

# 4-H Volunteer Application Packet

Adults who assume volunteer roles with the Mississippi State University Extension Service have the opportunity for a rewarding experience. A volunteer's role is easier to manage when expectations and responsibilities are outlined and communicated before the job assignment. The success of the 4-H youth development program is attributed to its volunteers. A registered 4-H volunteer is anyone who contributes time, energies, or talents to the 4-H program and is not paid by MSU Extension. All 4-H volunteers must complete an application. 4-H volunteers can register in only one county.

The process to become a Mississippi State University Extension Service 4-H registered volunteer is as follows:

1. Effective **December 1, 2018**, all potential 4-H volunteers **MUST** complete the MSU Extension-approved **TrueScreen** background check.
2. Volunteers must fill out a Volunteer Application Packet.
3. Your Extension office will input your information into the secure online MSU 4-H Volunteer tracking program. This program will send you an email to inform you whether you need to complete a background check and will prompt you to complete the required online training (if you have not completed it within the previous 12 months).
4. If you need to complete a new background check (required every 3 years), you will receive a separate email from [applicationstation@truescreen.com](mailto:applicationstation@truescreen.com). You will need to log in and provide the requested information.
5. Once you have a current background check and have completed the training within the previous 12 months, the online program will track the date you completed each one. When it comes time to renew, the system will automatically remind you to update your compliance requirements. The email will come from the MSU Office of Compliance and Risk Management through MSU's Ideal-Logic system.
6. Volunteers must complete the Mandatory Online Training (Best Practices for Working with Underage Participants).
7. Volunteers must complete the Minor Protection Policy Acknowledgment Form.
8. Volunteers must be registered 4-H volunteers 30 days before any 4-H activity/event.

The Volunteer Application Packet contains the following documents:

- ▶ Volunteer application
- ▶ Reference forms completed by the Extension agent
- ▶ Volunteer expectations
- ▶ Volunteer position acceptance form
- ▶ A copy of background check form

The volunteer's signature is required on the application, the position acceptance form, and the volunteer expectation form.

*A registered 4-H volunteer is a volunteer who has completed the full volunteer application screening process, including screening, application, and training, and has been approved by the county MSU Extension agent and appointed by the MSU Extension associate director for youth development. To the extent authorized and allowed by law, this application form and its contents will be kept confidential and accessible only to appropriate MSU personnel and administrators.*

Special note: Only MSU Extension-approved TrueScreen background checks will be accepted. This is an MSU policy, and as an MSU unit, we will comply.

## **MSU Extension's Role**

- ▶ Educate volunteers on the 4-H program's mission, purpose, and goals as they relate to positive youth development.
- ▶ Provide direction for MSU Extension 4-H programs.
- ▶ Provide instructional materials and resources to be used for educational programming.
- ▶ Provide educational programs and materials to develop volunteers' understanding of youth development.
- ▶ Provide job descriptions for county volunteer leadership roles.
- ▶ Provide support and encouragement to all volunteers.
- ▶ Give recognition for time and energy devoted to 4-H Youth Development.
- ▶ Inform volunteers of events and activities via Extension newsletters, the website, and other correspondence.
- ▶ Maintain working relationships with volunteers and parents involved in the 4-H program.
- ▶ Provide a conducive and positive learning environment for 4-H youth, volunteers, parents, and other supporters.

## Expectations of 4-H Volunteers

The Mississippi State University Extension Service is trusted to provide quality leadership and care for individuals participating in Extension programs. The opportunity to work with youth is a privileged position of trust that should be held only by those who are willing to demonstrate behaviors that fulfill this trust. These expectations for volunteers guide their involvement in MSU Extension activities and programs.

The purpose of these expectations for volunteers is to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants (i.e., youth, their parents and families, and paid and volunteer staff). MSU Extension volunteers are expected to function within the guidelines of the MSU Extension 4-H Youth Development Program.

The following statements relate to the role of a volunteer with MSU Extension and represent a contractual agreement between a volunteer and MSU Extension.

- ▶ As a 4-H volunteer who will have contact with youth audiences, I agree to undergo a mandatory background check.
- ▶ I will represent MSU Extension to youth and adults by conducting myself with courteous manners and language, exhibiting good sportsmanship, serving as a positive role model, and demonstrating appropriate conflict-resolution skills.
- ▶ I will abide by all applicable laws and MSU rules, policies, procedures, and guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, child-protection policies, fiscal-management procedures, and substance-abuse policies.
- ▶ I will participate in volunteer training at the county level annually. I will work to improve my volunteer skills by participating in training conferences such as north or south Mississippi Forum, Annual 4-H Volunteer Conference, and other opportunities.
- ▶ I will not consume or allow 4-H youth to consume alcohol or use illegal drugs at any MSU Extension function.
- ▶ I will, when transporting others, operate vehicles and equipment in a safe and reliable manner and only with a valid operator's license. I will comply with all vehicular regulations and laws. All passengers will be secured by properly operating seat belts. I have the minimum vehicle insurance coverage required by the state of Mississippi.
- ▶ I will accept the responsibility to promote and support the vision, mission, and values of MSU Extension and its programs.
- ▶ I will conduct myself in a manner that is in the best interest of youth, adults, and MSU Extension and will not use the volunteer position for purposes of personal gain.
- ▶ I will treat animals in a humane manner and teach program participants to provide appropriate animal care and management.
- ▶ I will use technology (including social media) in an appropriate manner that reflects the best practices in youth development.
- ▶ I will not practice, condone, tolerate, or allow bullying, hazing, harassment, or malicious pranks.
- ▶ I will ensure that MSU Extension educational programs serve all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or group orientation.
- ▶ I will work with the local Extension staff to plan quality educational programs in my county.
- ▶ I understand and accept that MSU Extension has the right to remove me as a 4-H volunteer with or without cause.

I have read, understand, and accept these expectations for volunteers. I understand that suspension or termination of my position will result if I do not meet these expectations.

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Volunteer's Signature

---

Date





1. Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street, Box, Route, Apt #

\_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

How do you know this person?

2. Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street, Box, Route, Apt #

\_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

How do you know this person?

I authorize the MSU Extension 4-H Youth Development Program to contact the references listed above. I understand that the misrepresentation or omission of information requested is just cause for non-appointment/disengagement as a volunteer.

If accepted as a volunteer, I agree to abide by the rules, policies, procedures, and standards of Mississippi State University and to fulfill the volunteer responsibilities to the best of my abilities. I understand that the purpose of 4-H Youth Development programs is to develop youth individually and as responsible and productive citizens. I recognize that 4-H Youth Development programs are part of the Mississippi State University Extension Service. As a volunteer, I agree to work with youth regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or group affiliation in educational experiences in cooperation with other Extension volunteers and Extension personnel. A 4-H volunteer can be enrolled in only one county.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Extension Agent Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State 4-H Office Representative Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Associate Director for 4-H Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
County

# 4-H Volunteer Position Description

To be filled out by agent

Mississippi (4-H, FCS, ANR, Horticulture) Program

Mississippi State University Extension Service

Mississippi State University Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine

**TIME REQUIRED** (Estimate the total time required for both preparation and actual volunteer efforts.)

**LOCATION** (Identify where the volunteering will occur.)

**GENERAL PURPOSE** (Identify the overall volunteer responsibilities and expectations, in paragraph form.)

**SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES** (Identify specific duties and responsibilities of the volunteer position in a bulleted list.)

**QUALIFICATIONS** (Identify specific skills and abilities necessary for a volunteer in the specific position to be successful.)

**SALARY & BENEFITS** (Unsalaries; volunteer. Identify all benefits and “perks” that are available through this position.)

Agent \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Street, Box, Route, Apt #

\_\_\_\_\_ City

\_\_\_\_\_ State

\_\_\_\_\_ Zip

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Roles of the County Extension Agent

Extension agents/program associates have the responsibility for oversight of the 4-H Youth Development Program in their assigned counties. This includes the following responsibilities:

- ▶ Coordinate the chartering of 4-H membership clubs and other 4-H affiliates (e.g., 4-H Council, volunteer/parent groups, committees).
- ▶ Provide opportunities for all 4-H youth.
- ▶ Plan and coordinate the county 4-H program.
- ▶ Staff the 4-H clubs with volunteers with the assistance of youth leaders.
- ▶ Provide training, supervision, and resources for volunteers/parents and youth leaders.
- ▶ Explain and enforce 4-H rules and procedures.
- ▶ Ensure that a quality 4-H educational program is conducted in the county.
- ▶ Inform 4-H volunteers and members about opportunities at county, district, regional, state, national, and international levels.
- ▶ Appoint or dismiss 4-H members, 4-H volunteers, and 4-H parents.

## Role of 4-H Volunteers

4-H is a nonformal educational program delivered by volunteers who are supervised by Extension agents/program associates. There are two major roles adults may assume in 4-H:

- ▶ Direct volunteer. “Unpaid support for the 4-H program through face-to-face contact with youth, by a youth or adult (e.g., project leader, club leader, camp counselor, teacher, activity leader, organizational leader, and teen leader).” (As defined in Extension Service and Land Grant University Cooperating Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture ES Form 237; 7/93). Direct volunteers must undergo a TrueScreen background check. To volunteer at overnight camps or to travel with youth, volunteers must be 18 or older. To chaperone 4-H’ers, volunteers must be 21 or older.
- ▶ Indirect volunteer. “Unpaid support for the 4-H program by adult which does not include face-to-face contact with youth (e.g., boards, committees).” (As defined in Extension Service and Land Grant University Cooperating Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture ES Form 237; 7/93)

## 4-H Volunteer Position Acceptance Form

**I have read, understand, and agree to fulfill the purpose and responsibilities of this volunteer position and further agree to accept guidance and direction from the Mississippi State University Extension Service. I also understand that failure to fulfill the purpose and responsibilities of the volunteer position and to accept guidance and direction from MSU Extension personnel could result in removal from serving as a volunteer. I also understand that this volunteer position is renewable annually; I will notify the local county Extension office if I am no longer interested in serving.**

Are you applying to be a direct or indirect volunteer?      Direct      Indirect

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Form 1181 (POD-10-24)

Distributed by the Mississippi State University Extension Center for 4-H Youth Development. Written by William Cobie Rutherford, former Extension Instructor.

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