



## Garden Leadership Committee Toolkit

# Workday coordination

### Overview

Host gardeners and visiting volunteers by providing guidance, tools and task coordination on garden workdays.

**Time commitment: A few days, May – October**

### Keys to success

- Keep a running list of projects volunteers can work on.
- Be a great host! Think about what you appreciate on a hard workday and make it available to volunteers.
- Fill out the [Resource Request for Volunteers](#) form so Garden Project can connect you with volunteers and tools for bigger projects.

Workdays can be organized to complete projects that benefit the garden as a whole and require more than individual effort.

### The two types of workday participants:

Fellow gardeners

- Host a scheduled and structured time for gardeners to invest their effort in common spaces.
- Helps to foster community within the garden as members participate in shared tasks together.

Large group of outside volunteers

- A great opportunity to build connections between gardeners and the larger community.

- Use the [Resource Request for Volunteers](#) form to get connected with volunteer groups and Greater Lansing Food Bank's volunteer network.
- Your garden can also post volunteer opportunities online through social media, like Facebook or LinkedIn, or on platforms like [Volunteer Match](#) or [Idealist](#).

### Volunteer workday preparation

- Keep a running list of asks that require more than one person like spreading wood chips or building picnic tables. Prioritize tasks as primary, secondary and busy work:
  - **Primary tasks** require strong supervision and guidance.

- **Secondary tasks** can be done with less supervision.
- **Busy work** can be done if there is time after completing primary and secondary tasks.
- Gather all supplies and tools needed — remember, Garden Project’s Resource Center has a tool lending library!
  - Gloves
  - Trash bags
  - Water
  - Tote for recycling
  - First aid kit
  - Sunscreen and bug spray
  - Scissors and/or box cutter knife
  - Volunteer sign-in sheet
- Email volunteer leaders and participants with event details including the garden’s address and your phone number.
- Always take before and after pictures!

### Introduction

- Welcome volunteers and share a little information about the history of the garden and its current gardeners.
- Give a timeline/schedule for the day and describe or demonstrate projects.
- Explain safety rules like wearing gloves and protective eyewear when using weed whips, regularly applying sunscreen and drinking enough water on hot days.
- Show volunteers where the nearest restroom is located.
- Remind volunteers to sign in.

### During

As a workday leader, your main task is hosting. This includes:

- Making sure volunteers take breaks as necessary, especially in hot weather.

- Watch out for and correct safety issues.
- Gauge time and how fast volunteers are completing projects. Direct volunteers to other projects as needed.

### Clean up

- Leave time for volunteers to clean up, put away tools and throw away trash.
- Have volunteers perform a final sweep of the garden for forgotten tools, gloves, trash or any other item that shouldn’t stay in the garden.

### Closing

Gather everyone together to:

- Thank volunteers for their time supporting the garden. Remind them how their work will make a difference to the garden and its gardeners.
- Take a group photo if volunteers are comfortable.

### Afterward

- Finish any remaining cleaning tasks and return any borrowed tools to the Resource Center.
- If you took a photo, share the picture and a short description of the day’s work with Garden Project.
- Consider sending the group a thank you card or email. Share any photos you took and invite them to future volunteer opportunities.

### Additional documents

- [Garden workday prep sheet](#)

### Further reading

- [Engaging Volunteers \(Cornell University\)](#)
- [50 Tips for Organizing Volunteers \(SignUp Genius\)](#)