

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT PLANNING GUIDE

**Never organized a community service project before?
Not sure where to begin?
Here are some simple steps you can take to organize
a great event or service project!**

Form a Planning Committee

Depending on the scale of the event you want to plan, organizing a community service day can be a large project for just one person to handle. Consider organizing a group of 3 or 4 committee members to help with brainstorming and promotion. The committee can help research local organizations in need of volunteer assistance and support. It can also take care of answering volunteer questions.

Choose a Date

Determining a date for the community service event is key to ensuring success. Are your potential volunteers full-time workers and therefore unavailable during business hours? Are you targeting college students who may be away for summer or holiday breaks? Are you organizing an event stay-at-home parents can participate in with their small children? All of these factors can affect your volunteer turn-out, so choose a date with your audience in mind.

Research Community Organizations in Need

Compile a list of local non-profit organizations. Names and addresses of non-profit organizations in your area can be obtained by contacting city government offices and searching the volunteer database on MyCommitment.org. It is a good idea to search a variety of services including schools, day-care centers, parks, hospitals, animal shelters, retirement homes, rehabilitation centers, community shelters, libraries, churches, synagogues and mosques. Also look for major national organizations that are likely to have a local chapter.

Contact Community Organizations

Once you have compiled a list of agencies, review them with committee members and determine a few you would like to further investigate. Contact the volunteer coordinator for each organization and determine what type of assistance they could use. Remember to ask how many volunteers they would like and other important details about their volunteer opportunities. The number of volunteers needed for each individual project can vary greatly, so make sure the agency indicates the maximum number of volunteers that they can accommodate. Based on the data you collect, decide with your committee members what project you would like to undertake.

Post Commitment on MyCommitment.org

Once your committee has decided what your commitment to action will be, visit MyCommitment.org and tell us about it in the "[Make a Commitment](#)" section of the site.

Recruit Volunteers

One month before the community service event, you should start recruiting volunteers for the project. You may be able to fill your project with friends, classmates or co-workers. Depending on the number of volunteers needed for a particular project, an entire office or class could complete a project together. Promotion of the event is very important for recruiting volunteers and can be done through e-mail, Web site, posters, flyers, tabling at a community event, newsletter and most importantly, word of mouth. Include the URL for MyCommitment.org on all your promotional materials and encourage volunteers to share their commitment to action with the Clinton Foundation and other visitors to our site.

Provide Incentives

Community service comes from the heart, but offering incentives helps to ensure that you have plenty of volunteers to fill your project. Offering a free t-shirt or gift card to the volunteer who brings the most friends is a good incentive to consider. Free coffee and donuts before an event begins could also help draw a crowd to an early morning activity.

Thank Your Volunteers

You may also want to host a "Thank You" party or lunch for volunteers after the community service event. This also allows for volunteers to get together and share stories about their experience and reflect on what it means to come together and help the community. You should encourage all of your volunteers to submit their "Stories of Giving" on MyCommitment.org after the event to help inspire others to give, too.