Mass Hort Garden Volunteer Protocols for COVID-19

As additional information regarding COVID-19 becomes available, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society has to adjust its operations in accordance with guidelines from federal, state, and local governments and authorities. Our priority is the health and safety of our employees, our volunteers, and our community. Therefore, to help ensure the well-being of everyone at the Mass Hort, we have established the following protocols for all volunteers.

While these protocols are subject to change as circumstances evolve, our goal will always remain to mobilize healthy volunteers in a safe environment for the collective pursuit of the Mass Hort's mission.

For more information about COVID-19, please refer to the following resources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus
- World Health Organization (WHO): https://www.who.int/coronavirus
- MA Department of Public Health (mass.gov): https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-updates-and-information

Requirements Prior to First Volunteer Shift

Prior to your first volunteer shift, you must:

1) Complete an updated 2020 Mass Hort Volunteer Application for COVID-19
2) Watch the video from HudsonAlpha Institute of Biotechnology with Dr. Neil Lamb, PhD, called ***Shareable Science Beyond The Blog: COVID-19 Spread and Prevention***: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=694i317Q49w
3) Read and understand the Mass Hort Volunteer Protocols for COVID-19 (i.e. this document)
4) Sign the acknowledgement at the end of this document to indicate your completion of steps 1-3

Health and Safety Protocols for Volunteers

All volunteers on site at the Mass Hort should adhere to the following guidelines.

- **Fever/Illness:** You must not come on site to volunteer unless you do not have a fever and have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of symptom-altering medication. Refrain from volunteering if you are ill or not feeling well.
- **Hand Sanitizer:** Bring your own hand sanitizer for your use while volunteering.
- **Face Masks: Please bring your own face mask. They are optional to wear as long as you are 6 feet apart from other people. Mass Hort cannot provide masks.** (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)

- **Social Distancing:** All volunteers must practice social distancing and maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet from other volunteers, staff members, and guests. To help facilitate this distance, volunteer shifts will be scheduled carefully to minimize the number of people on site at any given time.
    - In accordance with this guideline, you should not shake hands with anyone and please wave and/or greet people verbally instead.
- **Hand Washing:** Wash your hands with soap and water frequently before and after your volunteer shift for a minimum of 20 seconds.. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- **Coughing and Sneezing:** Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze with a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Never cough or sneeze into your hands..
- **Bring your own gardening tools:** Kindly bring your own tools if you own the following items: gloves, stirrup hoe or equivalent (optional if you own : rake, weeding knife/hand trowel). Label your gardening tools with your name in brightly colored tape and keep your gardening tools with you at all times. NO TOOLS/GLOVES will be provided by Mass Hort at this time.

Communication Expectations for Volunteers

In addition to the health and safety guidelines above, all volunteers are expected to maintain open channels of communication with the Mass Hort staff. This includes (but is not limited to) communication about the following topics.

- **Schedules:** To help control the number of people on site at any given time, Mass Hort staff will be reintroducing volunteer activities according to a pre-determined schedule via Sign-Up Genius.
- **Sign-Up Genius:** All volunteers must sign up for volunteer shifts via the Mass Hort Sign-Up Genius. Please do not come to the Mass Hort unless you have signed up via a Mass Hort Sign-Up Genius slot time. If you did not sign up for a volunteer sign-up, admittance will not be allowed. Please arrive on time, no exceptions.
- **Cancelations**: Please cancel your volunteer shift as soon as possible via the Mass Hort Sign-Up Genius or contact the Volunteer Engagement Manager, Julie Griffin at jgriffin@masshort.org . We would like to give other volunteers an opportunity to volunteer if you're unable.
- **Volunteer Groups:** If you are a member of a volunteer group (such as the Garden Guild or a gardening society), your group leaders must coordinate all on-site activities with a Mass Hort staff member and a Mass Hort Sign-up Genius. Please follow the instructions of your garden leaders and the Mass Hort staff. Kindly refrain from coming to Mass Hort unless you have received approval for the time and activities.
- **Your Level of Comfort:** You will never be required to volunteer in a situation or complete a volunteer task that makes you feel unsafe or uncomfortable. If you do not

feel comfortable reporting for a shift or completing a task, please notify the Mass Hort staff member immediately.

- **Location of Volunteer Tasks**: Volunteer location, tasks and methods will be instructed to you upon arrival, we cannot fulfill garden requests at this time.
- **Changes to Schedules:** Due to the unpredictable nature of COVID-19, all volunteer activities and schedules are subject to be changed, postponed, or cancelled as needed to adhere to federal, state, and local guidelines. Please always follow the instructions given by the staff regarding your approved volunteer schedule. Always check your email before your volunteer shift.

When to Reconsider Volunteering

Please reconsider or refrain from volunteering if any these situations apply to you.

- You are in a high-risk category for COVID-19 or are in frequent contact with someone in a high-risk category for COVID-19.
- You have been around someone within the last 14 days who is sick or who has been experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.
- You have visited a foreign country, been on a cruise, or spent time in an airport within the last 14 days.
- You have been to an event with more than 50 people in attendance within the last 14 days.
- ***You are sick or have experienced any symptoms of COVID-19 within the last 14 days.****

Take care of yourself and others!

We are eager to welcome you back to the Mass Hort, but more than that, we want you all to stay safe and healthy. Especially in these difficult times, remember to take care of your health—physically, mentally, and emotionally—and take care of each other, too.

Your ongoing commitment and care of the Gardens at Elm Bank is essential and invaluable, and we are so grateful for your contributions to our mission. From all of us here at Mass Hort, thank you for your hard work and your support.

Julie Griffin, Volunteer Engagement Manager
jgriffin@masshort.org

Volunteer Acknowledgement & Waiver

I have completed the Volunteer Application for COVID-19, have viewed the video from HudsonAlpha Institute of Biotechnology with Dr. Neil Lamb, PhD**, called *Shareable Science Beyond the Blog: COVID-19 Spread and Prevention***, and read and understood the Mass Hort Volunteer Protocols for COVID-19.

I have received a copy of the Mass Hort Volunteer Protocols for COVID-19, and I agree to abide by the protocols and guidelines therein as a volunteer of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. I understand that if I do not abide by the protocols and guidelines, I may be asked to cease current and/or future volunteer activities.

I accept that the Massachusetts Horticultural Society reserves the right to ask volunteers who appear to show symptoms of COVID-19 to cease current and/or future volunteer activities.

I understand that the protocols and guidelines for volunteers of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society may change at any time. To ensure that I maintain my knowledge and understanding of all up-to-date protocols and guidelines, I agree to read and complete annual paperwork/updates as assigned by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

I understand that if I have questions at any time regarding the Massachusetts Horticultural Society Volunteer Protocols for COVID-19, I can consult with a Mass Hort staff member.

Volunteer Printed Name: _____

Volunteer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Received By: _____ Date: _____

If you have questions or concerns, please email jgriffin@masshort.org

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