

College Service Project

How to Conduct an Initial Home Visit



IHV: This is the acronym for “Initial Home Visit”, which is the term Appalachia Service Project uses to describe the first time any representative visits the home in which an application for home repair has been submitted for.

What to do with a submitted application: Keep all applications in a binder and/or create a database on Excel or a Google Form (or another similar platform) that will contain all the information from an Application. It may be a good idea to send a letter letting a family know you received their application and will call them if you are able to come take a look at their home.

Before conducting a visit: It is always a good idea to give the family a call and set up a specific time and date in which their home will receive a visit. Be sure you have at least one other person lined up to visit the home with you. *Never conduct an IHV alone!* Things to bring: Initial Home Visit Checklist, extra paper for notes, pen, tape measure, a camera to take pictures of potential projects to bring back to the rest of the CSP chapter.

During your IHV:

- Prioritize making the family feel comfortable, and make sure you also feel comfortable around the family. Introduce yourselves, and learn the names of everyone in the household.
- When the time is right, ask for the family to show you things around their home that they would like to see addressed. Before taking any pictures of potential projects, make sure to ask the family if this is ok with them. Explain to them why you are taking photos.
- Take measurements of potential projects in order to help you plan and budget. This will help your CSP Chapter make educated decisions on what projects you should and can afford to work on.
- Draw diagrams that will be helpful to refer to in meetings.

Finishing your IHV: Be sure to let the family know that they can expect to hear back from you within one month. The family will either receive a phone call saying you can work for them, a letter notifying them that their project is on a waiting list and will depend on funding, or a letter letting them know if you are unable to work for them. Thank them for their time. If you feel comfortable doing so, you may give them a phone number or e-mail address to use for questions in the meantime.

After your IHV: Be sure to talk about all IHVs in Chapter meetings. Once it's decided a project is not a good fit for CSP, notify the family with a “no letter” (provided by ASP online). If it is a good project that just needs to wait until later, send them the “waiting list” letter. If you'd like to work for them, call the family and set up a time to sign the Family Work Agreement.