

VCS COMMUNITY SERVICE GUIDELINES 2023

Suncoast Community High School

Students of the Voluntary Community Service (VCS) class are required to obtain **75 hours** of Community Service in order to obtain credit for the class. The following guidelines must be followed, to participate in community service activities that are considered “acceptable” for this class:

Community service is defined as non-paid volunteer work with a non-profit agency.

Students may begin accumulating service hours as early as the summer (June) prior to entry of the 10th grade year.

- **Service should benefit the community at large. Working solely for an individual will not be acceptable.**
- **Acceptable services include, but are not limited to:**
 - A student can work up to 8 hours per day on a project (mission trip students can only count 8 hours each day for every day of the trip).
 - Service with a religious organization - when not a part of the religious instruction/service/ceremony
 - Participation in the arts when the performance is free to the public or serves as a fundraiser for a segment of the community.
 - Organizing and collecting canned goods, clothing, or book drives for a community in need.
 - Tutoring/Mentoring through programs such as Big Brother/Sister, United Way, NHS, Mu Alpha Theta, etc.
 - Cleaning school grounds during/after lunch as witnessed by an administrator
 - Coaching/Support staff of organized or recreational sports teams
 - Attending community commission meeting (have commissioner sign)
 - Visiting/Assisting/Performing in/nursing homes/hospitals/shelters where no money is exchanged for services
 - Volunteering or participating with civic or governmental organizations or with a political campaign. Activities supporting a candidate or political party are prohibited **on campus**.
- **Hours must be documented in writing, on the VCS Community Service Log (generated by SHS VCS Program). You may include hours on a signed letterhead from the organization receiving service and describe the services provided. Attach to VCS Form.**
- Parent notification of the community service requirement is necessary. A school generated notice will include the necessity of parental knowledge/supervision while students are engaged in community service activities.
- Students who do not have access to community service opportunities must be provided opportunities on the school campus. It is the student's responsibility to alert the school Counseling Department that he/she is in need of school access to community service.
- By **September 8th, 2023** a minimum of **45** hours should be completed.
- The deadline for submitting **75** community service hours to your AP Government/VCS instructor is **December 1st, 2023**.

Does NOT qualify as community service:

- Rehearsal time for participation in a fine arts or performing arts program that charges money for the show (with the exception of SHS performing arts programs).
- Practice time for sports and band.
- Club meetings to organize community service activities.
- **No fostering of animals**
- Buying items to donate in exchange for hours is not allowed (animal shelters, homeless shelters)
- Donating canned goods (from home) to gain community service hours. (*Organizing a drive or collecting the cans from bins and driving them to the shelters/organization are acceptable.*)
- Personal tutoring without verification through a formal organization is prohibited.
- Parents cannot sign to verify their child's participation in a community service activity.
- **A For Profit Business**