

Frequently Asked Questions about Community Service

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What is the Philosophy behind doing community service?	The cornerstone of our Community Service program is our belief in improving and giving back to our community. Public service allows us to touch the lives of people and at the same time grow and stretch as an individual. In the process of service or volunteering we strengthen academic and social skills. We gain problem solving and critical thinking skills. We meet 'amazing' people. We gain a sense of accomplishment and realize as Margaret Mead so aptly said, "Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."
What are the graduation requirements?	Each high school student must complete 60 hours of Community service during their four year tenure at Foothill. We strongly suggest that students complete a minimum of 15 hours each year.
I didn't attend FTHS for four years, what are my requirements?	Students here for three years need a minimum of 45 hours. Students here for two years need a minimum of 30 hours. Students here for one year need a minimum of 15 hours
How can I verify that my hours have been recorded?	After submitting your hours through the google form found on this webpage: https://sites.google.com/venturaedu.org/ccmc/community-service. Hours will be logged on our spreadsheet every 4-5 weeks. You can then check the viewable spreadsheet with your ID number to confirm your hours were recorded. If you find a discrepancy, please let the Media Center staff know ASAP so we can resolve it.

Besides required hours, are there other criteria?	We recommend that you complete hours for two different approved organizations. You must also submit your verified hours on the google form found on the webpage: https://sites.google.com/venturaedu.org/ccmc/community-service.
Are there school awards for community service?	Yes. At senior awards night students who achieve Platinum Status (225+hours) will be awarded their certificate onstage. Students who have achieved silver and gold will be asked to stand and a slide will be shown to honor their achievement as well. Hours are prorated for students who have not been here for four years and they, too, will be eligible for awards. Hours must be submitted by the last day of the 3rd quarter to be eligible for senior awards. Hours for awards are: Silver 125-174 Gold 175-224 Platinum 225+ Ruby 500+
Are there other awards I can receive for community service?	Yes, you may be interested in applying for the President's Volunteer Service Award. For information on this, go to http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/ Also, there is a Congressional Award for community service and for info on this go to www.congressionalaward.org

Are there scholarships for community service?	Yes, each year a variety of organizations stress community service as one of the key components of their community service. E.g. Kohl's Kids Who Care® scholarship program,
Do universities consider community service when they select students for admission?	At this time, public institutions generally provide a place on their applications to check if you have done community service. Private schools are often more interested in your contribution in this area. Many colleges and universities today have community service requirements. E.g. California Lutheran freshmen do community service and on their page they state: The mission of the University is to educate leaders for a global society who are strong in character and judgment, confident in their identity and vocation, and committed to service and justice.
Where can I do community service?	Service must be performed for an approved governmental agency or non-profit 501c(3)organization that is doing charitable works to benefit at least one other unrelated person and for which neither compensation nor academic credit is received. Governmental agencies include: Ventura Unified School District – school tutoring and programs, school carnivals and events-City of Ventura, Police, Fire. There are dozens of ways that organizations can become non-profits. Thus not all non-profits fit our parameters for community service. An overview of our approved organizations should give you an idea of types of organizations that are approved. Check out the list here.

Is there a list of approved organizations?	Yes, there are approximately 180 organizations that have been approved. Check out the list here.
How do I arrange to volunteer with an organization?	Contact information is generally provided for in the list approved organizations. New and updated service opportunities are posted in the bulletin, sent to you via emails and can be found here. You must call and/or email the contact person yourself. Begin with a simple introduction: “Hello, my name is Jane Doe, and I am calling from Foothill Technology High School. I am interested in volunteering with your agency if you have openings.” The organization that you call may not have a current volunteer opening or might have specific age requirements or skills that you do not meet. If so, don’t be discouraged, we have over 180 approved organizations – contact another one.
Can I perform community service for a parent/relative?	No, the idea of community service involves personal growth and stepping outside your comfort zone to interact with and help unrelated people in need.
What if an organization is not listed, how can I get it approved?	First, check the list of approved organizations first. If it is not listed, then complete the community service proposal form. We will review your proposal and email you to let you know if it is approved or not. Not all non-profits are approved. It depends on if their mission is benefiting the community.

When can I do my community service?	Service may be performed at any time during a student's high school career, from the summer before freshman year until the end of April senior year. Under most circumstances community service may not be performed during the school day when students have assigned classes. For example, Outdoor School, Animal Fostering. Seniors hours are due May 1st of each year (FIRE crew hours from May can be turned in through June 1st).
What is the criteria for the submission of hours?	We suggest submitting hours when you complete an event. Remember you need to have the adult in charge of your actual service sign and verify the hours you have entered. If an agency gives you a time sheet you may use it instead of our verification form. • Be sure to round all hours worked to the nearest half-hour. This will be reported as a decimal. (1/2 hour = .5). Be sure to total hours at the bottom of the log. • Students cannot log more than 8 hours in a 24 hours period. (Email Mrs. Duffy to request exceptions in advance.) • Students cannot log hours performed during the hours they are normally scheduled to be in school. • Training hours do count for community service. Generally, no more than 20% of the hours on your log should be taken up by the training hours. • Travel time does not count for community service. • For ongoing community service, please submit your hours several times a year so we can monitor your progress. Students doing community service at CMH have their hours sent by the coordinator to Mrs. Duffy.

How are NHS logged?	You submit your tutoring hours via the verification form.
How are FIRE hours logged?	Mrs. Carr forwards the hours to Mrs. Duffy and they are entered into our database. A google form submission is not required.
I've heard that some organizations have special criteria that may impact how I record participation and what I can record. Can you explain?	This is true, as we have evolved the program we have discovered that some guidelines are necessary. I've included these below, but please check back occasionally for updates or changes. • Relay for Life hours – we often have an active group here at FTHS and your team leaders will outline recording of your participation and hours. If you are not working with a school team please see Mrs. Duffy first about restrictions on recording hours (e.g. can't record more than 8 hours during the event day) • Animal Fostering– Though an animal(s) may live with you, the actual hours involved in its care are limited to .5 hours per day or 3.5 hours per week. This applies to one dog/cat or more. If you also participate in a formal training program (e.g. Seeing Eye Dogs, obedience classes, etc) then you may also record these hours. Remember to get signatures. • Outdoor Education, YMCA Camp-Please ensure that this activity is on the approved list. No 24 hours days – recorded hours must reflect 'active' working hours (limit 8 hr/day). You cannot log hours when school is in session nor will we excuse you during school time. • Polling Stations-You cannot be paid and also log hours for community service. You cannot log hours when school is in session, nor will we excuse you during school time. • YWAM-This particular community service was 'grandfathered' in and we have agreed to allow students to receive 20 hours of service for this event. Remember to get signatures from your adult leaders. • Performances/ Special Productions-If students perform free at a convalescent home, hospital, school or other community function they may accrue hours only for the setup time and the performance.

	• Missions to build schools/hospitals etc. These can be used for accrued time, not including travel or sleeping time. Remember this cannot exceed 8 hours per day. In our experience the average submission has been no more than 6 hours per day. • Summer or other season camps. If you offer to volunteer so you may attend these camps for free or reduced rate, than you cannot double dip and count hours for school. Private camps do not count for community service. An example of a camp that could count is a camp for children with cancer. Church camps or Vacation Bible School fall within the 20 hour limit.
What are the restrictions?	You may not volunteer for profit-making businesses even if you do not receive any pay. Your family/relatives may not sign for your hours. You may not count hours volunteering with religious organizations, if it involves recruiting people for the religion. If your church does outreach events such as feeding the homeless; veteran programs; participating in a Habitat build, etc. then you may log those hours Family-operated day care homes are not allowed. Licensed child-care facilities that have volunteer programs in place are seldom allowed as they are businesses. One that would be allowed is the college child care facility. You may not count commuting time to any community service event. You may not count hours for Club Sports, Ballet schools, judo schools or other similar enterprises that might be nonprofits (with exceptions cited above under Performances/ Special Productions.). Volunteering within your church community is limited to 20 hours for your 4 years. (e.g. nursery, Bible school, audiovisual, etc.)

Where can I find the forms for community service?	These forms are online at https://sites.google.com/venturaedu.org/ccmc/community-service or hard copies can be picked up in the media center.
What are my personal responsibilities ?	You represent your family and school when you volunteer in the community and so it is important that you consider the following: show trustworthiness and respect; present yourself in appropriate attire and always well groomed; be punctual; display cell phone etiquette; and always do your best.
Can the hours I volunteer with my team count?	Competitive Teams (athletic, speech, journalism, music) Competitive team members may volunteer with a community service organization, such when the Optimist Club hosts a basketball tournament, where the proceeds are donated to benefit a variety of community groups which may include the school or school competitive program. Competitive team activities that benefit the school, and therefore the student derives some limited benefit from their service, have a cap of 20 of the 60 hours required. Competitive team members may volunteer within the community, such as a beach cleanup, with no benefit to their school or program have no cap on number of hours that can be accumulated.

Can I volunteer for a religious organization?	Students may volunteer with church activities, such as with the audio-visual team for church services or in the childcare center. Serving for one's own faith community has a cap of 20 of the 60 hours required. Students may go with their church group to serve the general community outside of their faith community, such as to serve dinner at Project Understanding, orphanages, or building trips no cap on number of hours that can be accumulated.
Reminders	If you are working with an agency and don't understand something, be honest and ask for directions and clarification. At anytime, if you feel uncomfortable or questions a supervisor's actions please talk to us right away or to another adult on site.There will always be exceptions to the above guidelines and so be sure to talk to Mrs. Duffy if you have a query.