

Welcome to Plain-O Helpers. Here is some information that may help you.

Organization

Plain-O Helpers is a non-profit mission that is administered by Custer Road United Methodist Church (CRUMC) with the assistance of other churches. We are all volunteers that give of our time to help the seniors and handicapped of Plano. The volunteers come from all over the Plano and the north Texas area and are not necessarily members of any one particular church. We have a Steering Committee which oversees the four main areas of the program which are Major Home Maintenance, Minor Home Maintenance, Mowing and Special Projects. Clients are seniors and handicapped individuals living primarily in the Plano Independent School District. Each client is asked to sign a Liability Release.

Contact Information

Plain-O Helpers Phone Number: 469-366-4286
Plain-O Helpers Website: www.Plain-O-Helpers.org
Plain-O Helpers Email Address: PlainOHelpers@gmail.com

Communication

Group communications are by email.

Major Home Maintenance: As projects become available the Major Home Maintenance Coordinator will send out a group email announcing a project and asking for a reply if you will be available to work on the project. The projects may occur on any day of the week.

Minor Home Maintenance: The projects occur each Friday and are planned to last from roughly 9:00 to noon (+/-). Each Wednesday evening you should receive an email listing the project teams that are planned for Friday. You are asked to reply to that email if you plan to attend and you are asked to list any teams that may be of special interest. Those that reply are sent a second email on Thursday evening listing the team assignments and the materials that will be provided. For potential liability reasons a minimum of two volunteers are on each team.

Mowing: Early in the Spring the Mowing Coordinator will send out an email asking for those who may wish to volunteer to mow during the coming mowing season.

Special Projects: Occasionally we receive requests for help with transportation, moving or computer assistance. When those do occur, a coordinator will ask those who have indicated an interest in the above areas if they are available to help. This typically is not sent out as a group email.

Materials

Materials for projects are provided as anticipated. However, it is quite common that the anticipated materials are not appropriate. If the materials provided are not appropriate, we ask the volunteers to purchase the correct materials and submit the receipt for reimbursement.

Since this is a non-profit mission of a church, the purchases need to be made tax free. The following will help you make a tax free purchase. We need to guard this tax free status and only make tax free purchases for items to be used on Plain-O Helpers projects.

Home Depot and Lowes: Tell them that it is to be a tax free purchase. Give them the phone number of Custer Road United Methodist Church, 972-618-3450. (You might keep this in your cell phone.)

Elliott's: Tell them it is to be a tax free purchase and give them "Custer RD" (not Custer Road.)

All other places: Tell them it is for Custer Road United Methodist Church. There is usually an account.

To be reimbursed for your expense, turn in your original receipts as you meet on Friday morning. Make sure that your name is at the top of the receipt. All expenses are reported to CRUMC at the end of the month and checks are mailed one to two weeks later.

Project Reports

No work is done until the paperwork is done. The team leader will usually report on the team's projects. For the Friday Minor Home Maintenance projects the first name listed on the Team Assignment is asked to either make a report or delegate that responsibility to some other team member.

The report should include the following:

Client's name

Volunteers

Time spent volunteering - not an exact science. Just divide up the day appropriately from 8:30 until you are done and assign a portion to each project.

Work accomplished - list what you actually did.

Follow up work needed - list what needs to be finished or what additional work is desired.

Contributions - Check contributions are obvious. Turn in the contribution (check or cash) at the next opportunity. Cash contributions can be messy. To avoid any issues with cash, let your team members know the amount of any cash contribution. List the amount of the cash contribution in your report. Make sure that cash contributions have the name of the contributor and date of the contribution attached (paper clip) to the donation as they are turned in. (If it is in a sealed envelope, just turn in the envelope. You do not need to open it or report it. Make sure that the contributor's name is on the envelope.)

Liability Release

Each new client is asked to sign a Liability Release form as a first step to protect all volunteers from any legal action resulting from a misunderstanding. Please turn in the signed form at the next opportunity.

Senior Source

We ask each volunteer over 55 years of age to sign up for the RSVP program administered by the Senior Source in Dallas. We will turn in your volunteer hours quarterly for you. They will, in turn, provide you with supplemental insurance for accidents, personal liability and life insurance while you are volunteering for Plain-O Helpers. (See their write up for accurate details.)

Skills Survey

After you have had the opportunity to try your hand at a number of different projects, you will be asked to fill out a simple survey of your skills. These will be compiled and used to assign you to a particular team if no team preference is given.

Trade Referrals

Plain-O Helpers is often asked for recommendations of good tradesmen. If you have work done at your house and would like to add a recommendation to the list, include the recommendation in your team report and it will be added. A list of referrals will be provided upon request.

Poinsettias

Each year just before Christmas, Plain-O Helpers delivers a Poinsettia plant to a select number of our clients that we have seen in the previous year. As you go through the year look for clients that may not otherwise receive anything for Christmas or could just use a little love at that time of year. Make a nomination anytime and the client will be added to the list.