

WELCOME TO NON-MILITARY SERVICE

Centre for Non-Military Service
Lapinjärvi 2017

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT NON-MILITARY SERVICE

Non-military service (*siviilipalvelus* in Finnish / *civiltjänst* in Swedish) is intended for those conscripts who for reasons of conscience are prevented from carrying out military service. Non-military service is administered by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, and is regulated by the Non-Military Service Act (*siviilipalveluslaki* / *civiltjänstlag*). During non-military service, you're generally entitled to the same benefits and discounts (in sports facilities, museums, etc.) as during military service.

Non-military service starts with a "basic training period" (*koulutusjakso* / *utbildningsperiod*) at the Centre for Non-Military Service (*Siviilipalveluskeskus* / *Civiltjänstcentralen*) in Lapinjärvi, eastern Uusimaa region. After the training, the rest of the service consists of socially beneficial civilian – that is, non-military – "work service" (*työpalvelu* / *arbetstjänst*). You yourself must find and choose a work "service location" (*palveluspaikka* / *tjänstgöringsplats*). You can also influence the timing of your service.

To get from your home municipality to the Centre, you'll receive two Matkahuolto bus tickets with the letter ordering you to start non-military service (*määräys siviilipalvelukseen* / *kallelse till civiltjänst*). If you need more bus tickets or if you'd prefer to travel by train, tell us your itinerary. Extra tickets will be sent some 2–3 weeks before the assigned date for starting the service. If these haven't arrived or need to be changed, let us know at least one week in advance so that we have enough time to mail you new ones. If you use any local commuter tickets for the trip, keep the receipts for possible reimbursement.

DURATION OF THE SERVICE

The period of non-military service is 347 days. Any previously completed days of basic training or work service are deducted from this number. Each completed day of military service is deducted using coefficients that depend on the assigned length of the service. If you were assigned 165 days of military service, the co-efficient is 2.10. If it was 255 days, the co-efficient is 1.36. If you were assigned 347 days, which is also the period of non-military service, the co-efficient is 1.00.

You can track your remaining service days and daily allowance using the service length calculator available on our website www.siviilipalveluskeskus.fi (*Palvelusaikalaskuri* in Finnish / *Räknare av tjänstgöringstiden* in Swedish).

Example: You served 8 days out of an assigned 165 days of military service.
 $8 \times 2.10 = 16.80$, so (rounding up) your non-military service is reduced by 17 days.
 $347 - 17 = 330$ days.

BEFORE THE SERVICE

WHERE TO FIND A SERVICE POSITION?

You should try to secure a service position (*palveluspaikka / tjänstgöringsplats*, a term also used for “service location”) before coming to the basic training period. The earlier you start, the more likely you are to get a position to your liking. You can't choose a service location with which you've had an employment contract within the past six months. Also, the service mustn't further your own studies directly.

VACANCIES ON THE WEB

Our website www.siviilipalveluskeskus.fi has a continuously updated list of available service positions (*Avoimet työpalveluspaikat* in Finnish / *Lediga arbetstjänstplatser* in Swedish), as well as a directory of all approved service locations (*Kaikki palveluspaikat / Alla tjänstgöringsplatser*). If you wish to choose some other location, they must apply for approval well before you can start your work service there.

WHERE CAN I DO MY WORK SERVICE?

A service location can be almost any state or municipal authority or agency, religious community, or any not-for-profit association or foundation under private law. It cannot be a for-profit corporation, political party or trade union. The most common non-military service locations are daycare centres, libraries, universities, nursing homes, ministries, parishes, cultural institutions, colleges, schools, hospitals and certain associations.

INTERVIEW

If you use public transport to go for a work service interview outside your official or home municipality, save the receipts: travel expenses for one service position interview will be reimbursed during the basic training period. Remember to ask for proof of attendance, and show it to your training group instructor along with the receipts. You can also apply for permission to go for an interview during the training period.

If you do secure a position, fill out a **Non-Military Service Contract** (*sitoumuslomake / förbindelseblankett*) with your service location and send it to the Centre. Alternatively, you can bring it to the training period and give it directly to your group instructor.

NEED A DEFERMENT?

You must start your service on the assigned date. Lack of tickets, a pending deferment application or appeal, or any similar reason will not excuse you from reporting to service. Deferment can be granted for studies, health reasons, arranging your financial circumstances, or other specifically personal reasons (see §26 and §31 of the Non-Military Service Act). Deferment must be applied for well in advance, preferably at least four weeks before the assigned date. The application forms are available on our website www.siviilipalveluskeskus.fi (*Lomakkeet > Siviilipalvelusvelvolliset* in Finnish / *Blanketter > Civiltjänstgörare* in Swedish). Remember to attach the necessary documents demonstrating your need for deferment:

- studies (*opinnot / studier*): an extract from the student register or proof that you've accepted an offer to study
- health reasons (*terveydelliset syyt / hälsoskäl*): a doctor's written "B statement" (*B-lausunto / B-läkarintyg*) justifying either temporary (1, 2 or 3 years) or permanent exemption from service
- financial reasons (*taloudelliset syyt / ekonomiska skäl*): proof of loans or debts, a payment plan, and a salary certificate or a copy of an employment contract
- other personal reasons (*muu henkilökohtainen syy / andra personliga skäl*): a written statement explaining the reasons

You can also apply for deferment during your service for any of these reasons. If you're unsure of your ability to make it through the service, you can discuss the possible need for deferment with a doctor during the training period.

TRANSFERRING TO MILITARY SERVICE

If you wish to carry out your national service as military rather than non-military service, you must send a written application to the Centre for Non-Military Service. The application is free-form and must be sent well before your assigned date for starting non-military service. In this case the Centre will make a decision. If the decision is positive, you're released from non-military service and all your documents are transferred to your military district office (*puolustusvoimain aluetoimisto / försvarsmaktens regionalbyrå*), which will assign you a date for starting military service (*varusmiespalvelus / beväringstjänst*).

REFUSAL TO PERFORM THE SERVICE

If you refuse to perform the service, you must send a written statement to the Centre for Non-Military Service. The Centre will report the incident to the police, after which the matter will be transferred to a public prosecutor. In accordance with §74 of the Non-Military Service Act, if you refuse to perform non-military service you will be imprisoned for a period corresponding to half of your remaining service time.

THE BASIC TRAINING PERIOD

LAPINJÄRVI? WHAT ON EARTH IS THAT?

The Centre for Non-Military Service (*Siviilipalveluskeskus / Civiltjänstcentralen*) has been located in Ingermaninkylä, Lapinjärvi since 1998. The Centre runs the four-week basic training period and administers non-military service jointly with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.

Lapinjärvi is located along highway 6 between Porvoo and Kouvola, some 90 km from Helsinki in eastern Uusimaa region. The bilingual municipality (called Lapinjärvi) has a population of about 3000. The Centre itself is located on a beautiful headland by a lake (also called Lapinjärvi), on the estate of Sjäkulla near a parish village (again called Lapinjärvi). The current facilities date from the 1930s, and have served among other things as a rehabilitation centre for alcoholics and a reception centre for asylum-seekers and refugees, before the Centre for Non-Military Service began operations here.

HOW TO GET THERE?

Buses are the most convenient way to get to the Centre for Non-Military Service. Helsinki, Porvoo, Kouvola and Lappeenranta all have direct bus connections to Lapinjärvi. At 10:00 AM on the first day of the training period, there will be 1–2 charter buses leaving from **Helsinki**'s Mikonkatu tourist stop (next to the Central Railway Station) and arriving at the Centre itself. Other buses, from the direction of Helsinki or Kouvola, typically stop instead on highway 6 (the stop is called *Ingermaninkylä 6-tie* in Finnish / *Ingermansby rv. 6* in Swedish), about 1 km from the Centre.

Trains do not reach Lapinjärvi. The nearest railway stations are in Kouvola and Helsinki. Kouvola's station is right next to the bus terminal, so you can easily transfer from train to bus. In Helsinki the Central Railway Station and bus terminal are less than 1 km apart (see walking directions below).

Since timetables change frequently, you should check them on www.matkahuolto.fi/en (for buses) and www.vr.fi/en (for trains) to make sure you reach Lapinjärvi in time.

DIRECTIONS FROM HELSINKI'S CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION TO THE KAMPPI BUS TERMINAL

Take the main exit of the railway station, turn right and walk towards Mannerheimintie (Helsinki's main street). Cross it, and you're at Lasipalatsi (an office building). Behind Lasipalatsi there's an open space, beyond which is the Kamppi complex. Take the right-hand side entrance labelled *Kaukoliikenteen terminaali* / *Fjärrtrafiksterminalen* ("Long-distance traffic terminal") and go down the escalator. The buses to Lapinjärvi (direction Kouvola or Lappeenranta / Villmanstrand) usually leave from platforms 1–11. Remember: there's no shame in asking for directions!

Cars arriving from the direction of Kouvola or Helsinki should turn at the Neste Oil petrol station and signs towards Porlammi (road 1771). Immediately after you turn, you'll see a sign on your right pointing towards the Centre (the road is called *Latokartanontie / Sjäkullavägen*).

If you're coming from the north, head towards Lahti. South of Lahti, at the junction of highway 4, take road 167 towards Orimattila. There are many twists and turns, so follow carefully the signs towards Myrskylä (stay on road 167), Porlammi (road 1751 from Myrskylä) and Lapinjärvi (road 1771 from Porlammi). As you drive from Porlammi towards Lapinjärvi, the road to the Centre (*Latokartanontie / Sjäkullavägen*) will be on your left, behind a largish industrial facility. The abovementioned Neste Oil petrol station will also be visible ahead of you on the left side of road 1771. For more details, check for example www.maps.google.com (where highways 4 and 6 are labelled E75 and E18, respectively).

Car travel is as a rule not reimbursed. If no public transport at all is available, reasonable fuel expenses will be reimbursed to the nearest public transport departure point.

The parking area is located in front of the Lampola teaching facility.

Air travel can be reimbursed only if the total cost of the air and bus fares is the cheapest option available to the state. There are direct buses from Helsinki-Vantaa airport to Lapinjärvi (direction Kouvola or Lappeenranta / Villmanstrand). When searching for Matkahuolto buses, choose "Helsinki-Vantaa Airport Terminal 1 (Vantaa)" or "Helsinki-Vantaa Airport Terminal 2 (Vantaa)" as your point of departure.

If your travel arrangements are particularly difficult, you can also arrive on the day before your training period begins (usually a Sunday). Do however note that the dining hall only opens on weekdays.

PROGRAMME FOR THE FIRST DAY OF THE TRAINING PERIOD

You must arrive by noon! Register at the reception desk in building A. While queueing, take out a valid photo ID and one passport photo. The receptionist will log you as having started non-military service, and you'll receive a Non-Military Service Certificate and a key to your room.

The Welcome Info will be held in Sikala from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. Lunch will be served in the dining hall until 12:45 PM.

Note: If you want a last-minute transfer to military service, do not register at the reception desk, but go straight to Administration. If you do register, you're considered to have started non-military service and you can no longer transfer to military service.

Updating your information

To update your contact details and bank account number for payment of your daily allowance, use the OmaSivari website <https://omasivari.mol.fi> or your Citizen's account <https://asiointitili.suomi.fi> (available in English).

THE TRAINING

“On no account did I expect [the training period] to be horrible, but it turned out to be surprisingly interesting. There was a lot of discussion during the lessons. [...] I learned new things from a totally different angle. As a whole, the training period was one of the best months of my life, especially considering that it was mandatory. I’ll highly recommend non-military service to everyone I know, specifically based on my experience at the training period.”

GENERAL INFORMATION

The purpose of the four-week basic training period at the Centre for Non-Military Service is to support your general citizenship skills, train you in civil defence and rescue (among other things), and prepare you for your work service. The training is common-good, and provides skills and knowledge that may also come in handy later on in your working life. In addition to lectures there are discussions, group projects, excursions, etc.

The training is mandatory, in accordance with the scheduled programme. Attendance is taken at least twice a day. The lecture times are 8:45–10:15 AM, 10:30–11:45 AM, 12:45–2:15 PM and 2:30–4:00 PM. On Fridays the programme ends at 2:00 PM.

On the first day of the training period, you’ll join a training group. As a rule, the choice of group is up to you. With a few exceptions (for example Swedish-language training periods), the groups are:

- The Environment & Society (YKS)
- Citizenship Skills (KAVA)
- Fire, Rescue & Civil Defence (PP)
- Violence Prevention (VÄKE)

There are also lectures common to all groups, such as Basics of Non-Military Service, First Aid EA 1®, and History of Conscientious Objection. The lectures are held in the Sikala (“Piggery”), Lampola (“Sheep Barn”), Kanttiini (“Canteen”) and Pakkaamo (“Packing Plant”) teaching facilities; in the computer room; and occasionally, weather permitting, outdoors. Most of the programme is separated by group, but for the common topics groups are sometimes combined.

THE ENVIRONMENT & SOCIETY (YKS)

The YKS group trains you to protect cultural heritage and to provide assistance in the event of an environmental disaster. We also address environmental problems and their solutions.

In Environmental Protection, we examine the interaction between humans and nature, especially through problems caused by humans and possible solutions to them. We focus on actions taken by the individual, which both cause and solve these problems. Weather permitting, “YKSiles” (*yksiläiset*) will also get a chance to explore the natural environment surrounding the Centre.

We survey active citizenship from multiple angles – from voting and political parties through not-for-profit organisations all the way to demonstrations, civil disobedience and other kinds of activism.

YKSiles learn the basics of oil spill response through theory and practice. Topics include the necessary equipment, the proper handling of birds and organising a clean-up. Occasionally we also get to study bird-cleaning equipment at the Porvoo Rescue Department. The Centre for Non-Military Service has the right to issue a World Wildlife Fund (WWF) certificate to everyone who attends the Oil Spill Response course.

Protecting Cultural Heritage will introduce you to our common global cultural heritage, World Heritage Sites in Finland and abroad, and a case study of the local culture in Lapinjärvi. The aim is not only to recognise and value cultural heritage, but also to understand the need to protect it in various crisis situations.

CITIZENSHIP SKILLS (KAVA)

The KAVA group encourages you to be an active, involved citizen. At the lessons you'll contrast your own values with both Finnish society and the international reality.

In Political Participation & Citizen Activism, the emphasis is on examining social problems important to you, finding solutions to them and pondering your own readiness to act. We survey active citizenship from multiple angles – from voting and political parties through not-for-profit organisations all the way to demonstrations, civil disobedience and other kinds of activism.

The international community is approached from various perspectives, including human rights, development and armed conflict. We study the human rights situation in Finland and worldwide, along with ways to promote human rights. In Development, we discuss our relationship with developing countries and the people who live there. The Anatomy of Conflicts series takes a look at warfare as a phenomenon, the law of war, and trends in and factors behind armed conflict.

FIRE, RESCUE & CIVIL DEFENCE (PP)

The PP group trains you to provide assistance in civil defence and rescue, and to prevent accidents. After the training you'll understand the risks involved in various situations, know how to prepare for them in advance and not panic if a disaster does occur.

As a "PeeP" (*PP-läinen*), you'll get an official certificate for completing Security Officer Training. By taking this certificate to the police, you can apply for a five-year Security Officer Card. Security officers are needed at assemblies and other public events. The group will also be informed on the safe organisation of a small public event (or even a slightly bigger one).

An often-featured course is the official Hot Work Training of the Finnish National Rescue Association (*SPEK*). Everyone who successfully completes this course will receive a Hot Work Certificate. In AS1 you'll learn fire safety and initial extinguishing (*alkusammutus*). Home Safety deals with basic everyday safety – how to recognise and prevent the most common hazards in the home – and introduces the basics of emergency planning.

The PP group will also study the Voluntary Rescue Service (*Vapaaehtoinen pelastuspalvelu, Vapepa*), through both theory and a Missing Person Drill. Basics of Crisis Intervention will teach you how to deal with a person in a crisis situation and how to cope while giving aid.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION (VÄKE)

The VÄKE group trains you to prevent violent behaviour by identifying aggression triggers, and by promoting your own and others' mental well-being as well as human interaction.

We focus on practicing emotional and interpersonal skills, and we discuss self-image and the construction of self-esteem. We examine the myths of manhood with respect to upbringing, sexuality, relationships and fatherhood.

We study violence as a phenomenon and its various forms, such as bullying, disciplinary violence, domestic violence and sexual harassment. The aim is to learn about various social procedures for preventing violence, like mediation and school anti-bullying programmes.

The skills you learn will prepare you for assisting various professionals, particularly in the fields of education and social work (for example in daycare centres, schools and youth work).

ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE

At the training period, attending lectures is mandatory. During breaks you're free to leave the area, as long as you're back in time for the next lecture. Although accommodation is provided, those living nearby can spend their nights at home if they wish.

Weekends during the training period can also be spent at home. Charter rides to Helsinki and Kouvola leave from the Centre each Friday. If you need bus or train tickets, you can order them from the reception desk early in the week.

For each day of **sick leave**, you must bring a medical certificate signed by a doctor or nurse. Those who have already secured a service position will as a rule get **efficiency leave** on the second, third and fourth Monday (although this may not be the case if any public holidays fall during the training period). For everyone else, these Mondays are **job search days**, with guidance provided on such things as writing a CV and applying for a service position.

Other types of leave besides efficiency leave are generally not granted during the training period.

HEALTH CARE

The clinic is located on the first floor of building B, on the side facing away from the lake. It's staffed by two nurses and a doctor.

HEALTH INSPECTION

During the first three weeks of the training period, your fitness for service will be established by a health inspection. This inspection is mandatory and consists of one appointment with a nurse and another with a doctor. You should bring your vaccination records (*rokotuskortti / vaccinationskort*), prescriptions for any medications you're taking, and any other documents relating to your health. If you don't have a copy of your vaccination records, you can get one from your municipal healthcare centre or school nurse. If necessary, you'll get a booster vaccine against tetanus and diphtheria (TD) during the inspection.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

The clinic offers **walk-in care** on weekdays from 8:00 to 9:00 AM and from 12:00 to 12:30 PM, and by appointment at other times. The doctor is present as agreed. Medication for underlying conditions (such as asthma) is provided free of charge during the training period. Sick leave is granted as necessary.

If you fall ill while on **leave** or during the **weekend**, you should go to a municipal healthcare centre. Remember to inform your training group instructor of any illness or sick leave as soon as possible. All expenses related to diagnosis and treatment can be reimbursed. Submit the healthcare centre's receipts to Administration. Attach a pharmacy receipt for the prescribed medications (if any), a copy of the prescription and your bank account number.

If necessary, the Centre's doctor can refer you to a specialist at a district hospital.

You should also contact the clinic if you apply for **deferment** or **exemption from service** (classes E and C, respectively) for health reasons. If you're granted deferment or exemption for health reasons before turning 25 years old, your contact details will be forwarded to your local youth outreach programme.

The Centre also has a **welfare counsellor** (*sosiaalikuraattori / socialkurator*). You can turn to the counsellor whenever problems arise, whether financial worries or relationship troubles. Both the nurses and the counsellor make use of the *Time out* service, through which you can get help with difficult issues from your local experts.

LEISURE TIME

“There was a wide variety of things to do, and consequently the leisure time passed smoothly.”

ACCOMMODATION

“The arrangements worked quite nicely in every way. Though admittedly the bedroom window insulation is lousy!”

You'll be lodged in a 2- to 10-person room in Sjökuulla. The door is lockable. If you need a padlock for your locker, you can get one from the reception desk.

Shared bathrooms and showers are located along the corridor. There's one available allergy room, for which you need a doctor's allergy certificate. For females there's a separate room, with a lockable bathroom and shower next door.

During the training period, the large wood stove sauna is available every Tuesday and Thursday from 6:00 to 9:30 PM.

Bed linen is provided by the Centre. Everything else you should bring yourself. Noise must die down at 10:00 PM, and from 11:00 PM to 6:00 AM there must be complete silence. The showers should preferably not be used after 11:00 PM.

There's a shared TV room, and a kitchen complete with microwave and fridge. Once a week you'll help clean your room and the common spaces.

Smoking areas are located outside the buildings. For fire safety reasons, smoking on the balconies is strictly prohibited.

MEALS

Breakfast, lunch, dinner and an evening snack are served on weekdays. Each meal offers a single general option, but diets are catered for. If you're vegetarian or have other dietary needs, please notify the kitchens at least one week in advance by emailing siviilipalvelus.keittio@eurest.fi.

Meal times:

Breakfast

7:00–8:30 AM (Monday–Thursday)

7:00–7:50 AM (Friday)

Lunch 11:15 AM – 12:45 PM

Dinner 4:00–5:00 PM

Evening snack 7:00–8:00 PM

THINGS TO DO

“Never have I made so many new friends in such a short time!”

As lectures usually end at 4:00 PM, the evenings offer plenty of leisure time that can be spent in many different ways.

KANTTIINI

In Kanttiini (the “Canteen”), you can have a good time with your (new) friends. There's a library, a ping-pong table, a pool table, board games, newspapers and magazines, a jukebox, a television, a PlayStation and Internet. Kanttiini's subscriptions include *Helsingin Sanomat* (“Helsinki Dispatches”), *Hufvudstadsbladet* (“Journal of the Capital”), *Rumba*, *Inferno*, *Aku Ankka* (“Donald Duck”), *Maailman kuvalehti* (“World's Pictorial Magazine”), *Image*, *Suomen Luonto* (“Nature of Finland”), *Tekniikan Maailma* (“World of Technology”) and *Tiede* (“Science”). The (cash-only) vending machine dispenses coffee, tea, soft drinks and snacks.

Kanttiini opening hours:

4:30–10:30 PM (Monday–Thursday)

RECEPTION AT YOUR SERVICE

The reception desk, located in building A, is open 24/7 all year round. Here you can:

- order tickets for weekend travel
- get painkillers if you're in acute pain
- borrow sports equipment and bikes, or (in summer) keys and life jackets for row boating
- return books borrowed from the parish village library (*Lapinjärven kirjasto / Lappträsk bibliotek*)
- pick up lost items and hand over found ones
- pick up your mail during the training period

INTERNET ACCESS

There's a computer room in the basement of building A. It's open for general use Monday–Thursday from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM and from 4:00 to 10:00 PM. At other times it may be reserved for teaching purposes. For recreational use, there are also computers with Internet access in Kanttiini. Both Kanttiini and the lodgings have Wi-Fi.

THE PARISH VILLAGE

The beautiful parish village of Lapinjärvi has two food stores, a hardware store, a bank, a post office, a LähiTapiola insurance office, a pharmacy, a pizzeria, a library, and two churches. It's located some 3.5 km from the Centre. You can find the website of the Lapinjärvi municipality at www.lapinjarvi.fi.

SPORT

At the gym, you can pump iron free of charge. In summer you can play football, badminton, basketball and frisbee golf. The adjacent lake offers swimming and row boating opportunities in summer, and in winter you can take a refreshing post-lecture dip through a hole in the ice. The paved hilly roads and bike paths on the Sjäkulla estate can be used for skateboarding and roller skating.

For those who wish to play floorball, transport is provided to the sports hall of the parish village school (*Kirkonkylän koulu*) twice a week during the school year.

There's a track-and-field venue and a tennis court some 3 km from the Centre, and a lit skiing trail / sawdust track about 1 km away. Joggers can enjoy pleasant routes throughout the year.

MUSIC

Under the dining hall there's a "band booth" that you can use Tuesday–Thursday from 4:00 to 9:00 PM. It has a PA system, electric guitars, a bass, guitar and bass amps, a drum kit, an electric piano and mics for singing. You're also welcome to bring your own instruments! Acoustic time, meaning no amps or drumming, starts at 8:00 PM. There's a piano in Sikala. If you play an acoustic instrument, we'll do our best to find you a rehearsal space.

OTHER OPTIONS

Do bring games and sports equipment of your own – you might meet fellow enthusiasts. During your four weeks here you can also try out a completely new sport. If someone is willing to drive, you can explore the sleepy nightlife of the nearby area. The lovely historic centre of Loviisa offers a small-town atmosphere less than half an hour's drive from the Centre. Less than 45 minutes away, Porvoo, Kouvola and Kuusankoski are a bit more vibrant. Lahti, just over an hour from the Centre, already has an urban feel.

WHAT TO BRING

Pack for at least a one-week stay in Lapinjärvi.

IMPORTANT:

- an ID card
- your Kela card (personal health insurance card)
- any tickets you've received for the trip
- the letter ordering you to start your service (*määräys siviilipalvelukseen / kallelse till civiltjänst*), to be presented with your Matkahuolto bus tickets (see p. 4)
- a passport photo for your Non-Military Service Certificate
- your Non-Military Service Contract (*sitoumuslomake / förbindelseblankett*), if you've secured a service position
- your vaccination records
- any other medical certificates
- your bank account number (in IBAN form) for payment of your daily allowance
- a water bottle
- woollen socks (in winter) or indoor shoes

ALSO WORTH BRINGING:

- toiletries
- a towel
- enough clothes
- shower sandals to prevent the spread of germs
- outdoor gear
- gym clothes
- earplugs (for light sleepers)
- books, magazines

The entire area of the Centre for Non-Military Service is an alcohol-free zone, and you must not be under the influence of alcohol during service hours.

It's FORBIDDEN to bring weapons (whether guns or knives), pets, alcohol or drugs to the Centre. Smoking is allowed only in designated areas.

BENEFITS OF PERSONS LIABLE FOR NON-MILITARY SERVICE

UPKEEP DURING THE SERVICE

DAILY ALLOWANCE

You'll be paid a daily allowance for the duration of your non-military service. The amount depends on how long you've served, and is highest towards the end of the service. During the basic training period, the allowance is paid by the Centre (retroactively every two weeks); and during the work service, by the service location (who may do things differently). You and your service location should agree on a payment method and schedule when filling out the Non-Military Service Contract.

Days Served	Daily Allowance
1–165 days	5.10 €
166–255 days	8.50 €
256–347 days	11.90 €

Updated 01.01.2015. For possible changes, check our website www.siviilipalveluskeskus.fi (*Päiväraha* in Finnish / *Dagpenning* in Swedish).

When calculating the daily allowance, any previously completed days of military service count as 1-for-1, with no varying coefficients. The allowance is paid for every service day, including weekends.

MEALS AND MEALS ALLOWANCE

Your service location is responsible for your meals during the service. This applies not only to work service days, but also to all weekends and leave days that you spend at the accommodation assigned by your service location. The daily meals are breakfast, lunch, dinner and an evening snack.

Instead of providing food, the service location can choose to pay a meals allowance. Depending on which meals are provided, the meals allowance varies from 0 (all four meals provided) to 13.50 €/day (no meals provided). For more details, check the chart on our website www.siviilipalveluskeskus.fi (*Taulukko maksettavista ruokarahoista* in Finnish / *Måltidersättningar* in Swedish).

CONSCRIPT'S ALLOWANCE

If you live in housing that you own or rent, or if you have family entitled to conscript's allowance, contact the local office of Kela (the national Social Insurance Institution). To ensure that your conscript's allowance application is processed in time, you should submit it about a month before the beginning of your service. Remember to sign the application and to include all requested attachments. The allowance is granted from the beginning of the month in which the application is submitted to Kela, not retroactively for earlier months. If you apply for conscript's allowance, Kela will take into account your actual available income during the service. In the first week of basic training, the Centre for Non-Military Service will inform Kela that you've started your service.

Conscript's allowance will be discussed at the basic training period's Kela briefing. You can also get an appointment for 1-on-1 counselling.

For more information check www.kela.fi/web/en/conscripts-allowance, Kela's conscript allowance leaflet and p. 27 of this guide ("Accommodation").

INTEREST ON STUDENT LOANS

Kela can pay any interest on your student loans as conscript's allowance, provided they fall due during your service or in the calendar month in which your service ends.

OTHER LOANS AND DEBTS

If you have debts, you should agree with your lender in advance about rescheduling payments or switching to an instalment plan. The payment of fines can generally be postponed until the end of the service. Payments to repossessioners can also be negotiated. Think twice before taking any payday loans or other forms of instant credit, as the interest and other costs will be high compared to the amounts borrowed, whereas your income during the service will be low.

UNEMPLOYMENT

If you're unemployed, remember to notify the Office of Economic Affairs and Employment that you're starting non-military service (www.te-palvelut.fi/te/en > E-services, available in Finnish and Swedish). If you're receiving earnings-related unemployment benefits (*ansiosidonnainen työttömyyspäiväraha / inkomstrelaterad dagpenning*), you should also notify your unemployment fund (*työttömyyskassa / arbetslöshetskassa*).

APPLYING FOR JOBS OR STUDIES

If you have nowhere to work or study after the service, you might be in need of careers advice. Your service location is recommended to let you visit, for example, the local Bureau of Economic Affairs and Employment (*TE-toimisto / TE-byrå*) without having to spend any personal leave.

HEALTH CARE

You have a right to free health care during non-military service. Your service location will pay for any treatment necessary for carrying out the service. If you require additional services or treatment, you can apply to Kela for compensation. If you need medical services during your work service, your service location will tell you where you can get them. If you need urgent care, go to a municipal healthcare centre or other public healthcare unit.

SPECTACLES

Provided certain conditions are met, your service location will pay for spectacles or contact lenses. The conditions are listed in section 5.5.6 of the guide for service locations, available on our website www.siviilipalveluskeskus.fi in Finnish (*Siviilipalveluksen järjestämistä ja suorittamista koskeva ohje*) and Swedish (*Anvisning om anordnande och fullgörande av civiltjänst*). If your spectacles break during basic training lectures or work service hours through no fault of your own, they will be replaced to a similar standard. Before purchasing new spectacles, you should discuss the conditions with your service location.

DENTAL CARE

The main focus of dental care during non-military service is on prevention and preservation. In practice, your service location will pay for an annual check-up with fluoridation as well as treatment for aches, infections and other dental conditions endangering your general health. Prosthetics are generally not covered.

THE WORK SERVICE PERIOD

The length of the work service period following the basic training depends on the number of previously completed days of military and non-military service. Usually it's around 10.5 months. The working time is 36–40 hrs/week, in line with the general working hours of the service location. For more information on finding a service position, see p. 5 (Where to find a service position?).

NO SERVICE POSITION?

If you haven't secured a service position by the end of the training period, you can take leave for personal reasons (*henkilökohtainen syyloma, HSL*). During this time, your local youth work programme (*etsivä nuorisotyö / uppsökande ungdomsarbete*) can help you find a position. Alternatively, you can stay at the Centre for a two-week “intensive” search period. You can also carry out your work service at the Centre itself, which offers some 15 positions including receptionist, IT support and driver.

ACCOMMODATION

You have a right to free accommodation during non-military service. **During the basic training period**, Kela can reimburse your housing expenses, whereas **during the work service period** it's either your service location or Kela that pays.

The assigned accommodation should be clear from the very beginning to both you and your service location. It must also be indicated on your Non-Military Service Contract. The service location can assign you accommodation from their own facilities, or rent an apartment. Subject to your agreement, the assigned accommodation can also be your own home. If this results in expenses to you, the service location must reimburse them. When filling out the Non-Military Service Contract with your service location, you should discuss possible housing expenses (rental contract, proofs of payment, etc.).

If you refuse the assigned accommodation, the service location doesn't need to pay your housing expenses. A refusal to accept the offered accommodation must also be indicated on your Non-Military Service Contract. In this case, check with Kela if you're eligible for conscript's housing assistance.

WHO PAYS FOR ACCOMMODATION?

DOES YOUR SERVICE LOCATION HAVE ACCOMODATION TO ASSIGN YOU?

YES

This can be, for example, a dorm room or a separate rental apartment. It must be possible for you to move into the assigned accommodation – the service location can't assign accommodation that isn't available in reality.

DO YOU ACCEPT THE ASSIGNED ACCOMODATION?

NO

Even if the service location has arranged other accommodation, you're free to keep living at home if you wish. The service location doesn't need to pay your housing expenses.

Write the address of the arranged accommodation in the highlighted address field (*Palveluspaikan osoittaman majoituksen osoite / Adressen för bostaden, som tjänstgöringsplatsen erbjuder*) of the Non-Military Service Contract, check the box that indicates you do not accept the assigned accommodation (*Velvollinen ei ota majoitusta vastaan / Tjänstgöraren tar inte emot inkvarteringen*), and write the address where you will actually live in the other address field (*Jos velvollinen ei ota majoitusta vastaan, hänen osoitteensa on / Om tjänstgöraren inte tar emot anvisad bostad, så är hans address följ.*).

YES

Your service location will be responsible for the expenses of the arranged accommodation. You have the right to retain any housing that you rent or own, and the service location can't force you to make an official change of address to the assigned accommodation.

Write the address of the arranged accommodation in the highlighted address field (*Palveluspaikan osoittaman majoituksen osoite / Adressen för bostaden, som tjänstgöringsplatsen erbjuder*) of the Non-Military Service Contract and check the box that indicates you accept the assigned accommodation (*Velvollinen ottaa majoituksen vastaan / Tjänstgöraren tar emot inkvarteringen*).

If you own or rent housing that causes you expenses during the service, you can apply to Kela for conscript's allowance in the form of discretionary housing assistance. For more information check p. 25 of this guide ("Conscript's allowance") and the Kela webpage <http://www.kela.fi/web/en/conscripts/housing-assistance>.

Your service location is obliged to assign you accommodation. If they don't have housing of their own, they'll assign you your own home.

DOES YOUR SERVICE LOCATION HAVE ACCOMODATION TO ASSIGN YOU?

NO

When you start the service, will you live with your parents or independently?

WITH MY PARENTS

Write your parents' address in the highlighted address field (*Palveluspaikan osoittaman majoituksen osoite / Adressen för bostaden, som tjänstgöringsplatsen erbjuder*) of the Non-Military Service Contract and check the box that indicates you accept the assigned accommodation (*Velvollinen ottaa majoituksen vastaan / Tjänstgöraren tar emot inkvarteringen*).

IN HOUSING THAT I OWN OR RENT

The service location will pay your share of the housing expenses. The Centre for Non-Military Service will reimburse part of these costs (max. 250 €/month in the Helsinki metropolitan area, max. 150 €/month in the rest of Finland).

Write your own address in the highlighted address field (*Palveluspaikan osoittaman majoituksen osoite / Adressen för bostaden, som tjänstgöringsplatsen erbjuder*) of the Non-Military Service Contract and check the box that indicates you accept the assigned accommodation (*Velvollinen ottaa majoituksen vastaan / Tjänstgöraren tar emot inkvarteringen*).

Your service location will pay you the meals allowance for any leave days that you spend at the accommodation assigned in your Non-Military Service Contract. The service location will also pay for your commute (if it's more than 5 km one way).

TRAVEL

WORK SERVICE TRAVEL

If you accept the assigned accommodation and your commute is more than 5 km, the service location must pay for it. The service location can pay for commuting in other cases as well, but isn't obliged to.

GOING ON LEAVE AND TICKET DISCOUNTS

Your trips for leave are paid by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, but you apply for them through your service location. The trips are granted provided certain conditions are met:

1. The trips must be the cheapest option available to the state under the circumstances.
2. The trips are between the service location and your official or home municipality.
3. Trips can't be granted for evening leave (less than 24 h), except for entrance exams, job interviews or similar reasons (see 4.d below).
4. In special cases your service location can also, at their discretion, grant you trips to:
 - a) A location of long-time work or study
 - b) The home municipality of a spouse or long-time common-law partner
 - c) The home municipality of a parent, sibling or child
 - d) A potential future municipality of residence, work or study, provided you can produce some kind of proof, for example an invitation to a job interview or entrance exam.

In addition, your trips to the training period and from there to your service location are free of charge, as is any secondment (*komennusmatka / kommenderingsresa*).

For any other trips during your service, you can get discounts on long-distance trains (outside the Siuntio–Vantaankoski–Tampere–Lahti–Helsinki area) and buses (distance at least 80 km) by presenting your Non-Military Service Certificate.

Travel within the Helsinki metropolitan area is unfortunately not discounted, but other cities' local transport might be – it's always worth asking your local Transport Authority (*liikennelaitos / trafikverk*).

LEAVES

All working days, weekends (or any lawful equivalent) and leaves (except *HSL*, leave for personal reasons) count as service days. Days spent away without leave do not count as service days.

TYPES OF LEAVE

PERSONAL LEAVE (*henkilökohtainen loma, HL*) – 18 DAYS

The personal leave days are supposed to be granted evenly throughout the service, but your preferences should also be taken into account, without any need for justification. These days count as service days, and the daily allowance is paid.

LEAVE FOR PERSONAL REASONS (*henkilökohtainen syyloma, HSL*) – 180 DAYS

This type of leave can be granted by the service location if you give justification in your application, for example financial issues. These days do not count as service days, and no daily allowance is paid. If you're granted 14 or more consecutive days of leave for personal reasons, the service location will record it in your register, which will notify Kela.

EFFICIENCY LEAVE (*kuntoisuusloma, KL*) – 20 DAYS

If you distinguish yourself by your service, you can be granted up to 20 days of efficiency leave on your service location's initiative. These days count as service days, and the daily allowance is paid. The service location doesn't need to grant any efficiency leave if you haven't distinguished yourself.

PATERNITY LEAVE – 12 DAYS

This type of leave is granted if a child is born to you. These days count as service days, and the daily allowance is paid. On top of the daily allowance, you can also apply for Kela's paternity allowance. Weekend leave does not count as paternity leave.

SICK LEAVE

To grant sick leave, the service location needs a medical certificate signed by a doctor or nurse. These days count as service days, and the daily allowance is paid. If you're granted one long sick leave (about 2 weeks) or multiple shorter ones, your service location may order you to be re-examined by a doctor. If the doctor deems you unfit for service, you can get an exemption from service. Any exemption decision based on sick leaves must be made by the Centre for Non-Military Service. Sick leave takes precedence over all other types of paid leave (meaning all other types of leave except *HSL*).

LEISURE TIME

All time outside your prescribed working hours is your own. You're free to spend this time on work, study or hobbies, as long as your service isn't adversely affected. However, there are some restrictions. Even in your leisure time, you can't do paid work for your own service location. Also, if you do paid work (for someone else) during the service and Kela is paying your housing expenses or the interest on your student loans, these benefits can be reduced or cut off.

You have the right to travel abroad during the service. The clearance certificate for getting a passport is granted by the Centre for Non-Military Service (before your work service) or the service location (during your work service). If you haven't completed your service, the clearance certificate will be valid only until the end of the year in which you turn 28.

TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SERVICE LOCATION

If you wish to change service locations, you must apply to the Centre for Non-Military Service for permission. To do this, send us the following documents:

1. A Non-Military Service Contract for the new service location
2. A statement of approval from the old service location
3. A freely formulated, signed application by you
4. An extract from the criminal register (*rikostaustaote* in Finnish / *utdrag om brottslig bakgrund* in Swedish), if the new service location requires it and the previous extract has expired (valid for 6 months).

You can't start your service at the new location until the Centre for Non-Military Service has granted you written permission to do so.

TESTIMONIALS

A foot in the door at a future employer

I chose *Luonto-Liitto* (the Finnish Nature League) as my service location because I knew some people in the organisation and I'd been on their summer camps. It was a great choice, as I really enjoyed myself. The work was varied: I answered the phone, ordered materials, updated the website, carried mail, ran errands and took part in various environment-related activities. I was treated as an equal by a fun and relaxed crew. It was nice to do meaningful work and support environmental education. The best part, though, was that I earned more money than anywhere else before. In addition, after I'd finished the service they offered me a job.

Tomi, 22

In a familiar high school

I'm a "non-mil" (*sivari / civare*) at my own high school: the Lyceum of Jyväskylä (*Jyväskylän Lyseon lukio*). I'm already familiar with the people and practices, so settling in was easy. Among other things, my work includes teaching, roadie jobs, IT support and updating administrative records.

Jani, 20

A political choice

I chose to work at a reception centre because I'm interested in social work, multicultural environments, global ethical issues and asylum seekers' perspective on Finland. I also wanted my choice of service location to express my view that Finland can and should take responsibility for international social work. I feel that, for Finland's foreign relations, international civilian work is currently more important than armed defence or participating in military operations overseas.

One source of motivation was to find out how the much-debated asylum process actually works. So far I've discovered a complex web of problems, which above all calls for a sense of global responsibility on the national political level and sustained positive-minded development on the bureaucratic level.

Jussi, 28

Challenging work as a reporter

I was interested in journalism, so when a non-mil reporter's position opened up at Kepa (the Service Centre for Development Co-operation), I applied. I didn't have any previous experience as a reporter, I'd just done a year or so of political science at university. The interview was thorough, but I was lucky enough to get the position.

I was part of a team of four. The work at *Maailman Kuvalehti* ("World's Pictorial Magazine") was varied: brainstorming, fact-finding, interviews, writing, editing and layout. Occasionally I'd also be a receptionist or a festival organiser. There was no time to get bored, indeed at times the year was passing by a bit too fast. I learned a lot through challenging work, and I'd like to go back to journalism in the future. After the service, I've still done odd jobs for Kepa.

Joona, 23

Swedish too for good measure

Having read about Solglimten on the Centre's notice board a couple of days before finishing the training period and joining the "legion", my first reaction was to laugh. The thought of spending a year on a little island at a Swedish-language assisted-living facility sounded like a joke, but in the end I decided to seize the opportunity out of some mix of humour and desperation. I called them, secured an interview with my very clumsy Swedish, and sat down on the bus with a long trip ahead of me.

The first thing on the island that caught my attention was the truly beautiful scenery. As soon as I'd arrived, I was invited to dinner, which is still as delicious now as it was back then.

Having stuttered my way through the first few weeks of work service, my Swedish started to come along, and for the first time in my life I dared to say that I actually spoke the language. As a night watchman I haven't come across anything more serious than a few stumbling grannies, and I've been able to spend my nights in peace. I've put this time to good use by watching some 200 films. The staff and residents are pleasant and unforgettable people, and thanks to fortnightly leaves and free Internet, I haven't had to sever my ties to the outside world. This has been a very good year.

Ville, 23

AFTER THE SERVICE

You have a right to a **health inspection** at the end of your service. Although the inspection isn't mandatory, it is however advisable. It carries weight, for example, if you apply for compensation for any injury or illness suffered during the service. Either way (inspection or no), **you must sign** a state-of-health declaration on your green medical card (*lääkärintarkastuskortti / hälsogranskningskort*). If you haven't been ill during the service, this will be the first time that the envelope is opened and the card is taken out.

You should also ask your service location for **proof of employment** (*työtodistus / arbetsintyg*), as this may come in handy when you apply for jobs in the future.

The service location will log your service as completed on your **yellow Non-Military Service Certificate**. Hold on to this, as it acts as proof of completed service, for example if you apply for a passport. You should therefore keep the Certificate at least until the end of the year in which you turn 30.

Your service location will notify the Centre for Non-Military Service that you've been discharged, and return your medical card.

WHERE TO TURN FOR ADVICE?

The **Centre for Non-Military Service** (*Siviilipalveluskeskus / Civiltjänstcentralen*) can advise you on any issues related to non-military service. You can contact us by email or by phone. Our website www.siviilipalveluskeskus.fi provides a wealth of information (mostly in Finnish and Swedish), including possible changes to the phone line (*Siviilipalveluskeskuksen puhelinneuvonta palvelee / Civiltjänstcentralens telefondejour rådgger*).

The **Non-Military Service Act** can be read in its entirety at www.finlex.fi in Finnish (search for *siviilipalveluslaki*) and Swedish (search for *civiltjänstlag*). An unofficial English translation, along with this info package, is available on our website at www.siviilipalveluskeskus.fi/en.

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Tel. +358 (0)295 0295 00 (Monday–Friday 9:00–11:00 AM Finnish time)

The national Non-Military Service Phone Line provides general advice on matters related to non-military service. It does not make decisions, and does not provide information on individual persons liable for non-military service. Depending on the issue, decisions are made by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Centre for Non-Military Service, the Non-Military Service Advisory Board (*siviilipalvelusasiain neuvottelukunta / delegationen för civiltjänstärenden*), the service location's person in charge, or Kela (in the case of conscript's allowance).

Tel. +358 (0)295 020 704 (Monday–Friday 9:00 AM – 4:15 PM Finnish time)

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