

United Way of East Central Iowa
Day of Caring Agency Leader Guide

UNITED WAY
V**LUNTEER****ENGAGEMENT**

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Introduction/Overview:

Thank you for participating in the United Way of East Central Iowa Day of Caring! Your partnership in volunteerism with the United Way helps create a cohesive community where volunteers get the most out of their work and you get the best volunteers for your project. In order to ensure that this partnership is effective in giving you the best volunteers, we have created this toolkit of best practices for working with volunteers in an episodic capacity.

Day of Caring is an event where volunteers from around the region join local nonprofit agencies to work on one-time service projects. Participating nonprofit agencies host volunteers from local companies who choose to give their time and services in an effort to impact our communities' needs. Day of Caring is a unique opportunity for you to market your services to the community, establish relationships with local businesses, and strengthen the volunteers' awareness of your mission.

Again, thank you for your commitment to volunteerism in East Central Iowa. It is through your great work that the most important needs of our community are met.

Participants

Agencies: All participating nonprofit agencies must be located in the counties UWECI serves: Benton, Cedar, Jones, Linn or Iowa counties.. Agencies must be registered or agree to register as an agency with the United Way of East Central Iowa Volunteer Now site.

Volunteers: Volunteers will be recruited from local companies and provide a volunteer project leader to lead each volunteer team.

Contact Information

For questions regarding Day of Caring, please contact:

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Policies and Procedures

Mission Statement:

Day of Caring (DOC) is an event supporting the United Way's Volunteer Engagement mission to mobilize resources to address the community's most pressing needs. Specifically, Day of Caring is a day when local businesses partner with nonprofit agencies to make a difference in our communities.

Responsibilities of United Way:

- Fundraising/Sponsorships for DOC
- Planning, administration and evaluation function for DOC
- Training agencies, company coordinators, and volunteers

- Recruiting companies and volunteers
- Providing best practices and other resources

Requirements for participating nonprofit agencies:

- Agencies must be registered or agree to register as an agency with the United Way of East Central Iowa Volunteer Now site.
- Accurately represent and describe project(s) utilizing the project spreadsheet.
- Provide snacks and water to volunteers when possible
- Provide necessary materials needed to complete project(s)
- Meet with volunteer Project Leader(s) prior to the event
- Obtain liability and photo releases from all volunteers.
- Report volunteer hours and submit completed liability waivers and photo releases for all volunteers

Requirements for DOC volunteers:

- Designate a project leader(s)
- Project leader should meet with agency representative prior to the event
- **Volunteers must be over 18 years of age**
- Volunteers are accepted at the sole discretion of UWECI

Half-Day Projects:

Typical shifts are 8am-12pm or 1pm- 4pm. Agencies will need to ensure a project is truly half-day and provide necessary materials. Lunch is optional, but should be discussed with the company lead.

Project Approval:

Projects are accepted at the sole discretion of UWECI and UWECI reserves the right to exclude a project.

Projects at Client Homes:

As a general practice, projects at client homes will be considered for inclusion in the Day of Caring if an agency provides an onsite staff lead during the project.

Waivers & Hours Reporting:

Agencies are required, as part of the sign-in process on Day of Caring, to obtain signed liability and photo waivers, and a sign-in/sign-out sheet with hours of work completed. **Copies should be emailed to UnitedWay.Volunteer@uweci.org** or faxed to 319-398-5381, attn Sue Driscoll. If a volunteer refuses to sign a waiver, the agency representative must notify UWECI so as to avoid using any photographs that do not have approval from the subject.

Inclement Weather Plans:

Each agency is responsible for making its own plans in case of inclement weather on the Day of Caring. If possible, agencies that are planning outdoor projects are encouraged to plan an alternate indoor project or projects in case of inclement weather, e.g. cleaning, rearranging heavy furniture, straightening out storage rooms, etc. Agency representatives will have the opportunity to stipulate their bad weather plans when registering their projects on-line. It is imperative that you communicate your bad weather plans to volunteers ahead of time. On Day of Caring, it is the responsibility of the agency representative and volunteer team leader(s) to communicate directly with each other regarding any changes in plans.

Responsibilities of the Volunteer Coordinator

As the volunteer coordinator for your project, you are responsible for communication with your volunteers. All project details will come through you. In order to best transfer information to your volunteers, as well as to make sure that the volunteer's best receive the information, you must keep them informed, interested, and invested:

- Informed:
 - Information is the basic premise of communication. People need to know when and where the volunteer project is as well as other basic pieces of information.
 - NEVER assume that your volunteers know the details about the project. Reminding someone one extra time is better than them not knowing where to go or what to do.
- Interested:
 - Everything goes more smoothly when people are engaged.
 - Give people information that will get them excited about the project so that they are interested about the information you are sharing with them.
- Invested:
 - Once people are excited, make sure EVERYONE is included in meaningful projects and work.
 - Make your volunteers feel useful by explaining to them the impact of your agency and the meaningful outcomes that their project will have on the community. This can turn even the most menial, but necessary, volunteer project into an opportunity for growth. For example:
 - When sorting canned goods at a food bank, enumerate how many packages of food were sorted and how many meals that made. Explain how the families were fed because of these volunteers' work.
 - When painting a fence for a local daycare, explain how bright colors can help stimulate young minds and tell your volunteers how many kids they have helped. Perhaps explain how beautifying an area also increases morale for the children and the teachers.

You are responsible for communication with the rest of the agency. You are your agency's connection to the volunteers and the volunteer program. This means that everything the agency knows about your volunteers usually comes through you. In order to best ensure that the project runs smoothly, both you and the company coordinator are responsible for the project. This means that:

- You are responsible for staying current with the company volunteer's responsibilities and your responsibilities.
 - Do not simply rely on the fact that the volunteer will eventually tell you how many people they're bringing, when they will arrive, what they will bring, etc.
 - Instead, proactively discuss these topics with the volunteers and work together to have a project that will run efficiently and will give both the agency and the volunteers the greatest impact.
- You are responsible for knowing what the volunteers will do and where they will go during the project.
 - Do not arrive the day of the project assuming that the volunteers know where to park, where to go, and what to do.
 - Maintain communication with the company and confirm the details of the project before the day of the project.

Please contact the company coordinator or project lead well in advance of the project with the information provided above. It is your responsibility as a volunteer coordinator to make the first contact with the

volunteers. If emails do not work, call them. Ensure that communication occurs well before the day of the project.

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.

Below are some guidelines to better help you plan. The answers you give to these questions will help you assess the appropriateness and scale of your Day of Caring projects, and will help the volunteers better respond to your needs.

Project Assessment Criteria: Questions to Ask

1. Can the project be substantially completed in the allotted working time with non-professional 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 or skilled carpenter?
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 bring from home?
6. Is the project too hazardous for the 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 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. Will the agency provide someone to organize and/or oversee the work being performed? (It is essential that each agency designate a point of contact that is available throughout the day, even if the designated person does not work with the volunteers all the time.)
9. Does the agency have the ability to accomplish the necessary preparatory work in advance of Day of Caring, e.g., purchasing necessary materials, installing foundations for a new structure, obtaining municipal permits, etc.?
10. Are there smaller projects that volunteers can work on if they finish the main 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. By determining the type of project, you will be able to better assess the number of volunteers needed. Once you determine the type of project and the number of volunteers needed for each project, you will submit *each* project online. Therefore, some agencies may have more than one Day of Caring project listed online.

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

- Sample Headline: 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: 8

Type 2: Variety of small, unrelated projects – No Special Skills Needed

- Sample Headline: Sort, clean, tag, paint, organize, and garden at the Thrift Shop!
- 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: Design and 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. Moderate finish quality.
- Total Volunteers: 6

Determine Permit Requirements

1. Some of your best project ideas may require a permit from the city, state, or town.
2. *New construction and renovation work often requires the issuance of a building permit.*
3. You should check with your local inspection department or code official to help determine your permit need.
4. In addition to your local code official, some board members, skilled staff, current volunteers, and licensed professionals are knowledgeable resources that can help you evaluate project needs and scope.

Project Ideas

Outdoor Maintenance and Preservation: Have volunteers...

Paint murals on the inside and outside walls of an organization ♦ Plant a garden ♦ Construct or paint picnic tables / park benches ♦ Repair and clean a camp or play 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 ♦ Spruce-up a playground ♦ Develop a nature trail

Restoration/Repair Work: Have volunteers...

Paint the inside or outside of a building ♦ Repair a porch roof ♦ Wash windows, carpets, walls, toys ♦ Clean and tune-up transport vans or buses ♦ Wallpaper a room ♦ Construct a play gym for children ♦ Build a 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. ◆ Plan and accompany clients on a field trip ◆ Organize a mini-Olympics for clients ◆ Put on a talent show or slide show for clients at a senior center ◆ 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 classes in needlepoint, crocheting, pottery, or other crafts ◆ Accompany a youth group on a day hike or outdoor field trip ◆ Assist clients with grocery shopping ◆ Visit and deliver meals to homebound clients ◆ Help teach independent living skills such as cooking and shopping to mentally challenged clients ◆ Help conduct a training session for clients in teamwork, problem solving, etc. ◆ Organize a flea market for clients in a residential facility ◆ Present a puppet show to children ◆ Work at a local soup kitchen or homeless shelter ◆ Computer network organization locations ◆ Do library or internet research for grant sources ◆ Fold, stuff and address organization bulk mailing ◆ Distribute organization brochures to various locations ◆ Inventory organization educational supplies ◆ Assist with website development ◆ Organize storage closets ◆ Do data entry ◆ Change batteries in emergency response units in group homes ◆ Wash and clean CPR mannequins ◆ Develop a videotape or slide show presentation of the organization to promote its mission and services ◆ Catalog and sort books in a library ◆ Prepare emergency medical kits for clients ◆ Conduct a telephone survey ◆ Walk and feed animals and clean cages at the local humane society ◆ Hold a car wash to benefit an organization ◆ Create an art room for a youth center ◆ Design a brochure

Projects to be Avoided

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

- Projects that need technical designs, unless the agency or a volunteer leader can provide designs. Design-as-you-go approach often wastes time and materials and results in less than satisfactory end products.
- Projects that may be unsafe for the volunteers, e.g., having to work on tall ladders, in too close proximity of vehicular traffic, lift too heavy objects, etc.
- Projects that require complex or time-consuming preparatory work such as obtaining multiple permits, building concrete foundations, scraping old paint, clearing a field, etc. (unless such preparatory work is the Day of Caring project).
- Projects that cost more to make than it would to purchase.

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 an event of this nature, please take the time to 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:

- 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.
- Designate someone else to oversee the other volunteers so that you can focus on the injured volunteer.

- Try to determine the seriousness of the accident. See if there is a volunteer that may have some training to assist the injured individual (e.g., 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 UWECI office number at (319) 398-5372.
- If the person has a minor cut or scrape, administer first aid, fill out an accident report, and notify UWECI office.
- Ensure that all appropriate agency representatives are aware of the injury.

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 Shoe |
| | Hands (Cuts, Abrasions) | Work Gloves |
| | Legs (Cuts, Abrasions) | Long Pants |
| | Sunburn | Wear sunscreen |
| | Bug Bites | Bring Bug Spray |
| Clearing Trails | *Chain Saw Use | Hard-toed Boots |
| | | Ear Plugs or Muffs |
| | | Chaps for legs |
| | | Gloves, Long Sleeves |
| | | Safety Glasses, Goggles |
| Painting (Interior or Exterior) | Eyes | Safety Glasses |
| | Hands | Gloves (Latex or Work) |
| | Ladder Use (Use scaffolding when necessary) | Waist never above top of ladder. Never reach past arm length. |
| Carpentry/Renovation | Eyes | Safety Glasses, Goggles |
| | Foot | Hard-toed Boot |
| | Hands | Gloves |
| | Falls | Approved Ladders or 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 completed 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.
- List of emergency numbers is available and readily accessible at each work site.
- Working phone is available at each work site.
- Personal protective equipment is available for each task, as applicable. (Safety glasses, hearing protection, gloves, hard hats, respirators, etc.)
- Staff will ensure that volunteers are properly dressed for the task prior to the start of activities

Project Description Tips and Tricks

When writing a description for a volunteer project, It's important to both sell the **benefits** and share the **features** of the project. Think about the potential volunteer reading your project description. Does it give them a clear picture of what the project involves? Is there anything in the description that would entice a volunteer to select your project? It's easy to focus on the details of a project from the organization's perspective (e.g. we need our walls painted, floors cleaned, windows washed) while forgetting who your audience is - the volunteer! Below are some examples of project descriptions that will sell, as well as some that won't sell as well.

Benefit: What volunteering does for the volunteers, such as teaching them a skill, having fun, meeting people, etc.

Feature: Descriptive elements of the volunteering, such as when, where, doing what with whom, etc.

Projects That Sell:

- *Clean Sweep for Children:*
A lot of heart and a little muscle go a long way to help children thrive. We invite you to help us spruce up our youth residential care facility, with yard cleanup, planting bulbs, pulling weeds, and reconstructing the compost and recycle bin areas. The variety of tasks will meet all your diverse interests, talents and abilities. Your tasks, in turn, will make a positive impression on resident youth and their family and/or visitors, staff and the neighbors!
- *Ante up! Help with Casino Day for Elders*
Bring joy and fun to frail elders and others with disabilities while having a great time with your colleagues. Our annual Casino day with Day of Caring volunteers is one of the highlights of the year for participants at our adult day health center. Who needs Vegas when we can have our own casino with poker, black jack and craps right here? If you have any special talent in addition to staffing game tables, you could also provide entertainment. We are looking for people with caring hearts that are open to people with disabilities who love to have fun.

Project Descriptions That Don't Sell as Well:

- *Carpet cleaning/pressure washing:*
We need 2 classrooms carpet to be cleaned, and a 4 car parking area to be pressure washed no, pressure washer will be supplied, and one carpet cleaner, if they could bring a carpet cleaner so 2 could work at a time, that would be great
- *Chill Is In The Air:*
The trees have dropped their leaves, the drains are filling with debris, the tree roots are getting thirsty, door handles are getting ready to collect germs, and the chill is in the air. Come and help us prevent the spread of germs, make sure our trees don't die this winter, and our drains are kept clear.
- *Day of Caring:*
Help in removing the window awnings at the Community Center. No training required. Need some muscles and ability to climb a ladder

Checklist – Prior to DOC

Prior to DOC

- Set up meeting with company to discuss project details
 - Confirm location of project sites and times
 - Confirm the number of volunteers and arrival time
 - Confirm who will provide the needed supplies/materials
 - Confirm what tools volunteers should bring
 - Confirm how volunteers should dress
 - Discuss lunch, water, and snacks
 - Discuss other items volunteers should bring: repellent, sunscreen, safety glasses, etc.
- Purchase or line up project materials and tools
- Contact insurance provider and request a Certificate of Insurance for DOC
- Email Certificate of Insurance to **UnitedWay.Volunteer@uweci.org**
- Meet with your staff to go over DOC details
 - Confirm staff leads for each project
- Plan and coordinate snacks, lunch, water, etc.

Day of Checklist

- Verify all materials and tasks are ready prior to volunteers arriving
- Welcome and register volunteers
- Have volunteers sign forms
 - Liability waiver
 - Photo consent
 - Sign-in for hours log
- Have nametags for staff and volunteers
- Give brief orientation about organization and project overview
- Motivate and manage volunteers to complete tasks
- Halfway point: ask volunteers if there is too much or not enough to do
 - Prioritize tasks; complete most important tasks first
 - Have back-up projects available for extra work
- Monitor safety
- Be available to answer questions and troubleshoot issues that arise
- Set aside time for volunteers to clean up project site and themselves
- Have volunteers fill out volunteer hours log

- Give volunteers time to reflect on their service
- Thank volunteers and inform them of future volunteer opportunities
- Mail or email copies of volunteer hours sheet, liability waiver, and photo consent form to Sue Driscoll,
 - United Way of East Central Iowa
Attn: Sue Driscoll
317 7th Ave. SE
Suite 401
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
 - Email: UnitedWay.Volunteer@uweci.org

Dates to Remember

- By March 18: Agency submit project form
- March 21-22: Agency final project review
- March 25-April 4: Company registration opens up
- May 2: Companies register for projects
- By May 2: Site visits
- May 12: Day of Caring
- By May 20: Submit hours and waivers

Day of Caring Notes