

## Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement

We appreciate your commitment to the Texas Master Gardener program. Your satisfaction and progress in this volunteer position are important to us. Please read the following expectations and indicate your willingness to cooperate by signing the end of this form. This form must be signed and filed with the county Extension office and must be updated annually. Volunteers not adhering to all items in this agreement may forfeit their certification as a Texas Master Gardener Volunteer.

I understand that I am trained by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in the field of horticulture, and I am expected to extend research-based information to the public on behalf of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. As a Denton County Master Gardener Volunteer:

- I understand that to maintain active status as a Texas Master Gardener Volunteer, I must volunteer for the Denton County Master Gardener Association for a minimum of 20 hours annually after my intern year and complete a minimum of 10 hours of continuing education hours annually.
- Provide a record of this service and training as directed by the Master Gardener Program Coordinator.
- Comply with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Background Check policy. The background check is to be renewed every three years.

When acting as a Texas Master Gardener Volunteer, I agree to:

- Consistently exhibit a positive professional manner toward and about Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the Master Gardener Program, the Master Gardener Coordinator, other Master Gardener Volunteers, and clients.
- Carry out and discharge all duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Avoid conflicts of interest
  - Do Not use my Master Gardener Volunteer status to promote any commercial activity or private business.
  - Volunteers' efforts for their place of employment will not be considered volunteer service to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.
- Recommend and use (when functioning as a Master Gardener Volunteer) only Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service approved information for any public pesticide, herbicide, fertilizer or cultural practices.
- Provide my own transportation and pay my own expenses incurred as part of official volunteer activities. (Expenses may be tax deductible with proper documentation.) Some County Master Gardener Associations may assist volunteers with expenses for certain types of events. Check with your local Master Gardener Program Coordinator for more information on specific association policies and procedures.
- Act in accordance with the highest standards of ethics:
  - Not physically, verbally, or sexually harass/abuse anyone.
  - Refrain from illegal or unsafe behavior.
  - Dress appropriately and do not use harsh language.
  - All work by a Master Gardener – text, written, spoken, images, photos, illustrations – is expected to result from the Master Gardener's thought, research, or self-expression. All outside work sources – text, written, spoken, images, photos, illustrations – must incorporate appropriate attribution. Failure to comply is plagiarism and puts the Texas Master Gardener program and the Master Gardener Volunteer at risk of copyright infringement.

Regarding Master Gardener Coordinators, Master Gardener Volunteers will:



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- Recognize the responsibilities of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service staff/Master Gardener Coordinator in setting program priorities, standards, and direction. Specific projects for the performance of the volunteer work are determined locally and should reflect local needs.
- Refer all commercial horticulture inquiries to the Master Gardener Coordinator or other Extension staff.

Regarding Master Gardener colleagues, Master Gardener Volunteers will:

- Welcome volunteers from all backgrounds.
- Respect and safeguard individual rights, competencies, safety, and property.

Regarding clients, Master Gardener Volunteers will:

- Provide quality service to the public regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

I further understand that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will:

- Provide training, supervision, and direction to Master Gardener Volunteers through the local county Extension office.
- Communicate expectations and responsibilities of the program to volunteers.
- Match volunteer skills and interests with volunteer opportunities within the county.
- Support Master Gardener Volunteers and the local Master Gardener Association.
- Provide continuing education opportunities.
- Provide access to Extension horticulture reference materials and reasonable access to Extension professionals.
- Uphold and cultivate a trustful relationship between staff and volunteers.
- Reassign and/or terminate, if necessary, any volunteer who does not uphold Texas Master Gardener policies, procedures, guidelines, and values.

I understand as a volunteer I will not be acting as a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service employee and will not receive pay or employee benefits. I also understand that I am not covered by workers' compensation laws in connection with my volunteer affiliation. I understand and agree that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and I have the right to end my volunteer relationship with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services at any time, for any reason, and without advance notice.

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Signature

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Date

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Printed Name

Information taken from Purdue, Rutgers, Georgia, Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, California, and Montgomery County, Texas Master Gardener Programs.