

Project Serve

Volunteers typically choose to spend a few days up to a week working on a number of tasks including cooking a meal at the shelter, stocking shelves at the Food Bank, building and painting fences, and gleaning vegetables from local fields, just to name a few. In a short time volunteers not only benefit the community in which they serve but also benefit their spirit and the spirit of those around them motivating others to make a difference in our world.

Trip Requirements:

- Group size should be limited to 15. This helps to keep things manageable and ensures that there will not be more workers than work.
- Groups are responsible for paying Service Trip fees. This money covers the cost of supplies, extra food at the shelter, staff support, a donation to offset the costs for the church where your group lodges etc. We charge \$25 per person/per workday, and a \$250 deposit upon scheduling. The deposit is something we have developed after an unfortunate summer with many groups canceling their trip to La Puente last minute. We were left with open weeks where groups could have been getting projects accomplished and without sufficient time to schedule another group from our wait list. Your deposit will be deducted from your groups total Trip Fee and in no way cost you more in the long run.
- Lodging is provided by a local church, meaning you can almost always count on floor space to sleep on, bathrooms and showers for clean up, and kitchens to make breakfast in. Bedding and food for breakfast will not be provided.
- All ages are welcome, and if yours is a youth group, there should be at least 1 adult for every 6-7 youths.
- We encourage you to book early!! Typically we book spring breaks, summer and fall groups nearly a year in advance so call us soon!!

Plan for a typical week

Most groups enjoy a Sunday to Friday/Saturday weeklong trip, although two to three days trips are very common as well. An example of a week at La Puente looks a lot like this:

Arrive Sunday evening: Get settled in. Have Orientation.

Work Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Wednesday is day off to see the valley, go hiking, skiing, etc.

Thursday after lunch is usually reserved for group discussion.

Closing Friday evening after dinner.

Groups may choose to depart either Friday evening or Saturday morning.

A Service Learning Approach

We have just recently shifted from an entirely work based model to a more service learning based approach, meaning not only do we put groups to work on various projects, but also try to incorporate discussions, movies, trips to local farms, and other activities into the week. By implementing these activities we feel groups develop a better understanding on why a trip such as this is important and helps them dig a little deeper into why they decided to volunteer in the first place. During the week, groups will encounter many new ideas and situations and therefore this approach allows for time to process what they have witnessed and accomplished. We believe it is extremely important for groups to grapple with some of the larger issues surrounding homelessness, malnutrition, and poverty and hope to in every way possible make this not only an enjoyable experience for all but an educational one as well.

Goals we hope to achieve as a group:

Building Community

We must strive to be in service with all people, not just those who stand on the edges of our society. Compassion for our inner circles is as vital as compassion for strangers, the homeless, and the mentally ill. It is important that your group have a connection with the work they are doing at La Puente Home, and equally important to keep in mind that you are strengthening your own community as well.

Understanding Our Mission

La Puente Home is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization in Colorado's San Luis Valley providing emergency shelter, food assistance, transitional housing, self-sufficiency services, homeless prevention, community outreach services, and job readiness training for the homeless and community members in crisis. *La Puente Home endeavors to meet immediate needs and to empower people to live independently, with dignity.*

Fostering a long-term relationship

With La Puente – We look forward to getting to know new groups and love the special relationship that develops as groups and individuals come back again and again. With service – There are many avenues of service in this world and having a relationship with service provides many opportunities for growth both within and without. The spirit of volunteerism begins within each one of us and it is up to us to believe in our ability to make a difference.

Achieve significant amount of work

The significance of the work is far more important than the amount of work completed, and all groups achieve this goal without failure. This goal serves to remind us that we are capable of “getting things done” – a small group of people can accomplish the unbelievable with compassion and determination.

Thank you very much for your interest in bringing a work group to serve at La Puente. It's amazing to see how much can be accomplished by a passionate group in such a short time and La Puente would not be the same without you.

“We don't have to engage in grand, heroic actions to participate in the process of change. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world.”

Howard Zinn