



**Oncology Nursing  
Society**

# Local Volunteering Toolkit

Giving Back as an ONS Chapter

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Links to Additional Toolkit Resources

- [Chapter Website Handbook](#)
- [Certificate of Liability Insurance](#)



## Success Metric: Local Volunteering

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This toolkit provides information on the *Local Volunteering* success metric. To complete this success metric, your chapter must participate in at least one local volunteering opportunity.

## What Qualifies as Local Volunteering?

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For this metric, volunteer opportunities related to oncology care and awareness can provide significant value to your community. Consider participating in the following activities as a chapter:

- **Fundraising walks or runs:** Coordinate or join events like Relay for Life to raise awareness and funds for cancer research.
- **Support groups:** Facilitate or participate in local cancer support groups, offering professional expertise or emotional support.
- **Health education workshops:** Deliver workshops on oncology-related topics like cancer prevention, treatment options, or healthy living.
- **Hospice and palliative care:** Volunteer with hospice organizations to provide compassionate care or administrative support.

In addition to oncology-focused volunteering, chapters can benefit from engaging members in broader community efforts, such as the following:

- **Food pantries:** Organize food drives or assist with distribution at local food banks.
- **Animal shelters:** Aid in caring for animals or supporting shelter operations.
- **Homeless shelters:** Provide meals, organize clothing drives, or assist with facility maintenance.
- **Environmental cleanup:** Participate in local initiatives to clean parks, beaches, or other public spaces.

## Example Organizations

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The following is a listing of reputable national organizations you chapter can choose from if you are need of inspiration. You are not limited to this listing; choose an organization that works best for your chapter.



- [American Cancer Society](#): Participate in fundraising events like Relay for Life or volunteer at events promoting awareness and research. Opportunities include event coordination, community outreach, and support services.
- [Blood Cancer United](#): Engage in Light the Night walks, advocacy programs, or patient support initiatives. Volunteers can assist with event planning or join local chapters to host educational workshops.
- [St. Jude Children's Research Hospital](#): Support their mission by organizing fundraising events, volunteering at local campaigns, or becoming a patient ambassador. Reach out to regional offices for opportunities.
- [National Breast Cancer Foundation](#): Join efforts such as community outreach and educational workshops, or host fundraising events like Pink Ribbon campaigns. Local opportunities are often listed online or through regional partnerships.
- [Livestrong Foundation](#): Help organize community wellness programs, provide patient navigation support, or raise awareness through local events. Volunteer interest can be submitted directly on their website.
- [Pancreatic Cancer Action Network](#): Volunteer to fundraise, advocate, or host outreach events at the community level. Local chapters provide specific details on involvement opportunities.
- [Colorectal Cancer Alliance](#): Work with regional teams to promote awareness initiatives, provide patient support, or coordinate fundraising events like Undy Runs. Volunteer roles are outlined on their website.
- [American Lung Association](#): Contribute to campaigns targeting lung cancer prevention, such as LUNG FORCE Walks, or assist with educational outreach programs. Sign up through their local offices.
- [Feeding America](#): Volunteer at a local food bank to assist with sorting, packaging, or distribution of food to those in need. Opportunities are listed through their network locator.
- [Habitat for Humanity](#): Build homes, support administrative tasks, or organize community restoration projects. Contact local Habitat branches for specific volunteering needs.
- [United Way](#): Collaborate on educational, health, or financial stability programs aimed at uplifting communities. Opportunities vary by region and are accessible through local United Way offices.
- [National Park Service](#): Participate in environmental cleanups, trail maintenance, or visitor education programs. Volunteer opportunities can be found by contacting local parks or their national site.

# Organizing Volunteer Opportunities

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Chapters can begin by identifying volunteering opportunities in the area. This could involve reaching out to community organizations, such as food banks, environmental groups, or hospice care providers, to determine their needs and how chapter members could best contribute. Networking with local nonprofits, municipal offices, and schools can uncover events or initiatives that align with the chapter's goals and members' interests. It's helpful to maintain relationships with these organizations to ensure consistent engagement and support.

When collaborating with local organizations, it's essential to establish clear communication and shared goals. Chapters should discuss expectations, the scope of volunteer activities, and any specific skills or resources the chapter members can bring. For example, if partnering with an animal shelter, the chapter might determine whether they can assist with animal care, offer administrative help, or organize a supply drive.

Logistical planning is also important; chapter leaders should work with the organization to determine the number of volunteers needed, the timing of the event, and any materials or training required for participants. Consider transportation arrangements if the volunteering site isn't easily accessible and provide clear instructions on the schedule and expectations for the day. Safety protocols, especially for activities like environmental cleanups or work in shelters, must also be outlined.

## Logistical Considerations

- Coordinate the timing and schedule of the event, ensuring it aligns with participants' availability.
- Create a sign-up for participants.
- Arrange transportation for volunteers (if applicable).
- Secure parking options for participants and provide clear instructions on parking locations.
- Confirm event contacts with partner organizations (if applicable).
- Organize necessary materials, such as tools, supplies, or protective equipment, for the activities planned.
- Discuss and outline safety protocols, especially for physically demanding or potentially hazardous activities.
- Provide training or a briefing session to prepare volunteers for their tasks and responsibilities.
- Plan for breaks and ensure volunteers have access to water and snacks or meals.
- Establish clear communication channels for updates or in case of emergencies during the event.
- Develop a system for recognizing volunteers, such as letters of appreciation or certificates, to acknowledge their contributions.

## Volunteer Sign-Up Form

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Consider creating a sign-up form for your volunteer event on your chapter site. Instructions for **creating events** can be found in the [Chapter Website Handbook](#).

Be sure to provide the appropriate details for your volunteers, including date, time, event length, location, event schedule, and parking information. Collect the following information from volunteers:

- Name
- Email
- Emergency contact (if applicable)
- Food allergies (if applicable)
- Phone number (if applicable)

## Volunteer Letter Template

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If applicable, chapters are welcome to create volunteer letters to serve as recognition and to potentially assist participants in meeting employer career ladder requirements or professional development goals.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to confirm that [Volunteer's Full Name] generously contributed their time and effort as a volunteer with [Organization Name]. Their participation has been integral to the success of our event, and we greatly appreciate their commitment.

[Volunteer's Full Name] volunteered with us from [Start Date] to [End Date]. During this time, they dedicated approximately [Number of Hours] hours to [specific roles, tasks, or activities, e.g., organizing events, community outreach, administrative support, etc.].

This letter may serve as formal documentation of [Volunteer's Full Name]'s volunteer involvement with [Organization Name]. Should you require further details or have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly at [Phone Number] or [Email Address].

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]

[Board Position, Chapter Name]



## Chapter Donation Guidelines

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As a reminder, chapters are categorized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as 501(c)(6) nonprofit organizations. As such, chapters must abide by all IRS policies, including acceptable spending of chapter funds. Per the IRS, chapters are only able to spend funds on mission-related activities. This means hosting member events, supporting scholarships, and other activities that directly promote oncology nursing as a career.

Because the Oncology Nursing Foundation's sole purpose is supporting oncology nursing, this donation qualifies as an acceptable expenditure. **Please note that per IRS policies, donations to other nonprofits that are not related directly to oncology nursing are not permissible**, including donations to disaster relief and patient support. Chapters can donate their time, raise funds, or collect resources on behalf of other organizations, but chapter funds should never be donated to these outside causes. Doing so can jeopardize the chapter's nonprofit status.

If you have any questions about acceptable use of funds or how to help outside organizations, please contact [chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org).

## Liability Insurance

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ONS maintains liability insurance on behalf of the chapters. You can view the current [Certificate of Insurance](#) online. If the chapter is hosting an event on behalf of a partner organization or contracting rental space for a volunteer opportunity, you may need to request that they be added as an "additional insured" on the insurance certificate. If needed, please contact [chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org) for more information.

## Metric Completion Checklist

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To consider this metric completed, your chapter must have participated in a local volunteering activity during the calendar year. To confirm completion of this metric please complete the following checklist.

- ☐ Determine which local volunteer opportunity the chapter will participate in.
- ☐ Participate as a chapter in a local volunteer opportunity at any point prior to December 31.
- ☐ Report the volunteer activity date and details to confirm completion of this metric on your next [Quarterly Report](#).