

Volunteering in Colorado rises

Story by Esteban L. Hernandez • 1mo • 2 min read

Data AmeriCorps/U.S. Census Bureau; Map: Alex Fitzpatrick/Axios

Organized volunteering and [informal helping](#) are both rising after COVID-era dips, a new AmeriCorps report finds.

Zoom in: 34.7% of Coloradans volunteered through a formal organization at least once between September 2022-23, per the biennial [report](#) based on survey data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau.

- The state netted an 8.5-point rise in volunteering between 2021 and 2023, though the latest figure is far below the 2019 rate (42.2%).

Why it matters: Volunteer work is a bedrock of American civic life: assisting those in need and providing purpose to those who can help.

What they're saying: "When people go out and volunteer ... they see themselves [as] part of this larger community," Katy Walton, vice president of volunteer and community engagement at [Mile High United Way](#), tells us.

- The nonprofit focuses on providing low- to middle-income families with support including an [early-learning center](#), a program for young people leaving foster care, and free tax preparation services.

The big picture: Colorado's rate is slightly higher than the U.S. overall rate of 28.3%.

- That's up 5 percentage points from 2021, when the pandemic disrupted almost all facets of American life — volunteer work included.

The intrigue: The report also found a rise in the share of Americans who informally helped their neighbors, with more than 54% saying they lent a hand to someone nearby.

The bottom line: The findings paint a broad picture of "renewed engagement in American civic life," as the report puts it.

Esteban's thought bubble: This year, I committed to volunteering on Thanksgiving, something I've long told myself I would do.

- I'm excited — and a *little* nervous — to spend some time helping with [Mile High United Way's Turkey Trot](#) in Denver, which takes place Thursday.