



**Office for Evangelization
Catholic Diocese of Richmond**

Diocesan Work Camp
June 21-27, 2025

This communication contains initial information concerning the Diocesan Work Camp.
Please read all the information contained in this communication to ensure you have a full understanding of the event.

IMPORTANT REGISTRATION DATES:
Early Bird Registration ends on March 19th at 11:59pm
Group Leaders are asked to register by March 19th
Registration ends on May 1st at Noon

What is the Diocesan Work Camp?

The Diocesan Work Camp is a weeklong camp experience for high school youth to serve our brothers and sisters in need by making their homes safer, warmer, and drier while also having the opportunity to grow in our Catholic faith.

Work Camp is not just a youth event. It is an opportunity for parishes to make a difference in the lives of those in need right here in our diocese while encouraging youth to answer their baptismal call to serve others. It is a transformative experience in the life of the adults who assist as well, whether as a volunteer, contractor, or chaperone.

Who should attend Work Camp?

Work Camp is open to all high school-aged youth (rising 9th graders through graduated 12th graders). The week requires that youth give of themselves to serve others and to grow spiritually. It will be a challenging week that will provide many learning opportunities for participants and will push them both physically and spiritually. Throughout the week they will be living in intentional Christian community and will spend most days serving others by repairing and updating homes.

Where and when is the Diocesan Work Camp?

The Diocesan Work Camp will be held Saturday, June 21, 2025, through Friday, June 27, 2025 in the area surrounding Bristol and Abingdon. The work projects will take place in the surrounding communities. Saint Anne Catholic School in Bristol will serve as our home base where participants and adults will sleep, eat, and participate in evening programming.

What is the structure of Work Camp?

Each day of Work Camp will have a full schedule of events. Below you will find a brief overview of the activities for the week.

Saturday:	Arrival, Check-In, Opening Program
Sunday:	Mass, Teambuilding, Work Site Visit
Monday - Wednesday:	Daily Mass, Work Day on Site, Evening Program
Thursday:	Daily Mass, Work Day on Site, Dinner with Residents, Evening Program
Friday:	Daily Mass, Closing Program, Departure

Youth will have the opportunity to serve alongside other youth from across the diocese during the week. We will spend some time getting to know each other and learning how to work as a team. We will also review general safety and instructions and have the opportunity to prepare for the specific site locations. Each day we will celebrate Mass together. At various points throughout the week, there will be the opportunity for Eucharistic Adoration and Reconciliation. Evening program will have a wide variety of components and will be geared towards helping participants

encounter Christ through sacraments, prayer, the people they serve, and their peers. Each day there will also be the opportunity for each parish to gather to process the experiences of the day.

Due to the structure of the week all participants must be able to attend the whole week of Work Camp. Full participation is expected from check-in time on Saturday until after the closing programming on Friday.

***NEW for 2025* Cell Phone Policy for Youth**

This year we will be implementing a new rule for youth participants. For the duration of their time at Work Camp they will not be allowed to have a cell phone, iPad, or laptop. This decision has been made to increase youth engagement and participation. Youth Ministers or Parish Point of Contact will be expected to set a communication plan with parents and to ensure that youth do not have these devices with them at Work Camp.

What are the requirements for Adult Chaperones?

For this event, 1 Adult Chaperone is required for every 6 youth (or fraction thereof) who are participating in Work Camp. Adult Chaperones are responsible for looking out for the well-being of youth participants both at home base and at the work sites. Knowledge of home improvement is not needed to serve in this role. Because of the work we will be doing, adults should be able to work in environments that do not have air conditioning, be able to lift light-weight items, and be able to drive. Chaperones must be 21 years old before the beginning of Work Camp.

All adults must be in compliance with the Diocesan Safe Environment Policies, which includes completing the following:

- Screening One
- VIRTUS training (Protecting God's Children)
- VIRTUS Renewal (Healthy Boundaries, every 5 years)

Please note that parish employees and Catholic school employees have additional screening that must be completed.

***NEW for 2025* When is the Group Leader deadline? What is a Group Leader?**

Every parish that sends a group to Work Camp needs to have a Group Leader. If the Youth Minister is attending Work Camp, they should be the Group Leader. If the Youth Minister is not attending, another adult should be designated as the Group Leader at the time of registration; in this case, the Youth Minister and Group Leader will both receive all pre-event communication. Group Leaders register as Adult Chaperones. (Group Leaders cannot be Home Base Volunteers or Contractors, as those roles have responsibilities that pull them away from being with their parish groups throughout the week.)

Please designate only 1 Group Leader for each parish. We cannot accommodate combined parish groups with multiple Group Leaders. Each parish should be a distinct parish group with a distinct Group Leader, and all participants should register as the same parish as their Group Leader.

All Group Leaders are asked to register by the Early Bird Deadline of March 19. This helps us to plan well and to keep every group in the loop.

What are the requirements for adult Home Base Volunteers?

Parishes are required to find Home Base Volunteers. These individuals will need to serve in various roles at home base such as Work Camp set-up and clean-up, kitchen assistance, running team building activities, performing office related tasks, running errands, etc. Home Base Volunteers must be at least 20 years old before the beginning of Work Camp. Individuals in this role cannot serve as a chaperone or a contractor.

The number of volunteers is dictated by the number of youth participants. A parish will bring one Home Base Volunteer if they have 1-14 youth, 2 volunteers for 15+ youth.

Home Base Volunteers are required to serve from Friday afternoon, June 20 to Friday, June 27, 2025. They will need separate transportation from their parish vehicles and will need to arrive at 2pm on June 20, 2025. Carpooling may be available for volunteers coming from the same area.

What are the requirements for Contractors? What is a Contractor?

All parishes are required to bring 1 Contractor for every 6 youth participants. A Contractor is an adult who has home improvement knowledge, skills, and experience and is willing to teach and assist youth in completing work projects during Work Camp. Potential Contractors will need to be approved by the Work Camp Coordinator and the lead Contractors before they can serve in this role in order to ensure the safety of all participants, residents, and potential contractors. A brief phone interview by our Lead Contractor may be required for approval. Contractors will be asked to provide their own transportation and specialty tools needed for their work site. Contractors are required Saturday, June 21 through Friday, June 27, 2025.

If your parish is attending Work Camp for the first time since 2021, and you have 6 or fewer youth attending, then you do not need to provide a Contractor. The first Contractor you would need to provide is if you reach 12 youth.

Contractors will have the option for having overnight accommodations provided at the home base location. Contractors are not required to stay overnight. There will be a required Contractors meeting that will happen in the spring.

Any parishes who cannot provide a Contractor to meet the minimum guidelines below will be charged an additional \$750 per missing Contractor so the diocese can provide a Contractor.

***NEW for 2025* What meetings do adult participants need to attend prior to Work Camp?**

There are 3 pre-Work Camp meetings for adults.

- **2 Group Leader Meetings (Virtual).** These meetings will cover the Parish Handbook and go over all of the important pieces that parishes need to think about prior to Work Camp.
 - **MEETING #1:** Thursday, April 3 from 12:30-1:30pm on Microsoft Teams
Meeting ID: 247 351 537 651
Passcode: Ez3ry3D9
 - **MEETING #2:** Thursday, May 15 from 12:30-1:30pm on Microsoft Teams
Meeting ID: 225 915 491 371
Passcode: Ry9h9cn2
- **1 All-Adults Meeting (In-Person, Regional).** These meetings are for all Group Leaders, Adult Chaperone, Home Base Volunteers, and Contractors. We will have some meet-and-greet, cover expectations for the different roles, and open it up for Q&A. These are presented regionally from 6-8pm and will include dinner.
 - **WEST:** Wednesday, May 28 at Saint Jude, Radford
 - **EAST:** Thursday, May 29 at Holy Trinity, Norfolk
 - **CENTRAL:** Wednesday, June 4 at the Pastoral Center, Richmond

Youth/Adult Ratio Table

The following breakdown chart should be used when determining number of youth with the corresponding adults (chaperones, contractors and home base)

Youth Participants	Adult Chaperones	Contractor	Home Base Volunteer
1-5	1	-	1

6	1	1	1
7-11	2	1	1
12	2	2	1
13-14	3	2	1
15-17	3	2	2
18	3	3	2
19-23	4	3	2
24	4	4	2
25-29	5	4	2
30	5	5	2

What is the lodging situation?

Participants will be staying at Saint Anne Catholic School in Bristol, VA. The accommodations will be in classrooms so participants will need to bring an air mattress, sleeping bag, and pillow.

All youth participants and Adult Chaperones are required to stay at the home base location.

What kind of transportation is needed?

Transportation to and from Work Camp is the responsibility of each parish to coordinate. Additionally, Adult Chaperones will be responsible for transportation of their work crew to and from work sites each day during Work Camp. Every adult chaperone is required to bring a vehicle that has seatbelts for themselves plus 6 youth participants and also has space for transporting 2 5-gallon water coolers, a large lunch bin, a small vehicle supply bin, and tools. We prefer minivans with 7-8 seatbelts because they have the most room, but SUVs with 7-8 seatbelts can also work. As a reminder, the use of 10-15 passenger vehicles is strictly prohibited per Diocesan Policy.

Where do we get the tools for the work projects?

Each parish will be asked to bring some tools with them. This may include items like paint brushes and rollers, shovels, post diggers, circular saws, etc. Collecting tools to borrow for Work Camp from parishioners is both a great way to involve the entire parish and eliminate the need to purchase all the tools. A detailed list will be provided by May 20.

Please note that while the Office for Evangelization will do its best to return all tools to parish, lost tools will not be the responsibility of the diocesan office.

What supplies do parishes need to bring with them?

In addition to vehicles and general tools, parishes will be asked to bring certain supplies with them. A complete list will be provided in the Parish Handbook which will be sent by late spring. This may include items such as 5-gallon water coolers and a supply basket for each van which includes a basket, toilet paper, tissues, soap, and antibacterial hand soap.

How do we prepare our participants for Work Camp?

We will be provide a Parish Handbook that will help facilitate preparation for participating in Work Camp. The Parish Handbook will include topics like tool safety, what to expect, and how to prepare spiritually. This will require participants to gather together prior to Work Camp in 2-3 meetings, and it is up to the parish to coordinate. The diocese will provide guidance and resources as to how to facilitate these meetings.

Can other family members or children attend the Work Camp?

To ensure the safest environment possible, it is the policy of the Office for Evangelization that only registered participants may attend this event. Spouses or children of adult participants may attend if 1) they meet the target audience of the event AND 2) they are registered. Younger children of a registered adult participant (younger than a rising 9th grader) may not attend, including infants and toddlers.

What is the registration fee?

The registration fee per participant is listed below as well as available discounts.

Registration Fees:

Youth Participants & Adult Chaperone	\$425
Early Bird Rate (Until March 19th at 11:59pm)	\$375

The last day to register is May 1, 2025 at Noon.

Contractors	No charge
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Adult Home Base Volunteer	No charge
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Substitutions

Each participant substitution on or before May 1, 2025	No charge
Each participant substitution between May 2 and June 2, 2025	\$100
<i>After May 2, all substitutions must be of the same sex as the person for whom they are substituting.</i>	
<i>Substitutions must be made within your own parish; we cannot accommodate substitutions where one parish takes a spot from another parish.</i>	

The last day to request a substitution is June 2, 2025, at Noon.

After this date all changes will be processed as cancellations.

Cancellations Fees

Each participant cancellation on or before May 1, 2025	\$100
Each participant cancellation after May 1, 2025	No refund

Discounts and Additional Fees:

Increased Attendance Discounts

For parishes who attended Work Camp in 2024, we will provide discounts if you experience an increase in numbers for Work Camp 2025. If your youth participation increases by 5 youth then you will have a 10% discount for each participant and if you increase your youth participation by 10 then you will have a 20% discount for each participant. This discount will go towards either the Early Bird Price or the Regular Pricing. The parish will be reimbursed for the discounted amount at the conclusion of the registration period.

Contractor Credit

One contractor is required for every 6 youth participants. For each additional contractor (above the ratio, see previous chart) you provide for the full work week, your parish group receives a discount of \$750. (See "What is a contractor?" section for more details.)

Missing Contractor Fee

If your parish cannot provide the required number of contractors, for the full week of Work Camp, your parish will be charged \$750 per missing contractor.

What does this registration fee cover?

The majority of the registration fee goes to cover the cost of materials necessary to complete the work projects. The work projects completed during Work Camp are significant home improvement projects (for example wheelchair ramp construction, deck and stair construction, and window replacement) that are designed to make homes warmer, safer,

and drier. The registration fee also goes to cover lodging, meals (Saturday dinner – Friday breakfast), and programming for all participants.

***NEW* What do I need to do to complete the Safe Environment process for my adults?**

In an effort to streamline the Safe Environment process, we are initiating a two-step process for some of our larger Office for Evangelization events.

- **STEP 1:** On the registration forms for Adult Chaperones, we ask for the date that the adult completed their VIRTUS Training along with their legal name and if they are employed by the Diocese. This step is consistent with what has happened in the past.
- **STEP 2:** After registration closes on Monday, May 1, we will ask each youth minister/group leader to complete the Safe Environment Parish Verification Form. This form can be found at the top of the event webpage and should be completed with the parish safe environment coordinator. All participating parishes need to return this form within 2 weeks of registration closing.

Why are we implementing this additional form? Our hope is that this form will significantly cut down on the back-and-forth communication about getting chaperones cleared through safe environment. With the parish safe environment coordinator signing off on the form, parishes can verify dates quickly as well as directly manage any situations where an adult need to renew or complete a piece of the process prior to the event.

How do I register?

All youth and adults must register through their parish Youth Minister OR Catholic school coordinator. The registration process includes:

1. **Collect Registration Forms from Participants:** Print out and distribute the registration form from www.evangelizerichmond.org. A copy should be maintained by the Youth Minister in case of emergency. **DO NOT SEND THESE TO THE OFFICE FOR EVANGELIZATION.**
2. **Register Participants via the Online Registration System:** If you are the parish Youth Minister, contact the Office for Evangelization to get the event-specific password for the online registration system.
3. **Send payments to the Office for Evangelization** (*if you did not pay via credit card on the online registration system*): Be sure to include your parish/school name along with a list of participants for whom the payment applies. All outstanding registration fees will be invoiced to the parish/school.

For Home Base Volunteer registration, have each Home Base Volunteer fill out the corresponding registration form. Then the parish Youth Minister should register them via the Online Registration System.

Questions?

Contact us via email (evangelization@richmonddiocese.org) or phone (804-622-5159).