Offender Work Program

Manatee County



Population: 333,895

**Project Leaders:**

Mike Miranda

Senior Probation Officer

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**Synopsis**

The Offender Work Program participants, both male and female, will perform manual labor at non-profit County, City and Government organizations/agencies for no wage. This program can accommodate up to 40 program participants on a daily basis. Participants are required to work a minimum of one day per week. The offender will generally work up to an eight hour day; beginning at 7:30 A.M. and will include a 30 minute lunch and two 15 minutes breaks during the day, until 4:00 P.M. Personnel from the Manatee County Probation Office will supervise program participants. Attendance, conduct and compliance of program participants will be documented by Probation personnel.

**Intent of the Project/Program/Service**

This program will provide a sentencing alternative for offenders who could be given the option at the time of sentencing to perform various labor activities for the benefit of the community in lieu of incarceration at the Manatee County Jail. The program participant is repaying his debt to society by working in Manatee County thereby saving the taxpayer money. The Offender Work Program can be an extremely useful jail management tool.

At the time of sentencing, the Judge will need to specifically order as a condition of Probation, that the offender enter and successfully complete a certain number of days in the Offender Work Program pursuant to program rules. Program participants need to pre-register in person for the Offender Work Program with the Manatee County Probation Office located in the County Administration Building on the 3rd Floor. Thereafter, the participant will report to the Offender Work Program Office located at 1640 60th Avenue Drive East, Oneco, FL 34203. The Program will operate 6 days a week: Monday through Sunday. The Program will not operate Wednesday. Participants will work at duties based on the person’s knowledge, skills and abilities. All persons reporting MUST be checked in BEFORE 7:30 AM. Late comers will NOT be permitted to work.

Participants in the Manatee County Offender Work Program are limited to offenders serving a County probationary sentence which may include non-violent, low risk cases supervised by the Manatee County Probation Department and pending VOP cases.

If you don’t have transportation, the Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT) offers bus service from Desoto Station. Route 16 will take you to the corner of 15th Street and 60th Avenue Drive East. You must be on the 7:05 A.M. bus to arrive on time. The fare is $1.25. EXACT CHANGE IS REQUIRED.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

*How will I know where to go?*

Prior to starting the program, a participant must pre-register at the Manatee County Probation Office, 1112 Manatee Avenue West, Suite 303. At this time, a schedule will be developed and instructions will be given on where to report and who you are to contact next.

*What should I wear?*

A program participant should report wearing clothing suitable for manual labor in prevailing weather conditions, unless you are to work indoors. If you are directed to wear protective clothing, you must comply. Wear footwear appropriate for work. Athletic shoes with slip-resistant soles are recommended. No shorts, tank tops or open toe shoes will be allowed. NO CLOGS OR FLIP-FLOPS.

*What happens if it is raining?*

A program participant is required to report to the Offender Work Program Headquarters, 1640 60th Avenue Drive East, Oneco, FL 34203, regardless of the weather with the only exception being if hurricane conditions exist. If the weather prevents work from being done, the program participant may be redirected to other jobs. If the weather makes travel unsafe, the participant will be notified of any cancellation.

*What if I don’t obey the rules?*

The program participant must demonstrate good conduct during the hours of work and put forth a good effort to complete the required task. Both conduct and effort are reported by the on-site supervisor. The participant is not allowed to receive visitors while working or to make any telephone calls. Absolutely no personal property is permitted with the exception of lunch items. Failure to obey all of the program rules could result in the imposition of a sentence at the Manatee County Jail.

*Can I “buy out” days?*

Yes, but only after 50% of the days ordered are complete. The cost is $100.00 per day.