

“Respect, Recognition, Raise!”

Church Volunteer Camp Observer Information

Welcome and Thank You

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO, the National Farm Worker Ministry and Triangle Friends of Farmworkers thanks you for volunteering for this important project and welcomes you to the “Respect, Recognition, Raise!” campaign. As you perform your role as the Church Volunteer Camp Observer, there are certain expectations and rules that you need to be aware of.

Why You Are Here

FLOC summer organizers, in their visits to tobacco farmer labor camps, have encountered situations where workers are being intimidated, even retaliated against, by crew leaders or growers for union organizing activity (i.e. signing a card, or just listening to the FLOC organizers).

We believe that the tendency to intimidate and retaliate will decrease as it becomes commonly known that Church Volunteer Camp Observer are accompanying the FLOC organizing teams on some labor camp visits

The purpose of this observer project is two-fold:

1. to provide a trusted outsider presence to heighten the comfort level of workers by letting them know that people of faith here in North Carolina are paying attention to what is happening to them and care;
2. to document, as a third party attester, the experience and any grievances related by the workers to the FLOC organizers.

YOUR ROLE IS TO BE AN ACTIVE OBSERVER AND RECORD TAKER.

Orientation

Please arrive at FLOC’s Dudley Office (4354 Us Hwy 117 Alt. S. Dudley, NC 28333) by 5:30pm (Mon - Fri) and by 2:30pm Sundays.

1. You will be assigned to one of the 5 FLOC organizing teams; you may go to more than one camp. In some instances, volunteers will be asked to go with organizers to a camp where intimidation had previously occurred to follow up with the workers and to speak with the grower/crew leader about it. Determine with Raul and the team leader whether you will ride with the organizers or follow in your own car. Be sure that the team leader knows your level of Spanish language proficiency.
2. You will be given a badge to identify you as a FLOC representative. Keep this badge visible at all times while at the camps. You will also be given a vest to wear identifying you as a Church Volunteer Camp Observer and an Observer Recording Form, clipboard and pen.
3. You will receive a brief orientation from FLOC.

At the Camp/s

1. When you arrive at a camp, the organizer will introduce you to workers as a Church Volunteer Camp Observer.
2. While at the camps, make sure that you act as a visitor, this means:
 - a. Do not go into people’s rooms without their permission
 - b. Do not take pictures of any part of the camp without their permission
 - c. Do not take pictures of any children you encounter at the camps.

- d. Do not litter.
 - e. Be respectful to the workers and their house.
3. For your safety please follow the following safety precautions:
- a. Do not wander off from the group.
 - b. Do not enter worker's room unaccompanied.
 - c. Do not accept open beverages.
 - d. Do not accept alcoholic beverages.
 - e. Be aware of your surroundings.
 - f. Pay attention to the camp dynamics.
 - g. In the unlikely event of any contentious debate, team leaders will have planned an exit strategy in case retaliation escalates.
 - h. Practice non-violence.

We encourage everyone to be safe and avoid verbal confrontation when communicating with the workers or the employers. If any escalation should occur, the team leaders are trained on how to deal with these situations. In the event of an emergency, call 911 and notify your team leader, **Raul (919-262-6741)** or **Justin (704-577-3480)**.

FLOC wants to make sure that everyone is safe and having a great experience. Following the rules above should ensure that you have a safe and interesting experience.

Expectations of the Observers

As a Church Volunteer Camp Observer, you are expected to do the following:

1. Observe the interactions between the teams and the workers.
2. Observe the housing/camp conditions
3. Follow the main points of what the workers are telling the organizers. If you need translation, please be aware that the organizers are doing their jobs and establishing relationships with the workers and may not be able to interrupt longer discourses to give you word for word translations. However, they will, and you can ask for it during a pause, give you the main points of the conversation; record these.
4. Observe for any signs of intimidation or retaliation, several signs are:
 - a. Workers refuse to speak
 - b. Workers refuse to come out of their rooms
 - c. Only one person speaks for the whole group
 - d. Workers looking towards one or more workers when asked questions.
5. RECORD ALL OF YOUR OBSERVATIONS on the form given to you, especially any signs of intimidation or possible retaliation, housing/camp conditions, and working / wage conditions.

Once the Camp Visits Conclude

1. If you are not returning to the Dudley office, give your recording form to the team leader. Be sure to put your name the date and the team leader's name on it. If you feel you want to write up your observations in a clearer way, please email or mail your observations to the Dudley office within one week of your visit.
2. If possible, writing about your experience for FLOC's social media blog would be very helpful. If you can do this, talk to Raul.
3. If you need help with directions back to a main road, ask the team leader.

Again ...Thank You! Many times we have heard from workers that it is significant to them that someone from the community knows about them and cares about their living and working conditions. An important part of what you are doing as a Church Volunteer Camp Observer is living out the call of hospitality to the sojourner.