Adapted from California State University at Monterey Bay
Service Learning Institute, Best Practices in Risk Management in Service Learning
Manual service.csumb.edu/site/x9743.xml

For Service-Learning Staff and Faculty
DO provide campus- and community-based organization orientations to familiarize students with policies, procedures and risks involved in the specific service activities they will be providing and with the populations they serve.
DO discuss **Blueprint** with students so they fully understand their responsibilities, learning objectives and service objectives, and are informed of the risks associated with their service-learning placements. Students should sign the **Blueprint** and have their site supervisor(s) and faculty member review and sign it as well. **DO** build a working relationship with your risk manager and contracts and procurement officer.
DO be aware that special insurance policies for professional coverage MAY BE available for specific students and programs (i.e. nursing, social work, teaching).
DO conduct site reviews before, during and after a service-learning course is offered.
DO understand that faculty members can be individually named in lawsuits and should play an active role in ensuring safe and positive service-learning experiences for their students.
DO know that faculty members will be indemnified and protected by the university in the case of a lawsuit, so long as the faculty member was acting within the scope of his or her work.
DO offer alternative placements and/or opportunities for students in service-learning courses to avoid potential risks.
DO meet the special safety needs of any student.

DO be aware that there are state and federal regulations regarding fingerprinting and back-ground checks for those students whose service-learning placements are in organizations that works with children, the elderly, or persons with disabilities.
DO know when each student is scheduled to provide service and be able to verify that the student did provide the service at the community-based organization site. This will help to determine who holds liability for student behavior or student injury at any given time.
DO know where emergency contact information for students is kept, and what the procedures are at the university and at the community-based organization site if an emergency occurs. If the community-based organization asks the student for emergency contact information, a copy should be kept at the university for the duration of the service-learning experience.

DON'T assume that students are automatically covered for liability through the university or community-based organization when they enroll in courses and participate in service-learning activities.
DON'T assume that campus and site orientations are consistent; they vary among courses, campuses, departments and community-based organizations.
DON'T assume individual faculty members or departments are aware of the students' where- abouts or activities while performing their service learning.
DON'T assume that students are aware of such issues as liability or sexual harassment policies. Both campus and site orientations are necessary to familiarize students with any potential risks involved with service-learning activities.

DON'T assume that student fees will automatically absorb incidental costs background checks, or that the community-based organization will pay these fees. They can be an additional financial burden for a particular placement.
DON'T arrange travel for students. Liability is greatly reduced if students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the service site.

For Service-Learning Syllabi or Class Discussions
DO include a description of the service as an expressed goal.
DO include a description of the nature of the service placement and/or project.
DO specify the roles and responsibilities of students in the placement and/or service project.
DO include whether or not the service project/experience is mandatory. If it is mandatory, offer an alternative for students who cannot do, for any reason, the specific type of service you have identified.
DO include time requirements (how many hours total/per week/per term).
DO include community-based organization contact information.
DO identify the needs of the community that will be met through this service placement.
DO explain how students will be expected to demonstrate what they have learned in the placement, such as journals, term papers, and in-class presentations.
DO include an explanation of what will be evaluated and how it will be evaluated. (In terms of the course grade).
DO explain how the course assignments link the service-learning placement to the course content.
DO require a Blueprint for each student that defines the scope of service to ensure the faculty member, student and site supervisor meet educational objectives, create measurable outcomes, and understand the risks inherent in the particular placement.
DO explain, if appropriate, the expectations for the public dissemination of the students' work.
DON'T distribute a syllabus that doesn't clearly explain or define the service-learning goals, objectives, criteria and requirements.
DON'T wait until the beginning of the quarter/semester to determine with which community-based organization to partner. Plan ahead.
DON'T allow students to randomly select their sites for service-learning placements.
DON'T allow students to complete their service in only one or two sessions, but rather distribute the service over a consistent period of time.
DON'T wait until the end of the term to clarify the reflective process for student evaluation and learning outcomes.

For Community-Based Organizations
DO thoroughly review the Service-Learning Agreement to understand the roles and responsibilities of all parties.
DO ensure that service learners comply with any legal requirements for background checks.
DO assign a supervisor for service learners at your site.
DO orient all service learners to your organization and its policies, procedures, clientele profile, and emergency procedures. This will ensure that service learners act in safe, positive,

and productive ways during their placements.

DO require that service learners complete a sign-in/out sheet each time they serve, so that you are aware of who is at your organization at all times.

DO communicate with university representatives if your organization is experiencing a difficult time with a service learner.

DO ensure that you have contact information for a representative at the university, in case problems arise, or accidents happen.

DON'T share the results of any background check with university representatives.

DON'T assume that any final products produced by students are the sole property of the community-based organization. The final products are the property of the student, but more often than not, the student can grant rights to use the product to the community-based organization.

DON'T request that service learners do tasks that are beyond their capabilities as outlined in the Blueprint