

## OSU Extension Greene County MGV Handbook

Updated January 2026

The Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) program is part of the OSU Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Program. MGVs help further the mission of engagement and outreach. Volunteers are trained in horticulture and are leaders and educators in the community tasked with sharing their knowledge and gardening experience with the community via approved projects...always providing research-based, unbiased reliable information.

### Mission

The mission of the OSU Extension Greene County Master Gardener Volunteers is to educate the Greene County community with timely research-based gardening information under the guidance of the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Program.

### Program Coordinators

- ANR Educator: Marina [Miquilini.1@osu.edu](mailto:Miquilini.1@osu.edu)
- ANR Program Assistant: Sarah [lsbill.1@osu.edu](mailto:lsbill.1@osu.edu)

### Member Status

#### **Applicant**

- Individuals in the application process

#### **Intern**

- Applicants who have begun training and are working toward certification (forms completed, background check, references, 50 hours of horticulture training, and 50 hours of volunteer time)

#### **Active**

- Certified MGVs in good standing
- Requirements
  - Minimum of 20 volunteer hours per year
  - Minimum of 10 continuing education (CE) hours per year
  - Current on recertification and annual dues (\$30 total: \$15 state fee + \$15 program fee)

#### **Inactive**

- Certified MGVs unable to meet annual requirements due to personal reasons
- Requirements
  - Must notify the Program Coordinators to request inactive status
  - Must complete 10 continuing education (CE) hours per year while inactive
  - May remain inactive for up to 3 years; after that, status changes to *Resigned*

#### **Resigned**

- Individuals are no longer part of the MGV program due to resignation or termination

- Resigned individuals are not considered certified volunteers

### **Semi-Active Emeritus**

- Honorary status recognizing exceptional service
- Eligibility: at least 10 years of active volunteer service and 500+ volunteer hours in the county
- Requirements
  - Must still log hours, recertify annually, and pay dues, but no longer required to complete the annual 20 volunteer hours or 10 continuing education hours
  - If inactive for 3+ years prior to this status, a background check is required
- Application for Emeritus Status
  - Contact Program Coordinators
  - Complete the Emeritus Status Request Form (<https://go.osu.edu/EmeritusRequest>)
  - Review Process: Program Coordinators will share your request with the Leadership Team at their next meeting
  - Applicant will be contacted once a decision has been made on the request

### **Transfers**

- MGVs certified in another county or state may transfer into the Greene County program if they are an active volunteer in good standing. Program Coordinators should be contacted for instructions. Training or examinations are not required, but to help in the transition, the transfer will be asked to complete an interview/orientation in person at the extension office

### **Leadership Team**

The MGV Leadership Team is made up of project and committee leaders who serve as the core leadership team for our program.

- Responsibilities
  - Attend quarterly leadership meetings (and as needed)
  - Share committee/project updates
  - Collaborate to identify solutions and plan realistically
  - Help Program Coordinators with:
    - Reviewing MGV Handbook updates
    - Reviewing Emeritus Status applications
    - Reviewing new project requests and recommending/guiding project closures
    - Reviewing committee/project budget requests
    - Conducting annual project/committee reviews
  - Responsible for reporting back to their project or committee members

## Business Meetings

- The business meetings will be held bi-monthly at a place and time designated at the beginning of the year. Meetings will be organized in the following manner:
  - Business Meeting – 30 minutes used as volunteer time
  - Continuing Education – 30 minutes
  - Social time – 30 minutes, optional and not an official OSU function
- Cancellation - Notification of meeting cancellations due to emergencies and hazardous weather conditions will be accomplished via email at least 1 hour before the meeting time

<b>OSU Extension Greene County MGV Business Meetings and Annual Social Events</b>		
<b>Month</b>	<b>Meeting details</b>	<b>Meeting Topic Discussions</b>
<b>Every Meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General MGV updates</li> <li>• Budget updates</li> </ul>	
<b>January</b>	In-person	Winter Gathering
<b>February</b>	On Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Meeting</li> <li>• MGV Program review</li> <li>• MGV Handbook review</li> <li>• MGV general processes and HOC review</li> </ul>
<b>March</b>		
<b>April</b>	In-person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Meeting</li> <li>• Continuing Education</li> </ul>
<b>May</b>		
<b>June</b>	In-person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Meeting</li> <li>• Continuing Education</li> </ul>
<b>July</b>		
<b>August</b>	In-person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Meeting</li> <li>• Continuing Education</li> </ul>
<b>September</b>	In-person	Graduation Party Potluck
<b>October</b>	In person at the Extension Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Meeting</li> <li>• MGV Annual survey results and feedback</li> </ul>
<b>November</b>		
<b>December</b>		

## **Greene County Active Committees**

- Awards Committee
- Fundraising Committee
- Meeting Planning and Support Committee
- Programs Committee
- Signage subcommittee (temporary)

## **Greene County Active Projects**

### County Wide

- MGV Presentations
- OSU Extension Support
- Greeneline Horticultural Helpline
- School Education Outreach

### Xenia

- OSU Extension Office Demonstration Garden
- Bloom Xenia -Adopt a Spot
- James Ranch Demonstration Garden
- Phenology Garden

### Bellbrook

- Bellbrook Petrikis Park Butterfly Garden

### Beavercreek

- The Gardens at Owen's Place
- Wartinger Park

### Fairborn

- Wright-Patterson Medical Center Garden
- Mary Help of Christians Community Garden

## **MGV Mid-year Project Review**

All MGV projects must meet at least once mid-year as a team to complete the MGV Project Review Form. This process ensures consistent evaluation of each project against the expectations outlined in the project rubric.

Mid-year Review Includes:

- Team Assessment: Review accomplishments, identify needs, and confirm alignment with program goals and project rubric
- Continuous Improvement: Use feedback from these reviews to guide ongoing improvements and maintain accountability
- Coordinator Support: Program Coordinators will work closely with projects to ensure mission alignment, project sustainability, and responsible use of resources

## **MGV Project/Committee Budget Request & Annual Review**

Each Fall, all MGV projects and committees are required to get together as a team and complete the MGV Project/Committee Budget Request & Annual Review Form. This ensures that every project is evaluated consistently and that budget planning is done in alignment with program goals and available resources.

- Review Process
  - The Leadership Team and Program Coordinators will review all forms together at the final Leadership Team meeting of the year
  - The group will discuss accomplishments, identify needs, and provide feedback on budget requests
  - Final approval of budgets rests with the Program Coordinators, following OSU Extension guidelines
  - A summary of the project/committee budgets and annual review will be shared with the full MGV membership via email
  - Along with the summary, members will receive a survey to provide comments and suggestions
  - All comments and suggestions from the survey will be reviewed at the first Leadership Team meeting of the new year
  - Any resulting updates or decisions will be shared and presented at the first MGV Business Meeting of the year

## **New Project Requests**

- Application for New Projects
  - Contact Program Coordinators to discuss adding a project
  - Complete the New Project Request Form (<https://go.osu.edu/NewMGVProject>)

- Review Process: Program Coordinators will share your request with the Leadership Team at their next meeting
- Applicant will be contacted once a decision has been made on the request

### **Project Closure**

Projects may be closed if they no longer align with the program’s mission or are not sustainable. This can be identified by any MGV member or the Program Coordinators. Before any closure decision is made, the recommendation and plan will be discussed with the project team and the Leadership Team. Together, they will:

- Review the concerns and explore possible solutions
- Develop a transition or hand-off plan if closure is necessary
- Ensure that decisions are made collaboratively and that resources and efforts are managed responsibly

### **Purchases and Reimbursement Procedures**

- When items need to be purchased for a project or committee and it is not previously approved in the budget, a request form must be sent to the Program Coordinators for approval.
- When previously approved items need to be purchased, an order request may be sent to the Program Coordinators, or volunteers can place the order and request a reimbursement by filling out the online form: <https://go.osu.edu/GreeneMGVreimbursement>
- Notes:
  - Receipts must be original, legible, and include a detailed description of the items purchased. Do not write on the receipt, as it is considered an official document. The receipt must contain items purchased for the project only. Receipts must be submitted within 30 days of the purchase date (90 days maximum). At the end of the calendar year, the timeline will be shorter than 30 days, as all of the year’s receipts need to be in by December 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - All reimbursement requests will be reviewed and processed monthly, on the last business day of each month. The Program Coordinators will notify the requester once the receipt is reviewed and processed
  - Once approved by OSU, the office associate will notify the requester by email to look for the check

### **Volunteer Opportunities and Continuing Education**

- A biweekly update from the Program Coordinators will be sent with approved continuing education and volunteer opportunities.

- If an opportunity is not listed and falls outside approved projects or committees, contact the Program Coordinators at least one week before the event to request approval for credit. Approved opportunities will be added to the next update so all MGVs have an equal chance to participate. If you have questions about any opportunities, please reach out to the Program Coordinators.
- Prior to giving any presentations, they must be reviewed by the Program Coordinators for liability coverage. Presentations should be submitted at least 1 week prior to the event, to give time for review and any necessary adjustments.
- If you are contacted by anyone other than the Program Coordinators about participating in a volunteer opportunity, have the individual provide the request to the Program Coordinators for approval. Approval is required for liability coverage for activities outside of the established Greene County projects listed below.
- Program Coordinators cannot attend all continuing education (CE); therefore, feedback is needed for CE from non-university/non-government affiliated sources, which are not certain to be unbiased and research-based.
  - Items marked with \*\* in the Biweekly (or Extra) are non-university/non-government affiliated training that need vetting
  - After attending approved sessions, answer 6 questions in Qualtrics at: <https://go.osu.edu/CEquestions> OR by email to the Program Coordinators (answers can be a just a few short sentences)
  - The 6 questions are:
    - Give your name
    - Give the title of the CE event you attended
    - What were your top 3 takeaways from the CE opportunity?
    - What references did the CE opportunity present to you that you can share with others?
    - In which subject areas do you wish the CE opportunity had given deeper detail?
    - Why would you recommend this CE opportunity to other MGVs?
  - Enter CE credits into Hands-On Connect. CE hours will be approved if questions are completed, even if the answers are negative.
- CE Opportunities NOT marked with \*\* do not need the questions answered

### **Reporting volunteer and continuing education hours**

- Volunteer hours and continuing education hours should be recorded by each individual and entered monthly into the Hands-On Connect (HOC) platform. Hours should be entered under the specific project(s) or committee(s) on which work was performed or for individual continuing education opportunities.
- For volunteer hours, include your driving time. However, for continuing education hours, do not include driving time.
- When entering hours, use 15-minute increments with the following conversions:
  - 15 minutes = 0.25

- 30 minutes = 0.5
- 45 minutes = 0.75
- 1 hour = 1.0 (1:15 hours = 1.25; 2 hours = 2.0, etc.)
- Review the volunteer opportunity description in HOC to be sure you are making the correct entry for your volunteer time. If your work is not listed within the opportunity description, then you need to make your entry under a different project. More detailed information is in the project descriptions; however, these may help you find the correct one more easily.
  - **Committees & Leadership Team Meetings** – This is for committee meetings for Awards, Fundraising, Meeting Planning & Support, and Programs Committee, including meetings of the Leadership Team and temporary subcommittees such as the Signage Subcommittee. This also includes preparation and volunteer work with 4-H Camp and the Greene County Fair (both under the Programs Committee).
  - **MGV Presentations** – This is for prep work, teaching/leading, and helping with a MGV or Home Horticulture public program.
  - **OSU Extension Support** – This is for all meetings with Program Coordinators and for assistance with Extension programming, such as 4-H and Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS). This includes the Lettuce Cook program, but not 4-H Camp or Greene County Fair activities (see Committees).
  - **Greenline Horticultural Helpline, School Education Outreach, OSU Extension Office Demonstration Garden, Bloom Xenia – Adopt a Spot, James Ranch Demonstration Garden, Phenology Garden, Bellbrook Petrikis Park Butterfly Garden, The Gardens at Owen’s Place, Wartinger Park, Wright-Patterson Medical Center Garden, and Mary Help of Christians Community Garden** – These are all for approved Greene County projects with scheduled workdays; you can volunteer to help any project by contacting the project leader and arranging to work with the team.
  - **Out of State Transfer Hours** – This is only for a one-time entry of total current year hours for an MGV transferring from outside of Ohio. Transfers within Ohio will have their HOC profile transferred between counties and will not need to use this.
  - **Continuing Education** – This is for all approved continuing education hours, including Greene County MGV Business Meetings. Hours should be entered for each opportunity attended. The opportunity title and other clarifying information should be entered in the “Activity/Feedback” block.
  - **Ask a Master Gardener Volunteer & Heritage Garden at the Governor’s Mansion** – These are for State-level projects. Contact the Program Coordinators for more information if you are interested in participating in either opportunity; these cannot be used without prior coordination.
- A tutorial with instructions is attached to this Handbook (below). Any questions or concerns about the hour entry process should be directed to the Program Coordinators.
- The Program Coordinators review entries monthly and will contact MGVs by email to resolve issues.

Attachment: Greene County HOC Entering Hours Tutorial



HOC Entering  
Hours Tutorial.pdf