



# DUBUQUE ARBORETUM AND BOTANICAL GARDENS

## **Dubuque Arboretum and Botanical Gardens (DABG) Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities Policy**

Welcome to the **Dubuque Arboretum and Botanical Gardens (DABG)** community! We are thrilled to have you as a vital member of our volunteer team. Your commitment plays a crucial role in enhancing the beauty and functionality of DABG. To ensure a positive and collaborative experience for everyone, we have outlined clear **Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**. These guidelines are designed to create a supportive and inclusive environment, allowing you to make the most of your volunteer journey while contributing to the success of DABG. Please familiarize yourself with these principles as they reflect our shared values and commitment to excellence. Thank you for being an essential part of our DABG family.

### **Volunteer Rights:**

Volunteers make an essential contribution to the successful functioning of the DABG. As a valued volunteer of the DABG, you are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. We are committed to providing you with:

1. **A safe and pleasant working environment**, free of bias relating to gender, age, ethnicity, religion, or orientation.
2. **Training when needed or requested.**
3. **Events to celebrate your important contribution.**
4. **An enjoyable, collaborative growth experience.**
5. **Open channels for suggestions for improvement** by speaking with team leaders, the Ground Supervisor, Volunteer/Intern Coordinator, and the Executive Director.

### **Volunteer Responsibilities:**

As volunteers, we recognize the privilege of supporting DABG and its staff. Because DABG relies on volunteers, we ask that you fulfill your duties in good faith and with a spirit of teamwork. A successful volunteer will:

1. **Keep an Accurate Record of Hours Worked:** Enter your hours on the website or other appropriate timesheets. Your time worked is a valuable tool for DABG, helping assess future needs, plan special projects, budget, and apply for grants to expand programs and resources. Your work record also demonstrates community commitment to DABG, enhancing our status in applying for private grants and public funds.



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2. **Respect DABG Staff, Grounds, and Team Leaders:** Adhere to instructions and stay informed about current best practices in garden care.

Avoid prohibited actions such as:

- Unapproved removal or addition of plant material.
- Taking equipment, using dumpsters/compost areas for personal plant material, or using other DABG items for personal purposes.
- The DABG will not be held liable for any lost, broken, or worn tools or personal items that are brought from home.
- Starting projects without sufficient time for completion and cleanup.
- Refrain from smoking and drug usage on DABG grounds.
- Refrain from consuming alcohol while working.

3. **Prioritize Safety:** Ensure safety for yourself, fellow volunteers, staff, guests, and the grounds.

This includes:

- Getting approval for the use of DABG equipment, tools, or machinery from staff or team leaders.
- Abiding by the DABG Chemical Use Policy.

4. **Be a Steward of DABG:** Address all guests or volunteers with politeness and positivity. If you notice any upsetting behavior from guests or volunteers, please address the issue immediately by talking calmly and professionally to the individual, or report it immediately to a DABG staff and we will handle any situation swiftly. Maintain detailed records of your work (including plant material, timing, chemical use, and plant health) and make them available to staff. Remember that all plants and garden materials placed become DABG property and require prior approval from the Ground Supervisor.

## **Volunteer Best Practices:**

As a DABG volunteer, it is essential to adhere to up-to-date work policies when interacting with staff and fellow volunteers. This includes maintaining an atmosphere free from sexual harassment, innuendos, and inappropriate joking. If you have any complaints about other volunteers or staff, please report them to the appropriate lead or staff member.



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## Here are the key points to remember:

1. **Equal Treatment:** All volunteers are equal in the eyes of DABG. While some may have more years of experience or can dedicate more hours, everyone is expected to conduct themselves in a positive, respectful, and professional way.
2. **Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities:** By submitting a volunteer application, you agree to abide by the items outlined in the “**DABG Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities Policy**”.
3. **Compliance with the DABG Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities Policy is Essential:** Failure to adhere to company policy will result in the immediate removal from our program. At DABG we are committed to maintaining a professional and enjoyable environment for all who generously donate their time. Following company policy is crucial to achieving this goal.
4. **Complaint Process:**
  - If you encounter an issue, report it to your Team Lead.
  - If you do not feel comfortable reporting the issue with your Team Lead, please follow this guide to see who to contact with the complaint: The communication path for complaints is as follows: Team Lead > Ground Supervisor or Intern/Volunteer Coordinator > Executive Director.
  - If you do not feel comfortable speaking in person, you can always submit a comment or complaint anonymously through our volunteer portal to the Executive Director.
  - Just log in using the volunteer portal password, scroll down to the bottom of the portal page to the Ideas/Suggestions/Feedback/Complaints section, and click the “I have something to say button.” This will send a comment directly to the Executive Director anonymously (if desired).

## Help Us Grow

At DABG, volunteers are rooted in every facet of our organization. To branch out and grow, **we must hold ourselves accountable**. This commitment ensures that we can reach new people in the community and enrich their lives in nature.

1. **Ambassadors of DABG:**
  - As volunteers, you represent DABG. Use inclusive language and prioritize respect in all interactions with staff, fellow volunteers, and guests.
  - Your positive interactions create a welcoming and inclusive environment for our entire community.
2. **Visitor Awareness:**
  - Recognize the importance of visitors to DABG’s economic development.
  - Help create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for all who visit.
3. **Policy Support:**
  - Uphold and abide by the DABG’s non-smoking and no-pet policies.



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- Kindly advise visitors or volunteers in violation and alert a staff member.
  - If you are not comfortable talking with the visitor or volunteer directly, please report the incident immediately, follow the chain of command, or report it to your lead.
4. **Emergency Response:**
    - In case of a medical emergency, promptly alert a staff member and assist as needed.
  5. **Feedback and Improvement:**
    - We value your suggestions to enhance our grounds and visitor experience.
    - Complete surveys when sent out or submit suggestions through the Volunteer Portal.
    - Feel free to e-mail our Volunteer/Intern Coordinator or Executive Director directly: [volunteer@dubuquearboretum.net](mailto:volunteer@dubuquearboretum.net) or [director@dubuquearboretum.net](mailto:director@dubuquearboretum.net)
  6. **Mission Fulfillment:**

Contribute to DABG's mission: *To become a cherished destination for all, where vibrant gardens create transformative experiences that connect people, inspire learning, and deepen appreciation for nature.*