Volunteer Background Check Policy for University of Minnesota Volunteers

Conducting a personal background check is a standard best practice of quality volunteer program management, especially when volunteers may work with youth or vulnerable adults. Those volunteering for the University of Minnesota in many of its programs have such opportunities. A background check is required for all new volunteers applying to the Arboretum Volunteer Program.

The background check process is outlined below. The background check is conducted by The McDowell Agency, a screening agency in contract with the University. The results of background checks are transferred to the University of Minnesota, Office of Human Resources (OHR). The OHR makes the final determination as to acceptance of an applicant as a University of Minnesota volunteer. The determination is then conveyed to the Manager of Volunteer Services at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

The background check process works as follows:

1. After the successful completion of a mandatory New Volunteer Orientation, submission of a completed Volunteer Agreement & Release form, and purchase of a "New Volunteer Package," the Manager of Volunteer Services sends you an email with instructions for completing your background check.
2. The applicant completes the background check online by providing requested information directly to The McDowell Agency. It is recommended that this information is submitted by the applicant directly online. This is the most secure method of submitting information. If it is not possible to submit online, a paper copy of the release form may be requested from the Manager of Volunteer Services. This must be completed and sent by the applicant (mail or fax) to The McDowell Agency. As the form contains confidential information, Arboretum staff or other volunteers should not hold a copy or send the release form to The McDowell Agency on behalf of the applicant.
3. The McDowell Agency will conduct the background check. This usually takes 3-5 days. The background check includes searches of several county, state and national databases. The results of the search will be forwarded to University of Minnesota OHR.
4. OHR will review the results and determine the applicant's acceptance as a University of Minnesota volunteer. This usually takes 3-5 days. OHR will send their determination to

the Manager of Volunteer Services Based on OHR determination, the Manager of Volunteer Services will:

- o Order the volunteer their official Arboretum Volunteer name tag.
- o Name tags are shipped directly to the volunteer in the mail. From time of order, this typically takes 7-10 business days.

5. Receipt of your nametag will serve as confirmation of the successful completion of a background check and indicate your ability to begin work as an Arboretum Volunteer
6. *You are now eligible to apply for available Arboretum volunteer opportunities!

*Acceptance into the Arboretum Volunteer Program does not guarantee automatic approval or placement as a volunteer. Determination of volunteer positions and placements are at the sole determination and discretion of the Staff Supervisor that is hiring/filling the role. Additional interviews, screening, and or trainings may be required before the start of a volunteer position.

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