



Volunteer Learning Modules: Welcome to MSU Extension Part 2

Overview

In this module volunteers gain an understanding of, how volunteers are vital to extension and policies that all volunteers must follow.

Section 1: Volunteers are Vital

Volunteers—people who freely offer their time and talents to represent or perform services on behalf of MSU Extension—are vital to the work of the organization. MSU Extension volunteers play an essential role in our efforts to enhance the growth and development of the Michigan residents we serve through a multitude of programs. Volunteers act as something of an outreach arm of our staff.

Section 5: MSU Extension Code of Conduct

Adult volunteers, within MSU Extension serve in a variety of activities, programs, and projects in informal and nonformal settings. MSU Extension volunteers are expected to conduct themselves and interface with others appropriately. The Code of Conduct outlines volunteer expectations and is signed by volunteers in Volunteer Central

It is expected that all MSU Extension volunteers comply with the MSU Extension Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with any component of the code or participation in other inappropriate conduct as determined by MSU Extension representatives may lead to dismissal as a volunteer from the MSU Extension program.

Resources:

- › Michigan State University Extension Volunteer Code of Conduct:
<https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/volunteer-code-of-conduct>

Section 6: Antidiscrimination Policy & ADA

As part of a land-grant university that receives financial support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, or NIFA, Michigan State University Extension is required to comply with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI prohibits discrimination in federally assisted programs, and Title VII prohibits discrimination in federal employment practices. Because volunteers help to extend the programming and work of MSU Extension, they must also comply with Title VI and Title VII.

Programs, activities, and events you work with as an MSU Extension volunteer must be open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, or veteran status. This list of protected categories is slightly different from the federal list.

To contact an expert in your area, visit extension.msu.edu/experts or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464)

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Quentin Tyler, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned.



For additional information, visit extension.msu.edu

MSU Extension programming must be done in places that are open to all, including people with disabilities. This means that facilities must comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, or ADA. To be ADA-compliant, sites must have features such as accessible parking spaces and entrances; ramps, elevators, or lifts as alternatives to steps; and wide doorways with accessible door openers for people who use wheelchairs or walkers. All promotion one does for an MSU Extension program must include the request for accommodation statement. Please work with your local MSU Extension office for this statement.

Beyond the federal requirements, it is our responsibility as MSU Extension staff and volunteers “to care about people, all people,” (Fields, n.d.) and to create inclusive environments for all people. “Inclusion moves beyond simply having diversity within a space—and toward creating an equitable environment where the richness of ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives are harnessed. Inclusion is the act of creating a space where each person is authentically valued, respected and supported. Creating an inclusive environment involves taking steps to think and act through a social justice lens. These steps include:

- Opening our minds to reflect on our own identity and organizational culture
 - Engaging with diverse communities in an inclusive way
 - Positioning our youth and community members at the center of our programs
 - Celebrating and valuing the diverse cultures around us
 - Acknowledging and challenging the oppressive barriers that many groups face
- Complaints about bias-related incidents can be filed by the victim, by a person acting on behalf of the victim, or by a witness or bystander. MSU strongly encourages community members, including MSU Extension volunteers and program participants, to report incidents of bias and hate crimes to help ensure an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.

To report or to talk with someone about a bias incident that you experienced, witnessed, or were informed of, contact the Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance phone at 517-353-3922 or by the [public incident reporting form](#). We also ask you to inform your local MSU Extension office of the incident.

Resources:

- › Fields, N. (n.d.). *Increasing Cultural Awareness and Equity in Extension Programs*. Extension Campus. <https://campus.extension.org/enrol/index.php?id=1658>
- › Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance (517) 353-3922 or ocr.isr@msu.edu
- › [Public Incident Reporting Form](#): <https://msu.guardianconduct.com/incident-reporting/>