

## Frequently Asked Questions Client Protection

**Ken Culp, III, Ph.D.**  
**Principal Specialist for Volunteerism**

1. Who should complete the Volunteer Application Packet? (9)
  - a. All individuals who are interested in serving as volunteers for one or more Extension programs, who will have one-on-one or group access to a vulnerable population and will not be under the constant supervision of an Extension professional or paraprofessional.
2. Explain the classification for Volunteer Application Packets (green, yellow, red). (6)
  - a. Green applications are those that are complete, have two positive, supportive written references, have a clean Criminal Record Check, their name does not appear on the Sex Offender Registry, have had a satisfactory interview, and are a good fit for the volunteer position. (See Chapters 3 and 9.)
  - b. Yellow applications are those where a concern has been raised in either the interview, reference, criminal record check, or have a VAP that is incomplete. These applicants need to be interviewed by the entire CPC. In addition to answering the 10 required questions, the CPC should probe the topic of interest or concern, until their questions have been answered.
3. Please clarify the interview process, methods of interviewing, the basic questions that all volunteers must answer, etc. (5)
  - a. All new volunteers must have a face-to-face interview with the agent, the CPC Chair, the agent and the CPC chair, or the CPC committee. New volunteers must be asked the 10 questions on the Volunteer Questionnaire, and the Volunteer Questionnaire II.
  - b. All Past Program Participants and Familiar Community Members must answer the five questions on the Volunteer Questionnaire. They may be interviewed by the same methods as in 2a, or they may answer these questions in writing if they are included in the Volunteer Application Packet.
4. How do I handle this process when the other agents in my office ignore their responsibilities or are not motivated to screen volunteers in their programs? (5)
  - a. Visit with your District Director.
5. What happens if the volunteer doesn't complete the VAP? (4)
  - a. Send the individual a letter (by certified mail) thanking him/her for past service and notify him/her that until such time as the volunteer screening process has been completed, the role as a volunteer is terminated.
6. Please define vulnerable audiences. (4)
  - a. Vulnerable audiences include, but are not limited to: youth, home-bound, immigrant, physically, mentally or emotionally challenged, disadvantaged and underprivileged. (The majority of Extension audiences include individuals from one or more of these audiences.) (See Chapter 4.)

7. What types of roles require Extension Homemakers to be screened? (6)
  - a. All individuals who are interested in serving as volunteers for one or more Extension programs, who will have one-on-one or group access to a vulnerable population and will not be under the constant supervision of an Extension professional.
  - b. Specific examples include: volunteers in nursing homes, assisted living, adult day care and community adult home-bound programs; Champion Food Volunteers; Master Clothing Volunteers; programs that work with, target or involve mentally challenged adults; programs involving youth or children.
8. Specifically which types of volunteers should be screened? (3)
  - a. All individuals who are interested in serving as volunteers for one or more Extension programs, who will have one-on-one or group access to a vulnerable population and will not be under the constant supervision of an Extension professional.
9. How do I share a volunteer with another county? (3)
  - a. First, verify that this is a volunteer who can be shared with another county. (Some certification roles require the volunteer to serve only in one county.) Volunteers who serve in two or more counties (i.e. the Northern Kentucky Master Gardeners) should have a complete Volunteer Application Packet on file in each county in which they serve.
10. Can you provide a step-by-step process of how to administer this program? (3)
  - a. See the Checklist for Processing New Volunteers in Chapter 6.
11. Why must volunteers submit their social security numbers? (2)
  - a. Social security numbers are required by the Administrative Office of the Courts in order to process the Criminal Record Check. Additionally, the SS# is required for the Sex Offender Registry Check.
12. What is the makeup of the Client Protection Committee? (2)
  - a. The CPC will be composed of five individuals, including one representative from each of the following councils or program areas (4-H, FCS, ANR, MG, FA) and up to two additional members (in order to have a committee of five), recruited from the following organizations: law enforcement, social services, education or clergy. (See Chapter 3 of the CP Handbook.)
13. Who is exempt from completing the Volunteer Application Packet? (2)
  - a. Teachers, teachers' aids and Family Resource Center Coordinators, who are serving as 4-H volunteers in their own classrooms or school buildings during the school day must complete the Teacher Volunteer Application Packet.
14. What are the guidelines for an episodic volunteer? (2)
  - a. Episodic volunteers are those who serve in supervised roles once a year. They are exempt from the screening process, so long as they do not have unsupervised one-on-one or group contact with a vulnerable audience.
15. Why must all volunteers be screened? Why is this policy necessary? (2)
  - a. To protect Extension clientele, volunteers, staff, CES and UK. This is a federal mandate.
16. What determines if an event requires screened volunteers?
  - a. Will the volunteers ever have unsupervised, one-on-one or group contact with any member of a vulnerable audience? If the possibility exists, then screening is required.

17. What roles can individuals serve who have not been screened?
  - a. They can serve in roles supervised by Extension professionals, so long as they do not have one-on-one or group contact with a member of a vulnerable audience.
18. What is the difference between the Youth Leader Request and the Background Check?
  - a. First, the term “background check” is no longer used. It has been replaced with “Criminal Record Check.” The Youth Leader Request is the form that is completed in order to submit the request for the Criminal Record Check.
19. Where can I find the information?
  - a. In the County Office Procedures Manual. <http://ces.ca.uky.edu/manual/client-protection-handbook>
20. Are background checks free?
  - a. Through June 30, 2012, Criminal Record Checks are free for volunteers in youth-serving organizations. Therefore, as long as you check the “youth” box on the website, the criminal record checks will be free of charge.
  - b. Beginning on July 1, 2012, Criminal Record Checks obtained through the Administrative Office of the Courts in Frankfort will have a \$10 fee for Extension volunteers. In order to receive the \$10 fee (the cost is either \$15 or \$20 for other organizations) the CRC must be submitted on-line, and must be paid for through an escrow account.
21. How is an escrow account established?
  - a. This is done on-line through the Administrative Office of the Courts. The suggestion is that each county has one escrow account, used to defray the cost of running the CRC for all volunteers in that county. Funds can be deposited into this account from the District Board. (In other words, the cost of conducting the CRC is a legitimate expense that can be paid for from the District tax rather than charging the program council.)
22. Is it a good idea to screen all Master Gardeners?
  - a. Absolutely! Master Gardeners are required to provide service hours upon completion of their course. Most of the service hours will require them to come into contact with the public. It is impossible to predict when a member of a vulnerable audience will have contact. Therefore, all Master Gardeners should complete the Volunteer Application Packet when applying for the MG program.
23. Do all Extension Homemakers have to be screened?
  - a. Not necessarily. Only those individuals who have unsupervised contact with vulnerable audiences need to undergo the screening process. (See question 7.)
24. How will counties be monitored for non-compliance?
  - a. District Directors and County Review Teams.
25. Do all volunteers need to have training?
  - a. Yes.
26. How can I involve parents who are only occasional transportation providers?
  - a. They must complete the Volunteer Application Packet unless they are only providing transportation for their own children and never transport another youth.
27. How can I deal with volunteer’s reluctance and hesitation?
  - a. Explain the process to them, reassure them, and provide them with the required information. Those who choose not to submit the completed Volunteer Application Packet will not be able to participate in Extension programs as a volunteer.

28. What motivation does the volunteer have to complete the forms?
  - a. If an individual wants to be an Extension volunteer, the screening process must be completed.
29. How do I make certain that I have all the documents that are needed?
  - a. The state-wide CPC made it easy for you! Simply duplicate the Volunteer Application Packet exactly as it was presented to you (and including the appropriate Volunteer Position Description.) If everything on all 12 pages is complete, and you've included copies of correspondence that you've sent to the volunteer, you have all of the required documents in the volunteer's file.
30. How many references are needed?
  - a. Two.
31. What is needed for parents whose only role is to chaperone their own children at events?
  - a. This depends on the event. If the parent is chaperoning their child at camp, at horse camp, at any over-night activity, or will have unsupervised contact with any other youth or member of a vulnerable audience, those parents must complete the screening process.
32. Which volunteers need to have files?
  - a. Every volunteer who has undergone the screening process must have an individual file.
33. What needs to be done to update old files?
  - a. The following information should be in all volunteer files: application, two references, a current criminal record check, a sex offender registry check, interview notes, a signed KY CES Expectations for Volunteers and a signed Volunteer Position Description. Volunteers with a valid driver's license should have the MVR form on file. For individuals who volunteered prior to 2000, the interview notes and references may be omitted.
34. Where can I find Volunteer Position Descriptions?
  - a. The collection of Volunteer Position Descriptions is found at:  
<http://www.ca.uky.edu/agcollege/4h/oldsite/VolPosDescription/index.htm>
35. Who should complete the Volunteer Application Packet?
  - a. All prospective volunteers. Some counties also require the parents of 4-H members enrolled in horse and shooting sports to also complete the VAP.
36. How is information protected from identity theft?
  - a. The information is stored in a locked, fire-proof filing cabinet. The SS# and DL# are NEVER stored in any computer or shared with anyone.
37. How long is the Volunteer Application Packet good?
  - a. As long as the volunteer remains actively involved in the program, the VAP remains current.
38. Must we be present with our volunteers every minute?
  - a. Certainly not. That's why they undergo the screening process.
39. How often should the entire CPC meet?
  - a. As often as necessary to keep up with screening. No application should have to wait more than 4 weeks to be reviewed.
40. Can screened volunteers supervise unscreened volunteers without an agent being present?
  - a. No.

41. What companies sell fireproof, locking filing cabinets?
  - a. There are many. Do a Google search to find one near you. Another option is a fire-proof safe.
42. Do Extension Homemakers who are teaching a program in school classrooms need to be screened?
  - a. Not if the teacher or teacher's aid is present in the classroom *at all times*.
43. What liability does the CPC assume?
  - a. Volunteers are covered under both our general liability and educators legal liability policies as long as what they are doing is within the scope and duties of their volunteer work. (i.e. Operating under the supervision of an Extension professional with their duties outlined on a Volunteer Position Description.) In other words, if a CPC member performs open heart surgery on someone, the CPC member is not covered. Anyone can be sued, including committee members. The University would provide a defense subject to the above.
44. How do I get the process started?
  - a. Follow the processing checklist.
45. How often do criminal record checks need to be updated?
  - a. At least every five years. (See Chapter 8 for the year that your District must update all CRC.)
46. For what type of roles should ANR volunteers be screened?
  - a. All individuals who are interested in serving as volunteers for one or more Extension programs, who will have one-on-one or group access to a vulnerable population and will not be under the constant supervision of an Extension professional.
  - b. Specific examples include: The primary volunteer group are the Master Gardeners which are required to utilize their training by volunteering their knowledge for various things such as teaching, demonstrating, gardening, advising, etc. There may be a few cases where farmers volunteer to help with a field day or other program, but not often.
47. Does the CPC meet only when necessary?
  - a. Yes. Don't meet simply for the sake of meeting.
48. Will volunteers' information and social security numbers be sold?
  - a. Of course not. Social security numbers will never be entered or stored in an Extension database.
49. Why do we need to collect references?
  - a. References are valuable and useful pieces of information about the applicant and the individual's suitability for the position.
50. Do volunteers who have been screened and accepted still have to be supervised when working with vulnerable audiences?
  - a. No.
51. How are volunteer evaluations used? Are they mandatory?
  - a. To improve our programs and volunteer performance. They are not mandatory at this time.
52. Can Program Assistants or paraprofessionals supervise volunteers?
  - a. Yes.
53. How should the VAPs be stored after it has been processed?
  - a. In the volunteer's personnel file, in the locked, fire-proof filing cabinet.

54. Which VAPs should be reviewed by the committee?
- Those categorized as either “yellow” or “red.”
55. How do I utilize volunteers in all settings?
- By delegating, letting go, and trusting others to deliver the program to individuals and audiences who would otherwise not be served. Volunteers expand our outreach to audiences which individual agents could not reach.
56. Why is the VAP so long?
- It’s actually shorter than earlier versions! The information has been consolidated and assembled into a single document.
57. Can a volunteer orientation .ppt be put on-line?
- The UK CES Volunteer Orientation powerpoint has been on-line since 2007.
58. Can a volunteer provide his/her own criminal record check?
- Absolutely not. UK CES does not accept criminal record checks from individuals or other organizations. This would severely compromise the integrity of the document.
59. What should a completed, approved volunteer’s file contain?
- The completed VAP, the letter of acceptance (or rejection), the annual thank-you note, requesting continuation of service, and any other individual correspondence to that volunteer, as well as award nominations or recognition.
60. Do partners who work for other agencies and organizations complete the VAP?
- Yes, if they will have unsupervised contact with members of a vulnerable audience.
  - Another option is to complete the Environmental Camp Application Process, replacing “Environmental Camp” with the appropriate type of event or activity. This ensures that the individuals have been screened according to the requirements of their organization, and that their organization is vouching for their reliability and assuming legal liability.
61. Why must volunteers submit their drivers’ licenses?
- UK Risk Management requires this. This protects the volunteer and provides excess coverage while they’re driving their vehicle on University business.