

May 2019

Dear Master Gardener Volunteer Applicant,

We are pleased that you are interested in the Duval County Master Gardener Volunteer Program! The enclosed "Program Guide" will answer most of your questions; however, please feel free to call if you need additional information.

To be considered as a potential Master Gardener Volunteer applicant you must complete and return the application by the **June 14 deadline** and participate in a (10) minute interview. A \$150.00 fee is required once you are accepted into the program. For those that are accepted, an orientation will be held at our office on Wednesday, August 7 from 9:30 am – 11:30 am. There are a limited number of Master Gardener Volunteer interview appointments available. If the number of applications exceeds the dates and times allotted for interviews, written applications will be screened and only those applicants passing the initial screening will be interviewed and considered for the Master Gardener Volunteer program.

Please complete the following forms and return to the address listed below.

1. Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Application – 5 pages
2. Questionnaire #1 – 2 pages (front & back)
3. Questionnaire #2 – 1 page

Duval County Extension Office, C/O Master Gardener Volunteer Program  
1010 N. McDuff Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32254

**\*\*Note:** If you have the ability, you may also scan the completed documents to Sarah Freeman [sfreeman@coj.net](mailto:sfreeman@coj.net)

The Master Gardener Volunteer Program is intended as training for homeowners and not for persons employed in the horticultural industry. We feel that the personal interviews will give you a chance to ask questions about the program and will improve our selection process. You can only be a Master Gardener Volunteer in the county that you live in. Again, thank you for your interest in the Master Gardener Volunteer Program.

Sincerely,



Terry B. DelValle, Urban Horticulture Extension Agent IV, Emeritus



# **2019 MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM GUIDE**

**Jointly sponsored by:**

**Florida Cooperative Extension Service  
Nick Place, IFAS Dean**

**The City of Jacksonville  
Lenny Curry, Mayor**

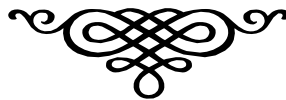
**Duval County Cooperative Extension Service  
Mike Sweat, Director**

## **2019 Duval County Master Gardener Volunteer Program Guide**

This "Program Guide" contains information that will be useful to you in understanding the Master Gardener Volunteer program, as well as the role and responsibilities of a volunteer Master Gardener Volunteer. It will also give you insight into the Florida Cooperative Extension Service, how it functions and how Master Gardeners Volunteers operate as a part of the Extension Service.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Terry DelValle  
Urban Horticulture Extension Agent IV, Emeritus  
1010 N. McDuff Ave.  
Jacksonville, FL 32254  
(904) 255-7450



### **The Master Gardener Volunteer Program**

#### **Part I - History**

The rapid urban growth in many areas of the United States coupled with increased interest in the environment and home gardening, have prompted ever-increasing numbers of homeowner questions to County Extension Service Agents. Many of these questions are seasonal in nature and easily answered assuming that one has horticultural training.

In 1972, an innovative Extension Service Agent in the state of Washington reasoned that well-trained volunteers could respond to many of the everyday homeowner questions freeing him and his colleagues for more technical and difficult problems. Volunteers, such as Extension Homemakers and 4-H Leaders, had always been a part of the Extension Service, but never in the area of homeowner horticulture. The Extension Agent selected, trained, and certified volunteers as Master Gardener Volunteers and succeeded in meeting his desired objectives - in fact, they exceeded his expectations. And so, the Master Gardener Volunteer Program began.

Since that time, the Master Gardener Volunteer Program has grown and is now active in all 50 states. Florida's program began in 1979. The program has been a tremendous success and is now active in 58 of the 67 Florida counties. The Master Gardener Volunteer Program in Florida is sponsored by the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) of which the Cooperative Extension Service is a part.

Just what is the Cooperative Extension Service? For a more complete understanding of this unique organization, we must go back to 1862 when the U.S. Congress passed the Morrill Act, which established colleges in each state to be financed through grants of land from the federal government. They became known as "land grant colleges," a name which persists today. These colleges would emphasize teaching practical subjects, such as agriculture and home economics. The 1887 Hatch Act provided for experimental stations at land grant colleges to conduct agricultural research.

Then in 1914, the Smith-Lever Act created the Extension Service as a part of these colleges as a means of disseminating the practical knowledge gained through agricultural research. The University of Florida in Gainesville is Florida's land grant college; the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is that part of the University, which has responsibility for the Cooperative Extension Service.

The term "cooperative" refers to the method by which Extension Services are funded. In Florida, three cooperating tax sources provide funds: The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the State through legislative appropriations and the counties through appropriations by county governments. The word "cooperative" also implies a sharing of information generated through sound research programs at the federal and state levels.

The term "extension" defines this organization's purpose - to extend the information generated at the state and federal level to people at the county level in the form of a "service." The Cooperative Extension Service is an informal educational organization, which provides information in three (3) main areas: Agriculture, Home Economics and 4-H Youth. Community Development, Marine Biology and Energy are associated programs.

The motto and goal of the Cooperative Extension Service is "Helping People Help Themselves." Thus, you can see how well the Master Gardener Volunteer concept fits into the ultimate objectives and goals of the Extension Service.

## **Part II - Duval County Master Gardener Volunteer Program**

In Duval County, the Master Gardener Volunteer Program began in 1983 and to date has provided 34 training classes to qualify candidates as Master Gardener Volunteers. Currently, 180 individuals are active in the program. They were trained and have committed themselves to giving a minimum number of hours of volunteer service for each year that they remain active in the program.

Selection to become a candidate for the Master Gardener Volunteer Program is not based on prior training, education, knowledge or experience. All candidates will be considered regardless of race, creed, gender, or national origin.

A sincere desire to help others, a desire to learn and a personal commitment to volunteer service are the major selection criteria involved. Gardening experience and knowledge are always helpful, but they are by no means a requirement for selection for the Master Gardener Volunteer Program.

### **Part III - Master Gardener Volunteer Training**

The Master Gardener Volunteer Program is demanding and intensive. The formal classroom training is held jointly with Master Gardener Volunteers from Duval and Nassau counties.

Orientation will be held at the Duval County Extension Office on **Wednesday, August 7 from 9:30 am – 11:30 am**. Training sessions begin at 9:30 am and conclude at 3:30 pm on Wednesdays at either the Duval Extension Office or Nassau County site. Training will be on the following dates: **August 14, August 21, September 4, September 11, September 18, September 25, October 2, October 9, and October 16**, and will conclude with graduation in Gainesville (Gainesville trip is optional) on Wednesday, **October 23**. Master Gardener Volunteers are allowed to miss only **one (1)** class because of the quantity of information covered in each session. A post-orientation meeting will be held in Duval County on **Wednesday, October 30, from 9:30 am – 11:30 am**.

Subjects to be covered include basic botany, nematology, entomology, pathology, animal pest control, turf grasses, soils and fertilizers, vegetable gardening, pesticide safety, plant propagation, fruits, woody ornamentals, plant identification and usage, and integrated pest management.

The fee for each trainee is \$150.00 which covers reference materials from the University of Florida. These materials are updated frequently so that Master Gardener Volunteers always provide the most current recommendations approved by the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida.

Master Gardener Volunteers deal only with homeowner-type questions. The Extension Agents will respond to all commercial or professional grower questions or problems.

At the conclusion of the fifty (54) hour training period, all Master Gardener Volunteers are required to take a comprehensive examination on the materials covered and receive a **passing grade of 70%**. Only then can the candidate be awarded the title of UF/IFAS Master Gardener Volunteer.

Once certified, Master Gardener Volunteers must abide by policies set out by IFAS and the Duval County Extension Agents.

## Part IV - Master Gardener Volunteer Activities

For new Master Gardener Volunteers, volunteer activities begin in January 2020 following course completion. **Seventy-five (75) hours** of volunteer service are required the first year and **35 hours** of service each year after that in order to remain active. All Master Gardener Volunteers also have to attend **ten (10)** hours of approved training each year to maintain active status. Most Master Gardener Volunteer activities and trainings are offered at the Duval County Extension Office at 1010 N. McDuff Avenue.

New Master Gardener Volunteers are **required** to volunteer a minimum of 24 hours answering phone calls from homeowners on gardening questions at the Extension Office and 15 hours helping maintain the landscape at the Extension Office during the first year.

Master Gardener Volunteers provide their hours of volunteer time in many ways. Here is a listing of some of the ways volunteer hours have been returned: answering telephone calls, helping with mail-outs, working in the soils lab, assisting with social media, writing newsletter or newspaper columns and fact sheets, making home problem-solving visits, working with youth in the 4-H program, working in the brochure storage room, working in community and demonstration gardens, conducting plant clinics, speaking to garden circles, working with the Junior Master Gardening program in elementary schools and judging horticultural contests.

As the Master Gardener Volunteers assist the Extension Agents, they are in effect "extending the Extension Service." As such, they provide advice and recommendations that have been well documented as a result of experimentation and testing and are **approved by the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida**.

Training never ceases for the active Master Gardener Volunteer. Regular on-going training sessions give Master Gardener Volunteers the opportunity to gain additional gardening information of a timely nature.

Every year an advanced training is held and opened up to Master Gardener Volunteers in various counties. The UF/IFAS State Master Gardener Volunteer Program offers a 3 day conference every other year and in the off year, it is a day-long program offered in different regions. These advanced sessions provide in-depth information on gardening subjects and are presented by State Extension specialists, agents, and other authorities. It is an excellent opportunity for Master Gardener Volunteers to take a look into the future of horticultural research at IFAS.

## Duval County Master Gardener Policies

The title "Florida Master Gardener Volunteer" is to be used **only and exclusively** in the Florida Cooperative Extension Service Master Gardener Volunteer Program in which the trained and certified Master Gardener Volunteers answer gardening questions.

Thus, Master Gardener Volunteers are expected to identify themselves only when doing unpaid volunteer educational work in this program.

In addition to the University of Florida training, Master Gardener Volunteers have diagnostic support via County Extension Horticulturists and State Extension Specialists. Master Gardener Volunteers also are provided Cooperative Extension Service publications, which discuss UF/IFAS recommendations.

Florida Master Gardener Volunteers are advised not to advertise their names or their places of business, nor be listed on the advertisements of business places as Master Gardener Volunteers. This is a University of Florida-Florida Cooperative Extension Service public service program providing unbiased information. Appearing as a commercial activity, having association with commercial products, or giving implied University or Extension Service endorsement of any product or place of business is improper.

In making recommendations, which include the use of chemicals (e.g., insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides), Florida Master Gardener Volunteers are to follow published Florida Cooperative Extension Service recommendations. Use of other pesticide recommendations is not approved. Cultural problems, which are not specifically covered by Cooperative Extension Service recommendations, may be handled by suggesting treatments, which an experienced Master Gardener Volunteer considers appropriate. Questions concerning commercial production of crops and pest control on such crops are to be referred to the local County Extension Agent.

A Florida Master Gardener Volunteer must attend the prescribed hours of instruction and pass an examination administered by the Florida Cooperative Extension Service before becoming a certified Master Gardener Volunteer. This certification is restrictive in nature in that it is valid only when the individual is participating in the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program and for one year only. If an individual ceases active participation, then the certification as Master Gardener Volunteer becomes void. New certifications will be issued each year only to those individuals who make a commitment for participation in the program for the coming year. Those who chose not to continue in the program will not be recertified and should be aware that if they represent themselves as Master Gardener Volunteers, they are violating their original commitment to the Florida Cooperative Extension Service.

The training and experience gained by participation in the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer program is valuable and may rightfully be listed and featured as qualifications when seeking employment. Once employed, and while serving as a paid employee, or if self-employed, Master Gardener Volunteers should not display credentials or give the appearance of being a Master Gardener Volunteer at the place of business.

Experienced Master Gardener Volunteers are likely to receive invitations to speak before groups. Gratuitous payments/gifts for speaking are not a concern since such speaking activity is entirely separate from the question-answering done at Master

Gardener Volunteer Clinics. However, please do not seek payment for such speaking appearances. Your work is much appreciated by the Florida Cooperative Extension Service and your local area gardeners who have received or will receive your counsel.

### **Duval County Guidelines Regarding Recertification**

A Master Gardener Volunteer may recertify for participation in the program for another year by:

- (1) Successfully completing the initial seventy-five (75) hours of volunteer service and adhering to the policies set forth in the agreement letter;
- (2) Committing to thirty-five (35) hours of volunteer work to be completed in the following year(s);
- (3) Completing ten (10) hours additional horticulture training each year. Examples of this are: New Master Gardener Volunteers training, Master Gardener Volunteer Advanced Training in Gainesville, one-on-one training in the office, university or community college related course work, horticulture seminars at the Duval County Extension Office, etc. If in doubt, check with the Extension Agent to see if the training is acceptable.

### **Inactive Status**

An inactive Master Gardener Volunteer is one who is unable to commit to an additional thirty-five (35) hours in a subsequent year, but would like the opportunity to possibly recertify him/herself in the future. The following policies apply:

- (1) An inactive Master Gardener Volunteer is one who is in good standing and completed his/her original commitment of seventy-five (75) hours volunteer service.
- (3) Inactive Master Gardener Volunteers are ineligible for Master Gardener Volunteer Advanced Training in Gainesville, mailings, or Master Gardener Volunteer educational meetings.

For individuals requiring special accommodations, please contact our office (904) 255-7450 within a minimum of 5 working days of the program. For persons with hearing or speech impairments, when contacting our office please use the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8771 (TDD).

Extension programs are open to all regardless of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, religion, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no endorsement by the Extension Office is implied.





# Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Application

Citizens interested in volunteering for the UF/IFAS Extension Florida Master Gardener Volunteer program must complete this application. Acceptance is contingent on return of this form to your county Extension Office for submission and clearance through appropriate screening processes. These processes are in place to help ensure the safety and well-being of all Extension program participants.

**General Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Male ☐ Female ☐

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you lived at this address? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

(If less than five years, attach a sheet listing all previous addresses for the past five years.)

Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

List *work* experience during the past 5 years, with most recent experiences first. Add a page if needed.

Employer	Position/Title	City/State	Years

List ***volunteer*** experience during the past five years, with current or most recent experiences first. Identify work with youth and community groups. Add a page if needed.

Organization/Group	Role/Title	City/State	Years

**Personal Interest**

Have you applied for the Master Gardener Volunteer training before? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_ Where?\_\_\_\_\_

Please list any training and/or practical experience you have had in gardening, horticulture, farming, or related fields:

What, if any, gardening groups do you belong to, e.g., garden clubs, horticultural societies, etc.?

How did you learn about the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program?

Why do you want to become a Florida Master Gardener Volunteer?

What ideas do you have of the type of volunteer work you can do toward completion of your commitment? (e.g., answering calls, preparing news releases, making home visits, etc.)

List *all* time periods that you can do volunteer work, e.g., every Friday afternoon, first Thursday of each month, etc.

What are the *best* days for you to do volunteer work, e.g., every Friday afternoon, first Thursday of each month, etc.?

**References**

List three references who have knowledge of your qualifications but who are not related to you.

Name	Mailing Address	Phone

Have you ever pled no contest or guilty to a criminal offense or have you been convicted and/or had adjudication withheld for a criminal offense within the past seven years?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, explain:

Have you ever pled no contest or guilty to a criminal offense or have you been convicted and/or had adjudication withheld for a criminal offense involving a minor (including a deferred imposition of sentence?)

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, explain:

*Note: A criminal record will not necessarily disqualify an applicant. A criminal record will be considered as it relates to specific responsibilities of the volunteer role.*

I wish to become a Florida Master Gardener Volunteer and would like to be accepted into the training program beginning on August 7, 2019. I understand that if accepted and I successfully complete the course of instruction, I agree to donate at least 75 hours of public service in the 12 months following the training through the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program. I have also read, understood, and agreed to abide by the policies regarding the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer program as outlined in the Annual Volunteer Agreement.

I certify that the above information is correct. I authorize the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension Service to request information for conducting a background check and to contact references. I authorize a check of my driver's license record as needed. I understand that misrepresentation or omission of the facts requested is just cause for non-appointment as an Extension program volunteer. My signature and information below are necessary to process this application.

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Signature

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Date

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Date of Birth

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Driver's License Number (State)

Thank you for your application. Return the application to the county Extension Office at your earliest convenience.

**UF/IFAS Master Gardener Volunteer  
Questionnaire #1**

Please **CIRCLE** the letter indicating your answer and return with application.

1. The Master Gardener Volunteer Program is sponsored by:
  - A. The University of South Florida
  - B. The U.S. Department of Agriculture
  - C. IFAS (Institute of Food and Agricultural Science/University of Florida)
  - D. Florida Department of Plant Industry
2. The Cooperative Extension Service was created by a legislative act called:
  - A. The Morrill Act (1862)
  - B. The Smith-Lever Act (1914)
  - C. The Hatch Act (1887)
  - D. The Larson Ave (1898)
3. The Cooperative Extension Service is funded by:
  - A. The Federal Government/MSDA
  - B. The State of Florida
  - C. The County of Duval
  - D. All of the above
4. Master Gardener Volunteers are required to volunteer how many hours to public service?
  - A. 25 hours each year
  - B. 35 hours each year
  - C. 75 hours the first year and 35 hours in future years in order to remain active
  - D. 60 hours the first year and 25 hours in future years in order to remain active
5. Master Gardener Volunteers are required to attain how many additional hours of horticultural training in order to recertify for another year?
  - A. 3 hours
  - B. 6 hours
  - C. 10 hours
  - D. 15 hours

6. The main purpose of the Master Gardener Volunteer Program is to increase or extend the service and output of information offered by the Cooperative Extension Service.
- A. True
  - B. False
7. The Cooperative Extension Service provides information to the community primarily in the program(s) and area(s) of:
- A. Home Economics
  - B. Youth
  - C. Agriculture
  - D. All of the above
8. Master Gardener Volunteers make most pesticide recommendations using information generated from:
- A. Public sources such as books, magazines and newspaper articles
  - B. Personal, practical experience
  - C. UF/IFAS Duval Extension
  - D. All of the above
9. The title Master Gardener Volunteer is to be used only in association with the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program and is not to be used for commercial purposes.
- A. True
  - B. False
10. Master Gardener Volunteers are expected to extend information to people involved in commercial agricultural/horticultural endeavors.
- A. True
  - B. False

**UF/IFAS Master Gardener Volunteer  
Questionnaire #2**

There are many reasons why individuals want to be part of this effort and program. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Beside each comment below, write the number (1-6), which best describes how important it is to you.

1 = Extremely important	2 = Very important	3 = Important
4 = Somewhat important	5 = Of minor importance	6 = Not important at all

Becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer is important to me because:

\_\_\_\_\_ I will have the opportunity to receive useful training.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will become a part of the University of Florida.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will have the opportunity to share my knowledge with other gardeners.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will gain practical experience that can help me get a job.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be able to provide a service to other people in my community and/or neighborhood.

\_\_\_\_\_ I can get a tax credit for my volunteer work.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will receive free instruction and materials.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be able to increase my knowledge in the area of gardening.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will gain a great deal of personal satisfaction.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be able to creatively use my free time.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be recognized by people in my community.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be able to gain new skills as a gardener.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be certified by the University of Florida, Cooperative Extension Service.

(Other reasons: Please use space below.)