

FAQ about Junior Christian Service

Who am I serving?

Junior year you perform DIRECT Christian service hours for the poor/marginalized. Persons to serve include the elderly, disabled (physically or intellectually), sick, homeless, or poor.

Why am I serving the poor/marginalized?

The population you serve corresponds to the curriculum in your religion class. Junior year you study Morality. Learning about human dignity and social justice (among other topics) corresponds to the enactment of the principles you learn through your service hours. You are putting the corporal and spiritual works of mercy into action.

What does it mean to do DIRECT service?

It means you are interacting face-to-face with the poor/marginalized community you have chosen to serve. You are building relationships with those you are serving.

What are some examples of the types of places I could do my service hours?

- Hospitals
 - Often require medical testing to ensure your health before accepting you
 - Often requires more than a 40 hour commitment
- Nursing homes/assisted living centers
 - One in nearly every neighborhood
 - Usually flexible schedules
 - Good for people who enjoy working one on one
- Soup kitchens
 - Usually require scheduling a time slot to volunteer far in advance
- Homeless shelters
 - May occasionally require parent supervision
- Tutoring students at low-income schools
 - Usually involves one on one interaction
 - After school hours available
- Coaching kids with physical/mental disabilities
 - Great for students with an interest in sports

May I do service at an animal shelter?

No. Our goal is for you to build relationships among our human community.

Can I box food/books for shipment to poor countries? What about fundraising? Or doing paperwork for a homeless shelter?

No. While this is service, it is NOT direct service. You are only indirectly helping the poor.

How do I know if the position they assign me qualifies for my required hours?

If you are getting paid, it does NOT count. The required Christian service hours are volunteer (i.e. free). If you are simply taking the place of a paid employee, the hours will not count.

How many hours do I need?

40 hours.

Must I complete them all at the same service placement?

Yes.

Why?

Not only does it require a significant amount of time to build relationships, you are also making a commitment to the organization. St. John's has high standards for students honoring their commitments.

What if there is a problem at my service site – can I switch?

Any potential switching of organizations MUST be approved by Campus Ministry. Only certain rare circumstances justify switching once you have made a commitment. For example, if the organization is not providing you with DIRECT service opportunities, then you may switch to ensure you fulfill your requirement.

May I complete them over the summer prior to my junior year?

Yes. The site must be pre-approved by Campus Ministry in 201. A signed Preapproved Summer Service Proposal must be completed prior to beginning the service at the end of the current school year. The log sheet and reflection assignment are due on the first day of school in the fall. If you fail to finish your hours or to complete the essay by then, you will be required to start over.

May I split my hours between the summer and during the school year?

No. Hours must be completed in the summer OR during the year. No combinations will be accepted.

What are extracurricular hours?

Extracurricular hours are service hours that are beyond what is required in any given academic year. If you perform more hours than the required 40, which may be direct or indirect, you may submit an Extracurricular Hours form to Campus Ministry in 201. The form is available for printing on the website.

Why would I want to record those?

Extracurricular hours will be recorded on your transcript and colleges will know that you went above and beyond what is required in terms of serving the community.

How do I find a place to do my hours?

There are several options:

- If you know the type of service you are interested in, do an internet search for placements in your area.
- See Campus Ministry – We can make suggestions based on your interests and location requirements.
- If you are not sure what you'd like to do – see Campus Ministry! We can figure out what might be a good fit for you.
- Talk to Seniors – ask where they did their service and what placements they recommend.
- Check out the SJC website – it has a (non-comprehensive) list of potential placements.

How do I get my Christian Service Agreement signed?

DO:

Politely call and ask for an appointment to talk or meet with the Volunteer Coordinator or other person in a position of management.

Leave a message if no one answers with your name, contact info, and reason for calling.

Show up to an appointment on time and well dressed.

Ask what volunteer opportunities are available.

Show your enthusiasm for serving the population that the organization serves.

Ensure they have 40 hours of volunteer work available for you.

Ask when and how often you can volunteer.

Ask for a full time employee to be your supervisor, who can verify the hours once you've completed them.

DO NOT:

Demand a meeting.

Have your parents call or set up meetings for you.

Ask a parent to be your supervisor, even if they work at or run the organization.

Show up late or disheveled to appointments.

Hand over the form without explaining the purpose of your interest in volunteering.

Use an organization's failing to call you back as an excuse not to turn in your form.

How should I conduct myself at my placement site?

DO:

Show up when you sign up.

Be courteous and follow instructions from staff.

Bring your log sheet and have your supervisor sign it each time you volunteer.

DO NOT:

Fail to show up at your scheduled time for volunteering without calling and letting the organization know. They are counting on you.

Wait until the last minute to complete your hours.