



VMN Volunteer Info Sheet

Online Application Tip Sheet for Virginia Master Naturalist Program Applicants

*This Info Sheet is intended for Potential Volunteers of the VMN Program.
Authored by Virginia Master Naturalist State Office*

Overview

This document contains information and instructions on how to submit an online application to the Virginia Master Naturalist (VMN) Program, including screen shots of the form. This document is meant to be used electronically rather than printed out but applicants are free to do that if they wish.

General Tips

- The VMN program has an online application process. It uses Better Impact, which is also the volunteer management system we use for all volunteer communications, listing available volunteer activities, and recording volunteer service hours and other information. Using the volunteer management system for these functions will help you be an effective VMN volunteer.
- When you apply to the VMN program, you apply to a specific VMN Chapter, usually during a specific period of time during the year when they are accepting new applications. Visit [the VMN website](#) for a list of Chapters, and contact the chapter nearest you or visit their website for information on whether they are accepting applications, where to find their online application, and for information on their basic training course for new volunteers.
- Each VMN Chapter has its own volunteers who are overseeing the basic training course and volunteer recruitment and screening process. Please check that Chapter's website for information on who to contact if you have questions or need assistance during the application process.
- Each VMN chapter has a mobile-friendly version of their application form, and the link is available upon request if you prefer to complete the application on a mobile device rather than a computer.
- Your application needs to be completed in one sitting. There is not an option to save and complete it later. Therefore, we recommend that you look through this document to know what questions will be asked, so that you can assemble your information ahead of time and be ready to enter it all at once.
- When you see a flag icon next to a question in the application form, that means that is a required field, and you must enter something there.
- When you see an "i" icon, you can click on it to get more information about that question or field.

Page one of the Online Application Form

Create a login username if you do not already have one. Otherwise, log in with your Better Impact credentials if you already use Better Impact with another volunteer organization.



Sandbox Chapter

Application Form - *Sandbox* Virginia Cooperative Extension

I am new to MyImpactPage.com

You will need to enter a unique username to identify yourself to the system. You should select something that is easy for you to remember such as your email address or your name. Your username must be at least 6 characters long. If the name you enter is already in use by someone else, you will be prompted to choose another username.

Username

Email Address

Verify Email Address

Save and Continue

I already have a username

If you have signed up with this organization before, or are a member of another organization that uses MyImpactPage.com, you can use the same login to access all organizations with which you are associated.

Username

Password

Login and Continue

Already use MyImpactPage.com to volunteer with this organization?
[Go to volunteer login](#)

MyImpactPage.com
[Privacy Policy](#)

Powered By **BETTER IMPACT**

Figure 1 VMN sample application form page one

Page Two of the Online Application Form

Complete the Contact Information page. Fields that are flagged are required. You will be required to provide name, address, a phone number, and an email address. Optional fields include some social media handles, alternate phone numbers, and a secondary email address. On this page, you will also need to create a password for your Better Impact account. After completing the Contact Information page, click “Save and Continue” at the bottom of the page.



Sandbox Chapter

Application Form - *Sandbox* Virginia Cooperative Extension

Contact Information

You need to complete all fields flagged (^{RM}) as required on this page and on the next one. If you don't fill in all required fields and click save on the next page, your application will not be submitted to *Sandbox* Virginia Cooperative Extension.

ACCOUNT

Username ^{RM}

Password ^{RM}

Confirm Password ^{RM}

NAME FIELDS

Salutation

Legal First Name

First Name ^{RM}

Middle Name

Last Name ^{RM}

Suffix

Figure 2 VMN sample application form page two

Page Three of the Online Application Form

The final page of the application is where you will fill out the majority of the application. The specific questions may vary slightly among chapters.

General Availability

You may be asked for your General Availability, where you can indicate when you are available for volunteer service. Your answer does not commit you to any specific schedule, but it helps with matching volunteers to projects.

Application Form - *Sandbox* Virginia Cooperative Extension

Please note that your application will not get submitted until you fill in all fields flagged (ⓘ) as required on this page and click the Submit Application button. You'll know your application was successfully submitted if when you click the 'Submit Application' button, it takes you to another screen. If you stay on this screen, it means you missed a required field and your application has not yet been submitted.

General Availability

Please check all that apply to let us know when, in general, you are available for volunteer service. Your answer does not commit you to any specific schedule, but it helps us match volunteers with projects.

	<input type="checkbox"/> Mornings	<input type="checkbox"/> Afternoons	<input type="checkbox"/> Evenings	<input type="checkbox"/> Nights
<input type="checkbox"/> Monday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Figure 3 General availability question on VMN sample application form

General Interests

You may be asked for your General Interests, where you can indicate which categories of volunteer activities are of most interest to you. You may check all that apply. Remember, by clicking on the “i”, you can bring up a window with more information about that category of activity.

General Interests

Please indicate what categories of volunteer activities are of most interest to you. You may check all that apply. By clicking on the "i" information button, you can find more information about that category of activity.

ⓘ Citizen Science ⓘ Stewardship ⓘ VMN Chapter Administration

ⓘ Education and Outreach

Figure 4 General interests question on the VMN sample application form

About You and Experience

You will be asked to provide answers to the follow questions to help us get to know you. Answer each question in the text box provided.

- Why are you interested in becoming a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer?
- How did you hear about the Virginia Master Naturalist program?
- What kind of volunteer work would you like to do as a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer?
- Have you ever been enrolled in a VMN Basic Training Course before (yes/no)? If yes, please also list when and with what Chapter.
- Please describe any previous volunteer experience you may have.
- What do you consider your strengths, special talents, or abilities that would make you a good match?

The screenshot shows the 'About You' section of the application form. It features a dark red header with the text 'About You' in white. Below the header, there are four questions, each followed by a text input field:

- Question 1: 'Why are you interested in becoming a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer?' followed by a large rectangular text box.
- Question 2: 'How did you hear about the Virginia Master Naturalist program?' followed by a smaller rectangular text box with a small icon on the right side.
- Question 3: 'What kind of volunteer work would you like to do as a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer?' followed by a large rectangular text box.
- Question 4: 'Have you have ever been enrolled in a VMN Basic Training Course before? (Yes/No) If yes, please also list when and with what Chapter.' followed by a smaller rectangular text box with a small icon on the right side.

Figure 5 About You questions on the VMN sample application form

The screenshot shows the 'Experience' section of the application form. It features a dark red header with the text 'Experience' in white. Below the header, there are two questions, each followed by a text input field:

- Question 1: 'Please describe any previous volunteer experience you may have.' followed by a large rectangular text box with a small icon on the left side.
- Question 2: 'What do you consider your strengths, special talents, or abilities that would make you a good match?' followed by a large rectangular text box with a small icon on the right side.

Figure 6 Experience questions on the VMN sample application form

References

As part of the volunteer screening process, we will contact up to three references. On the application form, you will need to provide the name, relationship, address (optional), phone number, and email for three different references of your choice. Your references may be co-workers, people who know you through other volunteer programs, or other people who can comment on how well suited you are for the volunteer role. The leaders of the VMN Chapter and organizers of the Chapter's basic training course may contact your listed references by phone, email, or letter.

First Reference	
Name	<input type="text"/>
Relationship	<input type="text"/>
If you chose, "Other", please let us know what your relationship is.	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
Primary Phone	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>

Figure 7 First reference section on the VMN sample application form

Demographic Information

You will be asked to provide some demographic information. This information is used for reporting purposes. The VMN program is part of Virginia Cooperative Extension, and Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all regardless 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. For gender, race, and ethnicity, you may choose an answer of “Prefer Not to Answer”. For age, however, you must indicate whether or not you are at least 18 years old. While the VMN program is primarily a program for adults, youth age 14 and up may participate alongside a parent, guardian, or other adult who will be present with them for all training and volunteer activities. That adult should also apply to the program.

Demographic Information

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless 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. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.
VMN Volunteer Enrollment Agreement, revised August 2018.

Gender

Are you at least 18 years old or older?

If you are under 18, please list your age:

Ethnicity

Race

Figure 8 Demographic information question on the VMN sample application form

Emergency Contact

You will be asked to provide name, phone number, and relationship for an emergency contact. If you are accepted into the program, this information is stored in your profile in case it is needed during a training or volunteer activity.

The screenshot shows a form titled "Emergency Contact" with a maroon header. Below the header are five input fields: "Name", "Primary Phone", "Secondary Phone", "Relationship" (a dropdown menu), and a text box for "If you chose, 'Other', please let us know what your relationship is." Each field has a small "i" icon on the right side.

Figure 9 Emergency contact question on the VMN sample application form

Voluntary Disclosure

You will be asked to disclose whether you have any criminal convictions. A “yes” answer does not automatically exclude you from volunteering. A criminal background check may be conducted on you during the application process or during your volunteer service, and you will need to indicate that you understand that on the application.

The screenshot shows a form titled "Voluntary Disclosure" with a maroon header. Below the header is a paragraph of text: "This information will be kept in a confidential manner and accessible only to authorized personnel. A 'yes' answer does not automatically exclude you from volunteering." Below this is a question: "Have you ever had any criminal convictions?" with a dropdown menu. Below the question is another paragraph of text: "I understand that records and criminal background or reference checks may be conducted on me at any time during the application process or during my volunteer service." To the right of this text is a dropdown menu with two options: "I agree" (selected) and "I do not agree".

Figure 10 Voluntary disclosure section of the VMN sample application form

Agreements and Acknowledgements

In this section of the application, you will be asked to indicate whether you agree to four different agreements: Media Release Statement, Volunteer Agreement, Enrollment Agreement, and Virginia Master Naturalist Volunteer Standards of Conduct. In each case, be sure to click the “i” to read and understand the statement before agreeing to it. You do not have to agree to the Media Release in order to be accepted, but you do need to agree to the other three policies.

Agreements and Acknowledgements

I agree to the Media Release Statement found in the information box to the right of this field. ⓘ [dropdown] RM

I agree to the Volunteer Agreement found in the information box to the right of this field. ⓘ [dropdown] RM

I agree to the Enrollment Agreement found in the information box to the right of this field. ⓘ [dropdown] RM

I agree to the Virginia Master Naturalist Volunteer Standards of Conduct found in the information box to the right of this field. ⓘ [dropdown] RM

Figure 11 Agreements and acknowledgements section of the VMN sample application form

VMN Basic Training Course Fee Information

The Virginia Master Naturalist Program (VMN) is utilizing what we call Variable Pricing to help reduce financial barriers that might prevent someone from joining the program. Variable Pricing is new for VMN and will be added to chapters during 2026. The chapter you are applying to may not have this question, but if it does please acknowledge that you will complete a separate questionnaire to determine your training course fee.

The link to this Registration Fee Questionnaire will be in the confirmation email you receive after successfully submitting your application. Your answers on this questionnaire will not impact your potential acceptance, only determine your training course fee should you be accepted into the program.

Submitting the Application

Be sure to click “Submit Application” at the bottom of the page! If any flagged fields are not completed, the application will not be submitted and the system will let you know that there is something you need to go back and complete. If, after you click “Submit Application”, it takes you to another screen, then you know your application was successfully submitted.

Please note that your application will not get submitted until you fill in all fields flagged (RM) as required on this page and click the Submit Application button. You'll know your application was successfully submitted if when you click the 'Submit Application' button, it takes you to another screen. If you stay on this screen, it means you missed a required field and your application has not yet been submitted.

Submit Application

Figure 12 Submit application button on the VMN sample application form

Filling out the Registration Fee Questionnaire

Once you submit your application, you will receive a confirmation email with information about application review timelines and next steps. One of the steps in this email will be a request and a link to fill out the Registration Fee Questionnaire for the chapter you are applying to.

Please follow the link and fill out the questionnaire. It will take about five minutes. We will use this information to determine the fee you will pay for basic training, should you be accepted into the program.

Visit Virginia Master Naturalist: viriniamasternaturalist.org

Visit Virginia Cooperative Extension: ext.vt.edu

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May 2026