

POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE CENTRAL MISSOURI MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM AND PROJECTS

CMMG Mission Statement: The mission of the volunteer Central Missouri Master Gardeners (CMMG) is to provide to the public research-based horticultural training and information on local climate, soils, and plants through educational community projects and programs and for gardening enjoyment.

I. University of Missouri Extension Master Gardener Program

Governance and Purpose: The volunteer Master Gardener Program is a University of Missouri public service aimed at providing horticultural information and education to the public. All activities of CMMG, including the Master Gardener Education Program and Educational and Community Projects, shall represent the interests of University of Missouri Extension.

II. CMMG Program, Projects, and Activities

A. CMMG Education Program: The CMMG Education Program consists of a MG core course of study and a MG Level II course of study, administered by the State Extension Coordinator through the local University Extension Coordinator. The local CMMG Program is coordinated by the CMMG Education Program Committee, consisting of the CMMG Program Training Coordinator, three (3) Educational Project Chairs, and two (2) CMMG Board members. The local University Extension Coordinator serves in a non-voting advisory position. The Committee may request other CMMG members to attend committee meetings per their expertise. As a CMMG Standing Committee, the Education Program Committee shall follow procedures for meetings, record keeping, and budget proposals as outlined in the CMMG Bylaws.

B. CMMG Projects: Both Educational and Community Projects are organized by Committee with a Committee Chair, who reports to the CMMG Committee Coordinator. CMMG Committees shall follow procedures for holding meetings, keeping records, and submitting budget requests as outlined in the CMMG Bylaws.

1. CMMG Educational Projects: The MG Demonstration Gardens and the MG Greenhouse in North Jefferson City and the Cole County Extension grounds serve as the primary long-term volunteer training projects for both MG Trainees and Active Master Gardeners. These sites showcase to the public the mission and purpose of CMMG.

2. CMMG Community Projects: The short-term volunteer community projects are gardening sites at non-profit organizations in Jefferson City. The Community Projects are part of the CMMG education outreach effort and also serve as volunteer training projects. CMMG Community Projects are approved by the CMMG Board after reviewing a submitted CMMG Volunteer Project Approval Form.

C. CMMG Activities: To earn volunteer hours, Active MGs may volunteer for any of the Board-approved activities listed on the *Primer on Recording Volunteer Service Record* (Appendix E). Trainees may count volunteer hours earned for CMMG Activities *after* meeting the basic 30-hour volunteer requirement.

III. CMMG Trainee Program

A. Recruitment, Application, and Selection

1. Recruitment of Master Gardener trainees is based on an action plan developed by the CMMG Education Program Committee.
2. Applicants to the CMMG Program must submit a *Master Gardener Program Application* (Appendix C), answering all questions on the form.
3. Completed forms are reviewed by the CMMG Education Program Committee in addition to the CMMG Program Coordinator.

4. Applications and in-person interviews may be used to determine if candidates are appropriate for the program.
5. Applicants shall be given a clear explanation of volunteer requirements and opportunities.
6. Final decisions for acceptance into the program will be made without regard to race, religion, color, age, disability, sexual orientation, military status, national origin, or gender.

B. Master Gardener Trainee

1. Definition: A Master Gardener Trainee is an individual accepted into the Master Gardener Level I Core Course, currently attending classroom-training sessions, and is in the process of completing the first-year volunteer requirement of at least 30 hours.

2. Acceptance as a Master Gardener Trainee: After acceptance into the MG Program and paying of fees, individuals must first receive orientation to the MG Program, including a review of CMMG Policies and Procedures and a site visit to the CMMG Educational Projects.

Becoming a MG Trainee is contingent upon signing the *Missouri MG Exchange of Services Agreement* (Appendix A), whereby the Trainee agrees to complete the training program consisting of classroom instruction and volunteer hours. Signing the agreement ensures from the outset that participants have a clear understanding of the CMMG Program's goals. Copies of the signed agreement will be kept by the Cole County Extension Center and the trainee.

The MG Trainee must also sign a *Missouri Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement* (Appendix B) prior to beginning volunteer service. Copies of the signed contract will be kept by the State Extension Coordinator, the Cole County Extension Center, and the trainee.

3. Volunteer Requirement: Trainees may accrue volunteer hours once the training sessions begin. The spring class must complete 30 service hours by November 30th of the current year and the fall class has until November 30th of the following year.

Trainees need to volunteer at the three CMMG Educational Projects to earn their 30 hours: the Demonstration Gardens and the Greenhouse in North Jefferson City and the Cole County Extension grounds. Volunteering at all three Projects will ensure coverage of a variety of horticultural learning experiences that coordinate with the curriculum.

4. Absenteeism

Not more than two (2) classes can be missed from the core course of study. All missed classes from the core course must be made up in the next session of courses to receive certification at the end of that session.

C. Training Fees

1. To ensure that all Master Gardeners receive basic resources, the State Master Gardener office requires a fee for the core course training. For this fee the State Master Gardener office will provide enrollment into the statewide program and permanent name tags and MG certificates upon completion of the core course and initial volunteer requirement

2. The CMMG Education Program Committee may need to annually adjust the basic training fee to cover additional expenses for facilities, copying, mailings, press releases, refreshments, etc. Travel expenses for non-University of Missouri Extension personnel may also be included in the fee.

3. Copies of *Grounds for Gardening* will be available for a fee through the State Master Gardener Office.

4. No fee will be required of Active Master Gardeners and Master Gardeners Emeritus who attend core course sessions for review.

D. Core Course Topics

Core Course topics shall include those contained in the core course textbook published by University of Missouri Extension. Additional topics may be included as needs are determined by the CMMG Education Program Committee and the CMMG Advisory Board, in collaboration with the local University Extension Coordinator, the regional coordinator, or the state coordinator.

E. Advanced Training

An Active Master Gardener is eligible to apply for Advanced Master Gardener Training. The CMMG Education Program Committee and the CMMG Advisory Board will determine the application and selection processes; course topics and examinations; absenteeism policy and hours of subsequent volunteer service; and fee for Advanced Master Gardener Training.

IV. Master Gardener Categories

A. Certified Master Gardener

A Certified Master Gardener is an individual who has completed both the core course and the volunteer requirements. When these requirements have been met and reported for recording with the State MG Program, the Trainee shall receive a State MG Certificate for class completion and a permanent name tag.

B. Active Master Gardener

1. Definition: An Active Master Gardener is a Certified Master Gardener who reports a minimum of 26 volunteer hours each year, a year being December 1- November 30.

2. Volunteer Requirement: Of the 26 minimum volunteer hours required each year, ten (10) of these hours need to be volunteer service in any of the three CMMG Educational Projects (Demonstration Garden, Greenhouse, or Extension Center). Six (6) of these annual hours need to be counted under the Educational Activities on the CMMG Service Record. The remaining ten (10) hours, and any additional hours for the year, may accrue from volunteering at CMMG Community Projects or CMMG Educational Projects, or by performing any CMMG Activities.

3. Exceptions: Exceptions to these requirements may be granted for extenuating circumstances, such as inability to perform physical exertion, by the Education Program Committee.

C. Inactive Master Gardener

An Inactive Master Gardener is one who has not completed his or her annual volunteer requirement of at least 26 hours each year (December 1 – November 30) and is not classified as an Emeritus Master Gardener. Inactive Master Gardeners remain as such until they complete the volunteer requirement of at least 26 hours in one calendar year. As soon as 26 hours of approved volunteer service have been recorded, the status will be changed to Active. Inactive Master Gardeners will not receive the newsletter nor be included in CMMG core courses or special events.

D. Master Gardener Emeritus

A Master Gardener who has been an Active Master Gardener for a total of ten (10) years will be granted Emeritus status upon request to the CMMG Board, who then seeks the designation from the local University Extension Coordinator, the regional coordinator, or the state coordinator. There will be no volunteer requirements. However, a Master Gardener Emeritus is encouraged to continue to participate in Master Gardener programs. He or she will receive Master

Gardener mailings and may attend any continuing education programs offered to Master Gardeners.

E. Uncertified Master Gardener

1. An Uncertified Master Gardener is one who may not use the Master Gardener title or participate in Master Gardener activities.
2. A Master Gardener Trainee will not be certified if he or she fails to complete the training course and/or annual volunteer service hours requirement within one year.
3. A Certified Master Gardener may be uncertified by CMMG Advisory Board—in collaboration with the local University Extension Coordinator, the regional coordinator, or the state coordinator with concurrence of the State Advisory Board—if the conditions under the volunteer agreement are not fulfilled.

F. Master Gardener Mentor

A Master Gardener Mentor is an Active or Emeritus Master Gardener who is paired with a Master Gardener Trainee to guide that person into a successful Master Gardener experience. The CMMG Mentor Program is a subcommittee under the CMMG Education Program Committee.

V. Volunteer Service

A. Approved Activities

1. Guidelines for volunteer service are that the activity should be educational and be performed or directed by Active Master Gardeners who are volunteers representing University of Missouri Extension. A good rule-of-thumb for determining appropriate activities is to ask, “Does this activity contribute to the goals and mission of the CMMG Program?”
2. Approved CMMG activities are defined on the *CMMG Primer on Recording the Volunteer Hours Service Record* (Appendix D).
3. Providing individual consultation services regarding landscaping and plant care may not count for more than 25% of total volunteer service hours for the year.
4. Travel time may not be counted on the minimum requirement of 26 volunteer service hours or 30 hours for Trainees, but may be counted for volunteer travel time beyond the minimum requirement.
5. Volunteer service shall not result in financial gain for any volunteer involved in a CMMG Activity or Project, nor does paid time qualify as volunteer service.

B. Volunteer Continuing Education

Continuing education, for which Master Gardeners may earn volunteer hours, includes Advanced MG Courses and educational activities. The determination of what counts as continuing education activities for the Active Master Gardener shall be at the discretion of the CMMG Education Program Committee and the CMMG Advisory Board, in collaboration with the local University Extension Coordinator, the regional coordinator, or the state coordinator. The basic guideline is that the Master Gardener continuing education should augment and reinforce the Master Gardener core course training.

C. Reporting Master Gardener Volunteer Hours

1. By November 30 of each year, Active Master Gardeners shall record annual volunteer hours for approved projects and activities on the *CMMG Volunteer Hours Service Record* (Appendix F). The Service Record needs to be reported by mail or by the University of Missouri Master Gardener Web Page to the Cole County Extension Center. Approved activities are described on the *CMMG Primer on Recording Volunteer Hours Service Record* (Appendix E).

D. Dual Capacity

A Master Gardener may report volunteer hours earned in a dual capacity situation if the volunteer activity or community project has been approved by CMMG. For example, if CMMG in cooperation with a local gardening club conducts a garden tour for their respective members, dual capacity credit may be earned. Speaking on gardening topics at civic clubs, however, does not constitute dual capacity credit unless the MG speaker volunteers for the CMMG Speakers Bureau. To earn dual capacity credit, the CMMG member needs to identify him or herself as a University of Missouri Extension Master Gardener, act under an approved CMMG Activity or Program, and wears the MG name badge.

E. Fees and Reimbursements

1. CMMG may collect fees to cover program expenses and operating costs for member and public programs, but individuals should not make a profit from Master Gardener activities. For example, an individual Master Gardener could collect mileage for approved program presentations, be reimbursed for supplies used in a Master Gardener project, or be reimbursed for telephone and postage related to Master Gardener officer duties, but the MG cannot be paid for volunteering to design a garden.
2. Only CMMG Committee Chairs, the Program Coordinator, and CMMG Board members may request reimbursement of expenses for an approved volunteer activity. If necessary, CMMG volunteers may spend personal funds for a volunteer activity and request reimbursement but only with written approval from the Committee Chair or Officer.
3. If honorarium, beyond mileage, are received for MG Speaker's Bureau presentations, the monies shall be turned over to the CMMG Treasurer. Otherwise, the activity does not qualify as Master Gardener volunteer service.

F. Volunteer Service Awards

1. Master Gardeners who have been Active for ten years will receive a bronze name badge; Active for fifteen years, a silver name badge; and Active for twenty years, a gold name badge. Badges will be provided by CMMG and awarded at the annual meeting.
2. All awards from the state office will be presented at the annual Missouri State Master Gardener Conference.

VIII. Appendices

- A. Missouri Master Gardener Exchange of Services Agreement
- B. Missouri Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement
- C. Master Gardener Program Application
- D. CMMG Volunteer Project Approval Form
- E. CMMG Primer on Recording Volunteer Hours Service Record
- F. CMMG Volunteer Hours Service Record