

Agency Project Development Toolkit



UNITED WAY

Kaw Valley

NANCY PERRY

DAY OF CARING





Nancy Perry Day of Caring - Project Development Toolkit

Join us for the annual Nancy Perry Day of Caring on September 17th and 18th, 2026!

In this toolkit you will learn how your agency can benefit from the skilled and enthusiastic volunteers available for the Nancy Perry Day of Caring.

Last year's Nancy Perry Day of Caring (NPDOC) was a great success! On September 18th and 19th, we had over 600 volunteers from Shawnee and Douglas County who opened their hearts, lent their time and talents, and gave a day to show they care about their community.

The Day of Caring was established by United Way of Kaw Valley (UWKV) to promote the spirit and value of volunteerism and increase the awareness of agencies who are working hard to meet the critical needs of our community. As United Way of Kaw Valley we continue this annual tradition and celebrate the impact that people working together can make on our community.

The Day of Caring is named for Nancy Perry who served as president and CEO of United Way of Greater Topeka for 24 years.

Contact Information

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Director of Shawnee County Initiatives

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Developing a Nancy Perry Day of Caring Project

There are many benefits to your agency uniting with our community on NPDOC. We encourage you to submit as many projects as needed. However, if you have more than 5 projects please contact us to confirm the need. There are NO guarantees every project will be matched to volunteers. We will try to accommodate your preferences.

Think “Outside the Box”

- Do you have a project which has never gotten started?
- Are there new initiatives you want to implement but haven’t had the ability due to lack of resources?
- Look at your annual events and daily activities for ideas.
- Can any projects be virtual or remote?

Create new and meaningful projects that keep volunteers engaged. Volunteers feel more fulfilled and engaged when new and innovative projects are introduced.

Meet with Your Colleagues

Use time during staff meetings or set aside another time to speak with your co-workers about the Day of Caring. Ask them to brainstorm how volunteers can help to make their job more efficient or effective.

- You might be surprised how many volunteers request projects that we would usually consider mundane work. Volunteers want to stuff envelopes, attach labels, shred old papers, etc., so don’t forget to consider these options.

Develop a Project Budget

Determine how much your agency can contribute to the cost of the project. Project costs include supplies and materials necessary to complete the project. It is never too early to start asking for in-kind donations.

Bear in mind it is also the responsibility of the agency to provide bottled water for the volunteers. We ask as a small “thank you” for the volunteers you provide lunch for full day projects.

Identify and Manage Risk Involved with Your Project

Once you determine a potential project, review each task involved. Identify potential risk factors, including volunteers’ use of tools, threat of injury, your clients’ privacy/safety, etc.

Project Development

This is your opportunity to think big and out of the box!

Identify three unmet needs at your agency.

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Identify unmet needs that could be completed virtually. These could be skill-based, i.e. graphic design (logos, posters, social media), web update, or database management.

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What could be done to meet those needs?

Identify unmet needs in the community which your agency could address.

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Who does your agency serve? What would enrich their lives?

What activities can you **only** do **with** volunteer assistance?

What type of projects would you do if you had the time, resources, and volunteers?

Brainstorm with staff: What would be involved in making those ideas/projects a reality?

How do these projects align with the work at United Way around Youth Opportunity, Financial Stability, and Healthy Community?

Project Planning Guidelines

Day of Caring is an incredible opportunity to tackle large and small projects at your agency which otherwise may not get accomplished. Given the unique service opportunity, try to plan creative, meaningful projects volunteers will enjoy and which will make an impact in our community.

Make sure you have enough to keep volunteers busy for the entire time. Have back-up projects just in case you need them, both if project ends early or because of inclement weather.

Project Assessment Criteria: Questions to Ask

1. Can the project be substantially completed in the allotted time with nonprofessional workers, allowing time for set-up, break down, agency briefing, and lunch?
2. Is the size and complexity of the project appropriate considering the volunteers' skills and allotted time?
3. Does the project require specific skill levels? For example, would you need an electrician, skilled carpenter, or project manager?
4. What is the need vs. the availability of tools and equipment, including those provided by the agency and by the volunteers. What tools can you provide, and what tools do you need the volunteers to provide?
5. Is the project too hazardous for volunteers? Does the work require climbing a tall ladder, operating a chainsaw, etc.? Is an outdoor work area close to a heavily trafficked street without protective barriers? Is there a potential fire hazard, e.g., use of a propane torch? (Consider potential liability exposure.)
6. Will the agency clients be present? Does the performance of work need to be coordinated with the clients' schedules?
7. Are there smaller projects for volunteers if they finish the primary project early?
8. Can the agency accomplish the necessary prep work in advance of Day of Caring, e.g., purchasing necessary materials, prepping walls for painting, etc.?

Full-Day and Half-Day Projects

We are encouraging both full (Friday only) and half day projects this year. A full day project hosted on Friday, September 18th only, will be considered and typically runs from 9:30 am – 4:00 pm with a break for lunch. If your project will require a full day, you might also consider hosting a morning and afternoon ½ day shift. While we have some groups that need an 8 hour project, many teams request to have half day opportunities. Typical half day shifts are 9:00 am – 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm. **(Friday all projects will begin at 9:30 am.)** Volunteers are advised they should try to be flexible in their time commitment in the event a project runs over. It is equally important to make sure if you submit a full day project that you have enough work for the volunteers.

Water & Snacks

REQUIRED: Water is required for all projects for all volunteers.

REQUIRED: SNACK is required for all projects half day.

REQUIRED: Lunch for Full Day Projects Only

If providing Lunch or Snack is a financial concern, please:

- Confirm with your volunteer participants/teams that they will attend.
- Ask your Board of Directors for a donation.
- Consider and seek in-kind donations.
- Speak with team leader of the group – ask if they can pack their own sack lunch (this option must be arranged ahead of time for full-day projects).
- Contact United Way of Kaw Valley.

Sample Project Ideas

Painting

- Blacktop maps and games (U.S. Map, World Map, Four Square, Alphabet Letters and Numbers)
- School/organization mascot footprints along walkways and walls
- Wall murals (don't forget bathroom beautification opportunities)
- Classroom toys/props
- Playground equipment
- Re-paint parking lot lines and curbs.

Landscaping

- Build a garden or a new flower bed
- Weed, mulch, replant existing flower beds
- Prune bushes/trees
- Trail building/clearing

Student-based

- Create educational kits
- Prepare classroom materials (cut, copies, etc.)
- Repair library books
- Create a new game for students to play

Community-based

- Make "care kits" with personal hygiene products to donate
- Repair or paint a local shelter
- Help organize and sort donations
- Make first aid kits
- Paint park benches, fences

Construction (remember it can be challenging to find enough skilled volunteers to meet the demands for these projects)

- Assemble/build/install shelves or furniture
- Build or repair a fence, handrailing's or ramps
- Build or repair benches and picnic tables
- Assemble/build play equipment

Cleaning/Organizing

- Clean building exterior/parking lot
- Data entry
- Bulk mailing
- Shred and/or organize files
- Clean/organize/inventory food pantry/storage, supply closet, or school library
- Wash buses or vans

Consider virtual and off-site projects

Virtual Options

- Logo or graphic image design
- Social media development
- Web review and design
- Database creation
- Consulting work – review of documents (grants, constitution, by-laws, strategic planning work)
- Professional Development work – review resumes and cover letters

Remote or Off-site Projects

- Kit Building – hygiene, educational, baby kits
- Fuzzy Blanket Projects
- Craft projects – knit/crochet hats, scarves, etc.
- DIY Projects – furniture updates, office decorations
- Mailer
- Thank you or encouragement cards

Project Submission/Approval

The Volunteer Engagement Department is charged with evaluating all Nancy Perry Day of Caring (NPDOC) projects. Once you submit your project(s) for NPDOC, we will determine if the project is viable for NPDOC. Submitting a project opportunity through KawValleyVolunteers.org does not guarantee that the project will be accepted for NPDOC.

THINGS TO CONSIDER/REMEMBER

- You will have from **June 1st** until **July 13th, 2026 at 5:00 pm** to submit a project for the priority deadline. Anything received after this date is subject to availability of volunteers. Unless you have made prior arrangements with the United Way of Kaw Valley.
- Projects will ONLY be accepted through KawValleyVolunteers.org. No paper submissions will be accepted.
- Please be as detailed as possible when filling out the information. The more information you provide ensures a better match of volunteers to the project.
- Make sure the project has the appropriate number of volunteers to complete the project.
- Projects should begin at 9:00 am. or after (9:30 am for Friday, September 18th.)
- You are encouraged to submit more than one project. When submitting projects, please make sure you indicate the priority of the projects (priority 1, priority 2, priority 3, etc.). If you have more than 5 projects, please contact Audrey to discuss.
- United Way of Kaw Valley will make every effort to inform you once your project has been accepted. However, if you have not received a reply by **July 20th, 2026** please email Audrey (UWKV) at amott@uwkawvalley.org
- Projects will be opened to our sponsors on **July 30th, 2026**.
- Volunteer registration will close **August 28th, 2026**.
- Agencies will be required to have a representative with cell phone access on-site for the duration of the project. If you have more than one project, make sure you have a representative for each location. You can use current volunteers if you do not have staff available.
- It is your responsibility to communicate with the Team Leader/Captain from the company supplying volunteers.

Communicating with Team Leader(s)

This is perhaps the most important aspect of a successful Day of Caring project. Once your project is chosen, it is entirely up to the agency and team to communicate about the details. You will receive notification through KawValleyVolunteers.org when volunteers/teams sign up for your projects. **Please note you may have more than one team leader for your project.**

Follow these helpful hints to make sure you and the team leader have covered everything:

- Confirm volunteer arrival time. Be sure the team knows the address of the project and that the agency representative is on-site when volunteers arrive.
- Complete advance communication with the team leaders so that the team is prepared day-of.
- Verify the number of people participating.
- **Confirm the supplies volunteers may need to bring** and inform the team of your plan in securing other required materials.
- Describe what the volunteers' duties will be that day.
- Advise of any heavy lifting or moving of objects (should be addressed when submitting the project proposal).
- Inform volunteers of the appropriate clothing needed for the job.
- **Discuss a rain plan and how to contact the volunteers the morning of NPDOC with the alternate plan. There is no rain date for the event.**
- Communicate that you will be providing lunch and/or water with the possibility of snacks.
- Is there ample parking for your volunteers? If not, make alternate plans. Suggest carpooling to the team, or identify close parking locations.
- Use KawValleyVolunteers.org for communication with your volunteers. More communication is always the best communication.

Volunteer Check-In/Out

KawValleyVolunteers.org has several features making it easier to check-in volunteers and collect accurate volunteer hours. These are:

- Mobile App – Volunteers can check themselves in and out on their smartphones
- Kiosk Team Check-in – Requires a computer/tablet and WiFi

Please see the guides on how to use the Check-in feature on KawValleyVolunteers.org. We strongly encourage agencies to either have all volunteers sign in using KawValleyVolunteers.org Mobile App or Check-In Kiosk.

Volunteers will not be allowed to participate until they have signed in. Team Leaders along with Agency Managers are required to ensure each volunteer has signed in.

Showcase Your Agency

- Welcome your volunteers with a banner/signage and make them feel at home while at your agency.
- Feature your volunteer team in your agency member or donor newsletter to report your success to the community.
- SOCIAL MEDIA
 - #NPDOC26
 - #VOLUNTEERMAGIC
- Like the United Way of Kaw Valley Facebook page and follow us on Instagram and Twitter:
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UWKawValley>
 - Instagram: @uwkawvalley
- Share your agency social media with volunteers. Tag @UWKawValley.
- Give the volunteers a brief tour of your agency and/or a short explanation of your programs and how you partner with United Way. **Remember, volunteers will be eager to get started on their project(s)!**
- Invite the volunteers back later in the year (to see the blooming daffodils they planted, or to participate in an activity at the recreation center they painted), or send them pictures of the finished project. You will have the team leader's email and can communicate and send an invitation! Please be sure to include United Way of Kaw Valley on the email so we can promote on our social media, as well.

Guidelines and Procedures

The following risk assessment checklist will help ensure your NPDOC project, staff, and volunteers will be as safe as possible. The checklist should be completed for each project and/or project site.

OVERALL SAFETY

- Adequate water is available to volunteers to ensure proper hydration to eliminate heat stress exposure.
- Adequate breaks will be made part of any project, especially in very warm conditions.
- Fully stocked first-aid kit is available and readily accessible at all project sites.
- Volunteers and agency personnel know the location(s) of first-aid kit(s).
- List of emergency numbers is available and readily accessible at each project site.
- Working phone is available at each project site, cell phone is acceptable.
- No volunteer will operate power tools or equipment without prior authorization.
- Volunteers will inform nonprofit agency personnel with respect to personal health issues such as: allergies to plants, insect bites, respiratory sensitivity, sensitivity to chemical vapors, and other issues prior to beginning the project.
- Personal protective equipment is available for each task by the nonprofit agency, as applicable. (Safety glasses, hearing protection, gloves, hard hats, respirators, etc.)
- Please make sure to clearly communicate with all volunteers on your site if you have specific COVID-19 requirements.

Important Dates to Remember

Project submission deadline	7/11
Project Sign Up Open**	
Platinum	7/29-7/31
Diamond	8/3-8/5
Gold	8/6-8/8
Silver	8/10-8/12
Bronze	8/13-8/15
Non-sponsors (Open)	8/17
T-Shirt Order*	8/21
Project Registration closed	8/28
Certificate of Liability to UWKV	8/28
Days of Caring	9/17, 9/18

Friday, September 17th – Nancy Perry Day of Caring (NPDOC) Celebration –
8:00 am – breakfast provided!

Thursday 9/17 Projects begin at 9 am

Friday 9/18 Projects begin at 9:30 am

* Each agency will receive two t-shirts. If you have multiple locations additional t-shirts may be available, please discuss with Audrey Mott amott@uwkavvalley.org.

** Tentative Guideline: If there are no sponsors for certain levels then the projects will be opened to the next sponsorship level earlier.