



# **City of Plymouth**

## **Volunteer Handbook and Policies**



# Welcome!

By volunteering, you help to strengthen our community – making it a better place to live, work and play.

- Over 2,400 individuals volunteer each year
- Volunteers:
  - Enhance services provided to our residents
  - Extend city resources
  - Support their community by sharing their time and talents
  - Are ambassadors of goodwill

We want to ensure that you have a positive and meaningful experience and hope that you find this orientation helpful.





# The Plymouth Logo



- The “P” stands for Plymouth, people and planning.
- Blue represents our many lakes, streams and wetlands.
- The plant symbolizes a commitment to the environment
- The gear illustrates a stable, diversified economic base

# City History

- Original inhabitants were the Wahpeton Sioux
- Incorporated as a town in 1885
- Located 12 mi NW of Minneapolis and covers 36 sq miles
- Includes residential, business, industrial and open space
- Population over 70,000
- Named Money magazine's "Best Place to Live" in 2008
- Governed by a mayor and city council
- City staff includes nearly 250 FT and PT regular employees
- Up to 200 seasonal employees annually



# City Services

Volunteers help to extend resources and services to our residents.

- Public Safety services translate to safe neighborhoods.
- Public Works services protect city necessities like water, sewer and streets.
- Environmental programs contribute to a healthy community.
- Parks & Recreation promote fitness, build community and offer opportunities for individual growth.
- Planning & inspection services ensure our neighborhoods are well-planned & meet safety codes.

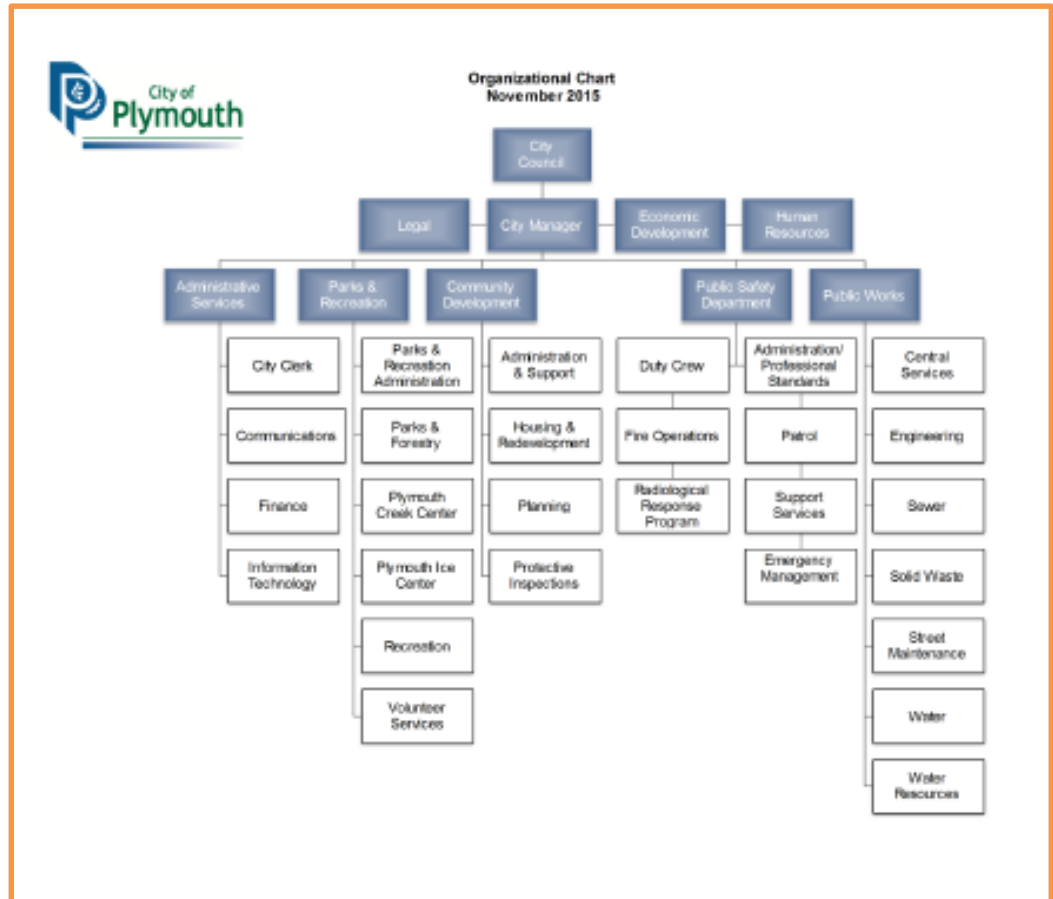






# City Organization

Volunteers support staff in all departments.





# City Council Members

**Mayor Jeffry Wosje**

**763-509-5007 | [jwosje@plymouthmn.gov](mailto:jwosje@plymouthmn.gov)**

Ward 1 – Alise McGregor

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Ward 2 – Nick Roehl

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At Large – Jim Willis

763-509-5006 | [jwillis@plymouthmn.gov](mailto:jwillis@plymouthmn.gov)



# Volunteer Services

**Volunteer Coordinator Jackie Maas**  
**P) 763-509-5230    F) 763-509-5207**  
**[jmaas@plymouthmn.gov](mailto:jmaas@plymouthmn.gov)**

**The volunteer coordinator is always available to answer questions, resolve problems and provide additional opportunities.**

Volunteer coordinator is responsible for:

- Recruiting volunteers
- Interviewing volunteers
- Matching volunteers' skills with opportunities
- Placing volunteers within the city

The Mission of Volunteer Services is to strengthen our community by:

- Providing an opportunity for local residents to contribute to city government
- Facilitating active partnerships between city staff and community members
- Enriching city programs through volunteer involvement & participation
- Helping citizens become more familiar with city programs, services & issues





# History of Volunteer Program

Moving into its third decade, the City of Plymouth volunteer program has grown into a well-respected leader in volunteer management across Minnesota.

- Formalized in 1993 with hiring of part-time volunteer coordinator.
- In 1993, 224 volunteers contributed 4,091 hours of service.
- Volunteer coordinator position became full time in 2005.
- Volunteer coordinator is a part of the Parks & Rec Department
- Supports volunteers throughout all city departments.



# Why Volunteer?

As a volunteer, you become a partner with the city to implement programs that benefit you, your neighbors, and the community as a whole.

- Share your skills and professional experience.
- Extend city resources and staff efforts.
- Bring new ideas and energy to enrich programs.
- Bring diversity of backgrounds and experiences.
- Learn about Plymouth and its opportunities.
- Meet people who share your same interests.
- Give back to the community.
- Build understanding and participation in city government.
- Strengthen community ties through partnerships.
- Gain valuable work experience.
- Have fun while providing significant support to the city.







## **Volunteer Services is located within the Parks & Recreation Department at City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Blvd.**

Volunteers participate at several of the City's buildings and parks:

- City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Boulevard, 763-509-5230
- Plymouth Creek Center (PCC), 14800 34<sup>th</sup> Ave N, 763-509-5280
- Plymouth Ice Center (PIC), 3650 Plymouth Blvd, 763-509-5250
- Public Works Maintenance Facility (PW), 14900 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave N, 763-509-5950
- City parks, trails & green spaces

City buildings are closed on the following holidays:

Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving + day after, Christmas and New Year's Day

# Volunteer Process

## As a Volunteer, What Can I Expect?

- Comfortable, friendly work environment.
- High standards of professionalism.
- A positive experience.

## Who Can Volunteer?

- You do not have to be a Plymouth resident.
- Must be at least 14 years old to assist with events.
- Anyone under 14 years old must be with an adult.

## Volunteer Applications

- For those seeking regular, ongoing opportunities.
- Submitted online or via paper copy.
- Basic contact information needed for one-time-only events.

## Interview/Talent Assessment

- Scheduled after application is received.
- Will cover your areas of interest and experience.
- Helps to best match your skills with the work needed.





# Reference/Background Checks

## Reference Checks:

- Will be made following the interview.
- Can be personal or professional, but no family members.

## Criminal Background Checks:

- Required for a variety of roles; depending on the information or participants working with.
- Conducted in a professional & confidential manner with volunteer's knowledge and permission.

## Driving Record Checks:

- For those driving a city-owned vehicle or their own vehicle as part of their volunteer duties.





# Placement

## Placement:

The integrity of the volunteer program requires that individuals will only be placed in positions with the most opportunity for success. This means that candidates will be matched to positions based on the skills, personality and time commitment necessary for each position.

## Equal Opportunity:

Provided to all qualified volunteers regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, affectional preference, marital status or financial status.

## Position Descriptions:

Developed for regular, ongoing positions to outline the duties and responsibilities. Work direction will be provided for short-term and one-time-only projects.

## Volunteer Career Path:

Volunteers are encouraged to grow and develop their skills while trying new positions and responsibilities.





# Supervision & Training

- **Supervision** provided by city employee either in person, over the phone, via email or self-directed.
- **Training** will mostly be one-on-one with your supervisor.
- **Staff** provides orientation, safety requirements, department procedures & necessary supervision.
- **Scheduling** will be agreed upon between you & the supervisor; some positions have specific hours.
- **Use of equipment and supplies** will be made available to you to perform the volunteer work.
- **Equipment can** include copy machine, fax, office supplies, computers, etc.
- **Evaluation and feedback** of your work will be provided for the work accomplished.
- **You** are invited to offer ideas and suggestions for program improvement.

# Confidentiality

The employees of the city and the citizens served by the City of Plymouth have the right to confidentiality.

Confidential information may be given to you:

- Orally
- On a computer screen
- In a report

This information is not to be shared, copied or removed from city property without prior approval.

Some volunteer positions may require that you sign a confidentiality statement.

Volunteer contact information will only be shared necessary staff supervisor(s).





# Recognition

As a City of Plymouth volunteer, you will be thanked for your contributions.

- Every fall, individual volunteers are invited to an event to celebrate their achievements.
- Group volunteers receive a thank you letter from the mayor.

Volunteers can also benefit from:

- Letters of recommendation
- Employment references
- Use of two parking spots for volunteers at City Hall
- Identification (if applicable: nametags, ID badges, t-shirts, etc)
- Report of hours contributed



# Communication

## Communication

- Typically done via e-mail.
- Phone calls or letters will be sent to those without email.
- Conducted by volunteer coordinator or supervisor.

## Volunteer Opportunities can be found:

- City website
- Plymouth News
- Special events volunteers receive quarterly notices.
- Contact the volunteer coordinator to receive notices.

## Media Relations

- Approval is needed from volunteer coordinator or project supervisor
- Team interviews (volunteer and supervisor) are strongly encouraged
- Must identify oneself as a volunteer
- Only address questions about volunteer activities.







# Current Volunteer Positions

Adopt a Park  
Adopt a Storm Drain  
Adopt a Street  
Annual Special Events  
Asset Inventory  
Beach Clean Up  
Buckthorn Removal  
CERT Team  
Chaplain Corps  
Clerical Aide  
Data Entry  
Dog Waste Bag Fillers  
Farmers Market Aide  
Finance Aide  
Front Desk Greeter  
Garden Wedding Coordinator  
Graphic Artist

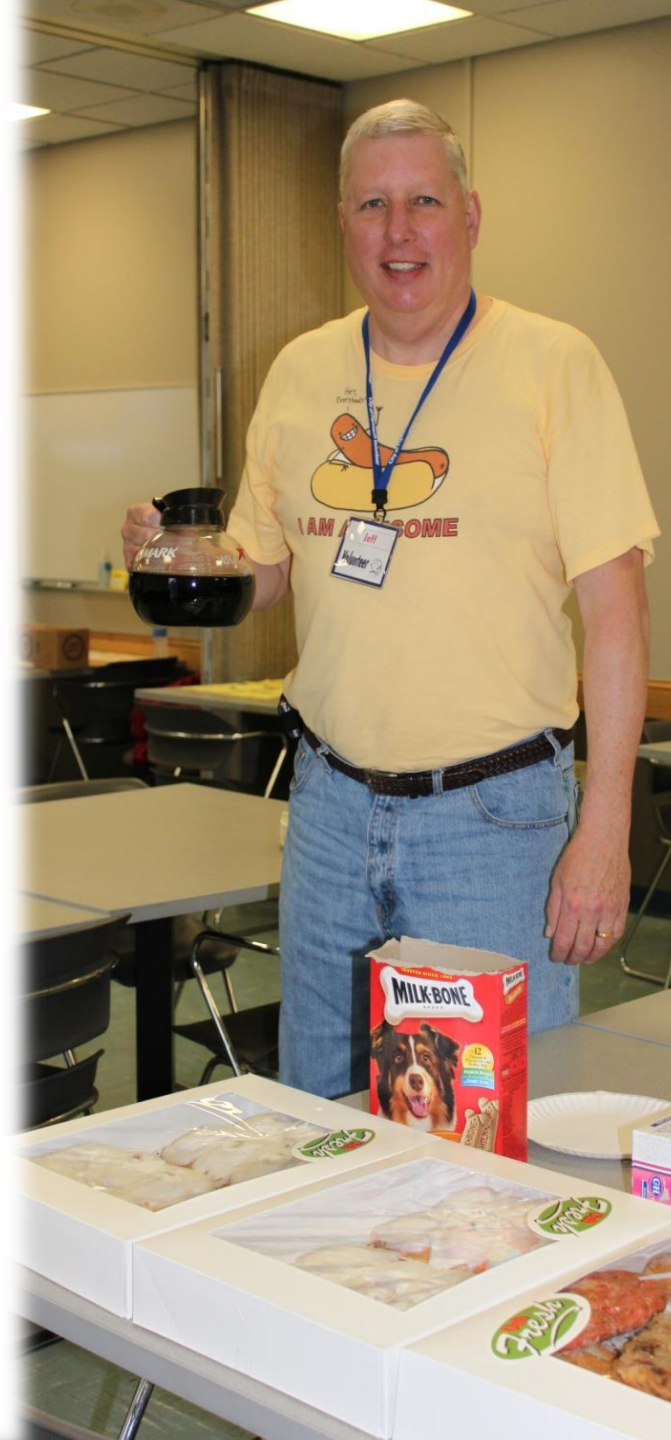
Hockey Ticket Taker  
Inclusion Aide  
LEAN Process Improvement  
Millennium Garden Caretaker  
Open Pickle ball Attendant  
Open Soccer Attendant  
Outdoor Maintenance  
Paint Hearts on Trails  
Police Explorers  
Police Reserves  
Senior Corps  
Senior Movie Assistant  
Skate Lesson Aide  
Ski Chaperone  
Special Mailings  
Storm Drain Marking  
Summer Teen Program

Team Green Tree  
Teen Advisory Group  
Translation  
Tree Inventory  
Videographer/TV Editor  
Water Surface Sampling  
Write Santa Letters  
Yard Waste Site Aide  
Youth Sports Coach

# Volunteer Guidelines

As a City of Plymouth volunteer, I understand that I am held to high standards and will follow policies and procedures laid out for all city volunteers.

- Create work of the highest quality.
- Conduct myself with dignity, courtesy and consideration.
- Clarify my duties, responsibilities and schedule with my supervisor.
- Carry out my duties in a safe, responsible way.
- Be prompt and dependable.
- Let my supervisor know if I am unable to come in.
- Remember that the City of Plymouth residents are our customers.
- Our customers deserve patience, respect and consideration.

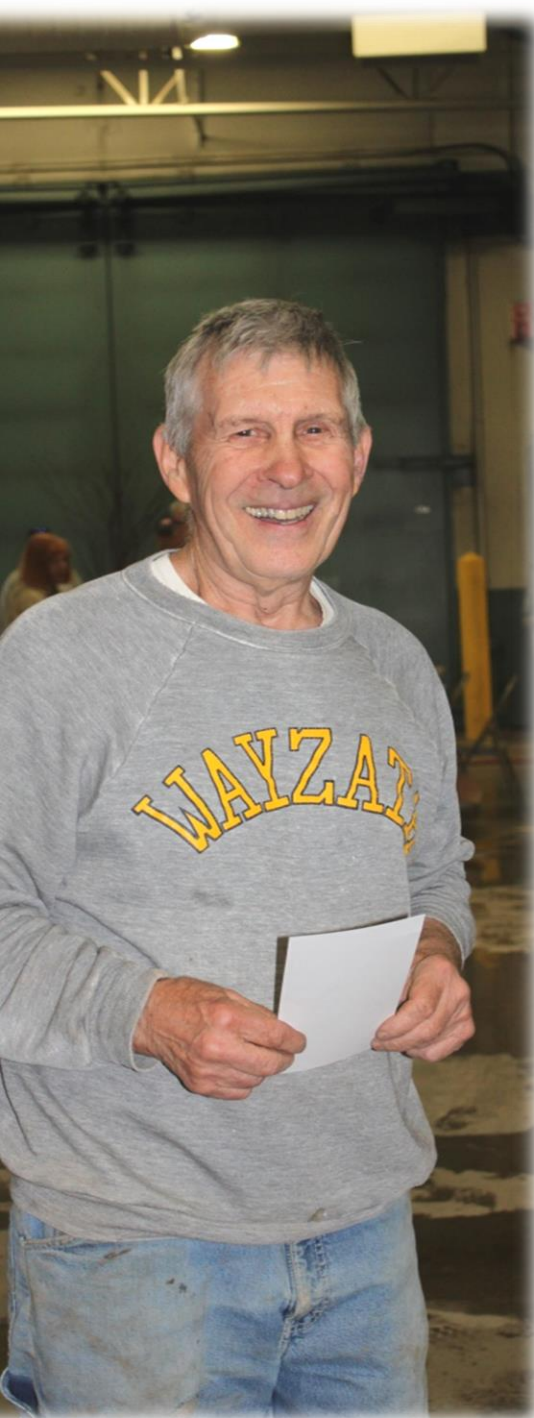




# Volunteer Guidelines (cont.)

- I will respect the confidentiality of my work as a volunteer.
- I understand that I may read, hear or observe information that is private and will not share with others.
- I will be well-groomed and will dress appropriately for the setting and the task at hand.
- When working with food, I will wear closed toe shoes and a hat or scarf to cover my hair.
- I will wear my name badge or identifying clothing while volunteering with the public.
- I will document my hours of volunteering.
- I will exercise good judgment.
- I will avoid outside activities or situations where conflicts of interest may be perceived to exist.
- I will inform the Volunteer Services office if there are any changes to my contact information.





# Service Standards

Volunteers are the city's ambassadors. When you assist the public, your interactions are key to providing positive first impressions of the city.

## Volunteer Service Standards:

- Greet guests in a friendly manner
- Be helpful
- Smile and have a positive attitude
- Behave in a professional manner
- Dress appropriately
- Offer assistance
- Provide accurate information
- Respond to questions or requests

## Gifts and Gratuities:

- Should NOT be accepted from residents or businesses
- Do not want citizens to feel obligated to reward staff & volunteers





# Service Standards (cont.)

## How to handle complaints from guests:

- Please handle complaints if they are within your range of knowledge.
- If you are unable to resolve the complaint, attempt to contact a staff person who can.
- Write down complaints that cannot be settled immediately and give them to your supervisor.
- With any complaint, include the person's name & phone number so a follow up call can be made.
- Do not argue or appear annoyed.
- Explain that you are a volunteer and the complaint must be handled by a person of authority.
- Thank the person for expressing their concern.
- Tell them their feedback is important and something will be done to resolve it.

# Conduct

Volunteers are held to the same standard and expectations as paid staff.

## Drug and Alcohol Policy:

- Involvement with drugs can jeopardize:
  - the safety of others
  - a volunteer's well-being
  - the professional stature of the city's employees.
- City maintains a healthy work force free from drugs and alcohol.
- While volunteering, you can not:
  - be under the influence of/use controlled substances
  - possess, sell, make or transfer controlled substances

## Tobacco Free Policy:

- Volunteers are not to use tobacco products on:
  - city-owned parkland, park facilities, open space
  - joint city/school district properties.

## Weapons Policy:

- Possession/use of a weapon is prohibited on city property.





# Conduct (cont.)

## Disrespectful Behavior:

- Will not be tolerated by or towards any employee, volunteer, official of the city or customer.
- Disrespectful behavior includes:
  - The use of physical force, harassment or intimidation
  - Abuse of power or authority when the impact is to control by causing pain or fear.
  - Inappropriate remarks about or conduct related to a person's:
    - race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, sex, marital status, etc.
  - Rudeness, exclusionary behavior, angry outbursts, inappropriate joking, vulgar obscenities.
  - Name-calling, disrespectful behavior
  - The intentional filing of an unfounded complaint under this policy.





# Conduct (cont.)

## Sexual Harassment:

Harassment includes unwelcome advances, requests for favors, physical contact, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a harassing nature.

Behavior which may constitute harassment includes:

- Verbal harassment (epithets, derogatory remarks or slurs)
- Physical harassment (touching, gestures, assault)
- Visual forms of harassment (derogatory posters, letters)
- Requests for sexual favors
- Unwelcome sexual advances





# Conduct (cont.)

## Confronting and Reporting Disrespectful Behavior:

Any employee or volunteer who believes s/he has been treated in a disrespectful way should deal with the violation by either:

- Report incident to supervisor immediately.
- Politely, but firmly, tell the person engaging in the disrespectful behavior to cease the behavior.
- Note the incident details, feelings and conversations.

## Driving and Use of City Vehicle:

If you are authorized to use a City of Plymouth vehicle for city business, you must:

- Have a valid driver's license in your possession while operating city vehicle.
- Not allow unauthorized persons to ride in or operate a city vehicle.
- Operate the vehicle in safe manner, obeying all traffic laws.
- Report any changes in your driving record to your supervisor immediately.

# Technology

The majority of the communication done between Volunteer Services and volunteers is through email.  
If you get a new address, please update us.

## Cell Phones and Social Media

Do not use your cell phone, iPod or other electronic devices while volunteering, unless you need to make arrangements for a ride.

If you mention you are a city volunteer on a social media page, please be respectful and keep in mind that almost anything on the internet can be accessed by the public.

## Use of City Computers

- May be given access to the city's internet/intranet services.
- Any messages sent are public information.
- City computers are not to be used for:
  - commercial/non-job related solicitations
  - adult entertainment sites
  - religious or political causes.





# Volunteer Separation

Volunteers may leave the city's program, whether voluntarily or involuntarily.

## Resignation:

- If you decide to leave volunteering, notify your supervisor and the volunteer coordinator immediately.
- Return any city property such as name or identification badge, keys, etc. promptly.

## Dismissal:

The City of Plymouth accepts the services of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the City. Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures or who fail to satisfactorily perform their responsibilities are subject to dismissal.

- The following behaviors will result in mediation or immediate dismissal:
  - Theft, misusing, destroying or defacing property
  - Unprofessional, inappropriate behavior toward visitors, other volunteers or staff
  - Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
  - Bringing weapons or illegal drugs to the volunteer work site



# Record Keeping

There are many reasons why it is important that the time you contribute is recorded.

- Used to verify work experience for job references.
- Assists with letters of recommendation.
- Used to compile the city's annual volunteer report.
- Shows program growth or change.
- Shows when you were on the job for accident claims.
- Volunteers at special events/projects will sign.
  - Volunteer Coordinator tracks hours.
- Regular, ongoing positions or projects: keep track of hours
- Police & PCC volunteers use a VicTouch screen to enter hours.







# Volunteer Tax Information

- Can deduct non-reimbursed expenses for local transportation to & from the volunteer activity.
  - Includes travel to other organizations in connection with the volunteer service.
- Bus or taxi fare, parking fees and similar expenses are deductible as local traveling expenses.
- Volunteers may NOT deduct the value of their volunteer time or services

For more detailed information, volunteers should contact their tax accountants or refer to Publication 526 Charitable Contributions, Internal Revenue Service.

# Weather/Safety

In case of tornados or inclement weather, city staff, volunteers and those inside public buildings will be directed to the appropriate shelter.

## Weather Announcements:

If blizzard conditions occur prior to the normal start times of city employees, listen to WCCO 830 AM to check if city offices have closed.

## Weather Line:

The Parks & Recreation department updates its Weather Line (**763-509-5205**) to indicate if any programs are cancelled due to severe weather.

## Workplace Safety:

If you feel your work environment is unsafe in any way, please remove yourself immediately and contact your supervisor or the volunteer coordinator.





# Procedures for Injured Volunteers

Volunteers who are injured while working should report the injury to their supervisor and to the volunteer coordinator as soon as possible. Accident reports are available from the volunteer coordinator or Human Resources coordinator.

## Serious and life-threatening injuries:

- Call 911 for police assistance.

## Injuries requiring medical care:

- You can seek medical attention anywhere.
- Closest Urgent Care & Emergency Room is:  
Allina WestHealth & Abbott Northwestern Hospital, 763-577-7700  
2855 Campus Drive, Plymouth, MN 55441

## Liability insurance:

- Provided for volunteers who are involved in the activities described in their volunteer position.





Please email  
[volunteer@plymouthmn.gov](mailto:volunteer@plymouthmn.gov) so that  
we can document that you completed  
this orientation.