

2025 Volunteer Awards Information and FAQ

About Marion County's 2025 Volunteer Awards:

County departments and individuals are encouraged to nominate a volunteer or volunteer group for their service during calendar year 2025. This is an opportunity for deserving volunteers to receive recognition for their contributions to a **Marion County department, division, or program**.



**Your participation is needed to make Marion County's
volunteer recognition a success!**

Nominations are accepted through Friday, March 27, 2026.

Visit <https://www.co.marion.or.us/HR/VOL/Pages/recognition.aspx> to find additional information and the link for the Volunteer Awards Nomination Portal. The Marion County Board of Commissioners will present awards at a special event during the 2026 Marion County Fair.

Nominations will be accepted for the following five categories:

1. **Outstanding Youth Volunteer (under 17 yrs)**
Recognizes the exceptional contributions of young people who volunteer in a county program, highlighting the impact and leadership of youth in service to the community.
2. **Outstanding Department Volunteer (18+ yrs)**
Honors adult volunteers who show dedication and exemplary service within a county department, making a meaningful difference to clients, staff, and the wider community.
3. **Outstanding Advisory Board Volunteer**
Celebrates individuals who serve on county advisory boards, committees, or task forces and demonstrate outstanding commitment, leadership, or impact through their service.
4. **Commissioner Mary Pearmine Outstanding Volunteer Group Award**
Recognizes a volunteer group that strengthens Marion County through direct service or partnership, making a collective impact that goes beyond individual efforts.
5. **Judge Rex Hartley Volunteer of the Year Award**
The county's premier volunteer honor, this award is presented to one individual whose leadership, dedication, and service have created a lasting and significant impact on the community.

Who can nominate?

Anyone may submit a nomination. Individuals may also nominate themselves.

Who is eligible for an award?

Volunteers who donated time during calendar year 2025. Groups recognized with the Pearmine award may have assisted the county through direct service or partnership.

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Eligibility details by award category:

Outstanding Youth Volunteer

Recognizes the exceptional contributions of young people who volunteer in a county program, highlighting the impact and leadership of youth in service to the community. One individual receives this award each year.

- Age 17 or younger.
- Serves as a volunteer with a Marion County program, division, or department.
- Episodic and affiliated volunteers are eligible.

Outstanding Department Volunteer

Honors adult volunteers who show dedication and exemplary service within a county department, making a meaningful difference to clients, staff, and the wider community. One award will be given for each department with a nomination submitted.

- Age 18 or older.
- Serves as a volunteer with a Marion County program, division, or department.
- Episodic and affiliated volunteers are eligible.

Outstanding Advisory Board Member

Celebrates individuals who serve on county advisory boards, committees, or task forces and demonstrate outstanding commitment, leadership, or impact through their service. One individual receives this award each year.

- Any age.
- Serves on a Marion County advisory board, committee, commission, council, or short-term task force.

Commissioner Mary Pearmine Outstanding Group Award.

Recognizes a volunteer group that strengthens Marion County through direct service or partnership, making a collective impact that goes beyond individual efforts. One group receives this award each year.

- Any age.
- Group includes a volunteer component, though not all members must be volunteers.
- Group has assisted the county through direct service or partnership.

Judge Rex Hartley Volunteer of the Year

The county's premier volunteer honor, this award is presented to one individual whose leadership, dedication, and service have created a lasting and significant impact on the community. One individual receives this award each year.

- Any age.
- Episodic and affiliated volunteers are eligible.
- Nominations must score at least 8 out of 16 possible points, based on award criteria.



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What information should be included in the nomination?

A strong nomination highlights the nominee's background, volunteer role, and key achievements. The nomination should clearly demonstrate how the nominee's actions, attitude, and behavior meet the award criteria. A great nomination includes supporting details such as stories, outcomes, and impact. Where applicable, include numbers served, services provided, shifts filled, completed projects, and other details that demonstrate the nominee's impact.

How many nominations can I submit?

You may submit up to 5 nominations in any one award category.

Can I nominate an individual for more than one award?

Yes. A separate nomination must be received for each award category.

Is there nomination deadline?

Nominations must be received by 5:00pm on Friday, March 27, 2026.

What happens after submitting a nomination?

You'll receive a confirmation email. After review, Volunteer Services will invite nominees, nominators, and department staff to a special awards event with the Board of Commissioners, likely held during the County Fair in July.

How are recipients chosen?

Volunteer Services convenes the Awards Selection Committee to review nominations and select recipients based on the published award criteria.

Will I know if my nominee is selected?

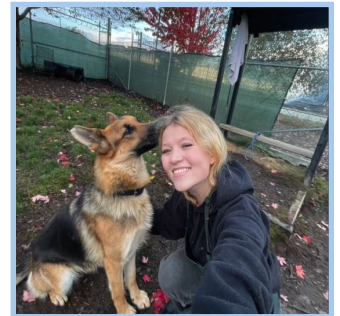
No. The winners are revealed at the awards event.

How do I write a compelling nomination?

Tell your nominee's story in a compelling way to help the selection committee understand why they stand out and deserve recognition. Remember, the selection committee is hearing about your nominee, and their volunteer activities, for the first time.

Make sure you understand the award criteria and provide specific examples to showcase the nominee's achievements, using clear and concise language, avoiding jargon, and highlighting the impact of their contributions. In addition to understanding the criteria, remember these tips:

- Be specific: Provide clear examples, data, and stories showing the nominee's impact.
- Show impact: Highlight results such as improved services, community benefits, or lasting change.
- Focus on uniqueness: Explain what sets this nominee apart from others.





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- Avoid vague praise: Instead of “we couldn’t do it without them,” describe why their contributions matter.
- Keep it clear: Spell out acronyms, avoid jargon, and proofread carefully.
- Quality over length: A concise, detailed nomination is stronger than a long, generic one.
- Spell out acronyms, avoid jargon and technical terms.
- Proofread carefully: Ensure your nomination is free from grammatical errors and typos.

A compelling nomination should describe as vividly and precisely as possible the difference your nominee’s contribution has made and show why it has been important. One of the biggest challenges is illustrating how and why the nominee stands out from the other amazing volunteers who support Marion County.

Other things to consider and/or include:

- ✓ What made this an outstanding achievement – indicate any extraordinary circumstances or challenges the nominee faced (include statistics or historical background if applicable).
- ✓ What knowledge your nominee had of the situation and what actions they choose to take.
- ✓ The scale of the achievement and whether it is completed or ongoing.
- ✓ The achievement’s sustainability and impact on the community and how it has enriched the lives of others.
- ✓ What makes your nominee different from others doing the same thing?

Remember that longer doesn’t necessarily mean better. When presenting your nominee, keep your explanations clear and to the point while ensuring there is enough information for the Selection Committee to make their decision.

Nominations must be received by Volunteer Services no later than 5pm, Friday, March 27, 2026
Your department’s participation is needed to make Marion County’s volunteer recognition event a success. Nominate a deserving volunteer TODAY!

