

STEANS CENTER FOR COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE LEARNING

GUIDELINES FOR SERVICE LEARNERS

Your Responsibilities. DePaul University is committed to education that engages its students, faculty and staff in contributing positively to the quality of life in Chicago's communities. One way that DePaul does this is by offering service learning courses in a number of different disciplines. You are one of over 1,000 service-learning students that will serve in a community partner organization this year. As DePaul representatives to our partner organizations this quarter, we ask that you take seriously your responsibilities to these relationships. Please keep the following in mind:

- The community organization is an extension of the DePaul classroom. The University's Academic Integrity Policy and Code of Student Responsibility as detailed in the Student Handbook (see www.depaul.edu/~handbook/) apply to your interactions with the staff of the community organization and its clients.
- You will obey all applicable local, state and federal laws. Failure to do so may result in your suspension or expulsion from the University, as well as in civil or criminal prosecution.
- **You are a guest** in the organization for only 10 weeks, respectfully listen and learn from the staff at the organization, its clients, and the community that the organization serves.
- Community service is integral to this course. You will treat it as seriously as any other aspect of the course.
- The relationship is reciprocal. The organization that you will be serving is providing a learning experience to you in exchange for your service to the organization.
- Do what you say you will do. Be punctual, adhere to your schedule, arrive willing to serve.
- Treat confidential information as private and privileged. Confidential information may include organizational files, projects in progress, and clients' personal stories. Do not publicly share information about your experience at the community organization (e.g.—through social media) without first obtaining the community organization's written approval to do so.
- You must notify the Steans Center, and get written permission from the community organization, before filming or recording at your community organization (even if the final product will only be used to fulfill course requirements).
- Respect the important work that your organization is engaged in.
- Be flexible and anticipate that you may encounter new ideas and unfamiliar circumstances.
- Be open to feedback from your supervisor.
- Dress appropriately for the organization and the work.
- Know the procedures for a health or safety emergency.
- Take responsibility for your own safety.

Your Rights. As stated in the Code of Student Responsibility, "DePaul University is committed to providing and maintaining a healthy learning and working environment for all students, staff and faculty members." You have a right to:

- Serve in a safe environment. If you believe your safety is compromised or you experience any form of harassment, immediately contact your professor, site supervisor, and/or a Steans Center staff member.
- An orientation that clearly sets the organization's expectation of you.
- Know who your agency supervisor is, how to contact him/her, and feel free to contact him/her at appropriate times to discuss any aspects of your service commitment
- Receive at least one warning from the organization (which the professor and CbSL Office will be notified of immediately) before you are asked to terminate your service commitment
- Expect support from the Steans Center primarily through the Service Learning Coordinator who is assigned to the specific class or agency. You understand that in some circumstances a warning may not be appropriate, and your service commitment will be terminated immediately.

The information on the back of this form will be used by the Steans Center staff to help us keep track of your student service hours and provide reports of your service activity to your professor. We'll also provide first name, last name, email, and phone number information to the community organization or agency where you are placed for your service.

I have read, understood and agree to act in accordance with the standards articulated above.

Name (Printed): _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Course Name: _____

In case of an emergency, please contact Public Safety at (773) 325-7777.
To reach the Steans Center or a Service Learning Coordinator, please call (773) 325-8523.

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COMMUNITY CONDUCT & SAFETY TIPS

Chicago is a major metropolitan city; please take responsibility for your own safety!

Transportation To and From Your Service Site

- Seek quickest and safest public transportation route—ask your site supervisor if there is an alternative route you should be taking
- Be clear about the address of your site and the correct train/bus stops
- If you think you are lost, ask CTA personnel for clear directions
- Always try to go to your service site with a buddy
- Travel in the daylight as much as possible

Surroundings

- Be aware of your surroundings—look for and observe landmarks and community activity (i.e. stores/gas station/ local street culture)
- Stay out of alleys and unpopulated streets
- Look confident and know where you are going—the more nervous you are, the more attention you draw to yourself
- Dress inconspicuously—avoid provocative or political clothing and flashy or expensive jewelry
- Be conscious of attention you may receive while in the community. There are usually two kinds of attention: (1) a general greeting of “Hi” or “Hello” versus (2) “Rude” or inappropriate comments. Overall, it is good practice to respond to general greetings and ignore those comments that you deem inappropriate
- Respect the local community

At Your Service Site

- Maintain professional relationships with both the site’s staff and clients
- Know your site supervisor and Steans Center Service Learning Coordinator
- If anything happens out of the ordinary, please contact your Service Learning Coordinator immediately
- Volunteer only during the scheduled service hours—DO NOT go unannounced or during unscheduled times
- Know the site’s policies and procedures
- Don’t exchange personal information with the people you are providing service for (i.e. address, phone number, e-mail address)
- Avoid inappropriate language (i.e. profanity, innuendo, insensitive jokes)
- Remove yourself from awkward situations
- Don’t offer services to clients (i.e. gifts, give rides, provide money, offer home as shelter) or accept gifts from clients
- Be responsible for your personal belongings
- When in doubt—ask for help from either the site supervisor or a Steans Center staff member

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