



An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh
The Probation Service
COMMUNITY SERVICE

What is Community Service?

A Guide for you if you are before the Courts



Community Service

What to expect if you are placed on a Community Service Order

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER?

Community Service is an order made by a Court as an alternative to prison. If you are sentenced to a Community Service Order, you will have to work unpaid until the order is satisfactorily completed. A Community Service Order is for a maximum of 240 hours and a minimum is 40 hours work.

If you plead guilty or are convicted at Court on a charge for which you could go to prison the Judge can, as an alternative to imposing a prison sentence, make a Community Service Order. Before doing so the Judge will ask the Probation Service to prepare a report to see if you are suitable and willing to do the work.

A Community Service Order can only be made if you agree and fully understand what is expected of you.

When a Community Service Order is made you will meet with a Probation Officer who will discuss the Order with you.

A contract will be drawn up with you including:

- dates and times for the work to be completed
- the type of work that you will do and
- where you will be working.

WHAT WORK WILL I HAVE TO DO?

Community Service is intended to help the community. You may work in a supervised group carrying out practical tasks such as painting, gardening or graffiti removal or you may be on an individual placement helping in a charity shop or in a food centre providing meals for persons in need.

WHO SUPERVISES THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER?

Depending on where you are placed to do your Community Service, you will be supervised either by staff from the Probation Service, called Community Service Supervisors or by staff from another organisation. A record will be kept of your attendance.

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- Community Service is intended to help the community.

WHAT MUST I DO TO CARRY OUT THE ORDER?

You must:

- Attend an initial interview with your Probation Officer at which placement arrangements will be made and a work contract signed.
- Attend community service on time and in a fit state to work.
- You must not be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or solvents. If you are judged unfit for work you will be sent home and appropriate action taken.
- Ensure that any absences are acceptable and backed by a medical certificate or other form of proof.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT KEEP TO THE CONDITIONS?

The Probation Officer will bring your case back to court for the Judge to make a decision which may include you going to prison.

WHAT IF I HAVE PROBLEMS?

Talk to the Community Service Supervisor or the Probation Officer as soon as possible. It is worth getting advice and help before problems become a major crisis and affect your working on the Community Service Order.

HOW CAN I MAKE A COMPLAINT?

You can talk to your Community Service Supervisor or Probation Officer or you can contact the Senior Probation Officer for your area at the local Probation Service office.

If you don't know where your local Probation Service office is you can phone the Probation Service at (01) 8173600 for details.

You can access our Customer Complaints Procedure on our website at www.probation.ie

HOW CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION?

You can contact the Probation Service:

- **PHONE:** (01) 8173600
- **EMAIL** communityservice@probation.ie
- **WEBSITE** www.probation.ie