



DEPARTMENT OF
CORRECTIONS
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Community *Work*

REDUCE RE-OFFENDING BY 25% BY 2017 **JUNE 2014**



Community work is the most common sentence in New Zealand. It makes a difference to communities everywhere and ensures offenders make amends for what they have done.

Each year, supervised offenders complete around three million hours of free labour to support non-profit groups and organisations.

They work off their hours in reserves, community gardens, marae, charity shops, recycling centres, sports clubs, parks, schools, churches, cemeteries, and in natural disaster zones – almost anywhere that help is needed.

Community work sentences range from 40 hours to 400 hours. Offenders with longer sentences must complete at least 100 hours within six months.

Community work supervisors and probation officers work to engage offenders in their sentences so they know what's expected of them, and make the most of opportunities to learn new skills.

Offenders who work particularly well and comply with their sentence can have it shortened by up to 10 percent. Those who don't work satisfactorily may have to work those hours again.

Skills for life

Some people doing community work need new skills and support to avoid re-offending. Corrections provides work and living skills training as part of a person's sentence. This training can range from writing a CV and preparing for job interviews, to parenting, literacy and numeracy, road safety, and budgeting.

Offenders serving at least 80 hours can spend up to 20 percent of those hours in work and living skills training.

Everyone benefits

- > Offenders get the chance to make up for their offending, learn new skills and work habits, meet positive role models and, in some cases, earn credits towards recognised qualifications.
- > Our partners get free labour to support their project or cause, and a chance to influence others with their good example and community spirit.
- > Corrections staff use their experience and skills to make sure the sentence is served and set individuals on a pathway out of offending.

How it works

Community work crews can operate seven days a week, in most weather conditions. We work with hundreds of non-profit groups and organisations on jobs large and small.

Our staff are always looking for projects where offenders can make a difference. When we're asked to help, we assess whether the work is suitable and safe for offenders and for the community.

Most offenders work in a team supervised by Corrections staff who arrange and oversee work projects and transport the team to the worksite. Teams work up to 10 hours a day.

Some of our partners become approved community work agencies and take responsibility for supervising a person while they work off their hours. Corrections still manages the offender's compliance and makes sure the placement is working.

Working partnerships

We have more than 1,000 active agencies around the country.

Our agencies in smaller towns and remote communities help us ensure that they too benefit from an offender's community work sentence.

These agencies also help us with suitable placements for people with limitations or special circumstances so that they can serve their sentences in a meaningful way.

Agencies can apply for special Corrections funding to cover equipment, materials, or resources that let them offer suitable community work placements. It's our way of giving something back to the groups that support us, and ensures that community work is available everywhere.



Quick facts

- ◆ *The courts impose around 31,000 new community work sentences each year.*
- ◆ *Community work accounts for just over 40% of the sentences being served in the community at any given time.*
- ◆ *Sentences can be shortened by 10% if an offender works particularly well.*
- ◆ *Some offenders gain so much from the projects that they stay on as volunteers after their hours are served.*

To find out more about using community work teams, or to apply for agency funding, visit www.corrections.govt.nz

