



D.O.T. Days
Planning
Guide



DOT DAYS

DONATING OUR TIME

Inspired by the Alpha Sigma Alpha service & giving statement, D.O.T. Days takes place the first week of October annually. Standing for 'donating our time', this week is set aside for all Alpha Sigma Alpha members across the country to focus on making an impact in their local communities through hands-on service.

Alpha Sigma Alpha Philanthropic Statement

Alpha Sigma Alpha encourages its members to support the Alpha Sigma Alpha Foundation, and to participate in our national philanthropic efforts as well as those in their local communities.

Our ritual states, "Life is not taking in only; it is giving out too. It is giving ourselves – freely – to other people, giving ourselves in comradeship, in understanding, in joy, in love."

This belief is demonstrated in the many ways Alpha Sigma Alpha women express their care and concern for others through the support of the sorority's philanthropic endeavors.

When is D.O.T. Days?

D.O.T. Days takes place the first full week of October annually. This year, D.O.T. Days will be October 2-8, 2022.

Why Should I Participate?

As members of Alpha Sigma Alpha, we are encouraged to express our care and concern for others through support of national philanthropic partners and local communities. D.O.T. Days unites Alpha Sigma Alpha members across the world in the shared value of generosity.

Hands-on Service

D.O.T. Days are dedicating to Alpha Sigma Alpha members donating time to communities through service. Alpha Sigma Alpha defines service as the hands-on interaction with a cause. Charitable giving is the term that Alpha Sigma Alpha uses to describe the collection of goods or money to donate to a cause.

While Alpha Sigma Alpha members are encouraged to impact communities through both charitable giving and hands-on service, D.O.T. Days activities should be categorized as hands-on service. Use the list of examples below to help determine if an event is service or charitable giving.

Service	vs.	Charitable giving
Raking leaves for a neighbor	vs.	Donating rakes to local school
Working concessions for free	vs.	Working concessions collecting proceeds
Walking dogs at an animal shelter	vs.	Selling cupcakes on campus collecting proceeds for an animal shelter
Cleaning up trash in local park	vs.	Having a food drive on campus
Stuffing coach's boxes for a Girls on the Run council	vs.	Donating coach box supplies to a Girls on the Run council
Create, host and chaperone a fall ball for a local senior home	vs.	Donating dresses to local school for dances
Make and serve soup at local soup kitchen	vs.	Donating soup to local soup kitchen
Work with local parks department to build playground equipment	vs.	Donating playground equipment to local parks department
Coach a youth sports team	vs.	Hosting a sports equipment drive on campus
Work with local parks department to paint park benches	vs.	Hosting penny wars on campus

Sample Week For Chapters

Plan at least 1-2 service opportunities for each day of the week and allow members to choose which activities best fit their schedules. Here is what a week of planned D.O.T. Days activities may look like:

Monday

Volunteer for local after school program
Mentor local high school seniors/ help prepare for college

Tuesday

Work concessions for campus athletic event

Wednesday

Clean up a local park or highway
Work concessions for campus athletic event

Thursday

Visit local animal shelter to clean cages, walk with animals or organize supplies
Rake leaves for community neighbors who are unable to do it themselves

Friday

Visit a local nursing home to play games and talk with residents

Saturday

Volunteer at local Special Olympics competition or tournament

Sunday

Volunteer for the local library by helping with reading programs, office assistance or organizing books

Social Media

Social media has proven to be an effective way to raise awareness about D.O.T. Days:

Instagram

Post a photo each day during the week showing what you or your chapter is doing to participate in D.O.T. Days. Use the official hashtag #DOTDays and tag @alphasigmaalpha in all posts.

Twitter

Spread the word about D.O.T. Days by following @asaHQ to see what others are doing in support of D.O.T. Days. Retweet and use the official hashtag #DOTDays

Facebook

Post a status with a picture or video each day during the week about what you are doing to participate in D.O.T. Days. Include a caption that mentions D.O.T. Days and make sure to tag Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority.

Planning Timeline

As officers set out to plan D.O.T. Days events, it is important to plan ahead. While being proactive is always important, it is especially important when working with nonprofit and service organizations in order to design events that not only provide a meaningful experience for chapter members, but also positively impacts the organization the chapter chooses to serve.

90-180 days out — April-July: BRAINSTORM

Brainstorm the type of service you wish to plan for your chapter, consider the following:

- Research organizations that might be a good fit for your chapter.
 - Use the organization's website.
 - Search for community service events which occur during the first week of October.
 - Call organizations to discuss opportunities for group service. *See call template on page 3.*
 - Reach out to your sisters! They most likely know of organizations and that could help save you some time in your search.
- Determine the size of your service event. What is the size of your chapter? How many members will need a role? This will be important to know when you reach out to agencies.
- Remember that D.O.T. Days is a multiple day service initiative. Having options for your chapter on different days and times will be beneficial.

60 days out — August: COMMUNICATE

Begin to set plans for D.O.T. Days by reaching out to your preferred organizations. The earlier you reach out, the more likely you will be able to plan an event that benefits both the organization and your members. *See a sample email template on page 4.* Provide as much detail as possible, such as:

- Describe Alpha Sigma Alpha and D.O.T. Days
- Dates and times that would be best for the event.
 - Consider creating a poll asking your sisters which dates they will be available since they already know what their schedule for the semester looks like.
- How many people will need a volunteer role
- Remember that organizations may operate with low numbers of staff, have established procedures for volunteering, or may not have an immediate need for group volunteering—flexibility is key in planning!

30 days out — September: CONFIRM DETAILS

By September, you should have confirmed partnerships with the organizations you will be working with for D.O.T. Days. In early September confirm the final schedule for the week and begin to recruit volunteers to fill the roles. It is important to have a sign up, which will allow organizations to know how many volunteers to expect. Never send more volunteers than an organization is prepared for.

Ask your public relations chairman if they can start to mock up posts for social media. You can have them do before posts to get your chapter excited, along with week of posts to display sisters in action. Giving her time to think of what she wants to post will ensure for a D.O.T. Days social media strategy.

7 days out: REPORT AND REMIND

One week before D.O.T. Days, send reminder emails, report at chapter meetings or utilize your chapter's preferred communication method to remind members when they have signed up to volunteer. If you are managing the sign up for the organization, be sure to email the organization a report of how many volunteers they should expect. Organizations will want to plan ahead to have a task for everyone.

Communication with Organizations

Use the following phone call scripts and email template to make connections with local organizations when planning D.O.T. Days activities:

Phone Call Scripts:

90-180 days out:

When calling an organization be sure to introduce yourself, and why you are calling immediately. Explain Alpha Sigma Alpha, and ask if there are opportunities for group service with their organization. If you need ideas for gathering information consider asking the following:

- What are your organization's greatest volunteer needs?
- What kind of opportunities do you have for groups to serve together?
- How many volunteers does your team feel comfortable working with?

Hi, my name is (insert name), a member of Alpha Sigma Alpha at (insert college). I am calling to learn about ways my chapter could support (insert organization) through a service event. Are you available to talk now?

60 days out:

When calling an organization be sure to introduce yourself, and why you are calling immediately. Be prepared with the dates of the event, and details about what your goals are for the service events you are planning.

Hi, my name is (insert name), a member of Alpha Sigma Alpha at (insert college). I am calling to see if (insert organization) has any volunteer needs that my chapter could support during the first week of October. Are you available to talk right now?

Voicemail Scripts:

90-180 days out:

Hello, my name is (insert name) and I am the service & giving chairman for a local chapter of Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority at (insert school name). I am calling because I would like to hear about opportunities for my chapter to serve with (insert organization). Please give me a call back at (insert phone number) at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

60 days out:

Hello, my name is (insert name) and I am the service & giving chairman for a local chapter of Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority at (insert school name). I am calling to inquire about group volunteer opportunities that (insert organization) may have during the first week of October. Please give me a call back at (insert phone number) at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

Initial Contact Email Template

To Whom it May Concern OR (Organization's Primary Contact),

My name is (insert name) and I am the service & giving chairman for a local chapter of Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority at (insert school name). I am writing to inquire about volunteer opportunities that your organization may have during the first week of October.

The first week of October is Alpha Sigma Alpha International's annual week of service, which we refer to as D.O.T. Days, also known as Donating our Time Days. During this week, chapters across the nation serve organizations in our local communities each day with hands on volunteering.

This year, D.O.T. Days are (insert dates). We are planning several group service events for the week, and would love for (insert organization) to be included. Can my chapter be of assistance to your organization during this time frame? The following are some ways I think our organization might be able to support (insert ideas for service that may help such as yard work, painting, pre-event set up, cook meals, etc.), but we are happy to support in any way you see fit. We want our time to be beneficial to your organization.

If you and your organization are interested in allowing our chapter to volunteer for you, please reply with a list of times and dates that work best for you.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(Insert your name)
Service & giving chairman
Alpha Sigma Alpha, (Chapter)

"Life is not taking in only; it is giving out too."

Post-Event Checklist

- Send photos of your chapter participating in service opportunities during D.O.T. Days to ljohnson@AlphaSigmaAlpha.org. Photos may be shared on Alpha Sigma Alpha's social media or used in the *Phoenix of Alpha Sigma Alpha* magazine
 - ◇ See *Guidelines for Picture Taking* under the "Public Relations & Communications" folder in the Officer Portal Document Library
- Assign committee members to send a "thank you note" to the location where you conducted service.
- Conduct a post-service reflection activity with your chapter at the end of the week. This will provide members the opportunity to reflect on participation in hands-on service impacted the community and them personally.
 - ◇ See *Pre and Post Service Event Activity* under the "Service & Charitable Giving Resources" folder in the Officer Portal Document Library
- Plan more opportunities for service with organizations or activities that chapter members enjoyed.
- Start making plans for next year's D.O.T. Days.