

Administrative Questions:

1. How do we transfer a member from our chapter to another – how do the hours flow?

As documented in the VMS Admin Guide on the Help Desk, either chapter should submit a Help Desk ticket requesting the transfer; include the transferee's: name, from chapter name, and to chapter name.

Transfers are usually accomplished by the next day.

2. How do we receive a Master Naturalist into our chapter from a different state's Master Naturalist program?

Even though they may have been through another state's training program, they must complete the Texas Master Naturalist curriculum with a chartered TMN chapter and be entered into the TPWD Samaritan database as a volunteer. Service and advanced training earned in another state's MN program may not be used in TMN.

3. How do we inactivate a member who has 'resigned' or is deceased?

Changing the 'Activity Status' (on the Personal tab of their profile) changes their status for the entire TPWD program; for that reason, TMN Chapters do not inactivate volunteers using the Activity Status unless the member is "deceased". The element under the volunteer's User Defined tab (Certifications) provides a drop down for TMN-Certification status values; this value can be changed without impacting the volunteer's profile in any other TPWD volunteer program.

4. Were volunteer hours earned prior to the implementation of VMS entered into the VMS system.

Yes, when provided by the local chapter. If provided by the local chapter, all prior (historical) volunteer service hours were converted into the VMS and are listed as "Historical" hours.

5. Some of our members already have registered as a TPWD volunteer, how can we determine who they are so they do not register again? Is there a problem if they register again?

Submit a Help Desk ticket including the new volunteer's name, DOB, and email address with a message to vet them against the TPWD master list. The VMS Implementation Team will do the check for you and return the results. If the new volunteer is not on the spread sheet, a new entry must be created in the VMS; if the new volunteer is in the master list, the new volunteer will be copied into either your chapter folder or into the Inbox making the profile available to the chapter admins.

6. How is the CBC handled (who pays for the background check, what is the cost, who notifies the member at renewal time, does the chapter get notified of any restrictions, for how long is the background check good)?

All Master Naturalist volunteers must be registered as TPWD volunteers (this can be done through the website tpwd.texas.gov) and all TPWD volunteers must have passed a background check in order to participate in TMN sponsored activities. When you register with TPWD, one of the things that occurs is information for a background check is collected and is, subsequently, submitted by TPWD, if you agree, to a background check. The results of the check are returned to TPWD who is responsible for entering the results into the VMS system. If you need "proof of screening" documentation for AgriLife, you may print CBC card for the volunteer. There is no cost to the volunteer nor the chapter for this screening by TPWD and the results are good for 1 year.

7. Is there a restriction on how long one has to enter hours in VMS after the event?

Yes, the maximum number of days a volunteer has to enter service, AT, or initial training hours is 45 days from the date of the event. If there are severe extenuating circumstances as to why the restriction was missed, one admin in chapter has the ability to override the 45 day restriction.

8. Can the volunteer User ID be changed after hours have been approved for the volunteer?

Yes, the volunteer user ID can be changed at any time as can the password