

Day of Caring Project Planning Manual

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**United Way
of North Idaho**

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DAY OF CARING

Overview

Day of Caring is a unique opportunity for you to showcase your work to the community, establish relationships with local businesses, and strengthen the volunteers' awareness of your mission.

Day of Caring is an event where volunteers join local nonprofit agencies to participate in one-time service projects. Participating agencies are matched with volunteers from local businesses, civic groups, and schools who choose to give their time and services in an effort to impact our communities' needs.

Volunteers gain a better understanding of the agencies' services and help to change lives.

Companies will select their projects based on the information you provide. Most importantly, they look for a project that is well organized and thought-out. They want to leave knowing their hard work has made an impact to your organization and the people you serve.

This manual is designed to help you plan your Day of Caring project(s). It provides you with questions to think about before and during planning, useful checklists and project ideas.

Contact Information

Should you have any questions, please contact:

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Agency Responsibility

- Be prepared when volunteers arrive.
- Act as the host/hostess for Day of Caring volunteers. Make sure you arrive at the project site early to greet volunteers and set up for project needs (i.e. lay out equipment, tools, etc.).
- Provide lunch for volunteers (and water/ beverages, particularly if work is outside) if you're hosting a full day project.
- Provide all supplies for the project (including the back-up projects, if applicable). You may recommend volunteers bring their own tools and gloves if necessary, but should be prepared to move ahead with the project if they don't.
- Provide volunteers with a brief introduction to your agency upon arrival (and perhaps more details or a tour at lunch time). Volunteers will come ready to work, so make your welcome short and sweet.
- Provide adequate supervision throughout the project. (i.e. If you have a large and/or detailed project, make sure more than one person knows the tasks and details.)
- Ensure volunteers leave having learned about your agency, the work you do, AND feeling like they've made a difference. NOTE: the #1 complaint from volunteers is that they left the project not knowing enough about the agency where they worked. Volunteers are your potential donors. Wow them!
- Thank volunteers throughout the day and provide some type of recognition at the end of the day. (This can be verbal, a certificate, etc.)

Bad Weather Plans

- Day of Caring is not cancelled due to bad weather. You may need to alter your project plans. Each agency is responsible for making its own plans in case of inclement weather on the Day of Caring. There is no rain date.
- Agencies that are planning outdoor projects should have an alternate indoor project or projects in case of inclement weather, e.g. cleaning, compiling a mailing, making centerpieces for an upcoming event, straightening out storage rooms, etc.
- Agency representatives will need to describe bad weather plans when registering projects on-line. It is imperative that you communicate your bad weather plans to volunteers ahead of time.
- On the actual day of Day of Caring, it is the responsibility of the agency representative and company coordinator(s) to communicate directly with each other regarding any changes in plans.

PROJECT PLANNING

Guidelines

Day of Caring is an incredible opportunity to tackle large and small projects at your agency that otherwise may not get accomplished. Given the unique service opportunity, try to plan creative, worthwhile projects that volunteers will enjoy and that will make an impact on the services you provide. Involve your entire organization in suggesting/ planning project(s). Full day projects should begin at 9:00 a.m. and finish at 3:00 p.m. Make sure you have enough to keep volunteers busy for the entire time. Have back-up projects just in case you need them.

Below are some guiding questions to help you assess the appropriateness and scale of your Day of Caring projects, and thus help the volunteers better respond to your needs.

Project Assessment Criteria: Questions to Ask

1. Can the project be substantially completed in the allotted time with nonprofessional workers, allowing time for set-up, break down, agency briefing, and lunch?
2. Is the size and complexity of the project appropriate considering the volunteers' skills and allotted time?
3. What is the manpower requirement (taking into account space limitations)?
4. Does the project require specific skill levels? For example, would you need an electrician, skilled carpenter, or project manager?
5. What is the need vs. availability of tools and equipment, including those provided by the agency and by the volunteers? What tools can you provide, and what tools do you need the volunteers to provide?
6. Is the project too hazardous for volunteers? Does the work require climbing a tall ladder? Is an outdoor work area close to a heavily trafficked street without protective barriers? Is there a potential fire hazard, e.g., use of propane torch? (Consider potential liability exposure.)
7. Will the agency clients be present? Are young children or elderly persons likely to be around the work area while the work is in progress? Does the performance of work need to be coordinated with the clients' schedules?
8. Can the agency provide someone to organize and/or oversee the work being performed? (It is essential that each agency designate at least one point of contact that is available for the day, even if the designated person does not work with the volunteers all the time. NOTE: larger projects or projects spread out over a large space will require more than one point of contact.)
9. Does the agency have the ability to accomplish the necessary prep work in advance of Day of Caring, e.g., purchasing necessary materials, prepping walls for painting, installing foundations for a new structure, obtaining municipal permits, etc.?
10. Are there smaller projects for volunteers if they finish the primary project early?
11. What plans do you have in case of inclement weather?

Determine Project Types and Volunteers Needed

To help determine the number of volunteers to request, you will need to decide what type(s) of project(s) you have to offer. Once you determine the type of project and the number of volunteers needed for each project, you will post each project separately on-line. Your project must require at least 5 volunteers. If your project requires fewer than five volunteers, consider combining it with another project. For example, volunteers may work on outside clean-up in the morning and a mailing or inside painting in the afternoon. (See Type 2 following page)

Type 1: One Basic Category/Project – No Special Skills Needed

Sample Headline: Catherine Morrill Day Nursery - Bring Our Playground Back to Life!

Project Description: Volunteers will spend the day raking, mulching, weeding, planting, and painting the playground and shed. We'll also be sorting, cleaning, and organizing outdoor toys in the shed.

Total Volunteers: 22

Type 2: Variety of Small, Unrelated Projects – No Special Skills Needed

Sample Headline: Salvation Army thrift shop - Sort, clean, tag, paint, organize, and garden!

Project Description: There are many small projects to do at the Thrift Shop that support our program. Take turns sorting, organizing and pricing items. Spend a little time outside raking or making our windows sparkle. Paint some shutters or do a little filing. Need a break? How about doing a little data entry? Plenty of general projects for your group!

Total Volunteers: 6

Type 3: Special Skill Project(s) – Special Skills Needed

Sample Headline: Camp Sunshine - Design & build picnic tables for our camp!

Project Description: We don't have blueprints, so we're looking for a team with design and building skills. We have a need for 4 picnic tables to be built at our site. We need the volunteer team leader to meet with us ahead of time to let us know what materials you'll need, and we will obtain the material in time for the project.

Skills Needed for this Project: Woodwork design and carpentry.

Total Volunteers: 15

Project Ideas

Outdoor Maintenance and Preservation: Have volunteers...

- Paint murals on the inside and outside walls of an organization
- Plant a school or community garden
- Construct or paint picnic tables / park benches
- Repair and clean a camp or playground area for children
- Clean and paint fences
- Remove litter from a river and its banks
- Build a deck or patio
- Plan a yard clean-up: weeding, planting, raking, mulching, pruning shrubs
- Develop a nature trail

Restoration/Repair Work: Have volunteers...

- Paint the inside or outside of a building or wallpaper a room
- Wash windows, carpets, walls, toys
- Construct a play gym for children
- Build a book case or coat rack at a shelter or childcare center
- Build a storage shed for recreational equipment
- Rehabilitate a group home
- Construct an accessibility ramp
- Sort and repair organization toys and equipment

Special Events for Organization Clients: Have volunteers...

- Plan a "fun" day for residents at a nursing home: games, singing, fingernail painting, hair styling, etc.
- Bake and decorate cookies with agency clients
- Plan and accompany clients or youth on a field trip

- Organize a mini-Olympics for clients
- Play games or read stories with children at a childcare center
- Plan and staff a cookout, picnic, “theme” party or ice cream social for clients
- Help clients with needlepoint, crocheting, pottery, or other crafts
- Organize a flea market for clients in a residential facility
- Present a puppet show to children
- Help agency clients with college applications or resume review
- Prepare emergency medical kits for clients
- Walk and feed animals and clean cages at the local humane society

Other

- Creative Projects (i.e. make blankets for a local agency, create toys for local animal shelter, make cards for clients, assemble centerpieces for a special event, conduct personal interviews at a nursing home, etc.)
- Build and decorate recycling containers
- Construct bird feeders or window boxes
- Make birthday boxes or spring baskets
- Do library or internet research for grant sources
- Fold, stuff, and address organization bulk mailing
- Inventory organization supplies, organize storage closets, catalog library books
- Do data entry or conduct a telephone survey

Projects to Avoid

The following are examples of projects that are usually not suitable for Day of Caring:

- Projects that will not provide a sense of accomplishment for the volunteers (i.e. a painting project that is too large to complete in one day, cleaning an attic or cellar, etc.)
- Projects that need technical designs or skills, unless they can be provided by the agency or a volunteer leader AND have a skilled project manager to oversee the work of the volunteers.
- Projects that may be unsafe for the volunteers, i.e., having to work on tall ladders, in too close proximity of vehicular traffic, lift too heavy objects, etc. Remember, agencies could be held liable if reasonable safety precautions were not considered.
- Projects that require complex or time-consuming preparatory work such as obtaining multiple permits, building concrete foundations, scraping old paint, clearing a field, etc.
- Projects that cost more to make than it would to purchase.

DAY OF CARING SAFETY PLAN

General Safety Guidelines

We recognize the potential for serious injury and liability problems associated with Day of Caring, just as we do each time any volunteer offers his/her services. To help avoid the potential pitfalls and hazards that can occur during any event of this nature, please review the safety guidelines below to help ensure that the Day of Caring is both a rewarding and safe experience for everyone involved.

Below are some actions to think about if an accident does happen:

- Prior to any work being done, ensure that you have emergency contacts for every volunteer. NOTE: This information can be added to the day's volunteer sign-in sheet.
- Stay calm. Have all of the other volunteers stop working if there is any reason to believe that the work is unsafe, or if the volunteers simply cannot focus sufficiently on the project's task. Be sensitive to the mood and needs of the volunteers.
- If a volunteer is injured, designate someone else to oversee the other volunteers so that you can focus on the injured volunteer.
- Try to determine the seriousness of the injury/accident. Ask if there is a volunteer that may have some training to assist the injured individual (i.e., a doctor, nurse or EMT).
- If the person has a serious injury call 911 immediately. Then call a friend or family member of the injured person, if appropriate, and the United Way of Greater Portland office number at (207) 874-1000.
- If the person has a minor cut or scrape, administer first aid and then fill out an accident report.
- Ensure that all appropriate agency representatives are aware of the injury/ accident.

Simple Safety Suggestions

Be prepared. To help avoid safety incidents, the below chart suggests safety plans that you may want to communicate to your volunteers prior to Day of Caring.

Task	Potential Hazards	Safety Plan
Landscaping	Foot (cuts, abrasions)	Boots, closed-toe shoes
	Hands (cuts, abrasions)	Work gloves
	Legs (cuts, abrasions)	Long pants
	Sunburn	Wear sunscreen
	Bug bites	Bring bug spray
Clearing Trails	*Chain saw use	Ear plugs or muffs
		Hard-toed boots
		Chaps for legs
		Gloves, long sleeves
		Safety glasses, goggles
		Safety glasses
Painting	Eyes	Safety glasses
	Hands	Gloves (Latex or Work)
	Ladder use	Waist below top of ladder.
	(Use scaffolding if necessary)	Never reach past arm length.
Carpentry/Renovation	Eyes	Safety glasses, goggles
	Foot	Hard-toed boot
	Hands	Gloves
	Falls	Approved ladders/scaffolding
	*Power Tools	All guards in place
		Extension cords with GFCI's

***Volunteers should not operate power tools unless they are trained to do so.**

Risk Assessment Checklist

The following risk assessment checklist will help ensure that your Day of Caring project, staff, and volunteers will be as safe as possible. The checklist should be reviewed for each project and/or project site.

Overall Safety

- Adequate liquids are available to volunteers to ensure proper hydration to eliminate heat stress exposure.
- Adequate breaks will be made part of any projects, especially in very warm conditions.
- Fully stocked first-aid kit is available and readily accessible at all project sites.
- Agency personnel and volunteers know the location(s) of first-aid kit.
- Individual trained in first-aid/CPR available at each work site.
- List of emergency numbers is available and readily accessible at each work site.
- Working phone is available at each work site.
- No volunteer will work alone at sites where mentally or physically challenged persons, recovering alcoholics, or drug addicts reside or are enrolled on-site.
- Volunteers will work in larger groups in areas identified by law enforcement as high-crime areas or will be provided with local security.
- Power tools/equipment will be checked for safety by a qualified tradesperson prior to use by volunteers.
- No volunteer will operate power tools or equipment without prior authorization.
- Volunteers will be assessed to ascertain particular allergies to plants, insect bites, respiratory sensitivity, sensitivity to chemical vapors and other personal health issues prior to beginning project.
- Personal protective equipment is available for each task, as applicable. (i.e. safety glasses, hearing protection, gloves, hard hats, etc.)
- Staff will ensure that volunteers are properly dressed for the task prior to the start of activities.

Safety Consideration for Specific Projects

Clean-up projects (trash and waste removal, general housekeeping):

- Volunteers will be encouraged to use gloves; watch for sharp items, biohazards, puncture hazards, etc.
- Volunteers will be supervised to ensure safe operation of power equipment.
- Only experienced volunteers will operate power equipment.
- Personal safety equipment will be available for use by all volunteers.
- Proper gloves will be used.
- Lightning safety will be practiced in the event of thunderstorms.

Painting and Preparation:

- Potential hazard exposure determined by reading safety data and warning labels on all paints, solvents and thinners.
- Water-based paints used wherever possible.
- Dust masks and respirators are available and will be used by volunteers involved in sanding, scraping, or in areas of poor ventilation.
- Ladder and scaffolding safety will be practiced.
- Ensure safe use of any electrical painting equipment.

Construction:

Ground fault protection used for tools outside or wet areas (bathrooms).

Safety glasses and hearing protection will be available and used.

Volunteers will wear proper footwear (no athletic shoes).

Child Care:

Agency representatives will be present during all interactions between volunteers and children to guard against any behaviors that could endanger the child or be potentially harmful to the volunteer.

If appropriate and necessary, have volunteers sign disclosure statement or confidentiality statements prior to event.

ONLINE MANAGEMENT

Note: Prior to the project registration deadline, no limit will be set on the number of project submissions. Projects submitted after the deadline will be accepted based on available volunteer resources.

Submit projects to
www.uwnorthidaho.org/day-caring