



VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES - Effective September 10, 2024

A. INTRODUCTION

The following represent the official Policies and Procedures (“Policies”) of the Williamsburg Botanical Garden (“Garden”) as adopted and approved by the Garden’s Board of Directors (“Board”). All Board members, Stewards, Volunteers and others associated with the Garden (“Volunteers”) are required to follow these Policies. These Policies are effective as of September 10, 2024 and replace all previous versions.

B. CODE OF CONDUCT

1. James City County. The Garden is located on land owned by the James City County Parks and Recreation Department (“Department”). The Garden has entered into a Program Agreement (“Agreement”) with the Department that outlines the responsibilities of both the Department and the Garden. Pursuant to the Agreement, the Garden and all Volunteers must abide by the Department’s Code of Conduct which states as follows:

“To ensure the safety of all citizens, visitors and staff, and to protect all County assets, the following conduct is mandatory for all patrons and users:

- Show respect for all participants, staff and officials;
- Refrain from causing harm (bodily or verbal) to others;
- Refrain from using foul language; and
- Show respect to all equipment, supplies and facilities.”

2. Non-discrimination. The Garden does not discriminate among individuals on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status or any other basis protected by law.

3. Anti-harassment. The Garden is committed to maintaining an environment in which all individuals, including Volunteers and Garden visitors, are treated with respect and dignity. Every individual has the right to an atmosphere that prohibits all discriminatory practices, including harassment. The Garden expects that all relationships among Garden volunteers as well as interactions with Garden visitors will be civil, respectful and free of bias, prejudice, discrimination and harassment. The Garden maintains a strict policy of prohibiting unlawful harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment and harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, sex, age, physical or mental disability or any other characteristic protected by state, federal or local laws or regulations. Any Volunteer who violates this policy may, in the discretion of the Board, be prohibited from all further association or affiliation with the Garden. Any incidence of harassment involving either Volunteers or Garden visitors should be immediately reported to the President of the Board at president@wbqvagarden.org.



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C. CONFIDENTIALITY

Volunteers may be exposed to information that is confidential, privileged or proprietary in nature. Such information must be kept confidential at all times. Volunteers, including Board members, are expected to return all materials containing such information at the time of expiration of service. Unauthorized disclosure of such information is a serious violation of this policy and may subject the person who made the unauthorized disclosure to appropriate discipline, including removal/dismissal from all association with the Garden.

D. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

This conflict of interest policy is intended to protect the Garden's interest when it is contemplating entering into any business arrangement that will or may benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Garden, and is intended to supplement but not replace any state or federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit organizations. Any officer or director of the Garden who has a financial interest, direct or indirect, in any organization or entity that is or may in the future be doing business with the Garden must:

1. disclose such interest to the Board; and
2. recuse him/herself from voting on such arrangements.

Any violation of this policy may result in the business organization or entity being barred from doing business with the Garden.

E. HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. **Health.** All Volunteers must follow current CDC, Commonwealth of Virginia and Virginia Cooperative Extension guidelines regarding public health, including COVID-19 and any other contagious or infectious diseases.
2. **Safety.** All Volunteers must observe common sense safety precautions when working in the Garden, including:
 - a. Never work alone;
 - b. Always notify someone of your whereabouts;
 - c. Carry basic identification such as your name tag or driver's license;
 - d. Keep your cellphone with you at all times;
 - e. Stay hydrated;
 - f. Use insect repellent and sunscreen;
 - g. Wear long pants, sturdy closed-toe shoes, a hat and gloves;
 - h. Only use tools that you are familiar with;
 - i. Be aware of wildlife in the Garden, including the possibility that snakes, skunks and stinging insects may be present;



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- j. Notify park personnel of any conditions that appear to pose an immediate danger to Volunteers or Garden visitors; and
- k. Do not climb ladders without assistance.

F. HORTICULTURAL PRACTICES AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Garden's Mission includes demonstrating landscaping and gardening practices that further the cause of environmental conservation. To that end, all Volunteers must comply with the following;

- 1. Change Proposals.** Volunteers who have oversight of any area of the Garden must submit a written proposal to the Board's Horticulture Oversight Team for any substantial proposed changes to the area, including the addition, alteration or removal of any major elements. No such changes may be made without prior approval. Planting or removal of a small number of plants in the ordinary course of the care and maintenance of the area will not require advance approval.
- 2. Invasive Plants.** No plants that are considered invasive in the Southeast by any federal, state or local agency may be planted or grown in the Garden, and any such plants currently located in the Garden will be removed and properly disposed of when identified. Such plants will not be sold at any Garden plant sale and will not be accepted as donations for use or sale.
- 3. Pest & Disease Management.** The Garden has the policy of following Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques. Proper identification of pests and diseases and acceptable damage is vital to determine what steps may be appropriate to control or manage future damage. These are typically minor infestations and cause little or acceptable amounts of damage. Chemicals, either organic or not, are very rarely necessary and cannot be used without a Horticulture Oversight Team member's prior approval.
- 4. Herbicides, Fertilizers and Other Chemicals.** The Board has a policy of limiting chemicals in the Garden as much as possible. This includes organic, inorganic and homemade remedies. Weed control is to be done by hand and/or tools along with preventative measures such as mulch and early identification to contain the spread of weeds. The use of fertilizers or any other chemicals must be approved by a Horticulture Oversight Team member except when fertilizing pots and containers. Adding compost is an acceptable soil amendment.
- 5. Water Conservation.** Volunteers will follow all appropriate water conservation practices, including landscape planning, proper soil preparation, appropriate plant selection, application of mulch and water-saving watering techniques.

The Williamsburg Botanical Garden and Freedom Park Arboretum is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
The Garden is located within Freedom Park at 5537 Centerville Road – Williamsburg, VA 23188.
Our mailing address is WBG-FPA – P O Box 1577 – Williamsburg, VA 23187-1577 – williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org



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G. IN-KIND DONATIONS

From time to time, generous members of the community may offer certain items to the Garden, such as tools, planters, garden décor, etc. To ensure that potential donations are in keeping with the Garden's mission, overall plan, budget and capabilities, the Board has adopted the following policy concerning donations:

- 1. Prior Approval.** In-kind donations may not be accepted without prior approval of the Executive Committee. If an item is offered to the Garden that would require any significant effort or expense in order to render the item useful, the Board must determine in advance whether it has sufficient funds and volunteer capacity to install and maintain the item.
- 2. Ordinary Garden Items.** This policy does not apply to the donation of ordinary garden items, such as plants that fall within the scope of the Garden's plan and mission, garden supplies or hand tools.
- 3. Invasive Plants.** No plants that are deemed invasive by any federal, state or local governmental agency or recognized native plant organization may be donated to or planted in the Garden.

H. VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Application.** All individuals who wish to volunteer in the Garden must complete and submit a Volunteer Application and obtain approval to do so before performing any garden tasks.
- 2. Compliance With Garden Policies.** All Volunteers must agree to abide by the Garden's Policies as adopted by the Board from time to time.
- 3. Purchases.** Volunteers who purchase goods or services for the Garden's use should submit an Expense Reimbursement Request Form. The Treasurer will provide the form and instructions. Prior approval by a board member is always recommended to ensure purchases will be reimbursed. Major purchases require prior approval by the Board.
- 4. Donations.** Volunteers who wish to donate items or materials to the Garden must follow the Garden's In-Kind Donations policy.