

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES Washington County Master Gardeners

### LIABILITY

1. Two (2) laws enacted by the state legislature protect volunteers from being held civilly liable for personal injury or property damage resulting from any act or omission in carrying out their volunteer activities. (*Copies of the laws are on file in the Little Rock state office*)
2. Extension agents using Master Gardeners to answer client questions shall have all contacts documented with the response given. (i.e. Telephone calls answered in the Extension Office.)

### MASTER GARDENER TRAINING

1. A Trainee shall attend the required forty (40) hours of educational training instruction.
2. Within the year of graduation a Trainee shall complete forty (40) hours of project work. (A minimum of twenty [20] of these hours shall be work on a sanctioned MG project.) In addition, the Trainee shall accrue twenty (20) hours of further education.
3. If the Trainee does not meet these requirements, he/she shall not be entitled to the title of Master Gardener and the benefits of the MG organization.

### MASTER GARDENER TITLE

1. The title “Master Gardener” shall be used on **sanctioned** Master Gardener projects ONLY.
2. The title shall not be displayed unless it is a **sanctioned** WCMG project.
3. The title shall not be used in any form of advertisement unless **sanctioned** by the WCMG.
4. The title shall be used only when doing **unpaid volunteer sanctioned** WCMG projects.
5. Master Gardeners shall not accept any money for speaking before groups on horticultural subjects.
6. Unsolicited reimbursements shall be donated to the WCMG organization fund.
7. Gifts may be accepted.
8. Education and experience may be used as qualifications when seeking employment.

### MASTER GARDENER CERTIFICATION: (To remain an active MG member)

#### First year:

1. 40 hours of training through the Washington County Extension Office.
2. 20 hours of further education. (*See Master Gardener Recertification # 2.*)
3. 40 hours of working on a project.  
(A minimum of twenty (20) of the working hours shall be work on a sanctioned WCMG project.)
4. A minimum of ten (10) hours shall be in the sanctioned Targeted Projects.  
*Targeted Projects are sanctioned projects identified as needing increased volunteer hours to reach their goals. Targeted Projects are designated at the discretion of the Executive Committee.*

**MASTER GARDENER RECERTIFICATION:** (to continue as an active MG member.)

Second year and all following years:

1. 20 hours of working with projects (10 hours of which must be on WCMG sanctioned projects)
2. 20 hours of education related to horticulture, such as:
  - a. Attending Master Gardener monthly meetings and programs.  
*(record 2 education hours for each meeting)*
  - b. Program preparation – research of information to present.
  - c. Horticulture information obtained from lectures, programs, classes, workshops, conferences, demonstrations, seminars, garden club programs, etc.
  - d. Attending MG Training Classes (or portions thereof).
  - e. Exhibits, tours, fairs, lawn and garden shows, fieldtrips to nurseries, botanical gardens, horticulture operations, etc.
  - f. Reading books, magazines, catalogues, watching videos/TV of gardening/horticultural programs.
  - g. Horticultural journalistic endeavors: writing for newsletters, newspapers, magazines, etc.

**RECORDING VOLUNTEER HOURS:**

1. Due to the Volunteer Hours Coordinator: *(Member of the Membership Committee)*
  - a. November through May – due by the meeting day in **June**.
  - b. June through October – due by the meeting day in **November**.
  - c. Hours in November shall appear on the next year's Hours Log.
2. WCMG hours record is due to the Arkansas State Volunteer Hours Coordinator by **December 1**.
3. Use the Volunteer Hours Log (*found in Forms/Bylaws Divider, Appendix A or in the Extension Office*) to record three (3) categories of hours: 1) Education; 2) Sanctioned Projects; and 3) Other Work.
4. Each WCMG member is responsible for turning in his/her own hours at the June and November meetings or giving to the Extension Office (in care of the Volunteer Hours Coordinator).

**MEMORIALS:**

At the death of a Master Gardener or close family member (child, spouse, life partner), a \$25 honorarium from the Master Gardeners' general account shall be placed in the WCMG Endowment Fund. This fund, created to support scholarships and other Master Gardener horticultural interests, is managed by the U of A Division of Agriculture, Agricultural Development Council (ADC) with oversight by Washington County Master Gardeners. *Donations to the endowment fund may be sent to: U of A Agricultural Development Council, P.O. 2219, Fayetteville, AR 72702. Include project ID # 30-011384. If the gift is in honor of an individual, name the individual and include the name and mailing address of the person to receive notification.*

**RETURN TO PROGRAM – REINSTATEMENT PROCESS**

Former Master Gardeners who have been inactive (i.e. Sustainer status) or relinquished their membership may apply for reinstatement. The reinstatement criteria and process is outlined on the back of the *Request for Return to Program* form found in the *Forms/Bylaws Divider* of the Volunteer Workbook, at the Extension Office or on the Master Gardener website: [www.uaex.edu/washinton](http://www.uaex.edu/washinton), click on “Master Gardener”; then on “Volunteer Workbook”.

## **MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS**

### **Transfers From Out-of-State**

1. Shall have completed MG training.
2. Shall pay local (Arkansas) WCMG dues.
3. Shall attend Arkansas WCMG training, since training varies from state to state.  
*Exception: If transfer is from a county bordering Northwest Arkansas.*
4. Shall pay WCMG applicable fees for a name tag and a book.

*Policies and Procedures (continued)*

### **Leave of Absence**

1. A Leave of Absence may be requested by an Active Member in good standing who has completed one (1) year of membership.
2. Reasons for requesting a Leave of Absence shall be:
  - a. for personal or family illness,
  - b. for family emergency, or
  - c. job related.
3. The Leave of Absence form shall be submitted to the WCMG Membership Committee for a recommendation to the Executive Committee. The recommendation shall be reviewed by the WCMG Executive Committee and submitted to the Washington County Extension Agent for final determination.
4. The Leave of Absence form shall be resubmitted annually.
5. The form shall be filled out by the member or someone aware of the circumstances.
6. The WCMG Executive Committee (secretary) shall notify the member and the Membership Chair as to the status of the approval or denial of the submitted request. The Secretary shall inform the Membership Chair of the decision within seven (7) days of the Executive Committee meeting.
7. The member shall:
  - a. pay WCMG yearly dues,
  - b. not be responsible for any work or learning hours,
  - c. not accrue years of MG service.
8. A Leave of Absence shall not be extended beyond three (3) years. A request at this time shall be submitted to the Washington County Extension Agent.

### **Sustainer Status**

1. The *Request for Sustainer Status* form shall be submitted to the Chair of the Membership Committee for a recommendation to the WCMG Executive Committee before the end of the fiscal year.
2. Shall be an Active Member in good standing for a minimum of seven (7) years.
3. Shall pay WCMG dues.
4. Shall have no requirements of work hours or education hours.
5. Shall not hold office or vote.
6. May be active on a committee or a project.
7. Shall not accrue active years of MG service.
8. To return to active membership a completed *Return to Program* form shall be submitted for approval to the MG Executive Committee.

### **Lifetime Membership**

1. An Active Member for fifteen (15) years automatically receives a Lifetime Membership.
2. Lifetime recognition shall be held at the annual state MG meeting.
3. Member hours/years of service shall continue to accrue.
4. Benefits of a Lifetime Membership status include: Work and education hours are no longer required, though encouraged, and dues shall be waived.

