

## AGENCY ORIENTATION TO STUDENTS

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*Once the agency and service-learner have agreed upon a placement and a specific assignment, the service-learner needs an orientation including:*

- ❑ An introduction to the agency, its Mission Statement as well as a historical background.
- ❑ A tour of the agency (ie. the physical layout)
- ❑ An explanation of the program (goals and objectives).
- ❑ A description of the client base, including numbers of clients served, socio-economic and other demographic data, and political subdivisions served.
- ❑ Community issues the program addresses and why there is a need for the service.
- ❑ A discussion of the service-learner's role, including specific tasks and specific benefits to the agency, specific importance to the population serviced, and to the community in general.
- ❑ Discuss specific policies and procedures related to the service placement.
- ❑ Will a background check be needed and how is this completed?
- ❑ An introduction to the staff. Although persons who will be supervising the volunteer should attend, it is important the volunteer be introduced to all agency personnel with whom contact will be made.
- ❑ Exchange contact information and discuss the best way to communicate with the agency and project supervisor.
- ❑ Discuss the amount of supervision the student's should expect. Will they see the supervisor daily? Will they be expected to do an amount of work on their own?
- ❑ A handbook or other written materials should be distributed to the service-learner during the orientation.
- ❑ Review confidentiality policies. Are pictures or video allowed?
- ❑ Establishment of a start date for students to begin their service hours. (Keep in mind students need to begin service by the fifth week of class.)
- ❑ Where do students check-in at the site for their first day of service? Is there a log book they will need to sign?
- ❑ How are students' hours recorded? Are timesheets kept at the agency or will students need to bring them each time they complete service hours?

- ❑ Where do students park when at the agency? Is there a cost associated with parking? Emphasize the student's responsibility in getting to and from the service site.
- ❑ Discuss risk and safety guidelines. Training students in safety procedures, potential dangers, and the risk management policies of your organization. If students have to drive (not recommended), the agency must get a copy of their drivers license and proof of insurance before students drive. In addition to proper education, waivers and informed consent forms can help document how organizations communicated potential risks and that participants understood those risks.
- ❑ Explain what students should do if harassment occurs. Whom do they contact?
- ❑ Review accident procedures at site and what to do if a student or client is hurt.
  
- ❑ If appropriate tell the students about yourself and how/why you work with the agency. Share some of your positive experiences to engage the students and make a personal connection with each of them.