

Extension Employees Volunteering for Extension Programs

MSU Extension employees are able to volunteer for Extension programs at their discretion and in alignment with applicable policies. This applies to all employee types.

MSU Extension employees are not expected to act as volunteers as a condition of their employment. However, some employees may choose to act as a volunteer solely for their personal purpose or benefit, and without expecting compensation or University benefits.

To ensure understanding of employees acting in a volunteer capacity the following applies:

- Time an employee spends engaged as a volunteer for MSU Extension cannot be the same work they complete as part of their normal work duties.
- Employees are responsible for supporting the separation of their employment responsibilities from those as a volunteer by constructively redirecting or deferring conversations, tasks, duties, etc. to a time when they are acting in the appropriate capacity, i.e., employee vs. volunteer and vice versa.
- Employees are not able to volunteer in situations where the employee would direct the contributions of a similarly situated volunteer.
 - For instance, a 4-H program coordinator is not able to volunteer in their own county because that individual directs the work of volunteers in their county.
 - MSU Extension employees volunteering as MSUE Master Gardeners (EMG) on approved projects should postpone non-volunteer duties to work time only (e.g., managing volunteer data) and should defer related MG financial decisions to their work time.
- Staff may only serve as ex-officio, non-voting members of volunteer or advisory groups in their own county program. Staff cannot serve in elected officer positions, as a signatory on bank accounts or similar for volunteer or advisory groups under the direction of their normal position responsibilities.
- Volunteer background checks, training, documentation, etc. are required as defined by MSU Extension Volunteer Selection Process (VSP). Employment screening processes do not replace the VSP requirements.
- Volunteer services are not performed during work hours or in connection with regular duties as an Extension employee.

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