

How to Create Service Projects: A Lodge Guide

Lodge service projects on behalf of elder fraternal family members are a meaningful way to reconnect members in need with the lodge, give volunteer members an opportunity to give back, and to partner with Masonic youth. Follow these steps to create a service project at your lodge.

1. Discuss the service project idea with your lodge.

- At your stated meeting, introduce the idea of a service project to your lodge.
- If possible, include youth order leaders in this meeting. If they are not able to attend, delegate a brother to contact them following the meeting.
- Identify the kind of projects your members and youth order members will be willing to take on, based on their skills and interests (yard clean-up, home repairs, housework, etc.)
- Ask interested members to sign up on the **Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet**.
- Based on participation and members' skills, establish a goal for how many fraternal family members you would like to assist over a set period of time. (For example: Help two members every month).

2. Identify members in need.

- Ask your members if they know of any fraternal family members who might need support. (The Charity Committee is a great place to start.)
- Publicize your service project at stated meetings, sweetheart events, family nights, and other events.
- Place an announcement in your Trestleboard along with information of who members can contact if they would like to be a recipient of a service project.
- Call members and widows who don't come to lodge regularly to see if they could use support. Use the **Phone Script: Contacting Members Regarding Service Projects**.
- *Note: Recipients of service projects may be more willing to allow members to assist them if the service project is framed as an opportunity for the lodge and youth orders to give back.*

Emphasize that the lodge and youth are trying to meet charitable goals through these efforts so that recipients don't feel as though their needs are a burden.

3. Meet with members in need of assistance.

- After speaking with the member in need on the phone, plan a home visit so that you can fully understand their needs and how the lodge might be able to help.
- During this visit, complete the **Home Visit Checklist** to assess the member's situation.
- Following the visit, complete the **Home Visit Project Form** to determine the scope of the needs and the project request.

4. Determine which projects are eligible and most impactful.

- Once all home visits for potential projects are completed, the Charity Committee will review the completed Home Visit Checklists and Home Visit Project Forms to assess members' collective needs. Prioritization will be based on urgency, time, and feasibility. (If your lodge does not have a Charity Committee, this can be determined by the Outreach Committee or Executive Committee).
- The brother who conducted each home visit should contact the members to let them know if their request has been accepted, as well as a rough timeline for the project.

5. Publicizing the project

- Lodge leadership will announce which projects have been selected along with financial and volunteer needs for implementation. (Announcements should be made at stated meetings, as well as in the Trestleboard, lodge app, or through email.)
- Delegate one or two members to announce the project to other lodges and your inspector to increase participation and impact.
- If you have not already involved Masonic youth, reach out to local youth orders to invite their participation.

6. Launching the Project

- One or two brothers will be designated as project leaders. They will be responsible for organizing a project sign-up sheet. (All participating members, spouses, and Masonic youth should be included on this sheet.)
- The project leaders will also complete a **Home Visit Project Management Sheet** to detail tasks and participation.

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- As the project progresses, continue to communicate with the recipient to ensure they know what to expect, and include them in the planning process. If possible, include their family members. Building strong connections with the person being assisted will lead to more satisfactory outcomes and an overall positive experience for both recipients' and the lodge.