Maryland TORT Claims Act
Simple Explanation from Jon Traunfeld, State Master Gardener Coordinator

It is very difficult to sue the State or its employees or volunteers. It has never happened in the history of the MD MG program.

Example 1: you are at the Baltimore Herb Festival and someone trips on the corner of the MG display, falls, and breaks an ankle. If you did not push this person and your display designed and set up in a reasonable way you would be protected from a potential tort.

Example 2: you read on the internet that jimson weed is a good home remedy for the hiccups, and as a UME representative you share this information with clients. Someone puts it to the test and ends up in the hospital for a week. You were not attempting to hurt the client (you did not act maliciously) but you your actions were grossly negligent.

Detailed explanation from State of Maryland:
MD has special statutory protection for government units and its employees and volunteers. The immunity from suit and not simply immunity from liability for volunteers in State agencies is defined by the Maryland Tort Claims Act (MTCA). It protects volunteers to the same extent as State employees when negligence is defined as, “unintentional failure to exercise the care that a prudent or reasonable person usually exercises. It is doing something that a person using ordinary care would not do, or not doing something that a person using ordinary care would do.” Ordinary care is that “caution, attention or skill that a reasonable person would use under similar circumstances.” However, certain actions may remain outside the scope of that protection. A UME volunteer is a person who is providing a service to or for the State, who is not paid in whole or in part by the State, and satisfies all other requirements for designation as State personnel (UME volunteer) and is performing within the scope of his or her duties, may be protected by the MTCA. A tort is a wrong that harms an individual.