



2023

Program Handbook

Compiled by the Center for FaithJustice

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
ServiceworX Program Overview	2
What to Bring on Program	3
Contacting Staff and Participants While on Program	4
Participant Conduct on Program	5
Staff: Who is Leading These Programs?	6
Safety and Security	7
Medical Emergency Protocols	8
Health and Wellness on Programs	8

Introduction

Dear ServiceworX Participants and Families:

The Center for FaithJustice (CFJ) is excited for you/your child to attend our JusticeworX experience this summer! CFJ's mission is to inspire the next generation of leaders by creating programs to serve those in need and educate for justice in the Catholic tradition.

The Mission of the WorX Programs

Named for the biblical passage that inspired them, "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:26), our signature WorX programs unfold through week-long immersion retreats incorporating equal parts direct service to those in need and intensive reflection on Catholic Social Teaching. The mission of the WorX programs is to provide transformative experiences of encounter and community service rooted in the Gospel call to kinship with those experiencing poverty and marginalization.

ServiceworX offers opportunities for hands-on service through a vast network of regional partnership organizations in their parish communities. These service experiences, coupled with extensive programming developed by CFJ, inspire participants to become lifelong beacons of service, love, and justice for the world.

While our programs are inspired by the principles of the Christian faith and Catholic social teaching, we encourage and welcome staff and participants of all faiths to participate in our programs!

ServiceworX Program Overview

ServiceworX takes place at local parishes and schools and their surrounding communities. It is a life-changing program for junior high students that explores service and social justice through the lens of the Catholic faith during a week-long service immersion day program (approximately 4 hours Sunday with times varying by location; Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.).

ServiceworX is facilitated by our passionate staff who help participants live their faith through engaging prayer services, lively discussions, and dynamic community service. We design and staff the week-long, service immersion day program at the participating parish or school, with outreach to local social service agencies and non-profit organizations. ServiceworX is a fun-filled way to help young people learn the meaning of faith and service.

General Program Structure

ServiceworX begins on a Sunday (start time varies by parish) at the host parish/school. Participants will report to a predetermined meeting location within the parish/school and

parents must accompany their children for sign-in every day. Sunday is an opportunity for the staff and participants to meet, go to mass together, get to know each other, and talk about what the week ahead will contain. It is also a chance for parents to ask any remaining questions they might have regarding the upcoming week. Parents must come in to sign their children out at the end of each program day.

The Friday schedule remains the same except for the closing prayer service at 2:30 p.m. where parents are invited to join the participants. Friday's activities will conclude at approximately 3:00 PM. The staff attempts to schedule the closing prayer service at a time when parents can join their children, though that is not always possible.

We encourage teens to *PARTICIPATE, NOT ANTICIPATE!* The weekly schedule and planned activities are intentionally not revealed to participants ahead of time in order to help them be fully invested in the present moment.

Arrival and Departure

Given its impact on the entire program, late arrivals at the beginning of the day and early departures at the end of the day are strongly discouraged. Drop off & pick up times are covered in the email families will receive about 10 days prior to the program. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must accompany participants into the building for drop off/sign in and pick up/sign out.

Parents will be asked to initial off on a verbal COVID-19 symptom check each morning during sign-in. If your student is experiencing COVID symptoms, they must remain home. Please see our COVID guidelines on page 12 of this handbook for more information.

What to Bring on Program

Packing List

Necessary Items:

- Bagged lunch
- Reusable water bottle
- Sunscreen & Bug Spray
- Baseball Cap or Hat for Outdoor settings
- (OPTIONAL) \$20 cash or check to purchase a WorX Program T-Shirt

Dress Code

Students should wear closed-toed shoes and modest shorts and t-shirts that they aren't worried about ruining with dirt, paint, etc. While it won't be a problem at most sites, it's always best to anticipate that clothing could be damaged when going on service weeks. We ask that all participants make sure that shorts and tops are of appropriate length and adequately covering. Shorts should be no shorter than 3 inches above a participant's knees and t-shirts should have sleeves (rather than crop tops, tank tops, etc.). CFJ has a zero-tolerance policy for clothing with

inappropriate logos, words, or images. Our dress code comes from our service site partners and will be strictly enforced to ensure safety and continued partnership. Please help us by noting what your child is wearing. Thanks for your cooperation!

Bringing Personal Belongings on Program

Please do **not** bring smartwatches, tablets, or any other valuables that you fear may be damaged or misplaced. If you bring a camera, be sure that it is in your possession to prevent a loss. Cell phones will be returned to participants at the end of the program day before parents arrive. All items brought on program are at your own risk. Even when collected by staff, CFJ/JusticeworX and the host site **are not responsible for any loss or damage of personal items.**

Contacting Staff and Participants While on Program

Cell Phone Policy on Program

An essential part of all of the WorX programs is that we collect the participants' cell phones and smartwatches at registration. Participants' phones will be collected during sign-in and they will get them back at the end of each day right before check-out. As you are comfortable, we encourage you to have your students leave their technology at home.

Why do we do this? Over many years of conducting these experiences, we have found that this creates a more focused environment in which all participants can have the best possible experience. A cell-phone-free environment helps participants to focus on God, each other, and all those they are meeting while at service. In our tech-driven world, it is a rare gift to shut out the noise and be fully present, and we hope we can give that to your children during ServiceworX.

We understand this is unnerving to many parents and participants, but we ask you to support this policy and provide encouragement to your child in advance of their program week. Even our most resistant participants often tell us that they ultimately come to appreciate their time without cell phones.

The staff will have their phones at all times to ensure they are able to communicate in an event of emergency.

CFJ Emergency Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns during the week that are NOT emergency-related, please call our office at 609-498-6216 and dial the extension for Brooke Foster or Collin Quigley.

If an emergency should arise on your end (for instance, illness or family death) and you need to reach your child, please call our CFJ main office line at **609-498-6216 and dial extension 1** for the **Summer WorX Emergency Hotline**. This hotline rings until answered, and our office staff will immediately contact the on-site team leader.

Should an emergency arise while your child is at ServiceworX, please know that our first call after 911 will be to the parents/guardians. A member of the CFJ Team will then keep you updated and, if necessary, meet you at the hospital.

Participant Conduct on Program

Warning Policy

Certain misdemeanors on ServiceworX will result in an official warning from the program and/or CFJ staff. CFJ holds the right to ask participants to leave the program if the misdemeanors continue to happen after a warning has been given. Behaviors, actions, or situations that will result in an official warning include but are not limited to the following:

- Bullying of any nature: CFJ does not tolerate bullying of any form on programs. By coming on program, participants agree to uphold and respect the dignity of each person they encounter. If a participant (or group of participants) is seen to be instigating and/or perpetuating a situation that makes another participant (or group of participants) uncomfortable or that the staff deems as inappropriate — including, but not limited to, inappropriate comments, intentional exclusion, or use social media platforms to make discriminatory or inappropriate remarks — the team leader and/or CFJ staff hold the right to speak with the participant(s) directly to investigate the situation and issue an official warning.
- Leaving the group and/or service sites: By coming on the program, participants agree to stay with their designated group and program staff whether they are at the host site or service site. Under no circumstances should participants leave their group or leader without first informing and getting permission from the program staff. Should a participant leave their service site and/or any spaces where the whole group is meant to be together, without informing a leader, CFJ holds the right to give the participant an official warning.
- Reckless treatment of property/equipment: Participants agree to respect and take care of the property, equipment, and spaces of CFJ, the parish, and their community partners. Should a participant be reckless with their use of any of these spaces or materials that leads to damage or could lead to damage, CFJ holds the right to give the participant an official warning.
- Repeated Violations of Program Ground Rules: At the beginning of each program, staff will go over a series of ground rules and community agreements for the week. During this time, participants will have the opportunity to add any ground rules or agreements they would like the community to uphold during the program. Any repeated and blatant disregard or violations of these ground rules and agreements may result in an official warning and/or dismissal from the program.

Early/Immediate Dismissal from Program

Some misdemeanors will result in immediate dismissal from the program. Situations, behaviors, and actions resulting in immediate dismissal include:

- Drugs and alcohol: The Center for FaithJustice has a zero-tolerance policy for smoking, drugs, and alcohol on all programs. The possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited. Use and/or possession and distribution of drugs and drug paraphernalia are strictly prohibited. Use and/or possession and distribution of prescription drugs without proper medical documentation is also strictly prohibited. Note that this includes all illegal materials and vaping substances, including THC, cannabis, CBD, etc.
 - Violation of the above will result in the participant's immediate dismissal from the program. Furthermore, if a participant gives any leader or staff member suspicion of being in violation of the above, CFJ reserves the right to search the participant's personal items. If you are a participant on the WorX Programs as part of a parish group, the codes of conduct in place at said parish also apply.
- Inappropriate physical contact (of sexual, violent, or bullying nature): CFJ has a zero-tolerance policy for inappropriate physical contact. Participants who are caught engaging in inappropriate physical contact will be asked to leave the program immediately.

Refund Policy for Early Dismissal

Participants who are asked to leave the program due to misdemeanors will **NOT** be issued a refund. The participant's family is responsible for any expenses to cover property damages and/or transportation as a result of the dismissal.

Staff: Who is Leading These Programs?

Our WorX programs are staffed by experienced working professionals and trained young adults who are passionate about putting their faith into action and working with teenagers. Our program staff are vetted, go through an application process, undergo a background check, and are trained to accompany young people on our faith-based service experiences. All CFJ summer staff and volunteers are VIRTUS (Protecting God's Children) trained and certified.

Below is an overview of the different key staffing roles present on each WorX program:

Team Leader - typically 25+ years old, experience working with our programs and/or youth ministry. Serves as an extension of the CFJ office staff on each of our trips. Responsible for overall program management, leading daily staff meetings, assigning responsibilities as necessary, and having a pulse on the group as a whole. This person understands group dynamics and can support the staff. They are able to manage a crisis and think on their feet. They are responsible for managing/overseeing the daily operations of WorX trips, serving as a constant role model for participants, consistently engaging participants and getting to know them, leading prayer services, leading staff meetings at night, handling parent interactions and concerns, dealing with

conflicts that may arise, offering team members feedback when appropriate, and constantly keeping track of all participants.

WorX Program Facilitator - a general term used to describe the individuals (paid/volunteer) leading/supporting our programs. These folks will be assisting in the daily operations of WorX trips, serving as a constant role models for participants, consistently engaging participants and getting to know them, leading prayer services, getting materials ready, and accompanying participants while at their service sites.

LeaderworX - these individuals are members of the young adult cohort staying at our CASA retreat house each summer, living in community, and discerning their own role in this world as it relates to their passion, calling, ministry, career goals, leadership development, etc. These tend to be individuals in or just out of college (ages 19-25). They play an important role as “on the ground” staff, each working with small groups, leading small group activities, assisting in large group programming, managing community time, icebreakers, and team builders.

Safety and Security

CFJ’s Child Safety Protocol

CFJ requires that all staff and volunteers immediately report suspicions of child abuse, neglect, and/or sexual abuse to their supervisor. Staff and volunteers must follow all aspects of the CFJ Code of Conduct at all times or risk dismissal from the organization.

Fire & Safety

The program staff will give instructions, as well as rules regarding overall safety/precautions at the site and policies for the site (doors, gates, being inside, being with group, etc). This will include referencing and reviewing specific protocols for that program/location.

Security of Program Location and Service Sites

When selecting service sites, safety is always our first priority. All service sites are managed by agencies with which we have developed a previous working relationship. Our second condition is that they serve populations in need. While many sites work with those who are economically poor, we also work with sites that serve those poor in spirit, loneliness, etc., and fulfill our call to serve through the Corporal Works of Mercy. You may find a list of our community partners [here](#) on our website.

CFJ performs site visits and inspects our program host locations thoroughly prior to sending our adult volunteers, summer staff, and participants.

Medical Emergency Protocols

All of our staff will be trained to respond to medical emergencies in an efficient and effective manner. Each of our program sites will be stocked with first-aid kits, which will also be brought with participants to each service site.

Minor Injuries While on Program

In case of a minor injury while on program (ie: cut, scrapes, bruises, minor burn), our program staff will refer to the participant waiver form to follow parent preferences for treatment. As needed, participants will have the chance to speak with their parents over the phone as needed and a CFJ office staff will follow up with the parent/legal guardian after the initial contact to give updates on the situation.

Medical Emergency While on Program

Our top priority is always participant safety and CFJ has a very strict and specific protocol in place for both non-life-threatening and life-threatening emergencies. In addition to being trained in advance, written protocols are provided at host sites to use as reference.

If you have specific questions related to medical emergencies, please contact our staff team.

Health and Wellness on Programs

The Center for FaithJustice prioritizes the holistic well-being of every participant that comes on our programs. It is our desire to be as well informed and prepared as possible to meet your child where they are and to respond proactively and compassionately to their needs. At the time of registration, we ask parents to answer a health questionnaire and to provide any details regarding their child's health that would be beneficial for our staff to know as they accompany them on the program. The information provided helps inform our leaders and staff on how to best respond to the physical health needs and support the mental health wellness of each participant. This information is only shared with the specific program staff and leaders that directly engage with your child.

We understand that things may change between the time of registration and the start date of your program. In the weeks leading up to your child's program week, our office staff will be in touch with you to get the most up-to-date information regarding your child's overall condition.

Medication While on Programs

If your child will be taking any prescription medication during their program hours (8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.), please be aware that CFJ requires that all prescription medication be administered by our staff. In the weeks leading up to your participants' program, you will receive a form through which you can report any medication or health concerns you feel CFJ staff should be made aware of before your child joins us. Before their program week begins, your child's Team Leader will

receive the information you provide in a confidential form. This will allow them to prepare in advance and best accompany your child throughout the week. Medications are to be checked in with our staff when you sign your child in at the program drop-off. We ask that you also report any non-prescription medications that your child takes on a regular basis or will need to take during the program week.

Please make sure that your child's medication container is clearly marked and labeled. Using a separate sheet of paper, please provide concise directions that include the names of medications, required dosage, and an intake schedule which will be handed over to the team leader at check-in. Please note that failure to indicate, in writing, all prescriptions and non-prescription medications a youth participant is currently taking may result in dismissal from the program. This policy is consistent with that of other summer camps throughout New Jersey and helps our staff prevent substance abuse or potential injury.

Mental Health Wellness

The WorX Programs offer a unique experience that challenges participants to grow in their awareness of prevalent social justice issues in our communities. We also seek to foster a space in which participants can reflect on their relationship with themselves, others, and God. These intense and formative experiences sometimes trigger emotional responses in some participants.

We want to be intentionally mindful and prepared to respond compassionately and effectively to any situation regarding the mental wellness of both our leaders and participants. By answering our health questionnaire on the registration form candidly and thoroughly, you will be helping our staff team be as well prepared and attentive as possible to the holistic needs of your child when they are on program with us.

We encourage you to reach out to Brooke Foster (bfoster@faithjustice.org), Manager of Programs, if you have any questions or would like to inform us of any additional health information regarding your child leading up to the start of their program week.

Gratitude!

We are so grateful to have the opportunity to accompany your child on ServiceworX! This program has hosted and transformed the lives of thousands of young people over the years. We can't wait to hear about your child's experience, too! It is truly a gift for us to be able to offer this program. Thank you for entrusting them to our care for the week.