

Volunteer Questionnaire *(Required of all applicants)*

This questionnaire may be used in place of an interview for individuals who have an association with Extension or the 4-H Agent. i.e. Familiar Community Members (FCM) or Past Program Participants (PPP)

Please respond to the following questions in detail.

1. What experiences or volunteer activities will help you to be successful in this position?
2. What appeals to you about serving as a volunteer in this role?
3. Please share a situation in which you were responsible for disciplining a child other than your own.
4. How can the Agent best support and supervise you in your volunteer role?
5. Describe a situation in which you worked as a team member.

Notes: (include notes on punctuality, appearance, demeanor, attitude, etc.)

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Following are the types of responses that the questions are designed to elicit.

1. *What experiences or volunteer activities will help you to be successful in this position?*

The purpose of this question is to discover if the applicant has any experience in a volunteer role. The follow-up (likes and dislikes) probes what the individual learned and how this experience could either benefit or detract from this role.

2. *What appeals to you about serving as a volunteer in this role?*

What the interviewer is listening for are the appropriate skills, qualifications, and interests required for this position. Be alert for a high interest level in one-on-one or unsupervised activities with youth, preference for a particular age and gender, and idealized statements about wanting to “save children.” Be cautious of someone who overly identifies with youth, is unduly excited about the possibility of children (particularly if he/she has no children), or emphasizes that working with children is much easier or desirable than working with adults.

3. *Please share a situation in which you were responsible for disciplining a child other than your own.*

Red flags would include use of force, unrealistic expectations about a child’s needs, use of discipline techniques that would violate organizational policies, or anything that could be deemed as degrading to the child.

4. *How can the Agent best support and supervise you in your volunteer role?*

Be alert to an applicant’s preference to be “left alone” to do his or her “own thing.” This question presents a natural segue for the interviewer to expand upon the monitoring and supervisory techniques used to promote safety of the participants as well as human development. Each applicant should understand that there is no tolerance for any form of mistreatment (physical, emotional, sexual, or psychological) within your program.

5. *Describe a situation in which you worked as a team member.*

This question is designed to reveal the recruit’s ability to interact with others in a warm and helpful manner, while simultaneously building credibility and rapport.

Volunteer Questionnaire II (Required of new applicants)

In-depth interview questions for new applicants (those with no previous contact with the program; are unfamiliar to the agent or to one or more members of the CPC.) These questions should be asked (face-to-face) of all new applicants, in addition to the five questions on the Volunteer Questionnaire.

Please respond to the following questions in detail.

1. *What do you see as the objective of this Extension program?*
2. *How would you handle a defiant, disruptive or unruly child or adult?*
3. *You observe an individual at a meeting or activity with something they should not have in their possession. How will you handle this situation? What would you do if it was your best friend...your best friend's child...or your child's, spouse's or employer's best friend?*
4. *How would you describe yourself?*
5. *Describe a time in which you were asked to perform a task that you did not feel comfortable doing. How did you handle the situation? Did you ask for help? If so, who? Did you complete the task? How did you feel afterwards?*

Notes: (include notes on punctuality, appearance, demeanor, attitude, etc.)

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Following are the types of responses that the questions are designed to elicit.

1. What do you see as the objective of this Extension program?

For 4-H, this question focuses on “youth development” or “four-fold youth development” or “holistic youth development.” Ultimately, the objective of 4-H is cognitive, emotional, social and physical development. These are represented by the four H’s: Head, Heart, Hands and Health. Beware of individuals that are overly concerned about competition, winning, or want to use the volunteer position for personal gain (a horse trainer who wants to be a 4-H Horse Club Leader and give riding lessons to her club members). Also be alert for individuals who might want to use the volunteer experience to gain access to a vulnerable population.

2. How would you handle a defiant, disruptive or unruly child or adult?

Appropriate responses would include pulling them aside to talk with them privately about their behavior, then giving a verbal warning. Additional responses would include finding ways to engage them in an activity, or refocusing their attention in a different direction. Be careful of people who would talk about punishment, restraint, use of force, ridicule or embarrassment.

3. You observe an individual at a meeting or activity with something they should not have in their possession. How will you handle this situation? What would you do if it was your best friend...your best friend’s child...or your child’s, spouse’s or employer’s best friend?

Correct responses would depend upon the specific item. Firearms would be treated differently than an unopened tobacco product. Generally, quietly advising the individual to dispose of the item or to take it home immediately (never to be seen at the Extension event again) would be a logical answer.

4. How would you describe yourself?

Be alert for someone who is shy, withdrawn, passive or indecisive in responding.

5. Describe a time in which you were asked to perform a task that you did not feel comfortable doing. How did you handle the situation? Did you ask for help? If so, who? Did you complete the task? How did you feel afterwards?

Seeking assistance from someone knowledgeable or experience, or asking for advice or help are good choices. Asking to be reassigned to a different task is also acceptable. Simply trying to muddle through without understanding the task is inappropriate.

In-depth, Secondary Interview Questions (Yellow)

In-depth interview questions for new applicants (those with no previous contact with the program; are unfamiliar to the agent or to one or more members of the CPC) with a yellow designation.

1. *Why do you enjoy working with children (or this audience)?*

2. *Give an example of a program that you've been in charge of organizing and planning?*

3. *Describe the best presentation that you have given. What made you feel so good about it?*

4. *Describe a situation in which you persuaded a group to see your view point. What was your approach? What were the results?*

Notes: (include notes on punctuality, appearance, demeanor, attitude, etc.)

In-depth, Secondary Interview Questions (Yellow)

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- 1. *Why do you enjoy working with children (or this audience)?***
Beware of over-identification with youth, statements that children are “so easy to work with,” or negative statements about adults or teens compared with younger children.
- 2. *Give an example of a program that you’ve been in charge of organizing and planning?***
Is the recruit able to organize or schedule people or tasks; develop realistic action plans while being sensitive to time constraints and resource availability?
- 3. *Describe the best presentation that you have given. What made you feel so good about it?***
For any volunteer who will be in a teaching role or make presentations, the response to this question should reveal the recruit’s ability to clearly present information through spoken word; influence or persuade others through oral presentation in positive or negative circumstances.
- 4. *Describe a situation in which you persuaded a group to see your view point. What was your approach? What were the results?***
Is the recruit able to interact with others in a collaborative manner, building consensus, moving the group toward a decision, while simultaneously building credibility and rapport.

Criminal History Questions (Yellow)

The following questions may be helpful during an interview in order to examine applicants' possible criminal history as related to the requirements of the volunteer position. (These questions should be asked of individuals whose applications have been classified as "yellow.")

1. ***Have you been convicted of any criminal offense, including driving violations?***

The answer to this question should be verified by checking law enforcement records. A "yes" response does not automatically exclude a candidate from being selected for the volunteer position. However, anyone answering "no" who was convicted (and therefore offered inaccurate information) should not be placed in a volunteer role.

2. ***Have you ever been convicted of a drug or alcohol charge?***

Drug and alcohol convictions should be carefully reviewed in terms of type of conviction, frequency, rehabilitation, last conviction date, and the role in which the candidate could be placed. When in doubt, do not place the volunteer.

3. ***Have you ever been convicted of child abuse or neglect?***

Any applicant who will have one-on-one contact with children/youth and who has been convicted of neglect or abuse of a child is disqualified as a volunteer applicant.

4. ***Are you required by any state or federal law to register as a sex offender?***

Most states have sex offender registries which are accessible to community-serving organizations. Asking this question during the interview puts the candidate "on notice" that this aspect of his or her life may be subject to further scrutiny. Anyone found on any sex offender registry should not be accepted as a volunteer.

5. ***Have you ever held a position in which you were required to be bonded and the bond was either refused or revoked?***

This could indicate financial problems for which a bonding company found reason or cause to believe that the individual should not have the responsibility for handling some else's funds. This question should be asked of anyone serving as a treasurer or handling significant amounts of money.

Driving History Questions

A candidate's driving history is relevant for any position which requires operating a vehicle. (Not all volunteer positions do. It should not be assumed that a person without a valid driver's license is not capable of volunteering.) This may include shuttling people to and from activities, transporting goods, materials or supplies, or delivering meals to shut-ins. The following questions are examples which could be asked concerning operating a motor vehicle. (These questions should be asked of individuals whose applications have been classified as "yellow.")

1. ***Do you own an automobile, pickup truck, van, or recreational vehicle? If so, are you licensed to drive it? Are you and your vehicle adequately insured? What is the name of your insurance company?***

Kentucky requires car owners to have automobile insurance. Not having insurance or being part of an assigned risk pool is a clue toward recognizing individuals with unsafe driving practices.

2. ***What kind of driver are you?***

With this question, the interviewer is looking for specific traits such as always fastening seat belts (which is the law in Kentucky), never driving after consuming alcohol, obeying posted speed limits, and never having wrecked a vehicle.

3. ***Have you received any traffic tickets or been involved in an accident during the past two years?***

This is a good follow-up to the previous question. It is designed to help explore the applicant's driving skills and may also reveal immaturity or lack of judgment.

4. ***Have you been convicted of driving under the influence(DUI) of alcohol or drugs?***

This question may reveal a substance abuse problem which extends beyond driving.

5. ***Have you operated the type of vehicle that we own? Would you be comfortable driving it?***

Driving a "company-owned" vehicle may be different from driving a car.