



A Team Leader's Handbook to a Successful planting with Volunteers

This guide has been created to assure that all TreeUtah Team Leaders have the knowledge and resources to ensure a successful planting with volunteers. This guide provides policy information, action steps and forms for use in the field.

Team Leaders play a critical role in helping TreeUtah staff to successfully coordinate tree plantings and events with groups of engaged community volunteers. A Team Leader engages and manages volunteers to safely and correctly plant trees at schools, parks, and other public locations. The Team Leader is responsible for making sure each volunteer planter is warmly received and engaged through the entire course of the planting. In return, TreeUtah promises to make sure each of its Team Leaders are thoroughly prepared, informed, and appreciated for his or her invaluable service.

If you have questions regarding this guide, please contact Nate, the Planting Coordinator, at (801) 364-2122 or planting@treeutah.org for more information.

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Getting Started

The following are the first steps to guide you in the process of ensuring you have the information and materials you need for your planting.

Becoming a Team Leader:

- An email will be sent to all Team Leaders advertising the events in need of a Leader. Included will be the date, time and a small description of the event.
- Our events may have from 10 to 100 volunteers. We aim to have one staff member or Team Leader per 10-15 volunteers in order to keep events very manageable with good planning and organization.
- If you see a date that works for you, please RSVP to TreeUtah and register for the event online. For your first event you will shadow a staff member or experienced VTL.

Working with TreeUtah staff

- You will meet in person, by email or over the phone with TreeUtah staff to discuss the ins and outs of the event. The Planting Coordinator and the Volunteer Coordinator are primarily responsible for organizing each planting.
- Contact information should be exchanged so you can check in with each other as the date approaches.
- TreeUtah staff will have already:
 - Completed the site visit with appropriate people
 - Set planting date and time
 - Set arrangements with the volunteer group's main contact to ensure the correct number of volunteers per tree.
 - Arranged for the pickup or delivery of trees and mulch to the site on the appropriate day.
 - Prepared all necessary volunteer waivers, brochures, water, snacks, and educational items for volunteers to be available. This may also include folding tables, pop-up tents, and tree planting banners.
 - Prepared and provided all needed tools and equipment – including shovels, rakes, wheel burrows, the **green and purple planting box** - (a box with smaller tools, zip ties, marking paint, First Aid kit, and other necessities), water jugs, tarps, gloves, tree cart, buckets, stakes, stake hammers, marking flags (if needed), and weed barrier (if needed).

Team Leader Training (Required)

- All Team Leaders must participate in a short training in order to qualify. Team Leader training essentially includes a review of TreeUtah's mission and goals, procedures and expectations during tree planting events, and the expectations specifically for Team Leaders and staff.
- Training sessions may also include a hands-on demonstration tree planting. This is a great opportunity to learn the basics of tree planting and tree care, as well as volunteer management.
- For your first event you will often shadow a staff member or experienced VTL.

Leading a Successful Event

The 5 W's

- Before any planting event you should know: **Who** our partners are for this event? **What** tools you will need? **When** the event is? **Where** the event is (directions and map)? **Why** this project is important/happening?

At the event you may sign up to help with tasks including but not limited to:

- Set up
 - Help set-up the tree planting banners to guide arriving volunteers to our meeting location. We may also need assistance setting up shade structures such as a pop-up tent. Set out outreach materials and snacks. They will be in the **pink volunteer box**.
 - Help remove tools and equipment from the TreeUtah truck and lay them out. Arrange tools so they can be easily picked up by volunteers once the event starts. If you have the time, you may even want to place tools at the actual digging sites.
 - Ensure you know where the trees are located. They will often be flagged. You may want to group them by species for easy dispersal.
 - If necessary, help the planting coordinator layout the containerized trees in their appropriate planting locations. Seedlings or trees in 5 or 10 gallon containers can usually be moved by one person. But larger trees, especially balled-and-burlapped trees will require 2 or 3 people to move. When moving large trees make sure to ask for help and lift carefully so as to avoid injury.
- Event
 - Welcome volunteers as they arrive
 - Collect Volunteer Release forms- **all volunteers must have this signed to participate**. Extra forms will be in the volunteer box. If the volunteer is under the age of 18, the form should be signed by someone over the age of 18. Give any signed volunteer waivers to the Volunteer Coordinator.
 - If you still have tasks to complete - pull in volunteers as they arrive and ask for assistance. They prefer to help than stand around.
- Orientation
 - Who we are, what we are doing, why volunteers are important
 - Overview of the activity timeline
 - Safety talk – proper and safe tool use, in case of injury
 - Tree planting demo- don't break your back! Pull in volunteers to do the demo!
 - Demo styles
 - Some staff inspect the first tree planted, pass the team or make recommendations on needed improvements
 - Share the WHY we are planting this way

- Ask for questions – if you can't answer let the volunteer know you will follow up with them. Education is a priority!
 - Assign tasks and groups for the day
 - Have teams pick up the right species for their planting location.
- Clean up
 - Have volunteers return all tools to the truck
 - Assign a volunteer to take inventory and ensure all tools have been returned
 - Ensure the planting space looks as good or better than when we arrived
- Thank you
 - Thank volunteers for participating
 - Share with them upcoming events they can volunteer for
 - Encourage membership if you feel comfortable

Follow-up

- Connect with TreeUtah staff afterward to recap about the successes and challenges faced

Policies

Injury at the Planting Event

- **Minor** – TreeUtah always provides a First Aid Kit in the green and purple “planting box.” There is usually another First Aid Kit kept in the white truck. Provide the First Aid Kit to the volunteer so they can clean and treat the area as needed. Provide the “Accident Report Form” for them to fill out and sign. Inform TreeUtah staff that an injury has occurred.
- **Major** – identify two volunteers; one to call 911 and one to call the injured volunteer’s Emergency Contact listed on the sign in sheet. Provide the Emergency Kit to the volunteer so they can clean and treat the area as needed while the ambulance is on the way.

If the volunteer is unconscious or otherwise unable to provide basic treatment you are protected under the “Good Samaritan” law if you choose to offer assistance. Immediately notify TreeUtah staff about the injury and your location (Hannah, the Volunteer Coordinator, cell (970) 497-6768).

Working with Youth

We want to ensure that volunteers and staff are safe at all times.

- In general, one-on-one interactions should never occur in private. This includes between youth and adults or among youth. If personal discussions are needed,

the discussions should be conducted in an area that is in view of other adults and youth.

- An adult should not be alone with an individual youth (other than his/her own child) without the advance written permission of the youth's parents.

Tool Safety

Some of the tools we use can be dangerous. Team Leaders and TreeUtah staff should routinely demonstrate and discuss tool safety before each and every planting event. Shovels should never be carried blade-side up. Anyone swinging a Pulaski or planting bar should communicate and coordinate well with all other volunteers.

Volunteer Age Policy

Volunteers age 6 and older are welcome to participate in our TreeUtah plantings. Volunteers under the age of 18 need to have, in some capacity, an adult supervisor or parental consent to participate because of health, safety, and liability concerns. More importantly adult participation provides motivation, input, and encouragement to young participants.

Ages:

1-5: Not recommended in most cases

6 - 9: One adult / one child

10 -15: One adult / four children

16 - 18: Adult supervision or parental consent

18 and over: no adult supervision required

Working with volunteers with disabilities

Volunteers come in all shapes and sizes and it is our privilege to assist anyone who would like to volunteer with us, the opportunity to participate to their fullest extent.

Some ideas:

- You don't need to guess what they need. Ask them, or their assistant what they feel comfortable doing/need;
- Have a short shovel available for someone in a wheelchair;
- Assign a task at the sign in booth, with snacks, or ensuring the correct numbers of tools are returned.

Volunteer Release Form

The Volunteer Release forms are very important for the protection of the volunteer as well as TreeUtah. Please remind volunteers to mark their organization's name if they are volunteering with a group. The release forms:

- Ensure we can get help for an injured volunteer;
- Ensure we have a contact number if a volunteer is injured;
- Help the Volunteer Coordinator with reporting, recognition and communication ;
- Serve as a record of a volunteer attending the event;
- Non-binding release from liability.

Grounds for Volunteer Termination

We hope to never have to terminate a volunteer, but if the following arise you are permitted to ask them to leave:

- Disregard for safety policies;
- Disrespect for Team Leader and/or other volunteers;
- Vandalism of trees or property;
- Blatant disregard of tree planting protocol or the health of the tree;
- If taking place at a school, you are not the disciplinarian. Inform the teachers and other adults in charge that discipline is one of their duties.

Service Hours

- Only TreeUtah staff may sign-off on hours for volunteers needing court-ordered service.

Volunteer Appreciation

- TreeUtah water bottle and/or other gift
- Snacks and water will be provided at all plantings
- TreeUtah Salt Lake Olympics collectible pins
- One free Ruby Snap cookie card per event worked

Volunteer Attire

- All volunteers should wear closed toed shoes. If a volunteer does not have closed toed shoes, assign them to the check in table, or passing out snacks/water etc. They can not use tools.
- Weather appropriate clothing-layers
- A water bottle
- A yellow Team Leader vest to wear at plantings
- Gloves if they own them. Extra gloves are also available in the glove bucket.

Policies and tips for working with media at a community event:

The Executive Director speaks officially for TreeUtah if media are present at a TreeUtah event. At TreeUtah we value transparency and community involvement. If you are asked questions by the media you are free to participate and respond, but any questions regarding specific TreeUtah practices or policies should be directed to the Director or TreeUtah staff.

Damage to Property:

If a volunteer causes damage to TreeUtah property, please make a note of the damage and inform the TreeUtah Director or Planting Coordinator so the item can be repaired or replaced.

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Volunteer Team Leader Agreement:

I wish to be trained as a TreeUtah Volunteer Team Leader (VTL) for the Spring/Fall (circle one or both) 20__ season. I have read through the VTL Handbook and understand my responsibilities. Barring any extenuating circumstances, I will give the TreeUtah staff at least one months notice if I decide I will be no longer able to fulfill my VTL duties.

Volunteer's Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

Witness Signature _____ Date _____