



While it is difficult to refuse help that is freely offered, it is necessary to be selective. It is unfair to the candidate, as well as a misuse of time and resources, to select someone who is not suitable for your program needs. The wrong person in the wrong job is of little or no help to the program. Usually the volunteer will become dissatisfied, unhappy and often will not contribute towards a positive image for the program.

Volunteer positions with Extension Service are open to all individuals who meet the qualifications established without regard to race, color, sex, handicap, religion, age or national origin.

In some instances, the UME faculty or staff member will check references and conduct the interview. Sometimes volunteers will be assigned and trained to carry out these roles.

In order to maintain confidentiality, those checking references and conducting interviews may be required to sign a confidentiality statement.

Application

An application is usually completed prior to the interview. The application ask for basic information such as name, address, home, and work phone, availability, previous volunteer experience, employment and education, health limitations, and references.

This information provides clues as to the most suitable placement for the volunteer. The content of the application can create questions and leads which can be addressed in the interview.

Reference Checks

Reference checks provide another person's perception of how well the applicant can work with others. They may also provide you with additional information about the applicant that could be useful in matching the skills of the volunteer with the work that needs to be done. A reference checks may be conducted by phone or by mail. Phone reference checks often provide the most candid information. Mail reference checks are likely to provide more responses if you include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

References should not be from close friends and relatives of the applicant. To protect participants and the organization, it is essential to check the listed references. The person responsible for checking references should use a set of questions which are the same from one check to another. Two references returned is a minimum, three preferred.

Interviews

A personal interview is a valuable step in the screening process. It is an extension of the application which list experience. The interview allows for discussion of volunteer job responsibilities, skills needed, time commitment and mutual expectations. It also provides the opportunity to gain information about the volunteer's interest and skills that will assist in the best match of volunteers and positions.

Interviews should be informal, but a list of questions helps to obtain the needed information. Questions should be posed in such a way that people are encouraged to talk about themselves. The applicant should learn about the University of Maryland Extension and/or the program, how it functions and how the volunteer will fit in. The volunteer will gain a perceptions of how volunteer function and are treated in the program.

The applicant should be informed by mail as to the decision of acceptance or non-acceptance. An applicant may be accepted on a probation basis or a special conditions may be attached to the volunteer agreement.

Confidentiality

All personal information, verbal or written, collected from applicants or UME volunteers are to be treated as confidential information. All written applications, interview responses, evaluation information must be kept in a locked file. Only those responsible for supervision of volunteers and reference checking of applicants should have access to confidential. It is recommended that volunteers also sign a confidentiality waiver of liability statement.

University of Maryland Extension programs are open to all citizens without regard to race, color, gender, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, or national origin.

Interview Questions for Volunteers

Throughout the interview, consider how well the volunteer and position fit together. Consider how the volunteer listens and responds to the questions. Choose one or more appropriate questions from the following areas:

1. Leadership skills:

- What experiences have you had in working with adults and/or children?
- What skills and qualifications do you have?
- How do you promote teamwork?
- What leadership roles have you had in other organizations?
- How will you involve others in your program?

2. Human Relations Skills

- How do you handle conflict?
- How would you work with an upset parent or leader?
- How do you handle criticism?
- How would you deal with a troubled client or one who missed an appointment?
- What discipline techniques would you use with a disruptive or irresponsible child.
- Describe a previous volunteer experience.

3. Affirmative Action:

- Describe experiences you have had working with people of different backgrounds.

4. Organizational Skills:

- Please comment on the following items as they relate to you: time management, record keeping, group organizational skills, decision-making, planning and conducting a meeting.

5. Adaptability:

- How do you deal with situations that don't go as you planned?

6. Dependability:

- Describe one project for which you had responsibility from beginning to end.

7. Communication Skills:

- What public speaking or writing experiences do you have?
- What methods do you use to communicate with others?

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Interview Report Form

Name of volunteer _____

Position _____

1. Leadership Skills

2. Human Relations

3. Affirmative Action

4. Organizational Skills

5. Adaptability

6. Dependability

7. Communication Skills

Based upon the interview would you recommend the volunteer's appointment to this position?
____ YES ____ NO ____ UNCERTAIN. If no or uncertain, explain.

Another position ____ YES ____ NO ____ UNCERTAIN. If yes, specify:

Action or follow-up needed:

Date Completed

Signature of Interviewer

Title

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Reference Form for Volunteer Position
(for phone or face-to-face interviews)

Volunteer Applicant's Name: _____

Reference Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Date:** _____

Interviewed By: _____

_____ is applying to work as a volunteer in The University of Maryland Extension program and has given your name as a reference. I would like to ask you some questions. Your comments will be treated in a confidential manner. Do you have a few minutes?

The position the applicant will be assuming is _____

How long and in what capacity or position have you known the applicant?

Please comment on the applicant's ability to work in a volunteer role with youth and/or adults.

What strengths/weaknesses would the applicant bring to this position?

What additional skills, abilities and attributes does the applicant have that would be helpful in this position?

Please describe experiences the applicant may have had in working with people who are developmentally disabled; from different race/religion/nationality backgrounds; from different socio-economic backgrounds.

How would you describe the applicant's ability to handle records and/or money?

Please describe situations where you have observed the applicant interacting well with others.

Do you know any reason why this person should NOT be considered for this position? _____ YES _____ NO. If yes, please explain.

Thank you. I appreciate your assistance in helping University of Maryland select the best qualified people to serve in volunteer roles.

Interviewer Signature and title

Date

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Reference Form for Volunteer Position
(for reference by mail)

_____ is applying for a volunteer position with the University of Maryland Extension and has given your name as a reference. (Explain the position the applicant will be assuming: Master Gardener, 4-H Leader, Financial Counselor, etc.)

University of Maryland Extension seeks your assistance in selecting the best qualified people to serve in volunteer roles and will appreciate your prompt completion of this reference form. All comments will be treated in a confidential manner.

How long and in what capacity or position have you known the applicant?

Please comment on the applicant's ability to work in a volunteer role with youth and/or adults.

What strengths/weaknesses would the applicant bring to this position?

What additional skills, abilities and attributes does the applicant have that would be helpful in this position?

Please describe experiences the applicant may have had in working with people who are developmentally disabled; from different race/religion/nationality backgrounds; from different socio-economic backgrounds.

How would you describe the applicant's ability to handle records and/or money?

Please describe situations where you have observed the applicant interacting well with others.

Do you know any reason why this person should NOT be considered for this position?
____YES ____NO If yes, please explain.

Signature

Date

Thank you for your timely response.

Return to:

Date Received:

Updated for Extension Name and Logo Change 3/2010 AMT

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OPTION 1 Place on UME Letterhead

Date

Name
Address

Dear

We are pleased to welcome you as a University of Maryland Extension (Master Gardener, 4-H Leader, Financial Counselor, etc.) volunteer in _____ Office. We feel you will be a valuable addition to our program.

A training is scheduled on (date) ____ at (time) ____. It will be held at (location). This training is designed to help you better understand your role as a University of Maryland Extension volunteer and to provide you with the knowledge and skills necessary to do a good job.

Sincerely,

Extension Representative
Title

OPTION 2 - Place on UME Letterhead

Date

Name
Address

Dear

Thank you for your application as a volunteer for the University of Maryland Extension. We have carefully considered your application and the information you provided. Unfortunately we are unable to accept you as an Extension volunteer at this time. We appreciate your interest in our organization and encourage you to consider applying for other volunteer positions that better match your skills and abilities.

Sincerely,

Extension Representative
Title