

PROJECT GUIDE

CHESTER, DELAWARE, MONTGOMERY AND PHILADELPHIA COUNTIES



LIVE UNITED™



United Way
of Southeastern Pennsylvania

I. DAYS OF CARING OVERVIEW

United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania's (UWSEPA) Days of Caring provides corporate employees and groups with an opportunity to participate in hands-on volunteer experiences with local non-profit organizations throughout our region. We would like to encourage your agency to participate as the United Way unites the corporate and non-profit communities in hopes of creating on-going partnerships and lasting change every day of the year.

Since beginning in 1993 with only a few hundred volunteers, Days of Caring has grown to hosting more than 7,300 volunteers engaging in over 200 projects. It is due to this tremendous success that beginning in September 2009, United Way's Days of Caring has expanded to become a 365 Day a year initiative. By expanding Days of Caring United Way will now accept proposals for Days of Caring projects 365 days a year!

Today, the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania's activities are primarily focused on accomplishing the priority goals outlined in our agenda for community solutions. However, through United Way's Days of Caring activities we hope to foster a culture of civic engagement in the communities we serve. Therefore we encourage and will accept projects outside of our priority areas meeting the broad interests of volunteers throughout our region.

II. VOLUNTEERMATCH

To better support the work of 365 Days of Caring, the United Way has partnered with VolunteerMatch to launch an enhanced volunteer website - <http://liveuniteddelval.volunteermatch.org/>. This partnership has made connecting volunteers to your agency easy. By visiting VolunteerMatch.org, you are able to find the volunteers you need from a large, active online network that includes employees from local companies, and the general public.

VolunteerMatch's basic service is free, and is available for all nonprofit and tax-exempt charitable organizations.

Features include on VolunteerMatch include:

- Recruiting tools and online volunteer management. Post opportunity listings and manage your volunteer referrals online in one easy location.
- Reporting on volunteer activity. Keep track of your volunteers and report on your volunteer referral activity. You can also take advantage of VolunteerMatch's
- Community Leader Service and receive the full set of recruiting tools and benefits. [View all the benefits of signing up with VolunteerMatch.](#)

To register and post volunteer project, visit www.LIVEUNITEDsepa.org/VolunteerMatch.

III. DAYS OF CARING STAFF AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

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IV. PLANNING FOR DAYS OF CARING PROJECT

A. What Makes a Great Project?

1. Any project big or small can be a great project; one that is both a great experience for the volunteers as well as making a big difference in your community. Consider the following when you're developing a project:
 - Are there long-lasting improvements that can be done in a day-long project?
 - Are there areas of improvement that your clientele need or want that have not been done because you do not have enough help to make it happen?
 - Have you considered safety issues and potential barriers (such as physical ability) for potential volunteers?
 - Planning an outdoor project? Do you have access to restroom facilities? What about a rain plan?
2. Here are some suggestions for projects for you to consider when planning your Days of Caring Project. If additional examples would be helpful, contact Days of Caring staff.
 - Volunteers could work with the local community or recreation center to clean, organize and repaint the interior of the center; weed and remove trash around the exterior of the building; and repaint and make improvements to the playground.
 - Volunteers could work with youth or job seekers to provide resume critiques, perform mock interviews and discuss business etiquette.
 - Volunteers could work with a park to organize a day for volunteers to come and do a clean-up and plant trees.
 - Volunteers could serve as the operations staff at your client holiday party serving refreshments and running activities which will allow your staff and clients to enjoy the festivities.

B. Your Days of Caring Project Proposal

When developing your Days of Caring Project Proposal you will need to include the information below. You can find the project checklist and a downloadable stipend request form at http://www.uwsepa.org/LiveUnited/programs_DaysOfCaring_forAgencies.asp.

Agency Contact Information

- Days of Caring Project Coordinator Contact Information
- Has the project coordinator attended a Days of Caring Briefing in the past 2-3 years?
- Project Title, Date and Time
- Number of Volunteers Needed – Keep in mind that projects must be able to host a **minimum** of 10 volunteers for a community improvement activity, but that our office often gets requests for groups larger than 50 volunteers and would be able to provide technical assistance and consultation if needed.
- Minimum Age Requirement for Volunteers
- A short project description which includes information about the opportunity and includes specifics the volunteer should be aware of prior to arriving (example: wear long sleeves and pants). Remember this is your opportunity to attract volunteers for your project. The more descriptive and informative the better chance of a good match.

Example: We are a site that provides after school programming for 50 kids in a low income neighborhood. The space behind our building needs to be weeded and cleaned in preparation for the garden and kickball area we plan for the kids.
- Project Location (If different from agency address)
- Rain Plan (if outdoor project)

- Directions to site via public transportation
- Organization County/If in Philadelphia, area of the City
- Do volunteers need any special skills to do this work? (optional)
- Are you open to the United Way matching you with a corporate partner for this project on an alternative date? Remember the more flexible your date range is the more likely a successful match will occur. (example: This project can be completed on any week day in October or November/this project can be complicated by 11-30-09).
- An itemized budget and stipend request if needed.
- Is this project appropriate for: Kids? Teens? People with disabilities? (list all that apply)
- Which, if any, of the United Way's Agenda for Community Solutions priority areas does this project best support (*list all that apply*)?
 - ▶ Early Childhood Education
 - ▶ Adult Self Sufficiency
 - ▶ Social Fabric (i.e. Basic Needs, Capacity Building, Civic Engagement)
 - ▶ Success in School
 - ▶ Older Adult Independence
- Select up to three areas (at least 1) from the list below that characterize your organization:

Animals	Emergency & Safety	International
Arts & Culture	Employment	Justice & Legal
Board Development	Environment	Media &
Children & Youth	Gay Lesbian Bi &	Broadcasting
Community	Trans	Politics
Computers &	Health & Medicine	Race & Ethnicity
Technology	Homeless & Housing	Religion
Crisis Support	Hunger	Seniors
Disabled	Immigrants &	Sports & Recreation
Education & Literacy	Refugees	Women

C. Final Review before Submitting Your Project Proposal:

Before submitting your project proposal, please review it carefully and consider the following things:

- Would you participate in this project?
- Make sure you have described the project clearly. Remember this is your opportunity to attract volunteers for your project. The more descriptive and informative the better chance of a good match.
- Have you considered safety issues and potential barriers (such as physical ability) for participants?
- If you are planning an outdoor project **MAKE SURE YOU HAVE PROVIDED A RAIN PLAN**. Rain plans may include alternative indoor tasks and or an alternative rain date - if opting for an alternative date make sure to specify this in your project plan as well as how you plan to communicate the need for rescheduling with your company contact.
- Can you afford to implement this project? Do you need a stipend for this project to help offset some of the costs? Please complete the stipend request form found at http://www.uwsepa.org/LiveUnited/programs_DaysOfCaring_forAgencies.asp.
- Have you included your itemized budget?
- Please try to include your clients and neighborhood/community members, as well as corporate volunteers in your project plan. Projects showing a plan for and commitment to engaging local (community, school, and client) volunteers are also strongly encouraged.
- If your agency title is an acronym, make sure to spell out the full name. If your agency name does

not explain your services and population served, please include a note about the location, project benefits and how it supports your mission.

- Are you submitting your project to Days of Caring at least 8 weeks in advance of proposed activity date? Please contact Days of Caring with any questions about this time frame.

D. Submitting Your Project Proposal

Days of Caring proposals can be submitted via the following means:

- Email: daysofcaring@uwsepa.org
- Fax: (215) 701-8187
- Mail: Days of Caring, 1709 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

REMEMBER: Your agency may offer one or more projects for Days of Caring throughout the year.

V. Projects - Submission to Completion

A. STEP 1: PROJECT REVIEW

- After receiving your project proposal the Days of Caring staff will review it and check for the following:
 1. Inclusion of all requested information
 2. Project feasibility – is your project too big for one day? Do you have enough for the volunteers to do? Is it safe? Do you require specific skill sets and abilities to accomplish proposed tasks?
 3. Clear project description and rain plan
 4. Realistic and complete itemized budget

If questions arise during the review process, we will be in contact with you to learn more.

- Make sure you post your project on VolunteerMatch. If you have not already registered with VolunteerMatch visit <http://liveuniteddelval.volunteermatch.org/> and register to begin the process.

B. STEP 2: PROJECT SELECTION AND PLANNING FOR THE DAY

- After your project has been selected by a company, you will receive a notification via e-mail from Days of Caring staff with the contact information of the company that has selected your project. In the event that your project is not selected by a company you will be notified within 2 weeks of the date of your project by Days of Caring staff to discuss your options.
- After receiving your match, it is critical that you communicate with the company's Days of Caring Volunteer Coordinator **immediately**.
- If possible arrange for a site visit with your company match's Days of Caring Coordinator. Take this time to think through final preparations and any needs that the volunteers might have.
- You will receive a Project Agreement form that details all of the information, both for your agency and your company match, for your Days of Caring project. Please sign this form and return it to the Days of Caring staff.
- Alert your colleagues that your project was selected and your agency will host volunteers for Days of Caring. Get others in your organization to support your prior and on the Day of Caring.
- If your project can accommodate community volunteers, do outreach and promotion in your area to sign-up community volunteers. Please be sure that, in recruiting community volunteers, your project still has enough space to accommodate the maximum number of company volunteers noted on your project proposal form.
- Submit a t-shirt order form (at least 2 weeks prior to the date of your project) to United Way for up to 3 staff members who will be working directly with your volunteer group.
- Arrange to have restroom options available.
- Arrange to pick up your t-shirts for the direct project staff. (Company volunteers will arrange their

own t-shirt pick up.)

- Below is a sample schedule for the day. Consider this when you are planning for your project.

8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. Agency DOC Coordinator and Staff

- Check levels of supplies and refreshments.
- Insure that all preparation work is completed.

8:45 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. Welcome, Orient and Prepare Volunteers

- Volunteers arrive and **sign-in**. Community volunteers receive t-shirts.
- Welcome volunteers and thank them for coming.
- Invite volunteers to enjoy the refreshments.
- Introduce yourself and other key people (briefly explain what agency does).
- Review facilities (bathrooms, exits, refreshments, etc.).
- Describe the project(s) and explain that the role of the agency will be discussed during lunch.
- Review supplies: what will be used and where volunteers can access the supplies.
- Offer brief Q and A.

9:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Perform Service Project

- Schedule morning breaks.
- Check-in with volunteers frequently to see how they are doing.
- Provide refreshments, especially water!

12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Lunch

- Take this opportunity to see how projects are progressing.
- Take 15 minutes while people eat to talk about agency/United Way.
- Discuss how project was selected and who is beneficiary of the day's efforts.

1:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. Continue with Service Project

- Schedule afternoon breaks.
- Check-in with volunteers frequently to see how they are doing.
- Provide refreshments, especially water!

3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Wrap-up/Reflection

- Volunteers wrap up their work.
- Facilitators lead reflection activity and speak about big picture of Days of Caring.
- Coordinators, facilitators, and volunteers complete evaluations.
- Agency closes with discussion of any future projects (if applicable) and thanks everyone for serving!

C. STEP 3: PROJECT DAY

1. Starting off the Day on the Right Foot

- Ask all your staff members directly involved in the Days of Caring project to arrive onsite at least 30 minutes prior to when you expect volunteers. Make sure all prep work is completed and that everyone and all supplies are in place and you are ready to welcome your volunteers when they begin arriving.
- Have refreshments and snacks available (water, coffee, bagels, etc.).
- When volunteers begin arriving, work with your company coordinator to make sure that all (company and community) volunteers complete the photo release and general liability waiver form.
- If you are having community volunteers, assign a staff member or volunteer to help with handing out t-shirts to welcome them and distribute their t-shirts.
- Make a photocopy of the sign-in sheets and give the originals to the company coordinator at the end of the day. Confirm that they will be returning them to the United Way.
- Welcome and orient the volunteers to your organization. Introduce all staff members that are going to be working on the project. Talk to the group about your mission; who you serve; and what impact the volunteer project is going

to have on your community. Make sure to point out where the restrooms are and where they can find water for the day.

- After welcoming the volunteer group, speak in-depth about the projects that they are going to be working on. If you have a large group who are going to be working on several projects consider dividing them up and sending them to their project location for the project orientation. Make sure you have enough staff to lead each portion of the project and that everyone knows where to go for more supplies.

2. The Project

- As you begin the project, check in often with the volunteers. It is important that they have what the supplies to complete the project. Make sure they have water and in general are having fun! Have another list of tasks that could be done in the event volunteers finish the original tasks early.
- When the group begins to break for lunch (typically between 12 and 12:30) talk with the volunteers about how their experience is going. Do they need anything to get the work done. Take some time to talk more about the work that your agency does and if appropriate how you partner with the United Way.
- Throughout the afternoon continue to check in with the volunteers frequently and continue to provide refreshments.
- As the day wraps up, make sure to thank the volunteers for their work.

D. STEP 4: After Your Day of Caring

- Send letters of thanks to volunteers and the company.
- Share any pictures taken during DOC with United Way. Photos and highlights from Days of Caring project will be posted on the United Way website.

VI. TIPS ON SUPPLIES

One of the most common problems experienced during Days of Caring is lack of adequate supplies for volunteers, particularly for outdoor and maintenance projects. Consider assigning a staff member to oversee the supply area. This person will distribute supplies and also be able to tell you when a supply run needs to be made.

- If you are not experienced in painting, wall-papering, lot clean-up, graffiti removal or other maintenance projects, please consult someone who is knowledgeable and can assist you in scoping the project and preparing the supplies needed (including quantities) based on the number of volunteers expected. The volunteers will expect you to guide them through the projects and be prepared with supplies.
- Check yards and lots that you plan to clean for poison ivy or other poisonous plants. If you want it to be removed, be sure you tell the company coordinator so that the group can plan to wear the right clothes and bring gloves. Those with sensitive conditions or allergies can be warned ahead of time to avoid problems.
- Check your paint supplies. If you order large containers of paint, be sure to have smaller containers on hand so workable quantities can be made available to the volunteers. Be sure to have drop cloths, plenty of brushes, rollers, tape, roller pans, etc. Be sure the areas where volunteers are painting are adequately ventilated.

- If you are planning a gardening project, please plan carefully so you have enough plants. If you are unsure of the correct quantities, consult with a local garden center about the correct amount for the area being planted. Be sure to have gloves, shovels, rakes, trowels, mulch, fertilizer and other soil preparation products. If the area needs preparation through weeding, have trash bags, shovels, rakes and other kinds of equipment needed to do the job correctly.
- Make sure that enough water and first-aid supplies are readily available.
- Keep in mind that you may run out of supplies. Be prepared to make a supply run if needed.

VII. FINAL THOUGHTS

Below are some final thoughts to make sure your project is as successful as it can be. Keep these in mind as you move through the Days of Caring Process.

- Communication is key. Make sure everyone on your staff knows and understands the project and what you hope to accomplish. Stay in touch with your company contact and invite them to come for a site visit and to be involved in the project scoping and final logistics for the day. Our experience has shown that the more engaged the company contact is in helping to plan the day, the more successful the partnership will be.
- It is important that you are prepared and organized. Make sure that you have adequate supplies and tasks for your volunteers. Provide your volunteers with clear descriptions of each task and the projects to be completed. Make plans in case there are extra volunteers, or in case projects finish early. It is important that volunteers stay busy and feel like they are using the day in a worthwhile manner.
- Make the volunteers feel welcome. Share information on your mission and programs as well as ongoing opportunities to stay connected to their work. If you have any community volunteers ask them to share how they feel about your organization. This will help the volunteers know they have made a difference.
- This is an opportunity to build ongoing relationships for your organization. Consider having information available about ongoing volunteer opportunities.
- Make sure to have fun with your volunteers! They are out of the office for the day and looking to work hard but also have fun! Enjoy the day!!!

**Thank you for working with the United Way to
make Days of Caring a success!**