

CONTACT PERSON/GROUP LEADER PLANNING GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Subject	Page
Staying in touch with ASP	2
Preparing Your Group.....	3
Recruiting (Adult) Group Leaders.....	4
Travel and Transportation Arrangements	5
At the Center.....	7
Typical Home Repairs	8
Crew Readiness	8
Forms and fees Matrix.....	10
Summary	11

Staying in Touch with ASP:

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We need to hear from you if –

- Your contact person(CP) changes.
- Your group size changes.
- Your trip date changes.
- You want to cancel your trip.
- You need to know what your balance is.
- You have any questions at all.
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Just prior to your trip date (2 weeks) you will also be communicating with the staff from the center where you are assigned. The information that you should be prepared to discuss is what you have provided on the **Pre-Trip Communication form** as well as the **Construction Information Form (CIF)**

Preparing Your Group:

Once you have submitted your group application along with the \$95 fee, you will be added to the schedule. ASP cannot always guarantee that your group will be assigned to your week of first choice, so you should be prepared with a second or third option.

Pre-trip planning should include such things as fundraising, coordination of trip details, review of travel costs, group insurance while in transit, packing guidelines, transportation arrangements, construction skills assessment, spiritual readiness, dietary needs, etc. Note that ideas for fundraising are provided on the website.

You will want to make sure your church or group has insurance that will cover accidental injuries for anyone in your group. You can acquire temporary travel/accident insurance from the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries (See Medical Information and Temporary Insurance)

It is important to allow time in the early stages to develop your group as a team. Time spent together and shared information will strengthen the bond and readiness of all team members. When you do your team building, you will need to include a review of [ASP Expectations, Rules, and Regulations, ASP Safety Manual, and ASP 3 S's - Sensitivity, Safety, and Stewardship](#). All volunteers must have read these documents prior to the trip.

Take time to review materials and learn about the local culture as well. The project area will likely be culturally diverse and distinct from that of the volunteers. Volunteers must be sensitive to and appreciative of that culture, so your group should plan to listen and learn, be open to new ideas, and be capable of making adjustments to the local culture.

Prepare your group for communal living. There is a lot of give and take when living with 70+ other people, whether you know them or not. This means sleeping on an air mattress, cot, or bunk in the same area as other volunteers. There could be limited accessibility to showers, depending on the facilities available at each center. Some centers are air conditioned, some are not. Every facility will be different; we do not know from year to year which facilities will be available for us to use so therefore, we cannot guarantee consistency of accommodations from one year to the next.

Your group must understand the daily schedule of an ASP volunteer, and that the work day continues until 4 or 4:30 p.m.

Recruiting (Adult) Group Leaders:

The most important decision you make as a Group Leader in planning your ASP experience is the adults you choose to send with your youth. If you don't send strong adults, the trip you have worked so hard to plan and coordinate could turn out to be a disappointment for everyone. The group leaders will be transporting your youth, watching out for their safety on work sites, helping them to follow the rules at the center, leading them in discussions, motivating the youth to learn and practice social skills, and being a role model. Group Leaders play a vital role! **Group leaders must be at least 19 years old.**

We recommend that Group Leaders be identified early on in your trip planning process. They should know your youth, and have had some experience interacting with them. Each group should also be accompanied by a leader with some basic knowledge of carpentry or other building skills.

Give prospective group leaders an idea of what they are signing up for. They should be made aware of what the sleeping, eating, and bathing arrangements will be like, and be prepared to do the driving to and from the work sites each day. The group leaders are expected to participate in all aspects of ASP. Make certain they understand what the daily schedule will be like. They will be expected to take on the responsibility of overseeing that volunteers abide by the published rules and regulations both at the center and at the worksite.

All adult leaders are required to have a current national background check before participating in ASP. Please inform them that this is a mandatory requirement.

Travel and Transportation Arrangements:

Plan your travel so that your group arrives at the ASP center between 2:30 and 3:30 p.m. on Sunday. **If you are a new group, please plan to arrive at 2:00 p.m.** Please do not arrive early because the staff will not be ready for you. If you have to arrive late, it can be difficult to fit in all of the prep information that you'll need to get started on your first day at the work site, so it is important to notify the staff of any deviations to your schedule. If you've been given better directions to the center by the staff during your contact call, it is wise to be flexible in your travel plans. It is always best to use the better directions when traveling the back roads of Central Appalachia.

On departure day (Saturday), everyone will pack up between 7 a.m. and 10a.m. Some groups elect to depart before dawn due to the length of their drive home. We encourage everyone to move out without too much delay so that the staff can prepare for the next group that will be arriving. They need time to get prepared and rested themselves.

For both arrival times and departure times, you may want to arrange for a phone tree to notify those at home that you have arrived safely or that you are heading for home. This is especially helpful since many centers are located in areas with little or no cell phone service and it can be difficult for the staff if more than just a couple volunteers are using their main and sometimes only phone line.

When you arrange for your transportation, you need to plan to have one vehicle for each work crew. This is necessary because the work sites will not be in close proximity to each other and no drop-offs are permitted. Also, there is no extra transportation available at each center. **Vehicles should be able to transport up to 7 people, along with tools, equipment, coolers, lunches, and building supplies or materials to the worksites each day.**

We have found that larger vans work best. If mini-vans or cars are used, you need to prepare for the limitations of these vehicles in the areas where ASP clients may live. There may not be adequate clearance for rough terrain, along with the fact that the smaller vehicles cannot accommodate hauling building materials in addition to the work crew. Large buses as a group's only means of transportation are strictly prohibited. Pickup trucks are not good for transporting work crew members, but are great for transporting materials. Consider a trailer or put a carrier on top of the vehicle to provide more space to haul materials, etc.

When groups come with vehicles that are not capable of hauling supplies to the worksite, they should be prepared for long delays in receiving what they need for their project. The summer staff can make deliveries, but because they must make multiple site visits for reasons other than supply delivery, there is no guarantee of timing on their arrival. **If a group can bring along a pickup truck, the driver can serve in a floater role and help the staff make deliveries to multiple sites, resulting in faster delivery times.**

Ideas for securing vehicles:

- Present your request to the church congregation.
- Borrow from another church.
- Rent vans at home for the trip, or on the way to Appalachia.

Preparing Your Vehicles:

- Thoroughly check your vehicles before your trip.
- Protect vehicle interior with cardboard mats, plastic sheets, old blankets .
- Keep an extra set of keys for each vehicle.

Each vehicle should have a copy of travel plans, the center's phone number and a first aid kit. If your group caravans and a vehicle become separated, be sure your drivers know to call the center and let them know of their situation/problem. If you have cell phones in each vehicle, remember to exchange phone numbers with each other.

When you figure your trip costs, understand who is going to pay for what and how. Be sure to consider the cost of the van rental and fuel (remember that you'll be driving to and from work sites each day). You should also plan for the number of meals you will have on the road and whether or not each person will cover this on their own. Will there be other trip expenses such as overnight expenses or expenses for other scheduled activities along the way?

(see ASP Mission Trip Budget Worksheet)

At The Center:

As is stated in the ASP Expectations, Rules, and Regulations, the ASP staff has overall responsibility for all activities at the center. Directions given by the staff are to be strictly observed. **There is a dress code for the center which is outlined in the ASP Expectations, Rules and Regulations. Please emphasize the importance of abiding by these guidelines.**

All volunteers must plan to participate in the activities that are held at the center, including meals and chores, as well as the evening programs (EG's = Evening Gatherings) that are conducted each night. Volunteers are expected to help keep the center clean, to help with loading and unloading of building materials, and to keep the tool and supply area organized.

Chores at the center will include cleanup after meals, emptying trash cans, cleaning bathrooms, etc. Each group will be given an assignment to complete each day. At the end of your workweek you will have additional chores to help get the center ready for the next group of volunteers. If you are scheduled during the last week of the summer program at one of our year round centers, your chores will be geared toward readying the center for the upcoming Adult program. If you are at one of our rented facilities during the last week, your chores will be geared towards getting the center back in 'pre-ASP condition' so that we are welcome to return the following summer.

Groups are asked to participate in or lead morning devotions (5-10 minutes) each morning at 7:15 a.m. Each group should be prepared to conduct devotions on one morning during your week. Be sure to remind the center staff that you are prepared to do so. The staff will also request that a volunteer say the blessing before each meal. It is nice when groups have identified someone ahead of time to do this.

The address, phone number and Center Director information should be provided to your church office and family members in case of emergency. This information will be made available two weeks prior to the start of the summer program on the ASP website so that volunteers will know where they are going and how to make contact there.

Please make certain your volunteers know to leave their laptop computers at home. There is no wireless capability at the ASP centers, and no one will be allowed to use ASP phone lines for laptop computers. Phones are at a premium at ASP's centers. They are strictly for business and emergency use by the staff.

Typical Home Repairs:

The types of projects you'll likely be working on will fall under these categories:

- Roofing/Drywall/Insulation
- Stairs/ Building porches
- Painting/ Building wheelchair ramps
- Foundation repair/ Floor repair

The ASP Home Repair Ministries has the difficult responsibility of selecting which homes will be worked on. They will visit each home, consult with the homeowner and make the determination of what can be repaired by the groups of volunteers who have signed up to serve. They must take into consideration the skill levels of the volunteer groups, unanticipated repairs that could arise or work that takes longer than expected, weather, and the fact that different work groups will work at different paces.

The ASP staff at your center will be available to provide construction supplies and tools. They will also deliver what the group leaders are unable to haul to the worksite. They are available to give support and guidance at the worksite, but it is the Group Leader who is ultimately responsible for overseeing volunteers at all times and for supervising the repairs at the assigned home. The effectiveness of the communication between the Group Leader and the ASP Staff will ensure proactive discussion regarding project status, supply requirements, quality control at the worksite, and an overall positive ASP experience for the family, for the volunteers, and for the staff.

Crew Readiness:

It is important to understand the construction skill level of each of your volunteers. ASP provides a document called the **Construction Information Form** for you to complete and **fax or email to your center two weeks prior to your trip**. This form (CIF) facilitates your ability summarize the various areas of expertise and levels of experience that your crew will bring to a work project. The center staff can then assess crew abilities versus project needs and make decisions on which groups to assign to the various projects that are planned. It is critical that you as the group leader conduct a thorough assessment of your team to ensure the effective execution and completion of ASP projects. This information will be discussed during your **pre-trip phone call** with the center staff. We need to stress how important it is for you to fax the document to the center so that it is available for reference during the call. Center location details and fax numbers will be available on the ASP website.

Each team member should be equipped with a 'basic' tool kit. Basic tool requirements are as follows: a tool belt, a 1 lb. hammer, a measuring tape (25' minimum), along with two carpenter pencils, a pair of safety glasses, ear protection, and work gloves. We also recommend that you have N95 dust masks available for members of your group in case your project involves working in dusty conditions or handling insulation. All volunteers are required to dress properly for the worksite, which means long pants, shirts with sleeves, and sturdy shoes. Work boots are preferable if you have them, but not required.

It is vitally important that each work crew come equipped with water jugs, water bottles, coolers, and also a first aid kit. At the beginning of each work day, the crew should plan to stop and load up with ice for the day. It is important to keep your food cool, and to keep your volunteers adequately hydrated.

The group leaders will function as site-managers and communicators. These leaders should be prepared to act as liaisons between the work crew and the center staff, reporting progress and any special concerns during the week. It is the group leader's responsibility to abide by the worksite instructions from the staff and to keep all of the members of the work crew busy without jeopardizing the quality of the work.

Every crew must have a vehicle. There are no exceptions to this requirement. If you have a floating volunteer, you must also have a vehicle for that person.

Cell phones, I-Pods, etc. are not appropriate for the work site. If folks must bring them on the trip, remind them that they should be kept in the vehicles while you are working for your family.

Forms and Fees:

ASP FEES AND FORMS MATRIX FOR SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM

Group Application Fee	\$95 per group	Due With Application
Payment Form	\$50 per person - required to reserve each volunteer's space	Due November 1*
Payment Form	\$175 per person	Due March 1
<u>Pre-Trip Communication Form</u>	We plan for your group based on the information you provide on this form	Mail, Email, or fax this form to ASP by May 10
<u>Covenant Sheet Form</u>	Each member of your group acknowledges having read ASP Rules and Regs, 3S's and ASP Safety Manual Mail or fax to ASP	Mail or fax to ASP 2 weeks pre-trip along with Volunteer Trip Balance
Payment Form	\$85 per person	Due to ASP 2 weeks pre-trip
<u>Construction Information Form</u>	Summary of your group's skill level. Influences staff project selection for your group.	Fax or email to your center 2 weeks pre-trip
<u>Volunteer Statement and Registration Form</u>	Liability release and medical information form – must be notarized. Bring to the Center	Due upon arrival at your center Also, bring one set of copies for each vehicle
<u>Weekly Family and Volunteer Work Crew Roster Form</u>	Necessary for purposes of locating a volunteer in case of an emergency Bring to the Center	Due upon arrival at your center Bring 2 copies

*Applications received between November 2 and January 31, \$50 per person due within 30 days.
Applications received after February 1, full \$225 per person deposit due with application.

To Summarize:

- Call ASP with any questions, any changes, or any concerns.
- Proactively plan with your group:
 - Culture
 - Travel
 - Rules and Regulations/Safety and Sensitivity
- Recruit and train solid adult leaders – a background of construction experience is a plus.
- Coordinate your travel schedule and vehicle needs.
- Become familiar with what happens at the center.
- Understand what you'll be doing – comprehend the extent of typical home repairs.
- Complete forms and make payments on time.