as a certified OSUE Master Gardener Volunteer.

The Ohio MGV Program is supported on the state level by the OSU Extension Agricultural and Natural Resources Program Area. The State MGV Program Director, Program Manager, along with the guidance of a State MGV Advisory Committee develops policies and guidelines for the operation of the program; develops and implements the state support budget; provides 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 an MGV program coordinator.

**TRAINING**

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

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, phone, email) 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 Master Gardener Volunteer" is to be used only and exclusively in the Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Ohio MGVs are expected to identify themselves as such only when doing unpaid public service work under the auspices of the Ohio State University Extension. MGVs are advised not to advertise their place of business during extension sponsored activities and are not to be listed as MGVs 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 inappropriate.

## **PESTICIDE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Ohio MGVs, when performing MGV activities, are considered unpaid staff of Ohio State University Extension. MGVs are trained by Extension personnel and other experts and are provided with Extension publications. In addition to their training, MGVs receive diagnostic support from the C. Wayne Ellet Plant and Pest Diagnostic Clinic at OSU, and from various Extension Specialists. When it is necessary to make recommendations that

include the use of pesticides, MGVs must follow product labels or OSU Extension recommendations. They are not to rely on their own personal experience, that of others, or common garden folklore.

## **RECERTIFICATION**

Once an individual has completed the necessary requirements and is certified as an Ohio MGV, he or she is not automatically a MGV for life. MGVs must be recertified each year to remain on the "active" list and maintain the MGV title. MGV Recertification is achieved by fulfilling the following requirements:

- 1) Completing a minimum of twenty (20) hours of volunteer service each year, and
- 2) Completing a minimum of ten (10) hours continuing education by any of the following options:
  - \* Participation in State, Regional, National or International MGV Conferences.
  - \* Participation in county or district sponsored- continuing education sessions.
  - \* Participation in any other programs approved by the local MGV Coordinator for recertification.
- 3) Paying \$10.00 per year State Support fee.
- 4) Completing a criminal background check every four years if working with youth (care, custody and control)
- 5) Completing MGV program recertification online annually that consists of reviewing the MGV Standards of Behavior, Pest Management Policy, Abuse Recognition and Reporting form, and other OSUE policies.

Each county MGV program may set its own recertification standards above and beyond these minimum requirements.

## **IN-STATE TRANSFERS**

Ohio MGVs transferring from one county to another must also be in good standing and have their file transferred to the new county. The Coordinators in each county should communicate so this goes smoothly.

## **DISMISSAL OF A MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER**

Disregard for the policies and guidelines established by the Ohio State University Extension, the Ohio Master Gardener Volunteer Program, and the OSUE County Program are grounds for dismissal as an MGV. When the county MGV 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.



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## Master Gardener Volunteer Position Description

### General Description

The Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) role is to support OSU Extension, Logan 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 and online 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, but they 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. If recertifying for an additional year, 20 hours are required along with ten hours of continuing education.

### 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, online, 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.



# MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

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

**Our Mission:** We are Ohio State University Extension trained volunteers empowered to educate others with timely research-based gardening information.

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (Zip)

Phone: Day: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to call (am/pm): \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to call (am/pm): \_\_\_\_\_

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

State	County	Year of Training Program
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program and program supervisor's name:



CFAES provides research and related educational programs to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis. For more information, visit [cfaesdiversity.osu.edu](http://cfaesdiversity.osu.edu). For an accessible format of this publication, visit [cfaes.osu.edu/accessibility](http://cfaes.osu.edu/accessibility).

## II. VOLUNTEER INTEREST CONT

Other special skills, training, interests (i.e. bird watching, social media, publishing, writing, etc.):

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Helpline         | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Presentations | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Gardens       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstration Gardens   | <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Youth   | <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Adults     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media/Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Writing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Horticulture |

Other interests

We sometimes have many 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:



## 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.

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MGV5 Reviewed October 2021



**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 \_\_\_\_\_





THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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## Master Gardener Volunteer Pest Management Information Policy

*(Signature Copy)*

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

1. I understand that as a Master Gardener Volunteer 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 Volunteer I will provide both nonchemical 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 the 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 Volunteer 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 Ohio State University Extension for home and garden use.**



## MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER

### PEST MANAGEMENT INFORMATION POLICY

*(Volunteer Copy for Records)*

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 Extension Master Gardener Volunteers are asked to subscribe to the following policies. This contract will serve as a formal basis for Master Gardener Volunteers when providing pest management information.

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I understand that if either I or the client is not clear on information, we will request clarification from the appropriate Extension Professional.

***Keep this record for your files***



**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, visit [cfaesdiversity.osu.edu](http://cfaesdiversity.osu.edu). For an accessible format of this publication, visit [cfaes.osu.edu/accessibility](http://cfaes.osu.edu/accessibility).



**What is this policy?**

Whether you are a faculty member, staff member, student, or volunteer working with minors entrusted to the university's care, each of us have an important role. Together, we share the responsibility of providing enriching experiences for the nearly half a million minors who participate in more than 600 programs sponsored by the university each year.

The purpose of this policy is to promote the safety and welfare of minors who participate in these activities and programs. To support the protection of minors, this policy outlines what is required of personnel and volunteers who work in activities and programs with minors and informs individuals of their reporting obligations in instances of known or suspected abuse or neglect of minors.

**Policy Requirements:**

- Activities and programs must be registered;
- Individuals working in these activities and programs must receive training, know reporting obligations, and sign standards of behavior, all of which are included here; and
- Those with care, custody, or control of minors must successfully complete a background check.

The policy includes an important focus on reporting obligations in instances of known or suspected abuse or neglect of minors.

**Ask your supervisor if you have questions regarding your responsibilities within the policy or view it at <http://hr.osu.edu/policy/policy150.pdf>.**

**What is child abuse?**

When a child has suffered or faces a substantial threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability or condition that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect.

**What are some signs of child abuse?**

You might notice some of these common signs of abuse when working with minors. It is important to remember, however, that not all children will exhibit all of these symptoms. They may exhibit alternative symptoms.

<b>Physical Abuse:</b> any physical injury inflicted other than by accidental means.	<b>Emotional Abuse:</b> a pattern of harmful interactions between an adult and child such as criticizing, belittling, and rejecting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unexplained bruises or burns</li> <li>- Fear of going home</li> <li>- Fear of going with a particular staff member or person</li> <li>- Physical force used to correct behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not eating or overeating at meals</li> <li>- Extreme nervous habit behaviors</li> <li>- Parent/child interactions using inappropriate language or name calling</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual Abuse:</b> when a person uses power and directly involves the child in any sexual act, involves the child in pornography, or forces the child to witness sexual acts.	<b>Neglect:</b> the failure of an adult to provide for a child's basic, educational, or medical needs (i.e., food, shelter, supervision, and clothing)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unusual sexual knowledge or behavior</li> <li>- Child-to-Child sexual contact</li> <li>- Bruises on inner thighs or other "no touch" areas</li> <li>- Fear of being alone with a particular person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stealing food</li> <li>- Poor shower habits/poor hygiene</li> <li>- Dirty clothes or clothes with numerous stains and/or tears</li> <li>- Low body weight</li> </ul>

**How can I help prevent child abuse?**

- Recognize and understand signs of child abuse. Be alert and act on your suspicions.
- Know the procedure for reporting child abuse.
- Always use proper touches when working with children. Some examples include: hand to shoulder contact, side by side hugs, pats on the

head, high fives, handshakes, eye contact, and smiles.

- Only use physical restraint in situations when a child puts herself/himself or others in danger.
- Minimize high-risk opportunities for child abuse.
- Avoid one adult/one child interactions. Unless pre-approved, don't be alone in private spaces with a child.
- These tips not only help to protect children, but also yourself from potential false allegations.

**REPORTING**

**YOU MUST ACT IMMEDIATELY**  
**If you witness or believe that there is a substantial threat of child abuse**

Under this policy, you are required to **immediately report** all incidents whether you observed them directly, someone reported them to you, or you believe that there is a substantial threat of child abuse.

You may also be a mandated reporter under Ohio law. A complete list of mandated reporters can be found at <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/2151.421>.

**2 CALLS: You must report in any of the above circumstances in the following order:**

1. Imminent danger or life-threatening: 911 **OR** Non-life threatening: Children Services Agency - 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline at 855-OH-CHILD
2. University Police at 614-292-2121

**1 REPORT: Complete the Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, or Neglect Incident Report form**

which can be found online at

[hr.osu.edu/policy/resources/150abuse.pdf](http://hr.osu.edu/policy/resources/150abuse.pdf).

OSU policy and state statutes may provide protection for those making reports in good faith.

# Master Gardener Volunteer Background Check Process



If you have lived in Ohio for the last five consecutive years you are only required to complete a BCI (Ohio) background check.

If you have not lived in Ohio for the last five consecutive years, you are required to complete both a BCI (Ohio) and FBI (National) background check.

BCI Revised Code: 2151.86

FBI Revised Code: 2151.86, Out of Home Child Care

Find fingerprint location [HERE](#)

## Results must be mailed to:

**Attn: Background Checks - [4-H or MGV] INSERT YOUR COUNTY/UNIT NAME, OSU Office of Human Resources, 1590 North. High Street., Suite 300, Columbus, OH 43201**



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How May We Help You?



Related

Background Check

Disclaimer  
 Posting of a WebCheck organization or agency on this site is not an endorsement by the Ohio Attorney General's Office.

Business > Services for Business > Background Check > Webcheck Community Listing



## Webcheck® Locations

### Special notice

The Attorney General's Office recently upgraded the state system that supports background checks to bring it into compliance with FBI standards. The office recommends that you contact a Webcheck location before visiting to ensure its equipment is up-to-date.

The Ohio Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation regularly processes about 1.5 million background checks annually. Through WebCheck, agencies transmit fingerprints and other data electronically to BCI, to be compared against a database of criminal fingerprints to determine if an individual has a criminal record. BCI then issues a background report that helps schools, hospitals, daycare centers, and other employers make critical hiring decisions quickly and with confidence.

Select a county or ZIP code below to display the community listing in your area. Click on a selection to display a map of the location.

Search by County:  or Search by Zip: 43311

Search >

Company Information	Hours
<b>Logan County Sheriff's Office (BCI &amp; FBI)</b> 284 County Road 32 South Bellefontaine OH 43311 (937) 651-6158	BCI - \$32, FBI - \$35, Both - \$60 Tues - 7:00am to 3:00pm Wed - 11:00am to 7:00pm ADA Accessible
<b>Midwest Regional ESC (BCI &amp; FBI)</b> 1973 SR 47 West Bellefontaine OH 43311 (937) 599-5195	BCI \$35, FBI \$35, BOTH \$70