

## Volunteer Project Timeline

This sample timeline can help guide your project planning process.

### 6-8 Weeks before the Project

- Identify potential community partner agencies and potential projects.
- Check project options and opportunities with potential agency partners.
- Contact potential agency partners, introduce yourself (if necessary) and schedule a face-to-face or phone meeting to discuss a project idea. If the partners are interested, determine the next steps.
- Make an initial project planning site visit to the partner organization site.  
The purpose of an initial site visit is to plan the project with the partner representative.
- At the site visit, determine what dates and times the project will be held and begin to develop an understanding of how to manage the project from one session to the next (if it is an ongoing project) or throughout the day of the event (if it is a one-day project).
- Begin planning your project with a Project Planning Worksheet.

### 4-6 Weeks before the Project

- Complete your project plans using the Project Planning Worksheet.
- Use the Project Supply List to identify the tools and materials the project will require and how these resources will be secured (donated or purchased).
- Recruit other volunteers to serve as Task Leaders to lead small groups of volunteers during your project.
- Confirm the involvement of the site organization. Make sure a representative from the agency or school will be at the project to thank and welcome volunteers and explain the importance of the project to the organization.
- Brief other project leaders on all aspects of the project and involve them in any further planning and preparation.
- Begin volunteer recruitment.
- Create the first draft of the project agenda.

- Craft a PR or media plan to handle publicity for your event.
- Discuss documentation (photos, video footage) of your event. Use a volunteer photographer if possible!
- Order event t-shirts, signage or other collateral as needed.
- Plan any transportation, catering or other logistics as needed. Be sure you communicate with volunteers if they are expected to bring their own refreshments.
- Outline a safety or emergency plan. Assign a safety point person for the day of the project, and know the location of the nearest first aid kit and hospital. Be sure you have a phone and the physical address of the service site in case you need to call 911.

#### 2-4 Weeks before the Project

- Make an additional site visit. Address any remaining questions and concerns.
- Secure needed tools and materials.
- Secure volunteers (with appropriate skills as necessary).
- Reserve heavy equipment as needed.
- Plan your reflection and evaluation activities.
- Secure attendance of all dignitaries as needed for the day's agenda.
- Draft or secure talking points for dignitaries to include in the run of show document.
- Brief dignitaries, task leaders and organizational partners on the run of show and solicit feedback.
- Finalize the Project Planning Worksheet. Make sure that all of the project leaders are comfortable with the scope of the project.
- Establish contingency plans in case of inclement weather, too few or too many volunteers and any other problems that can be anticipated.
- Communicate project details to volunteers.

#### 1-2 Weeks before the Project

- Confirm all final project details.
- Create a contact list. Exchange cell phone numbers with all key contacts. Make a contact list to carry with you during the project.
- Check to make sure there will be ample trash containers and recycle bins with bin liners.
- Make sure you will have tables and chairs for all project stations (registration, refreshments, media center, etc.).
- Review contingency plans and safety or emergency plans.
- Check, double check and triple check all project details!

- Finalize the run of show and talking points.
- Confirm that all tools and materials are on site.
- Conduct final communication with volunteers.
- Pack a Volunteer Leader "project kit" to include things such as:
  - § first aid kit
  - § sign-in sheets and waivers
  - § evaluation surveys
  - § signage, banners, and nametags
  - § pens and markers
  - § tape and clipboards
  - § poster board
  - § rope or bungee cords
  - § extra paper or card stock
  - § handouts or fliers about the next project or opportunity
  - § CD player or music to create a fun, energizing atmosphere
  - § sun block and/or bug spray
  - § camera