



2020/21 Volunteer Hours

COVID-19 continues to impact UC Master Gardener volunteers' ability to complete standard program requirements around volunteer hours. We want to support your continued engagement and have you continue as a Master Gardener, therefore, the following adjustments to volunteer hour requirements are available for the 2020/21 program year (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021). This flexibility is intended to address unprecedented challenging circumstances related to COVID-19 and is currently not approved beyond the 2020/21 program year.

This document includes new activities that will only count towards hours for 2020/21, as well as creative physical-distance activities that qualify now and, in the future, (see “Additional Ideas for At-Home Hour-Qualifying Activities”).

2020/21 Adjustment to Volunteer Hours

- **Limited Active** – Statewide policy change allowing for reappointment to limited active status to exceed one year with no expectation of 'making up' hours once back on active status. Limited active volunteers must complete reappointment to remain on limited active status; utilizing designation is in no way a denouncement – using the limited active designation simply helps the program understand the impact of 2020/21 on volunteer hours. **NOTE:** Volunteers with long-term or on-going Wi-Fi or internet challenges or experiencing exceptional circumstances are *encouraged* to continue participating with the program on Limited Active status with no expectation of hours recorded. Request to go “Limited Active” should be made through MGP Coordinator. Send request to sjphibbs@ucanr.edu.
- **Master Gardener** –
 - **Continuing Education (CE) Hours**

A minimum of 12 continuing education hours is expected. Book/reading flexibility has been expanded for 2020/21 to include garden/gardening focused non-academic titles. Resources include:

 - [UC Master Gardener Recorded Trainings](#) (online)
 - [Racial Equity Trainings & Readings](#) (online & print)
 - Print publications on garden and racial equity topics (print)
 - Consider identifying volunteer leads to organize and host an internal virtual book club that meets in small groups (<25 volunteers) once a month.
 - Suggested titles:
 - Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Will Kimmerer
 - Flower Confidential by Amy Stewart
 - Food Explorer by Daniel Stone
 - The Beekeeper's Lament by Hannah Nordhaus
 - The Botany of Desire by Michael Pollan
 - The Brother Gardeners by Andrea Wulf



- The Orchid Thief by Susan Orlean
The Overstory by Richard Powers
The Planter of Modern Life by Stephen Heyman
White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo
- Volunteers receive 2 CE hours for participating in a Master Gardener book club meeting (1 hour for reading the book and 1 hour for attending the meeting)
 - Meeting structure recommendations:
 - 1 – 1.5 hours
 - <25 participants
 - 2 - 3 volunteer coordinators and 1 volunteer moderator (these individuals also receive volunteer hours for time spent on preparation and leadership)
 - Email Sherida sjphibbs@ucanr.edu if you wish to start a book club in our county.
- **Volunteer Hours** - Twenty-five hours are expected; however, those hours may include any of the expanded volunteer activities outlined below. Non-standard activities should be reported under the VMS project category "**COVID Exception Hours**" and may not exceed 25 hours. All volunteer activities must be unpaid work. Flexibility includes the options below (the following activities should be reported in the "COVID Exception Hours" project): **Note: Activities that qualify as 'COVID Exception Hours' are not official UC Master Gardener Program projects. Please be aware that the Program's Hartford Insurance Policy is highly unlikely to cover claims related to activities listed under 'COVID Exception Hours'.**
 - Volunteer work directly related to the COVID-19 response (e.g., work as a contact tracer)
 - Food delivery, including groceries and prepared foods, to at-risk individuals outside of the immediate family unit, 1 delivery = 2 hours
 - Grow and donate garden produce to a local food distribution center(s), 5 lbs = 1 hour
 - Grow and donate garden bouquet to a local care facility (Senior, Veteran's, Alzheimer, other), 1 bouquet = 1 hour
 - Maintenance of school, demonstration, and community gardens (cannot be UC Master Gardener volunteer's own community garden plot, can be a new project and/or an existing project)
 - An urban greening project not related to the UC Master Gardener Program
 - Volunteer work at food closet/food bank and/or shelters

Additional Ideas for At-Home Hour-Qualifying Activities *(Reported in existing project categories)*

- Communication that supports the program and volunteer cohesion (calling volunteers who have not been seen in a while).
- Create a comprehensive list of community-based organizations in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties that employ and serve populations underserved by Cooperative Extension. Submit



to MGP coordinator at sjphibs@ucanr.edu for further action that may include: Connecting with local organizations to understand their needs and priorities and solicit input. Build authentic connections that lay the groundwork for better recruiting and serving populations currently underinvested by your UC Master Gardener Program

- Experiential home gardening activities that support the development of *new* gardening skills (e.g., plant propagation for a volunteer who has not previously attempted propagation and is looking to learn/develop knowledge), consider a peer-to-peer or mentoring component to this project as well as results sharing to maintain an educational focus
- Complete or curate refresher courses and readings that develop volunteer skills and abilities in gardening/horticulture, public speaking, technology/software, and project management
- Create or review landscape maintenance plans for school/demonstration/community gardens, UCCE office landscapes, city facility landscapes (police station, fire station, city offices), community-serving organization landscapes (food banks, shelters)
- Review program [website](#) for broken links and report to your MGP coordinator
- Serve as a Zoom co-host for another volunteer's public Zoom class – manage the chat and moderate the Q&A section
- Create virtual tours for internal and external audiences (e.g., ask a volunteer to record a tour of their home garden, share gardening successes/lessons learned, and/or garden observations – ask volunteers to share in small groups or during a regularly scheduled program meeting)
- Create [video resources](#) for the program to use with both internal and external audiences
- Participate in volunteer or program coordinator-hosted county program feedback session to learn what is working and what could be better for volunteers
- Consider supporting your county's Cal Fresh Healthy Living UC program coordinators to offer virtual gardening training.
- Photograph and submit high-resolution images of edible plants, flowers, trees, irrigation, gardening practices, etc. and upload to the program's shared photo album file storage.
- Create list or review/maintain existing list of local beekeepers, soil testing facilities, certified arborists, etc., that provide gardening & gardening-related services in our county
- Write 1-3 sentence seasonal, general gardening, garden design, water conservation, and other garden-related tips for [Facebook](#) - Submit to sjphibs@ucanr.edu
- Research and respond to our Website Help Desk questions
- Write articles for our quarterly Costal Gardener Newsletter
- Form and participate on program committees
- Help develop website content
- If you have an activity that is not mentioned, email Sherida and share your ideas, she welcomes your ideas and suggestions.