



Henrico County Public Schools has a Community Service program for students in grades 6 – 12. These students may participate in voluntary assignments and activities to serve organizations as well as individuals within the community. Students in grades 6 – 8 and grades 9 – 12 have different criteria. Middle School students can receive school based certificates for completing hours in the range of 1 – 10, 11 – 20, and 21+ hours.

High School students can receive a special seal on their diploma for serving 80+ hours during their 9 – 12 years. Hours from middle school do not carry over from year to year, but high school hours do carry over each year. The goal of community service is to enhance the quality of life within the student’s school and community. Community Service Learning combines instruction, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, and voluntary participation in supporting activities or obtaining contribution of goods. For 2019-2020, hours for the seal was reduced to 50, which will still be observed while social distancing rules, and possible quarantines, are in place.

**For the 2020 – 2021 school year**, students will use a Community Service form that allows students to record seven different instances of community service performed. Furthermore, **this letter** serves as pre-approval. While many activities do count for community service, there are some activities that do not. By signing this form, parents/guardians are acknowledging that their student can perform community service to earn a special seal on his or her diploma and that some activities are not allowed.

In summary, students can volunteer for a school, a non-profit agency, or help an individual who cannot help themselves. Activities tied to a grade, some sort of compensation, or a school sport or club does not count. The most common question is about volunteer opportunities related to a religious organization. If the activity serves a community function (e.g. camps, feeding programs, after school or summer care) these can count. If the activity is related to teaching religious doctrine or performing in a religious service, these hours would not count. If you have any questions, please see the Community Service Leader of each school. More information can be found at: <https://goo.gl/RzWuwr>. You can also follow **@HCPSService** for information on Twitter.

There is always a risk that students will volunteer for a worthy cause and find out later that it did not qualify within our guidelines. We are trying to minimize this occurrence with these procedures. All final decisions for approval will be made by the Secondary Social Studies Specialist, Taylor Snow at (804) 652-3752 or [tmsnow@henrico.k12.va.us](mailto:tmsnow@henrico.k12.va.us).

**Furthermore, in April and May of 2021**, high school students will hear about deadlines to turn in forms. For students in grades 9 – 11, the deadline is important to track their cumulative hours per year. If a student in grades 9 – 11 misses the May deadline, they can still turn in the hours the next school year. However, for Seniors, the deadline must be met in order to complete all the paperwork and order the seals.

Please check off and sign below to acknowledge the terms of community service.

\_\_\_\_ I acknowledge that my son or daughter will be performing community service and understand that some community service activities may not qualify for a community service seal.

\_\_\_\_ This permission form covers each year your student is enrolled at any high school in HCPS.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Printed Name and Graduation Year (Print Clearly)