

CAPITAL CITY YOUNG MARINES

COMMUNITY SERVICE GUIDELINES



This document is intended to serve as guidance regarding Community Service. It will cover the importance of community service within the Young Marines program, its purpose, and generally acceptable and unacceptable forms of community service.

1. National Headquarters.

- a. The definition of what constitutes Community Service is defined by National Headquarters in the YM Awards Manual as *"...a service that benefits their community, veteran's organization, military unit, service organization, i.e. the Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc., youth group, elderly/disabled, or school community events."*
- b. It has been conveyed that it is up to the discretion of the Unit Commander to determine what is and what is not considered Community Service when it comes to approving Community Service hours within their Unit.

2. Role Within the Unit.

- a. Character Building.
 - i. The first and foremost purpose of Community Service is that it encourages Civil Responsibility and cultivates good character by investing time and effort into the community and the people who live in it.
 - ii. Another benefit of Community Service is it promotes Personal Growth and Self-Esteem. Helping others fosters empathy and self-awareness, allowing us to view Community Service as an opportunity to serve rather than something we must do.
 - iii. Have goals of attending college after graduation? Grades and test scores will always be what college admissions officers pay most attention to, but having quality Community Service activities on your college application will showcase an aspect of your personality and help them see you as a good citizen and a

leader. Remember that they are not impressed by the sheer number of hours you have accumulated, they are impressed by what you have done, why you are doing it, and what you are getting out of it. Volunteering now will help prepare you for your future.

- b. Requirements - Since cultivating responsible citizens is a large part of our mission in the Young Marines, it is a requirement in the following ways:
 - i. A minimum of 50 Community Service hours within a 12-month period is required to earn the **Community Service Ribbon** (Ref YM Awards Manual). Additionally, see Appendix A at the end of this guideline for a detailed explanation of this process.
 - ii. The **Community Service Ribbon** is required to obtain the rank of YM/Lance Corporal.
 - iii. To obtain the **Distinguished Order of Merit** (DOM), one must have earned the Community Service Award no less than 3 times. Additionally, organizing an advanced Community Service project is required to earn this award.
 - iv. To earn the **Presidential Volunteer Service Award**, Community Service hours must be recorded. Level of award is based on the age of the individual and hours volunteered (Ref YM Awards Manual).
 - v. Though National Headquarters carries no specific requirement for Community Service above the rank of YM/LCpl, the Unit Commander of Capital City Young Marines (CCYM) encourages every Young Marine, regardless of rank, to have a goal of earning at least 50 hours of Community Service each year.
- c. Earning Community Service Hours - Community Service hours may be earned by either attending Unit-organized events, by volunteering to serve on your own time, or by organizing your own community service project.
 - i. Unit-Organized Events – If you serve during an event that is organized by the YM Unit, a Community Service Form is not required to get credit for the hours you volunteered. A Registered Adult staff member will account for your time and enter it into your record book in the online database.

- ii. Personal Volunteer Opportunities – If you volunteer on your own time for an event or charity that CCYM has not organized, a Community Service Form (found on the Unit website) is required. This form will need to be filled out by an adult supervising the volunteers. The completed form shall be turned in to the Unit Adjutant and once approved by the Unit Commander it will be entered into your record book in the online database.
 - iii. Personally Organized Project – If there is no supervisor for the event because it has been organized by an individual Young Marine, then the Young Marine shall create an After Action Report (AAR) to include the name of the project, who the project benefitted and why, and how many hours were spent planning and performing the planned project. The AAR shall be submitted to the Unit Adjutant and once approved by the Unit Commander it will be entered into your record book in the online database.
3. What Is and What Is Not Community Service – This is by no means an exhaustive list, but should serve as a general guideline of what is and what is not considered acceptable as Community Service by the Unit Commander.
- a. Examples of Community Service:
 - i. Monday night drill meetings or other YM meetings are considered community service for Registered Adults (however, not for YMs).
 - ii. Performing in a Color Guard.
 - iii. Marching in a parade.
 - iv. Participating in any event honoring veterans.
 - v. Doing a Habitat for Humanity project.
 - vi. Doing housework or yardwork for an elderly person, or a disabled veteran.
 - vii. Visiting residents of a nursing home.
 - viii. Tutoring elementary children.
 - ix. Volunteering at agencies such as the Boys and Girls Club, or an after-school program.

- x. Picking up trash around the community.
- xi. Working with a boy or girl scouts troop.
- xii. Ringing bells for the Salvation Army.
- xiii. Working with a school or a non-profit.
- xiv. Helping teachers with their classrooms.
- xv. Coaching for a school (unpaid).
- xvi. Donating blood.
- xvii. Run/Walk in a Thon or 5k-type race, if it supports a charity or agency.
- xviii. Volunteering and participating in any activity that directly impacts the community.

b. What does **NOT** count as Community Service:

- i. Monday night drill meetings or other YM meetings are NOT community service for YMs (however, they are for RAs).
- ii. Simply attending an event honoring veterans does not constitute community service. You must be an active participant of the event to receive community service credit.
- iii. Any sales-related or fundraising event (selling Meat Sticks, Yard Flags, etc.) even if you are not collecting monies.
- iv. Doing chores around your house or your own yard.
- v. Any activity that you get paid or compensated for will not be considered community service.
- vi. Babysitting
- vii. Run/Walk in a Thon or 5k-type race that does not support a charity or agency.
- viii. Anything that doesn't involve the community or agency.
- ix. Donating money, canned-goods, clothing, supplies, or the like, is considered philanthropy, and however generous is not qualified as community service.

4. Additional Notes.

- a. The Unit Commander reserves the right to decline, based on his/her discretion, any community service hours turned in by a Young Marine if he/she deems the submitted hours or event/activity to be fabricated, unworthy, or inappropriate.
 - i. If volunteer hours or event/activity are found to have been fabricated, disciplinary action may be taken against the Young Marine via a Disciplinary Board including, but not limited to, suspension from the Unit. If already entered into the database, those hours will be removed.

Appendix A

Accumulating 50-hours of community service in a 12-month period seems simple enough, but we often get questions about when the 12-month window starts and ends among other questions about this rule and the form itself. We'll do our best to clarify below.

1. What is the 12-Month Window? The 12-month period begins initially at the date of your registration into the Young Marines Database. You then have till that date the following year to have reached 50 community service hours to earn the ribbon. This window resets each year on the anniversary of your registration (if you fail to reach 50) or at the date you reach 50 hours (examples listed below).
2. What happens to your hours if you **go over** 50 within the window? If you accumulate over 50 hours before the 365-day window is done, the balance of your hours is applied to the next 'window' and you now have another 12-months to try again.
 - a. Example: YM/Pvt John Doe registered as a Young Marine on February 1, 2016. Over several months, he has 46 hours of community service logged. On August 16, 2016, he volunteers 6 hours of approved community service. He is credited with reaching 50-hours, and the 2 extra hours go towards his next ribbon. He now has until August 16, 2017 to accumulate 48 hours to get credit for another ribbon.
3. What happens to your hours if you **do not** reach the full 50 within the window? If by the time 365 days pass and you have not reached 50 hours, the time within that period unfortunately resets to zero and you now have another 12-months to try again.
 - a. Example: YM/Pvt Jane Doe registered as a Young Marine on August 1, 2015. Over several months, she has 32 hours of community service logged. She needs to volunteer an additional 18 hours of approved community service to reach 50 but does not do so before August 1, 2016. As a result, she is not credited with reaching 50-hours, all her hours from that 12-month period are reset to 0, and now has till August 1, 2017 to accumulate 50 hours to get credit for the ribbon.
4. If a Young Marine fails to reach 50 hours in a 12-month period and they have earned the Community Service Ribbon in the past, do they lose those hours as well? No, they only forfeit the hours accumulated during that 12-month period.

5. What if a Young Marine accumulates 50 hours over the course of 2 years, does that count? National Headquarters requires that the 50 hours of community service be accumulated within a 12-month period.
6. How many times can a Young Marine earn the Community Service Ribbon? There is no limit. Some take the whole year to reach 50-hours, some get there within months. It all depends on how much you volunteer.
7. How does the **Presidential Volunteer Service Award** (PVSA) tie in to the **Community Service Ribbon** (CSR)? The PVSA is always awarded based on community service hours accumulated from October 1 through September 30 of each year and is a separate award from the CSR.
8. Where is the **Community Service Form** found? On the unit website (www.capcityyoungmarines.org), click on the 'Forms & Reference' tab, then look for '[CCYMF001 – COMMUNITY SERVICE FORM](#)'.
9. Is there a way to find out how many community service hours a Young Marine currently has? As of right now, the online database does not make it easy for the end user to find detailed community service data, other than to list the events they have attended along with how many hours they have accumulated. However, it does not notify you of current hours within the 12-month period you currently have or how much time you have left. The Unit Commander has the ability, however, to view this information. Please contact the Unit Commander to request your current community service data.