Madison County Master Gardener Guidelines



Madison County Master Gardeners operate under the TEMG State Guidelines. This supplement will not cover issues already addressed in the state guidelines, but will serve to clarify how our organization operates on a local level. We can continue to add to this guidance document as needed to help our members.

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Guidance Areas

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

## **How do I relay information of death/sickness to the membership?**

If you need to pass along information concerning sickness or death of a MCMG or a MCMG’s family member, please contact the chair of the Membership Committee. They will be able to send group e-mails to everyone in our organization and post information to our MCMG Members Only Facebook page appropriately concerning each situation.

If a member of MCMG passes away, our organization honors that member by donating a brick with their name engraved to the Liberty Garden Park memorial sidewalk. The Membership Team will contact the treasurer to make arrangements for ordering and installing the brick.

## **What do I do if I cannot meet the yearly hour requirements?**

If you know that there is a life event in the near future that may not allow you to complete your hours for certification, simply let the County Agent know. She will provide you with a **Leave of Absence form** to complete and you will be marked as **inactive** for that year, waiving the hour requirements without penalization of losing your status as a Master Gardener in good standing.

If you get to the reporting deadline in November and see that you have not meet the requirements, please follow the same procedure as stated above. If no communication is provided to the Agent, explaining why the hours have not been met, you will not be in good standing and risk losing certification and being removed from the MCMG roster.

## **How do I apply for inactive status?**

If for personal, family, or circumstantial reasons, you wish to **suspend your Active status** with MCMGs, please contact the County Agent. She will provide you with a **Leave of Absence form** to be completed. Your service hours will be waived for that calendar year. Members are allowed to maintain inactive status for 2 consecutive years.

## **How do I REACTIVATE my certification after a leave of absence?**

If circumstances change and you are once again able to meet service requirements, contact the County Agent and she will provide you with a **Request for Reactivation form** to be completed. You will have 1 calendar year to complete your 25 service hours and submit membership dues. Once that is completed, you will regain Certified Active status.

## **How do I REINSTATE my certification if I have left the group and wish to return?**

If someone is a previously certified MCMG volunteer and wishes to return to the program, contact the County Agent. They will fill out a **Request for Reinstatement** **form** which must be approved by the county coordinator and board of directors. If approved and it has been more than 5 years since their involvement as an Active Certified member, auditing the intern training class will be required. Lastly, they will complete 25 hours of volunteer service and pay membership dues within 1 calendar year of auditing the course to regain Certified Active status.

If it has been less than 5 years since their involvement as an Active Certified member, they must complete the Request for Reinstatement form, gain approval from coordinator and board of directors, complete the 25-hour service requirement, and pay membership dues within 1 calendar year.

## **How do I submit a Project Idea?**

If you would like to submit an ongoing group project idea, please fill out the Project Request form. They can be found on the MCMG website (madisoncountymg.org) and provide as much information as possible. Once complete, send via e-mail to the Vice President of Projects. He/She will bring the proposal to the next scheduled board meeting where it will be voted on. With prior notification, the requestor may also attend the board meeting to present the project his/herself and answer any questions that may arise. After acceptance of new project, the requestor will be notified as soon as possible. The project will then be added to our list of Official Projects and reporting system.

## **How do I submit a newsletter article?**

We encourage EVERYONE to submit articles for our monthly MCMG Newsletter. Time spent researching and writing articles can be counted towards service hours. We are always excited to hear updates about NEW or timely garden happenings from your own garden, pictures and details about travels or garden tours, yummy recipes, book reviews, and any educational information that you may like to share with the organization.

To submit an article, simply send via e-mail to the Newsletter Editor, Liz Whitsitt, at [lizv@tds.net](mailto:lizv@tds.net) by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Ex: Want article to be published in the October Newsletter? Send in article by September 15th!

## **How do I request funds & reimbursement?**

If you would like to request funds from MCMG for the support of projects, workshops, classes, or membership activities, please submit that request to the Treasurer. He/She will place the request on the agenda for the next scheduled board meeting (first Thursday of every month at 5:30pm) where it will be presented and voted upon. After confirmation, you may make purchases. Save receipts for reimbursement. For speedy reimbursement, you may mail or scan the receipts and e-mail them to the Treasurer and he/she will cut you a check.

## **How do I join a TEAM?**

At this time, we are still in the early stages of developing our Teams and their leaders. If you would like to join a Team, please contact Celeste Scott at 668-8543 or [**cscott52@utk.edu**](mailto:cscott52@utk.edu) . As the teams develop, the members of each team and contact information will be provided in our Membership Directory.

## **How do I sign up to work on a project?**

Sign-up sheets for organized group work days are available at the monthly meetings. We also list group work opportunities on the MCMG Members Only Facebook group. You can always contact the Project Leader for more information about any project you may be interested in helping with.

## **Social Media Guidelines**

*Please read and abide by the following guidelines to ensure the best experience for all members of this group. Those who violate these guidelines will be removed from the group.*

## **MCMG-members only group page**

**Description**

This group page is for Madison County Master Gardeners members only and not open to the public.

The purpose of this group is for all our members to be able to communicate with each other about Madison County Master Gardeners news, updates and activities including: meeting information, official announcements, projects, speakers, trips, opportunities for volunteer hours, and to provide all our members with an environment that promotes learning, encouragement and support in all that we do to meet our mission as Madison County Master Gardeners.

**TEMG Mission**

The TN Extension Master Gardener program seeks to improve the lives of Tennesseans by promoting environmental stewardship, non-commercial food production, and human health and well-being through residential and consumer horticulture education delivered by a dedicated and skilled volunteer network.

**Guidelines**

**1) Goal-** Our goal is to provide all our members with an environment that promotes learning, encouragement and support in all that we do to meet our mission as Madison County Master Gardeners.   
**2) Content**- Considering group size & purpose, it is important that content be restricted to posts relating to horticulture/gardening, MCMG news, updates, and activities including: meetings, announcements, projects, speakers, trips, educational opportunities, and volunteer service.

**3) Be Kind, Courteous, & Respectful**- You must be kind, courteous, and respectful to others while demonstrating behaviors appropriate for a positive role model.

**4) Representative of UT Extension**- As representatives of the University of Tennessee Extension, your actions and behavior while in that capacity should always promote the best interest of UT Extension and spirit of this program, which is one of service.

**5) Harassment or Negativity**- Harassment of any member or negativity will not be tolerated.

**6) Post Removal**- If a post is in any way contrary to these values, the administrator reserves the right to remove said post. Repeated violations of these guidelines may result in removal from the group.

**7) Administrative Suggestions/Questions**- Administrative suggestions, questions, & constructive criticism should go through the proper channels to express those concerns. All project committees welcome feedback. Contact a board member for issues relating to association administration and project chairs for project suggestions.

**8) Resources-** *For guidance in conduct, respect for persons, and reporting of grievances and dismissal, refer to these documents:*

[*https://extension.tennessee.edu/eesd/Pages/Volunteerism.aspx*](https://extension.tennessee.edu/eesd/Pages/Volunteerism.aspx)

*‘Section 2 of the TN Extension Volunteer Statement of Principles,’*

[*https://extension.tennessee.edu/MasterGardener/Documents/W099-%20Volunteer.%20November.pdf*](https://extension.tennessee.edu/MasterGardener/Documents/W099-%20Volunteer.%20November.pdf)

*‘TEMG Program Volunteer Handbook Statewide Guidelines & Procedures’*

## **MCMG-open group page**

**Description**

This group page is administered by the TN Extension Master Gardeners of Madison County and is open to the public.

The purpose of this group is to provide members with an environment that promotes learning, encouragement, sharing, and support in all areas of horticulture. Our goal is to provide educational support to gardeners in an effort to meet our mission as Madison County Master Gardeners.

**TEMG Mission:**

The TN Extension Master Gardener program seeks to improve the lives of Tennesseans by promoting environmental stewardship, non-commercial food production, and human health and well-being through residential and consumer horticulture education delivered by a dedicated and skilled volunteer network.

**Guidelines**

**1) Content-** Posts should be restricted to any & all topics relating to horticulture, UT Extension News and/or Programs.

**2) Be Kind, Courteous, & Respectful**- You must be kind, courteous, and respectful to others while demonstrating behaviors appropriate for a positive role model for youth.

**3) Harassment or Negativity**- Harassment of any member or negativity will not be tolerated.

**4) UT Extension Representatives**- As representatives of the University of Tennessee Extension, MCMGs request that all actions & behavior in this group be held to the highest moral and professional standards.

**5) Post Removal**- If a post is in any way contrary to these values, the administrator reserves the right to remove said post. If unacceptable behavior continues, you will be removed from this group.

## **Reporting**

## **Deadlines**

Year-end reporting of volunteer service and continued education hours will be due on the **second Friday of November each year**. You may guesstimate what time will be spent on volunteer service and education for the months of November and December, and include those in the report. In the past, we have reported in mid-December. However, deadlines for agents to report IMPACT have been moved forward, and I need to include the Master Gardener information in this program report. The only way to accomplish this is to move up the Master Gardener reporting deadline.

## **Volunteer Service: What Counts?**

Any time spent working on Official MCMG Projects count towards service hours. In addition to Official Projects, members may contribute time to Civic/Community/Non-profit organizations on their own. These may include but are not limited to: City or County Government Buildings & Properties, Schools, Community Centers, Boys & Girls Clubs, Other Youth Organizations, Parks, Churches, etc...

Participating in project work days is the BEST way to get to know one another, and I encourage everyone to pick at least 1 project that is close to your heart and support it. As long as our main projects are receiving adequate attention, we will not institute specific hour requirements spent on Official Projects as suggested by TEMG Guidelines.

## **Continued Education: What Counts?**

Any event, class, lecture, tour, or trip that you participate in and contributes to your knowledge of horticulture is acceptable for continued education units. **Each monthly Master Gardener meeting that you attend counts as 1 CEU hour**.

## **Trips**

## **Trip Organizer**

This person will be responsible for overseeing sign-ups and the waiting list for group trips. They will work in cooperation with our Treasurer & Secretary to accept payments, issue receipts, and ensure that those who have registered are members in good standing. They will be the contact person for all issues relating to trip sign up, schedule, agenda, etc.…They will also be responsible for making provisions for travel snacks and drinks. It is recommended that they attend the trip. If that is not possible, they will select a trip leader to accompany the group.

## **Requirements for Eligibility**

Madison County Master Gardener members in good standing are eligible for participation in group trips. Payment in full is required at the time you sign up.

Interns and nonmembers (including spouses) may place their name on a waiting list. If the trip is not filled by MCMG members, interns on the waiting list will be contacted. After that, if space is still available, nonmembers will be contacted.

If you need to cancel your trip reservation, contact the trip organizer. Please do not try to find a replacement before contacting the organizer. He/she will attempt to find a replacement from those on the **waiting list**. If someone on the list is available to take your place, that person will refund you directly. In the unlikely event your spot is not filled, there is no refund.

## **Financial**

## **Dues**

Annual dues are $20 and should be paid in January at the first meeting. The treasurer will accept dues through the date of our March meeting. Those who have not paid will be contacted. If no payment is received by the March meeting, you will receive a final notification letter informing you that your status as a TEMG will be marked as **inactive**, and **certification will not be reinstated until payment has been submitted**.

Active Certified Members pay dues

Interns and those who have not yet achieved certification do NOT pay dues

Inactive/Leave-of-absence members do NOT pay dues

Emeritus members do NOT pay dues

Honorary members do NOT pay dues

## **Request Funds & Reimbursement**

If you would like to request funds from MCMG for the support of projects, workshops, classes, or membership activities, please submit that request to the Treasurer. He/She will place the request on the agenda for the next scheduled board meeting (first Thursday of every month at 5:30pm) where it will be presented and voted upon. After confirmation, you may make purchases. Save receipts for reimbursement. For speedy reimbursement, you may mail or scan the receipts and e-mail them to the Treasurer and he/she will cut you a check.

**Use of Tax Exempt #**

As a volunteer organization of UT Extension which is a 501(c)(3), MCMG’s are able to use the Extension Tax Exemption Number for purchases related to our organization. Of course, this number should NEVER be used for personal purposes. The Treasurer will have copies of the Tax Exemption Form which can be used by those who request funds through the Board. The forms/cards should be returned to Treasurer after use.

Businesses that require a special card:

Wal-Mart, Office Max/Depot, Hobby Lobby

For all other businesses, present them with the Tax Exemption Form at check-out, and fill out appropriate information:

Phone: 731-668-8543

Address: 309 North Parkway Jackson, TN 38305

Business Name: UT Extension

Business Type: Education

## **Contracts**

Do NOT ever sign a contract of any sort. All contracts must go through UT Legal.

Steps for securing a Motor Coach are as follows:

* The bus company will send a contract with all of the travel information and pricing.
* We send to Chris Webster at the Western Region Office.
* If the company is not already a VENDOR with UT, they will need to fill out an application to become a vendor. Chris will have this information.
* Chris will then send contract to UT legal to be reviewed.
* UT Legal may request changes. The contract will be sent back to the vendor for corrections and will have to be resubmitted to UT Legal. This will happen via e-mail
* Once UT Legal approves, they will send signed contract to Chris, and Chris will send it to Celeste.
* UT will pay the vendor directly, but Master Gardeners will write the check directly to the University of TN and give to Celeste. (Essentially, it is a reimbursement of sorts on our part.)
* Celeste gets appropriate transfer account # from County Director and writes it on the check.
* Celeste takes check to Chris Webster at Western Region Office, and Chris deposits is appropriately.

\*NOTE: YOU MAY WANT TO INITIATE THIS PROCESS SEVERAL MONTHS BEFORE TRIP!!

TEAM Responsibilities

## **Organizational TEAMS**

## **Hospitality Team**

This Team will be responsible for assisting with preparation and set-up at monthly meetings and greeting members as they arrive. They will assist with the Project sign-up, attendance table, greeting our guest speaker, and door prizes for monthly meetings. They will also be called upon to assist with hosting visiting groups, special guests, and hosting/co-hosting regional or state TEMG events.

## **Summer Celebration Meet & Greet Team**

This Team will have a Leader who will coordinate with those on the Hospitality Team to organize, plan, and prepare for the Meet & Greet event to be held the evening before Summer Celebration field day.

## **Growth Team**

Responsibilities include attending at least 3 intern classes and assisting with set-up and AV equipment. They will serve as the interns’ point of contact to ask questions concerning continued education, service hours, projects, meetings, and general involvement. They will put together a Growth Team directory with pictures of each member and contact information to help the interns remember WHO they are! The team will consist of at least 10 members with 2 interns from the most recent class joining each year and 2 older members rolling off.

Their main objective is to create/inspire “Intentional Involvement” for our newcomers as a way to bridge the gap between interns and the general membership.

## **Membership Team**

Responsibilities include notifying membership of sickness or death of MCMG’s or their family members via group e-mail and Facebook. Working with the **Treasurer** to order memorial bricks in the event of a MCMG’s passing. Writing letters of condolence, appreciation, thank you, and encouragement to our members. Assisting the **Secretary and Treasurer** in contacting those who need to pay membership dues by phone, e-mail, or letter.

## **Projects Team**

This Team will assist the **Vice President of Projects** with maintaining current projects and seeking out NEW project ideas. They will actively pursue replacements for outgoing project leaders, find co-leaders for volunteers who would rather have shared responsibility, and help to develop a core group of volunteers for each ongoing project to ensure its success and longevity.

## **Volunteer Development Team**

This Team will assist the **Vice President of Programs and County Coordinator** with seeking out NEW horticulture topics for MCMG volunteer development training, compiling feedback from the membership on what they need/want intensive training in, groom members to join the speaker’s bureau, and generate ideas on how to promote leadership within our organization.

## **Tech Team**

This Team will have the responsibility of attending “train the trainer” sessions where they will be taught how to use various technology systems. In turn, they will assist with training the general membership, and serve as helpful contacts for issues in those areas. Also, this team will have two important positions (see below).

**Administrative Reporting System Manager:** Assist members specifically with reporting of hours **AV Manager:** Set up and take down AV equipment at monthly meetings

## **Speakers Bureau Team**

This Team consists of members who are willing to teach classes, give presentations, or gain more training in these areas to become comfortable with speaking in public settings. This team will receive specific “train the trainer” education in areas that statewide programming has developed materials to be used for education of the general public. This list of speakers and their preferred area of interest will be used for many purposes including: requesting speakers for garden clubs & civic organizations, helping to teach the general horticulture class series, and to eventually create their own class series that may focus on specific areas throughout the year. I will also rely on them to assist with any workshops, hands-on demonstration classes, and field trips or special requests. Those participating in Intensive Training sessions will be provided with the information & resources to educate others. Those participants will be urged to join the Speakers Bureau with expertise in that topic area. To join the Speakers Bureau, please contact Celeste Scott.

## **Crapemyrtle Bark Scale Team**

This Team is open to any member who is interested in helping to spread the word about an invasive pest known as Crapemyrtle Bark Scale. They will meet as needed throughout the year to update # of contacts, communities or areas that have been reached, and groups that have been spoken to on the topic of CMBS. They will keep an up-to-date list of treatment products, where they can be found, ball park price range, and application rate. All of this information, including short demo videos, can be found on our MCMG website (madisoncountymg.org) for use by all. We also have a CMBS Presentation Kit that is available for checkout from the Extension Office when giving a presentation that includes: laptop, projector, display screen, power cords, power point presentations (long & short), handouts, brochures, tape measures, and any other supporting material that you may need if notification is given in advance.

## **Photography Team**

This team of volunteers will be responsible for taking photos at major Master Gardener events and collecting them in one common place that is accessible to members. It is unrealistic to expect 1 person to attend all events and be responsible for the documentation, so this is best taken on as a Team approach. They would also coordinate with project leaders. When a project leader sets a work day, if no member of the photography team is volunteering, arrangements should be made to take a few pictures and send them to a member of the photography team.

## **Nomination Committee (these members are appointed)**

The nominating committee, which consists of at least 3 MCMG members, is appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors. Due to term limitations, each year we are faced with filling vacant leadership roles, and this team will be responsible for putting together a slate of nominees for those positions. They will identify members whose talents would benefit our organization by serving on the Board of Directors and approach them to discuss their willingness to serve. They will also be responsible for explaining the role and responsibilities that come along with the given position. The slate should be assembled by the October meeting and presented to the Board of Directors for review (no vote). The slate will be voted upon at the general membership meeting in November. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor by any member in good standing. The proposed nominee must also be in good standing, be present, and accept the nomination before being added to the ballot. Only those offices with additional nominations will be voted on individually. For uncontested positions, we will vote to accept the slate as presented by the nominating committee.

## **Fundraising TEAMS**

## **Spring Plant Sale Team**

Typically held the first Saturday in May, the “Spring Plant Sale” generates funds through a public sale of plants that are donated by Madison County Master Gardeners and have been propagated from their own gardens. Plant selections include perennials, shrubs, trees, succulents, houseplants, ferns, hostas, fruits, & vegetables. Handcrafted and/or gently used garden art are also contributed for the sale. The sale is organized and managed by the Spring Plant Sale Team, but a large number of MG Volunteers are needed the day of sale. MG Volunteers are given opportunities at the monthly meetings to sign up to work on sale day. Time spent potting, grooming, & labeling plant donations may be counted as service hours as well and is certainly the most important task to ensure a successful sale.

**TEAM Director -** This person is responsible for all aspects of the Spring Plant Sale and will provide leadership and support to all team members

**TEAM Director in Training-** This personwill assist the director in all phases of planning and implementation of the plant sale with the intention of assuming the Team Director’s position.

**Advertising/Marketing Leader-** This person will submit monthly updates for the Master Gardener Newsletter, contact media outlets, schedule appearances for TV spots, submit notices to magazines, design and distribute reminder cards and flyers, coordinate outdoor signage, and submit the sale date to available calendars.

**Plant Processing Leader–** Will beresponsible for pricing, labeling and plant appearance prior to placement of plants on the sales floor. The Plant Processing Leader would also coordinate the printing of the price labels and plant description labels.

**Sales Floor Leader–** Will bein charge of plant grouping and staging, including garden art.

## **Summer Celebration Plant Sale Team**

This Team consists of 4-5 people who will be in charge of all aspects of preparing for the sale.

**1 Chair Person** will oversee and provide support to all other members of the TEAM and their duties. They will also be in charge of set-up, operations, and money on the day of the sale.

**1 Vice Chair** will make preparations concerning materials that may be needed, inventory of what is on hand, and purchase of needed items. They will also be in charge of any signage that will be needed, and ordering tables and tents with Dr. Hayes at the WTREC.

**1 Work Detail Chair** will layout work schedules and oversee sign-ups for ALL work positions on the day of the sale. Members are discouraged from signing up for more than two consecutive two-hour work periods due to the intense heat that is usually associated with mid-July. They will be in charge of updating duties of each position and training of workers.

**1-2 Volunteer Needs Co-Chairs** will be in charge of foreseeing possible needs of volunteers and providing for those needs. This may include securing fans, shade tents, or other ways to beat the heat. They will organize an area for volunteer refreshment with snacks and plenty of water under the main sale tent. They will coordinate with WTREC for volunteers to be able to store and eat their lunch in the break area inside the WTREC. They will also provide replacements or make adjustments for those who may need to take a break inside the building during their work shift.