

# Make the Most of Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to use your time and talent to help others. It's also an opportunity to make friends and build new skills. To find the best fit for you:

- ▶ **Consider your goals.** Questions to ask include, "Do I want to use existing talents to help others, or is my goal to develop new skills? Am I looking for a complete change of pace from my normal routine?" For example, if you spend your workdays in an office, you might want to spend your volunteering time outdoors.
- ▶ **Look for options.** Organizations that often need volunteers include:
  - Hospitals, libraries, and schools
  - Halfway houses or drug rehabilitation centers
  - Youth organizations, sports teams, and after-school programs
  - Domestic violence shelters
  - Neighborhood cleanup efforts
  - Literacy programs
  - Retirement homes
  - Meals-on-wheels and food pantries
  - Orchestras, theaters, museums, etc.
- ▶ **Choose a cause that matters to you.** Make certain the volunteering opportunity you select is aligned with your values and interests. Being engaged in the work you do will help you stay motivated to meet your commitments.



- ▶ **Expect an interview process.** Many organizations will ask you to fill out an application or come in for an interview. Work involving children or other at-risk populations may also require a background check.
- ▶ **Keep your schedule manageable.** Start with volunteering an hour or two a week. Hold off on a larger commitment until you're sure the position is a good fit for you.
- ▶ **Take action.** Is a cause you care about not being addressed? Consider launching a grass-roots effort to clean up a vacant lot or paint an elderly neighbor's house.

LifeMatters can help you locate volunteering opportunities in your community. Call 24/7/365.

Call **LifeMatters®** by Empathia toll-free anytime. **1-800-367-7474**

Assistance with Life, Work, Family, and Wellbeing • 24/7/365

Call collect to **262-574-2509** if outside of North America

Visit **LifeMatters®** online at **mylifematters.com**

 [facebook.com/lifematterseap](https://facebook.com/lifematterseap)

Language assistance services in your preferred spoken and written languages are available at no cost by calling 1-800-367-7474.

Source: USA Freedom Corps (serve.gov)

