

WSU Extension Master Gardener Mentor Job Description

The Goal of the Mentor Program

The goal of the mentor program is to provide a welcoming atmosphere for new Master Gardeners from the time they sign up for the MG classes until they become well established in the program. The mentor's role is to familiarize new MGs with the program and help them feel comfortable as they attend training and begin their volunteer service. The time spent on "mentor work" should be included in your MG Hours Report.

Duties Include

1. Calling assigned mentee(s) as soon as possible. Provide your mentees with your name and phone number so they may contact you if they have any questions. Let them know how training sessions are structured (handouts, announcements, breaks, etc.), and encourage them to bring paper and pen for note-taking. Tell them about the newsletters they will be receiving and what information they contain.
2. Meeting your mentees sometime very soon after the MG classes begin. Perhaps you could have lunch together or arrange to meet during break.
3. Contacting your mentees as classes progress to see how everything is going. Discuss the exams that are required and try to make them less intimidating. Review the opportunities available for volunteer payback time. Let them know they will be paired with a veteran MG during their first few clinic assignments or other payback functions. Once again, encourage them to call you if they have any questions.

Other Options

If your county has a Master Gardener Foundation, call and invite your mentees to the Foundation meetings. Let them know you will be there and arrange to meet them, or you may want to pick them up for the first meeting.

Network with other mentors, perhaps getting together to talk gardening with a group of mentors and mentees so the new MGs can widen their circle of MG contacts.

Note

Mentors are meant to help new trainees smoothly adapt to the program by offering help and support where needed. If there are serious concerns about a mentee, personality conflicts, or other problems, mentors are to pass this information on to the program coordinator. It is not the mentor's duty to get involved in any major conflict resolution or assist with a mentee's personal problems.