

United Way of Salt Lake

serving Davis, Salt Lake, Summit, and Tooele Counties

Volunteer Group Project Checklist

September 14, 2017

Nothing can take a volunteer project from fun to frightening quicker than not being prepared. Make sure your volunteer project is a fun and meaningful experience by following this quick pre-project checklist.

- Complete a site visit with your project contact in July.** This will help you ensure the organization understands what your group is capable of, what your time commitment looks like, and how likely you are to fill all the volunteer slots you have committed to. You should make sure to discuss project supplies/financial support to ensure the organization knows what/if you are able to provide anything to support the project. *Please note, we do not require groups to provide funding or supplies but if you are able to most agencies really appreciate it.*
- Be there!** If you can't make your project for any reason try and find someone else who can sign up to take your place. The organization you are working with is counting on the number of volunteers your group committed to in order to accomplish the projects they have organized. Too many or not enough volunteers can make the project seem unorganized or volunteers may be disappointed when they job isn't complete when they have to leave. **If your group needs to add or reduce their volunteer or time commitment be sure to communicate that to your project contact as soon as possible.**
- Dress for your project!** Make sure your volunteers know what to expect. If your project is outside consider bringing a hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, poncho, or other items that will help keep you cool (or warm) and comfortable. If you have committed your volunteers to bring their own supplies (like garden gloves or water bottles) make sure they know in advance so they can be prepared.
- Wear the right footwear!** If your project is reading to kids in the classroom, typical office shoes might be ok, but if you're going to be doing clean-up or maintenance type work you'll want close-toed shoes with good traction (think hiking boots or tennis shoes).
- Learn something new!** Your organization has been asked to provide a brief orientation to your group so they can share a little about their mission and how they support our community. Plan to gather with your team to learn more about the organization and the impact your volunteers will be providing today. We know you're excited to get to work but your project contact wants the opportunity to share what their organization does with you. Plus, **it's a great time to have your project contact take a group photo!**

- ❑ **Stay hydrated and take breaks!** It's not a race, especially when you're working outdoors. If you suddenly feel tired or light headed stop what you're doing and take a break. Bringing your own water or sports drink is a great idea if you know you'll be doing manual labor.
- ❑ **Be mindful of personal space!** If you're working with kids or clients of an organization, make sure you know their specific rules about things like holding hands, taking photos, or offering a hug. Check with the organization for their specific guidelines.
- ❑ **Be safe and follow the rules!** Make sure you know if it's ok to Tweet your project location or post pictures on Facebook. Each organization should review any specific rules they have for your project, but it never hurts to ask if they're not clear. If you are able to share photos use **#BeAForceForGood** and **@uwsf** to join the conversation!
- ❑ **Be respectful!** The people you may come into contact with come from a variety of backgrounds, financial situations, and cultures. Being mindful of how you talk about or to the people you come into contact with will keep everyone comfortable and respected. Remember, some organizations and their clients are comfortable working side-by-side with volunteers but others aren't. Organizations have the option to involve their clients in Day of Caring but even if they don't it doesn't mean their clients don't appreciate the work you are doing.
- ❑ **Ask if you need directions!** Your project contact should provide you with clear and complete instructions for your day. If you aren't sure about any details be sure to ask.
- ❑ **Have fun!** Enjoy your time, learn more about the services that improve our community, and when you're ready to volunteer again contact the United Way of Salt Lake volunteer team (volunteercenter@uw.org or visit uw.org) for more opportunities to give, advocate, or volunteer.
- ❑ **Let us know how it went!** If you have any feedback about your project, the organization, or anything else that was part of your day please send your comments to heather@uw.org or complete the post-DOC survey that will be sent to you via email.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Heather MacDonald, UWSL Senior Director of Volunteer Engagement at heather@uw.org or 801.736.7715 or Kenzie Knight, UWSL Volunteer Engagement Coordinator at MacKenzie@uw.org or 801.746.2560.