



## Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Agreement

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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 will need to be updated every three years. Volunteers not adhering to all items in this agreement will forfeit their certification as a 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. In exchange for the minimum of 50 hours of Master Gardener Training provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, I will:

- Commit to a minimum of 50 hours of volunteer service to the horticultural programming efforts in Dallas County by December 15 and record them in the prescribed time frame, but no later than December 31 of my training year.
- Maintain active status as a Certified Master Gardener Volunteer.
- Volunteer 30 hours and gain 6 continuing education hours annually after my intern year. In addition, during the first year of certification, there is a 6-hour commitment on the Help Desk.
- Provide a record of this service as directed by the Master Gardener Program Coordinator.
- Comply with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Background Check policy which requires providing your full social security number. The background check and Volunteer Agreement 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 conflict of interests:
  - Not use my Master Gardener status to promote any commercial activity or private business.
  - Volunteer’s efforts for their place of employment will not be considered as volunteer service to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.
- Recommend and use (when functioning as a Master Gardener) only Texas A&M AgriLife approved information for any public pesticide, herbicides, 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.) Dallas County Master Gardener

\_\_\_\_\_ (Initial)

Associations may assist volunteers with expenses to certain types of events. Check with the Dallas County Master Gardener Program Coordinator for more information on specific association policies and procedures.

- Act in accordance with the highest standard of ethics:
  - Not physically, verbally or sexually harass/abuse anyone.
  - Refrain from illegal or unsafe behavior.
  - Dress appropriately and not use harsh language.

Regarding Master Gardener Coordinators, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- 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 will 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 the individual rights, competencies, safety, and property.

Regarding Clients, Master Gardener volunteers will:

- Provide quality service to the public without regard to 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 Gardeners 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 Program.
- 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/or values.

I understand that, 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 both have the right to end my volunteer relationship with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at any time, for any reason, and without advance notice.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_