AGENCY ORIENTATION FOR STUDENTS

Once the agency and service-learning student have agreed upon placement and a specific project, the student needs an orientation. The following are topics recommended to include.

- An introduction to the agency (mission statement, historical background, goals and objectives of the program)
- The community issues the program addresses and why there is a need for the service.
- A description of the client base (numbers of clients served, socio-economic and other demographic data served)
- A discussion of the service-learner’s role (specific tasks and how the student’s service fits within your agency)
- A discussion of specific policies and procedures in place at your agency related to the student’s service
- A tour of the agency (the physical layout including where students should park)
  Emphasize the student’s responsibility in getting to and from the service site.
- An introduction to agency staff
  The student’s direct supervisor should be present during orientation but introduce students to any staff they may encounter during their service.
- If appropriate, tell the students about yourself and how/why you work with the agency
  Share some of your experiences to engage the students in your work and begin making personal connections.
- Discuss the amount of supervision the student should expect
  Will they see the supervisor regularly? Will they be expected to be responsible for working on their own?
- Demonstrate how students will check-in at the site for their service
  Will they sign in each time or check in with the supervisor when they arrive?
- Discuss how the student’s hours are recorded and utilized by your agency
  Are volunteer hours used for funding/grant matches? Is the student responsible for a separate timesheet? Are those to be kept at the agency or will students need to be responsible for them?
- Provide a handbook or other written materials for the service-learner during the orientation.
- If a background check is needed for service, how is this completed?
- Review confidentiality policies, are pictures or video of the student service experience allowed?
- Discuss risk and safety guidelines.
  Train students in safety procedures, potential dangers, and the risk management policies of your organization
- Explain what students should do if harassment occurs. Whom do they contact?
- Review accident procedures at your site, what is the procedure if a student or client is hurt?
- Establish a start date for students to begin their service hours.
  Keep in mind students need to begin service by the fifth week of class.
- Exchange contact information before completing orientation
  Discuss the best way for students to communicate with the agency and the project supervisor and vice versa.