



# Master Gardener Volunteer Reimbursement Roles and Responsibilities

## Submitting a Reimbursement Request

Master Gardener volunteers must fill out the [Master Gardener Program Funds Request Form \(Smartsheet\)](#) to request a reimbursement. The Master Gardener Volunteer Google Site [Reimbursing Volunteers page](#) outlines important steps volunteers can take to expedite reimbursements. The program coordinator will enter information. If a volunteer does not have access to the internet.

Submitted receipts must be readable with high enough resolution to be printed clearly. Dates, and reasons for purchase must be clearly defined. Do not include non-reimbursable items on the receipt. Volunteers should expect a 30-day turn-around time for reimbursements.

Group leaders should share the [reimbursement cheat sheet](#) with volunteers. Reimbursements are approved at the County level by assigned approvers. The list of assigned approvers for each county is maintained by the state MG team.

## County Volunteer Treasurer

If a volunteer treasurer has been assigned as the first approver, they will receive an email notification when a reimbursement request is submitted from their county.

Their responsibilities are:

- Verify the purchase is for an approved activity.
- Verify reimbursement information is readable and understandable.
- Verify the requested amount is correct.
- Clarify questions with the volunteer.
- Complete their review within five business days.
- Use the [reimbursement cheat sheet](#) for accuracy.
- Contact the [county coordinator or state team contact](#) with questions.
- Request monthly or as-needed detailed report from AFNR accountant/finance professional (Andy Bartus; [barto466@umn.edu](mailto:barto466@umn.edu); p. 612-625-9162)

## County Coordinator

**TIP:** It is easiest to manage the incoming requests by logging into [www.smartsheet.com](http://www.smartsheet.com).

The county coordinator approver's responsibilities are:

- Verify the legitimacy of the request.
- Supply the EFS from which to draw the reimbursement.
- Complete review within five business days.

If the county coordinator is the only approver, their responsibilities are:

- Verify legitimacy of the activity and purchase.
- Verify that information is readable and understandable.
- Verify the amount requested is correct.
- Clarify questions with the volunteer.
- Supply the EFS from which to draw the reimbursement. **In the 'Comment' tab of the request, write: "I approve \$xx.xx reimbursement to 'John Doe', EFS"**, and any additional missing information. (Note: tagging a finance contact, e.g., marti987@umn.ed, is no longer necessary)
- Request any further information from volunteers if needed.
- If the purchaser had errors in their submission (personal purchases on receipts, illegible receipts, etc.) contact the volunteer and update instructions for their next submission.
- Complete review within five business days.

Per Kristi Martini Starzynski –

"When approving an Expense Reimbursement Request in Smartsheets, the required information to include in the comments is:

The dollar amount that is being approved

The EFS number the payment is to be made from

Any justification information that was not included in the submission (who, what, where, when, why)

For example:

*I approve \$53.25 to be reimbursed from 1026-11510-20106-CNTY#####. Paper plates, napkins,cheese, crackers, potting soil, garden stakes and seeds were purchased for a MG meeting held 06/23/2021 at 7:00pm at the Anoka County Extension office, 550 Bunker Lake Blvd NW, Andover, MN 55304 and items to be used at our community garden at 1234 Main Street, Anoka MN 55303 to be used throughout the 2021 growing season. Agenda and attendee list are included for the meeting items purchased.*

The dollar amount you are approving needs to be listed, this shows you have looked at the receipts and agree with the amount the volunteer is requesting. The EFS number needs to be listed so we know where the money is supposed to come from. Any justification that is missing when the volunteer submits it needs to be added in order to complete the 5W's (who, what, where, when, why)."

**TIP:** If Smartsheet isn't saving correctly, someone else may be in the sheet and your edits may interfere with each other.

## State Support Staff Preparers

Kristi Martini Starzynski is the primary preparer. She receives a notification for every request. Preparers can log into [www.smartsheet.com](http://www.smartsheet.com) and will have access to the '[Master Gardener Volunteer Reimbursements](#)' Workspace. All files for this process are maintained there. The Extension Master Gardener Program Funds Request sheet is used to reference active and unfinished requests. Leaders can view the funds request sheet to review the reimbursement request status for each submitted request.

Preparers responsibilities are:

- Enter information into the EFS system.

- Once submitted, relay problems or questions from the UMN Finance team to county approvers.
- Maintain status updates for each request, ensuring submission completion. Preparers are not expected to contact volunteers directly.
- Smartsheet automatically archives completed requests two weeks after the 'Status' column is changed to 'Submitted to EFS.' This is done Friday nights or early on Saturdays.
- Smartsheet automatically notifies the back-up support preparer if the status of a request does not change within a week of submission.

Primary: Kristi Martini Starzynski, Executive Administrative Specialist  
[marti987@umn.edu](mailto:marti987@umn.edu); p. (763) 767-3837

## Questions?

Contact Diane Greiwe ([dhgreiwe@umn.edu](mailto:dhgreiwe@umn.edu)) for questions regarding Smartsheet, approvers, acceptable purchases, [EFS accounts to use](#), etc.

## State Resources

[Financial Management overview](#)

[Reimbursing volunteers](#)

[Smartsheet reimbursement form](#)

[Reimbursement cheat sheet for volunteers](#)

[Expense justification guide \(Extension\)](#)

EFS chartstring by county

County approvers

[Statewide contacts](#)