

Volunteer Guidelines

Thank you for your dedication to Oakland! Your well-being and satisfaction are important to us. All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a safe, courteous, and legal manner while participating in activities on City property or right-of-way. Please follow these guidelines:

General Conduct

- Always be courteous.
- Never use vulgar language or engage in threatening or disruptive actions.
- Never make unauthorized changes to City property or right-of-way, including landscaping.
- Keep foreign mulch and soils off City property and right-of-way, unless pre-authorized by Public Works.

General Safety

- Wear appropriate footwear, clothing, sunscreen, and eye protection.
- Stay hydrated.
- For Emergencies, call 911, or from a cell phone call 510-777-3333 (Oakland).
- In the event of injury while volunteering, please notify City of Oakland staff ASAP at adoptaspot@oaklandca.gov, 510-238-7630.

Tool Safety

- Do not use power tools.
- Carry tools carefully to avoid hitting others. For example, carry tools vertically with the tool pointed down.
- Always use the right tools for the job. Ask a team leader or City staff if you are unsure.
- Never allow children to play with tools or to use sharp tools.
- Always keep your tools close to you.
- When not using tools, neatly place them out of the way to prevent trip hazards.
- Count and clean your tools after an activity/cleanup.
- Return borrowed tools and supplies, as agreed. Tool Request Form available at www.oaklandadoptaspot.org.

Traffic Safety

- Stay out of the street when possible.
- Cross streets at signals or crosswalks, not mid-block.
- When working in or around a gutter, work from the sidewalk.
- If working near traffic, wear a bright reflective work vest or bright-colored clothing.
- Contact Environmental Services to assess or assist with traffic calming/coning.



Working near Waterways

- Always work with a partner near water.
- Avoid touching [poison oak](#). Bathe and wash clothes after suspected contact.
- Watch your footing on slopes and shorelines.
- Never allow children to work on steep slopes or near shorelines without adult supervision.

Debris Removal

- Always sweep, rake or shovel glass. Never pick up sharp objects with your hands.
- Never touch medical or hazardous waste (including hypodermic needles, automotive fluids, unknown fluids and materials). Report hypodermic needles to OAK311 and hazardous waste in the public right of way to the Oakland Fire Department at 510-444-3322.
- Separate collected materials into recycling, green waste and garbage.
- Dispose of recycling in your residential grey recycling cart.
- Dispose of small amounts of trash in your residential burgundy garbage cart. Larger amounts of trash placed in clear plastic City-issued bags can be picked up by Public Works. Bags supplied by request.
- Dispose of small amounts of green waste, such as leaves and trimmings, in your residential green cart. Waste Management will pick up green waste in paper bags placed next to your residential green cart on your normal trash pickup day.
- Debris boxes can be requested with one month's notice for large cleanups.

Working near Homeless Encampments

- Public Works does not authorize volunteers to work within homeless encampments.
- When staging debris for Public Works pickup, please leave volunteer debris bags at least 50 feet from a homeless encampment. This is to ensure that volunteer debris bags are not confused or mixed up with personal belongings of residents of the encampment. Bags placed too close to the encampment will not be picked up by Public Works.

Coordinating with Public Works to pick up City-issued trash or green waste bags

- **Park, median, and large volume pick-ups need pre-approval.** Please contact Environmental Services at least two weeks in advance if you anticipate needing City assistance disposing of large amounts of trash or green waste. At least one month notice is needed for debris box requests.
- Consolidate bags into one or few locations on street corners or near accessible litter containers in parks. Place bags in a safe location that does not block the street or public right of way, such as by a street corner or next to a litter container.
- For street cleanups, report collected debris to the Public Works Call Center at 311, or direct at (510) 615-5566 (Mon-Fri between 8am – 4:30pm), or report online 24/7 by emailing OAK311@oaklandca.gov or via the OAK311/See Click Fix smart phone app.
 - Report the type of debris, number of bags, and nearest address or intersection.
 - *Contact Environmental Services at least two weeks prior to your event to facilitate timely pickup.*
- Contact the Adopt a Spot program if you are having challenges with debris pickups.

Note: The City reserves the right to immediately withdraw support for any volunteer if, at the sole discretion of the City, the volunteer's conduct while participating in volunteer activities on City property or right-of-way is determined to be inconsistent with these Volunteer Guidelines or violates any local, state or federal law. Withdrawal of support may include repossession of loaned tools and revocation of related Adopt a Spot Agreements.

