

MOFGA Volunteer Guidelines

The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) is a broad-based community that educates about and advocates for organic agriculture, illuminating its interdependence with a healthy environment, local food production, and thriving communities. MOFGA is the oldest and largest state-based organic advocacy organization in the country.

MOFGA is rooted in community and committed to grassroots volunteer engagement.

Volunteerism infuses every aspect of MOFGA from our volunteer Board of Directors to the dedicated persons who donate their time and energy to ensure the success of the Common Ground Country Fair. Many of our volunteers are involved committee members who help make recommendations about MOFGA programs and events. To help guide these volunteers, MOFGA has developed the following guidelines as a means of ensuring that all participants are able to work together toward common organizational goals.

1. The importance of volunteers: MOFGA is dedicated to involving and effectively integrating the volunteers upon whom the organization relies. MOFGA appreciates and recognizes volunteer time, skills and other contributions. The grassroots engagement that volunteers supply is a key reflection of MOFGA's values and its mission.
2. The role of MOFGA staff: Volunteers work under the supervision of MOFGA staff and maintain open lines of communication with them.
3. Representing the Organization: Volunteers represent MOFGA and should always strive to lead by example, supporting MOFGA's mission and reflecting organizational values.
4. Safety is the Highest Priority: All volunteers have the right to a safe environment, including fair and respectful treatment and the right to have concerns addressed by MOFGA staff.
5. Commitment to Quality: Volunteers strive to handle all tasks with excellence, ensuring quality in all their work and relationships.
6. Being Accountable: All volunteers are expected to fulfill the responsibilities of their positions and roles, and, when appropriate, reporting their actions to staff.
7. Working Together: Volunteers support the effective implementation of MOFGA's programs through timely and thorough communication, cooperation, and mutual consideration, focusing on specific projects as directed by staff.
8. Taking Initiative: Volunteers may take initiative to identify opportunities and propose solutions to problems within appropriate parameters, including consultation with MOFGA staff. Such initiative is recognized and appreciated.
9. Decision Making and Involving Others: Volunteers use their best judgment when making recommendations to staff regarding specific areas of responsibility. Volunteers strive to involve the people impacted by any decisions.

Communication

Communication among staff members, volunteers, Board members, and the community is crucial to smooth and productive operations. As MOFGA relies on volunteers who serve throughout the

organization in so many different ways, effective communication is a key part of any volunteer role. To help participants work together more effectively, MOFGA has developed these communication procedures.

- **Volunteer Communication Tools:** Successful volunteering depends upon communication. MOFGA asks that volunteers communicate ideas, suggestions, personal goals, or problems to the appropriate staff person. In return, the organization will apprise volunteers on changes in procedures, policies, and general updates about the organization.
- In addition to the exchanges of information and expressions of ideas that occur in meetings or the office, volunteers should be aware of and use appropriate methods of communication including attendance at relevant meetings, reviewing meeting agendas and minutes, reading the MOF&G, subscribing to the weekly bulletin, and following MOFGA on social media.
- MOFGA may on occasion send letters or memos to volunteers to provide them with interesting news and helpful information about the organization's policies and events.
- MOFGA encourages all volunteers to bring forward their suggestions and good ideas about how the organization can be made a better place to volunteer, and better serve its constituencies.
- **Volunteer Communication Channels:** When volunteers see opportunities for improvement, they should speak directly to the staff member, volunteer, or board member with whom the volunteer has a concern. When unsure about whom to consult, volunteers should ask the staff person responsible for the program or project.
- If there is an issue of significant concern, the volunteer should speak to the executive director or a member of the executive committee of the Board of Directors.
- Direction to MOFGA staff members goes through their supervisors. Policy direction comes from the Board and committees.
- **Volunteer Expression:** MOFGA staff members and volunteers are willing to listen to each other and to communicate in ways that are courteous, respectful, polite, timely, objective, issue focused, to the point, and oriented toward problem solving.

MOFGA Work Environment Guidelines

In the interest of creating an inviting and safe work environment for volunteers, staff, and members, MOFGA has established the following policies:

- **Fairness Policy:** MOFGA welcomes volunteers without regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin or ancestry, political affiliation, marital status, criminal record, physical disability, mental disorder, veteran status, or any other protected status. Volunteers must strive to make others feel included. A volunteer who perceives that a staff member or other volunteer is engaging in unfair behavior, may register a grievance with an appropriate staff member.

- Harassment: All of us have a responsibility for keeping our environment at MOFGA free of harassment. Anyone who becomes aware of an incident of harassment should report it immediately to a staff supervisor. Harassment includes slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments or visual depictions, unwelcome jokes, teasing, aggression and unwanted sexual advances.
- Theft of any MOFGA property, including money, must be immediately reported to an appropriate staff member.
- If volunteers are not abiding by the Volunteer Operating Principles, MOFGA staff members shall take disciplinary actions to change volunteer behavior. If unsafe or inappropriate behavior continues, MOFGA reserves the right to ask volunteers to leave the premises.