

Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement

The Role of UT Extension Master Gardener Volunteers: Community members and families across Tennessee place trust in UT Extension to provide quality leadership and education for both adult and youth participants. This opportunity to interact with and serve the people of Tennessee is a privileged position of trust that should only be held by those who are willing to commit to uphold behavior that fulfills this trust. This document is intended to convey the expectations for volunteers, specifically those associated with the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener program. The following statement of principles provides guidance and examples in regards to the performance of many volunteer responsibilities, but is not all-inclusive and refers to other policies or documents for clarity.

Volunteers agree to:

- Acknowledge and support the TEMG and Extension mission.
- Maintain a sound, working relationship with all Tennessee Extension personnel and fellow volunteers.
- Complete the TEMG intern training program through 40 hours of education and 40 hours of service within one year.
- Complete 25 hours of service and 8 hours of continuing education in each subsequent year to maintain certified active status.
- Contribute to a positive educational environment which will enable volunteers and participants to learn and grow.
- Participate in TEMG functions, events, and training sessions.
- Be supportive of all Tennessee Extension programs.
- Comply with the TEMG volunteer agreement, Statement of Principles and the TEMG Program Guide for Volunteers.

UT Extension agrees to:

- Educate volunteers as to the TEMG mission, purpose, and goals and set educational tone for the program.
- Conduct intern training and continuing education and provide instructional materials for volunteers.
- Provide organizational and financial guidance and support for leaders of TEMG county associations or groups.
- Give recognition for time and energy devoted to the program at all levels by TEMG volunteers.
- Support sound and mutually beneficial working relationships with all TEMG volunteers.
- Inform volunteers of events within TEMG and Extension.
- Provide information and training to enable compliance with the TEMG volunteer agreement, Statement of Principles and guidelines in the TEMG Program Guide for Volunteers.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Child Sexual Abuse: Covered Adults must comply with Tennessee laws on mandatory reporting of child abuse and child sexual abuse. (HR0580: 2b)

Tennessee laws mandate reporting by any person who has knowledge of physical or mental harm to a child if:

- The nature of the harm reasonably indicates it was caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect; or
- On the basis of available information, the harm reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse or neglect.

Tennessee law also mandates reporting by any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been sexually abused, regardless of whether it appears the child has sustained an injury as a result of the abuse.

A report of child abuse or child sexual abuse must be made immediately to one of the following authorities: The Tennessee Department of Children's Services (Call Central Intake Child Abuse Hotline at: 1-877-542-2873 or 1-877-237-0004; The sheriff of the county where the child resides; The chief law enforcement official of the city where the child resides; A judge having juvenile jurisdiction over the child. Reporting to a supervisor, administrator, or University police does not satisfy an individual's duty.

TEMG Volunteer Expectations

- The Extension Master Gardener badge is only to be worn in a volunteer capacity while I am engaged in activities for the Extension Master Gardener Program. It is not to be worn at work, or in any other moneymaking capacity, or as part of any other volunteer program unrelated to TEMG. Extension Master Gardener status is not to be used to promote any commercial activity or private business.
- Tennessee Extension Master Gardeners are representatives of the University of Tennessee and as such, should make all reasonable efforts to ensure that programs are available to all youths and adults. Any noncommercial pesticide and cultural recommendations given will be in accordance with published Extension recommendations.
- The volunteer understands that he/she has no actual authority to bind or represent the university with regard to any third parties and agrees to avoid giving the impression of having this authority.
- Comply with the standards for all Covered Adults in interactions with minors including UT Safety Policy SA0575 and those defined in the UT Extension Statement of Principles for Covered Adults.

References: University of Tennessee **HR0580 – Code of Conduct**; University of Tennessee **SA0575 – Programs for Minors**; University of Tennessee, Knoxville Campus, **Standards of Conduct for Covered Adults**;

TEMG Program Guide for Volunteers W-199.

Tennessee Extension Statement of Principles: The University of Tennessee relies on the ethical and responsible conduct of all volunteers. Even the appearance of unethical or irresponsible conduct can be damaging to the public's trust in the university. All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest ethical and professional standards, and to comply with applicable laws, regulations, contractual obligations, and university policies as stated in HR0580.

Respect for Persons: Tennessee Extension volunteers are expected to be committed to creating an environment that promotes learning, diversity, fair treatment, and respect for others, including, but not limited to:

- Treat others in a courteous, respectful manner, demonstrating behaviors appropriate for a positive role model for both other volunteers and the public.
- Comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination policy. Make all reasonable efforts to assure Extension programs, activities and events are accessible to youth and adults without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation or disability.
- Do not require Extension program participants purchase materials, supplies, equipment, or services from specific vendors.
- Teach youth/adults to provide appropriate animal care and treat animals humanely.
- Comply with the standards for all Covered Adults in interactions with minors including UT Safety Policy SA0575 and those defined in the UT Extension Statement of Principles for Covered Adults.

You should report violations to County or Regional Extension staff or the UTIA Human Resource Office (865- 974-7245).

Respect for Property: Obey the laws of the locality, state and nation including but not limited to refraining from:

- Neglecting or damaging university property; stealing or engaging in dishonest behavior.
- Tampering with or wantonly destroying or disclosing university data, records, or other information.
- Engage in unauthorized use of university vehicles, telephones, computers, or other equipment or materials.
- Soliciting, collecting money, or circulating petitions on university property without proper permission.
- Gambling on university property or during UT Extension programs, activities, or events.

Standards of Safety

- Possession of firearms, explosives, or other dangerous materials on university property or during university programs, activities or events, is prohibited unless authorized either by university policy or law enforcement.
- The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of alcohol, illegal drugs, intoxicants, or controlled substances is prohibited. Also prohibited are abuse of prescription drugs, use of alcohol in a university vehicle on or off university property.
- Failure to obey security officials, Emergency Management personnel, or other authorities in emergencies.
- Failure to comply with safety rules, regulations, or common safety practices.
- Failure to report an accident involving on-the-job injury or damage to university property.
- Smoking in violation of university policy.
- Flagrant violation or failure to observe traffic or parking regulations.

☐ I wish to be an Active Certified Tennessee Extension Master Gardener for the year _____. I agree to donate a minimum of 25 hours of volunteer service and complete 8 hours of continued education during the year.

☐ I wish to be an Active Certified Tennessee Extension Master Gardener with more than 10 years of service for the year _____. I agree to donate a minimum of 15 hours of volunteer service and/or continued education during the year.

I have read and understand the University Of Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement. I agree to perform my duties as explained by Extension staff and to abide by these stated principles and any other rules specific to events and activities at which I may be serving as an Extension volunteer. I understand that volunteering with UT Extension is a privilege, not a right and failure to comply with the statement of principles is grounds for immediate suspension and/or termination of my volunteer status with the University of Tennessee Extension.

Volunteer Signature

Volunteer name (print)

Date