



Superior Court of California County of San Bernardino

Goals and Guidelines for Juvenile Community Service

Community service has the potential to teach young people accountability, and to expose them to good role-models and mentors. Community service can also help a person to acquire skills and habits they will need to become law-abiding and productive citizens.

Goals

1. Accountability.

By holding a minor accountable for their actions, good community service opportunities teach minors that individual rights and freedoms are not only balanced by responsibilities but that there are consequences for improper or unlawful conduct.

2. Involve the community.

Community service should be local, and should allow the minor to give back to the same community damaged (or harmed) by the minor's wrongdoing. Ideally, community service will address a real community problem or local need.

3. Accomplish worthwhile tasks.

Cleaning up of a public park or facility, working in a homeless shelter to help those less fortunate, helping with community gatherings or a local fair are a few examples of meaningful community service. Janitorial work is often used as a type of community service, but providers are encouraged to consider other tasks, especially those that give the minor some insight to careers or other

behavioral options. Whatever the task, its successful completion should provide the minor with a sense of accomplishment.

4. Teach minor transferable skills.

A good community service program will teach the minor meaningful skills. This can include specific vocational training. For most minors, learning good work habits, reliability, timeliness, critical-thinking, citizenship, and getting along with others are all skills that a successful community service program can help a minor to learn.

5. Bring recognition and sense of accomplishment to the minor.

Whenever possible, the minor should be permitted to complete what they start. This will help the minor to see and take pride in what they have accomplished. An effective community service project will help the minor to develop a personal stake in the well-being of their community.

Guidelines

1. Community service must be performed for a not-for-profit organization.

2. The minor cannot personally profit from the activity – the minor cannot be paid for the activity.

3. The minor cannot receive credit for community service that is performed toward another obligation.

4. The service must be a benefit to others.

5. Community service for churches and religious organizations is acceptable, however, community service credit is not provided for proselytizing activities.

6. The minor is responsible for making arrangements to complete community service, and for providing proof of completion to the Court.

7. The minor is expected to be respectful of the agency or organization that is allowing the minor the privilege of performing community service.

8. The community service "job" assigned to a minor should be treated like a job by both the minor and the organization.

