

Plain-O Helpers Procedural Guidelines

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Contents

MISSION STATEMENT	2
POLICY STATEMENTS	2
NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY	2
POLICY REGARDING THE CLIENT'S RIGHT TO CHOICE	2
POLICY REGARDING HOME VISITS	3
VOLUNTEER POLICY	3
PROCEDURES	4
OVERVIEW:	4
VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP ROLES:	4
HANDYMAN PROGRAM	6
PROPERTY OWNER APPROVAL - RENTAL PROPERTY	7
REQUEST FOR SERVICE/RELEASE	7

Mission Statement

Plain-O Helpers is a Christian based mission to provide an opportunity for seniors to help seniors and others within the community who are in need of home maintenance and repairs.

Policy Statements Nondiscrimination Policy

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulation, **Plain-O Helpers** will directly or through contractual or other arrangements, serve all people without regard to race, color or national origin in its provision of services and benefits.

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its implementing regulation, **Plain-O Helpers** will not, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, discriminate on the basis of handicap in provision of its services.

In accordance to the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and its implementing regulation, The **Plain-O Helpers** will not, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, discriminate on the basis of age in the provision of services, unless age is a factor necessary to the normal operation or the achievement of any statutory objective.

Policy Regarding the Client's Right to Choice

Members and volunteers of **Plain-O Helpers** shall use the following guidelines when dealing with our clients.

- The client should be included in the assessment, delivery of, and evaluation of services.
- The client should be granted choice and control over the decisions affecting their quality of life.
- Our staff and volunteers will respect the client's right to their belief systems and will not try to impose other beliefs or values on the client.
- The client has the right to their opinion.
- Do not give religious, political, or sales material to a client at any time.

We can only present options to the individual client. The client must decide which option(s) to choose. The client may even decide to do nothing about their situation. We must accept the client's decisions, regardless of our personal beliefs, and support them in their choices in appropriate ways.

Policy Regarding Home Visits

All members and volunteers of **Plain-O Helpers** should follow the following guidelines regarding personal safety when visiting a client. It is our policy to require that a minimum of two volunteers be present throughout each home visit.

Safety Guidelines:

- Each visit to include a minimum of two volunteers.
- Be aware of your surroundings before getting out of your car. Look for stray dogs and loitering people.
- Trust your instincts! If you approach your destination and have concerns about loiterers, reschedule the visit. Be aware of others in the household during a visit.
- If you begin to feel uncomfortable during your visit for any reason, leave with plans to talk to the client by telephone to reschedule.
- If you feel unsafe while helping the client, stop. Either approach the problem in a safe manner or decline to continue with the project.
- If you see a fellow volunteer or client working in an unsafe manner, ask the person to stop. Discuss the appropriate safe manner to approach the problem.

Volunteer Policy

While it is anticipated that the majority of Plain-O Helpers volunteers will be seniors, volunteer applications from any age group will be accepted. Plain-O Helpers volunteers do not need to be associated with sponsoring or participating organizations. All volunteers will be subject to a background check. All volunteers must submit a completed volunteer application form with emergency contact information.

Procedures

Overview:

Plain-O Helpers targets people, age 55 or older, and other designated clients residing in the city of Plano or within the Plano Independent School District (in areas not covered by other similar programs) and all members of sponsoring churches living outside the normal service area who need help with safety issues. The program provides maintenance and repair services for the home, with a key focus on safety issues.

Plain-O Helpers will prioritize home repair projects based on need established by the following criteria to community residing people who are:

- In need of geriatric or medical support (such as changing light bulbs, changing air filters, installing grab bars, building ramps, etc.)
- Need assistance with technology related items (such as VCR programming, minor computer assistance, etc.)
- Feel uncomfortable seeking help from an unknown source.
- Referred by another helping agency.

In addition to the above, Plain-O Helpers reserves the right to designate others in need of our assistance.

Plain-O Helpers focuses on household safety and maintenance. General household remodeling is not within our scope. On a case by case basis, Plain-O Helpers reserves the right to decide who they will or will not help in compliance with our nondiscrimination policy. If we are not able to provide service to an individual, we will do our best to refer them to a local tradesman.

The client must be the homeowner and occupant, with the exception of rental property needing installation of safety aids such as grab bars, ramps and smoke detectors or furniture adjustment. Installation in a rental property requires written authorization from the owner/agent.

The labor for all services provided will be free of charge, material is based upon need. Any donations to Plain-O Helpers in excess of the material cost will be gratefully accepted.

Volunteer Leadership Roles:

Members of Steering Committee

Voting members to be comprised of chairperson, one staff member from each affiliated organization, program coordinators, web administrator and four other at-large active volunteers who serve for a 3 year period. Duties are to provide leadership for the Plain-O Helpers program. Members are expected to attend quarterly meetings. After three consecutive unexcused absences, the absent member will be removed from the committee.

Steering Committee Chairperson

Duties of this volunteer position shall be to:

- Send a reminder announcement to all Steering Committee Members
- Prepare an Agenda
- Chair a quarterly scheduled Steering Committee Meeting
- Keep the meeting minutes
- Maintain Guidelines document

Web Administrator

Duties include:

- Administering the Plain-O Helpers Database and handle updates.
- Maintain the client's status regarding signature of a Client Liability Release form.
- Creating quarterly reports for the Steering Committee meeting and RSVP
- Sending yearly reports to each active volunteer.

Treasurer

Duties include:

- Collect and deposit donations
- Issue expense checks to reimburse volunteers for project expenses
- Report on the Treasury status for the Quarterly meetings

Client Calling Coordinator

Duties of this volunteer position shall be to become the advocate of the client by:

- Answering the Plain-O Helpers phone line and returning calls as necessary.
- Respond to email requests from the clients.
- The Client Calling Coordinator will do a cursory qualification of the prospective client.
- Update client information as necessary.
- Enter the project data provided by the client into the Plain-O Helpers data base.

Major Project Coordinator

Duties of this volunteer position shall be to:

- Organize the project list created by the Client Calling Coordinator.
- Call the client to plan a date and time to work the project
- Send an announcement to all volunteers
- Organize the volunteers on the date of the project and appoint team leaders if needed.
- Purchase anticipated material for project prior to work event.
- Add a project report to the database listing:
 - the volunteers working the project
 - time spent on the project, including travel
 - a brief report on each volunteer's accomplishments

Minor Project Coordinator

Duties of this volunteer position shall be to:

- Organize the project list created by the Client Calling Coordinator.
- Call the client to confirm the date and time for the project
- Send an announcement to all volunteers and organize teams.
- Purchase anticipated material for each project prior to work event.

- Accept donations and expense reports and turn them into the Treasurer.
- Add a project report to the database for each project listing
 - the volunteers working the project
 - time spent on the project, including travel
 - a brief report on each volunteer's accomplishments

Mowing Project Coordinator

Duties of this volunteer position shall be to:

- Organize the project list created by the Client Calling Coordinator.
- Call the client to confirm a mowing plan.
- Send an announcement to all volunteers asking for mowing volunteers
- Organize the volunteers on the date of the project and appoint team leaders as needed.
- Maintain equipment and purchase any supplies
- Add a project report for each mowing event to the database listing:
 - the volunteers working the project
 - time spent on the project, including travel
 - a brief report on each volunteer's accomplishments

Procurement

Duties include:

- Purchasing the supplies for the finalized minor project list
- Distribution of supplies at the Friday project meetings

Handyman Program

Repairs are typically of the type that could be performed by a team of volunteers within 3 hours over a couple of work sessions and may include but are not limited to:

- Yard work including mowing and trimming of grass, bushes and trees.
- Fence repair including replacement of rotted wood and straightening of posts.
- Interior home maintenance including replacement of lights, light fixtures, smoke alarms batteries, plumbing and electrical projects.
- Exterior home maintenance including fascia, soffit and gutter repairs. Some of these could take longer than the 3 hours and would fall into the Major projects classification.
- Construction projects such as the installation of bathroom grab bars and wheel chair ramps.

Repairs NOT provided are major roof repairs, foundation, structural work, major home refurbishment.

Property Owner Approval - Rental Property

The Property Owner Approval form must be used when there is an installation or modification in a property the client does not own. The "Property Owner Approval" form must be completed by the actual property owner prior to any installation or modification.

Request for Service/Release

Before clients can receive assistance from Plain-o Helpers, they are required to complete the "Request for Service and Release" form. This form must be reviewed and re-executed annually.

Explain to clients that this form:

- Releases Plain-O Helpers from liability resulting from problems that may arise as a result of services that are being provided or denied.
- Authorizes Plain-O Helpers to disclose information as necessary and appropriate about the client to organizations or individuals in the course of procuring services
- Informs clients they can revoke the authorization to disclose information, but they must do so in writing

Insist that clients read this form for themselves. Do not begin aid to the client until you have a signed form. Clients must provide the following:

- Their full name in the first blank at the top of the form
- The date they read the form
- Their signature that they read the form

