

## UNITED WAY DAY OF CARING PROJECT PLANNING GUIDELINES

### Key questions before submitting your Day of Caring project

- Is your organization a 501c3, government office or school?
- How many volunteer hours are needed to complete your project? How many volunteers can your space hold?
- Can the project be completed in the allotted work time with non-professional workers, allowing time for set-up, break down, agency briefing and lunch (if full-day)?
- Is the size and complexity of the project appropriate, considering the volunteers' skills and allotted time?
- Does the project require specific skill levels? For example, would you need an electrician or skilled carpenter?
- Do you have access to any tools and equipment needed to complete the project?
- Does the agency have the ability to accomplish the necessary preparatory work in advance of Day of Caring, for example acquiring all necessary materials, installing foundations for a new structure, obtaining municipal permits, etc.?
- Is the project too hazardous for the volunteers? For example, 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 your potential liability exposure.)
- 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?
- Have you designated an agency project coordinator to organize and/or oversee the work being performed?

***It is essential that your agency designate a point of contact that is available on site for the duration of the project.***

## Setting your Day of Caring project up for success

- Assign an alternate staff member or regular volunteer to be the project manager in the event the project coordinator or assigned person cannot carry out their responsibility.
- If your event is weather dependent, have an alternate plan. The Day of Caring does not have a “rain date” because many projects are indoors and not affected by the weather. It is up to the agency and team to decide on an alternate date in the event of inclement weather.
- Have a contingency plan if too many or too few volunteers show up or if the project takes more or less time than you estimated.
- Assign staff members to greet volunteers, provide orientation, conduct a tour, take pictures, and assist the media if applicable.
- Make sure sufficient supplies and equipment are available and ready to use. Seek donations for supplies, when necessary.
- Create a task list or instruction sheet for volunteers so that the project is as clear as possible, and you’ll have fewer questions to answer.
- Plan ahead to provide water and light refreshments for your volunteers.
- Plan how you will interact, supervise and work with your volunteers.
- Remind clients and staff of the day’s activities. Be certain everyone is aware of the plans, to avoid unpleasant surprises.
- Post important phone numbers (fire, police, and rescue squads) at the site.
- Have a First Aid Kit on site (including a bee sting kit, band-aids, aspirin, and ice packs)