



Chicago Conservation Corps (C3) Community Organizing – Volunteer Support

What If. . . .?

You do not have any volunteers signed up and it is a few days before your project?

- Reconvene with your original community supports (in a phone call or in-person meeting) to discuss last minute outreach opportunities (a festival that weekend, a phone tree, community meetings, worship services, etc.).
- Contact your C3 representative to talk about strategy and level of interest in the community
- Possibly postpone the project or change the project slightly (add a social component like a BBQ or change the time)

It is raining very heavily the morning of your project that is scheduled to take place outdoors?

- Before the day of your project, prioritize tasks that can be completed in the rain or that can be completed in an indoor setting (separating seeds, making plant labels, sorting supplies, counting supplies, etc.). Arrange for an indoor rain site that you can utilize if necessary.
- Before your project, set another date for the project in case it needs to be postponed due to weather. Then you can contact people right away with the new date and see if they can still make it. Try to make it within a few weeks of the original date.
- Get day-of phone numbers for all volunteers in case you need to contact them about project changes (location, date, etc.) and put lots of signs up at the original project location so people can find you if you have moved.

No one attends your community meeting?

- Reconvene with your original community supports (in a phone call or in-person meeting) to discuss community interest in the project idea. Ask about what other concerns the community might have that could be tacked onto this activity. Talk with them about how to spin the project (planting a garden helps make a neighborhood more beautiful and shows that residents care about it, which can help lower crime rate).
- Contact your C3 representative to talk about strategy and level of interest in the community
- Possibly change the project slightly (add a social component like a BBQ or change the time)
- Look at alternative sources of support in the community.

You have 10 extra volunteers arrive to help?

- Try to split them up on different tasks. It is worse to have them sitting around doing nothing than to have them working on something small.
- When planning your project, try to come up with some back-up tasks that can be done if there are extra volunteers or if the weather is bad.

A small group of volunteers disagree about how a certain task should be completed?

- Try to intervene early. Defuse the situation by providing a solution that makes sense in the moment. Try not to take sides. If necessary ask the volunteers to step away from the task and work on something different for a short while and then come back to it.
- If necessary ask the volunteers to move away from the area and talk with you about it away from the group. Try to help them compromise on a solution or explain to them why it has to be done the way that you've instructed. Stand your ground.





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A volunteer is injured at the project?

- Survey the area and make sure everyone else is safe.
- Call 911, or have another volunteer call 911, if medical attention is necessary.
- Do your best to keep everyone calm and give any first aid assistance that you are comfortable with.
- Make sure the volunteer receives any necessary care. If they go to a hospital, send another volunteer with them or go with them and leave the project in the hands of a capable volunteer.
- Contact your C3 representative after the project to let them know about the incident.
- Follow up with the group to let them know that everyone is alright and to thank them for their assistance.

Community members come by and ask what is going on?

- Explain what the project is and INVITE THEM TO JOIN YOU!
- Give them information about how they can get involved in the future.

A group of community members asks your volunteers to leave?

- Before your project, be sure to communicate with community members in the area about the planned project. Tell them the date, time, and type of activity. Invite them to join you or support the effort. Post flyers in the area to let community members know that something is going to be happening.
- During the project, speak with the community members calmly. Explain what the project is, what the volunteers are doing, and why it is going to benefit their community. Explain what C3 is and that it is a City of Chicago program.
- Invite the community members to join you. If they are still upset, explain to them that the project has been planned for a while and that the community was informed about the project. It will be over soon. They are welcome to talk with the city about any concerns that they have.

You are not able to connect with any of the resources on your asset map?

- Hit the streets. Walk around the area where your project will take place. Make a list of area worship centers, community centers, gathering places, police stations, fire houses, youth centers, community support services (shelters, pantries, social service agencies). Then make a new asset map. Utilize these contacts to make connections with residents who can help with your project. There is no need to reinvent the wheel.

You have a volunteer who really stands out and helps in many different ways on the day of your project?

- Send them a special thank you note.
- Invite them back to volunteer again.
- Ask if they would help as a leader in the future.
- Refer other people to them, showing them that you trust their knowledge and experience.
- Nominate them for an award.
- Recognize them publicly.

*Adapted for C3 by
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