

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR MASTER VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

I. Relationship to and Affiliation with WSU

Master Volunteer programs are part of the program delivery structure of WSU Extension. Volunteers should be acquainted with WSU Extension, its mission, and strategic goals. Master Volunteers represent the University and function as unpaid employees of WSU. Program managers should strive to ensure that all volunteers see themselves as such.

II. Mission, Vision, Goals and Objectives

The mission of Master Volunteer programs is to provide research-based education to the public utilizing a train the trainer modality, whereby the trainers are volunteers. Every Master Volunteer program should clearly define its mission and goals.

Goals should be based on addressing a documented need and focus on achieving expected outcomes including improved economic condition, environmental quality or quality of life. Associated objectives should define mechanisms for achieving these outcomes.

The mission and goals of Master Volunteer programs must be aligned with the mission and strategic goals of WSU Extension. All Master Volunteer programs should be routinely assessed for program impacts in terms of improving economic, environmental or social condition.

III. Leadership and Governance Models for Master Volunteer Programs

Master Volunteer programs must have identified faculty leadership at both the county and state levels.

- The County Director is responsible for oversight of county volunteer programs
- A statewide leader must be identified. This person is responsible for overall programmatic leadership.
- Program Directors are responsible for ensuring that Master Volunteer programs deliver high quality, research-based training and information.

A formal written agreement must exist between volunteers and county program leads defining the goals for the program, types of projects that will be undertaken while serving in the program, , and the expected number of hours required for volunteer certification. The appropriate County Director, Program Director, and District Director must concur before a new Master program is formalized.

All Master Volunteers are required to report their volunteer hours in the WSU Extension volunteer database. Failure to do so may result in discontinuation of their status as volunteers.

A statewide “Policies and Procedures” document should be created for each Master Volunteer program to clarify rules and regulations. These policies and procedures documents must be in concurrence with the overall policies and procedures outlined in this document.

IV. Recruitment, Training, and Evaluation of Skill Mastery

Master Volunteers are to be deliberately selected for the program and are vetted through some uniform process focused on ability to complete commitment. All Master Volunteer programs must have defined procedures for recruitment and screening of volunteers. Any volunteer program that is focused on serving vulnerable populations (youth, pregnant women, cognitively challenged, etc.) must conduct background checks on volunteers providing these services.

All Master Volunteer programs must include a mechanism for testing volunteers’ mastery of curricular content before they are engaged as trainers or provide outreach to the broader public. Master Volunteer programs must use a designed and research-based curriculum for training volunteers. Pilot programs may have a short-term exemption while curriculum is under development, but it is expected that all Master Volunteer programs adhere to these requirements within the first 2 years. Also within the first two years, all Master Volunteer curricula must be approved by the appropriate WSU Extension Program Director.

There are three categories of volunteers in Master Volunteer programs.

- Trainees – learning the curriculum
- Interns – trained and engaged in the process of returning volunteer hours
- Certified volunteers – met required hours of volunteer commitment.

To remain certified, volunteers must annually complete a reapplication form, participate in a predetermined amount of continuing education, provide a predetermined amount of volunteer time, and report volunteer hours in WSU Extension volunteer database.