

# COMMUNITY SERVICE GUIDELINES

## High School

### 2024-2025

Students of the School District of Palm Beach County are required to obtain a minimum of 20 community service hours to graduate from high school. Students must complete community service hours upon successful completion of 8<sup>th</sup> grade and by high school graduation. Community service is also a requirement for many scholarships (i.e., \*Bright Futures) and college entrance programs. The purpose of community service is for students to engage in activities that help them develop an appreciation for the concept of service to the school or community.

The following guidelines must be followed to participate in activities that are considered acceptable for community service:

- **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 prior to entry of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade year.
- Service should benefit the community at large. Working solely for an individual will not be acceptable.
- Hours must be documented in writing, either on a common community service log (generated by the School) or on letterhead from the organization being served.
- 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.
- Time spent organizing and collecting canned goods, clothing, or book drives for a community in need does qualify as community service.
- Service on behalf of a candidate for public office can be considered community service.
- Fostering animals for a non-profit animal organization will be given no more than 4 hours a day.
- Community service may include, but is not limited to, a business or governmental internship, work for a nonprofit community service organization, or activities on behalf of a candidate for public office.

**The following are examples that would not count as community service:**

- Rehearsal time for participation in a fine arts or performing arts program.
- Practice time for sports and band.
- Club meetings to organize community service activities.
- Donating canned goods or items to gain community service hours.

Parents cannot sign to verify their child's participation in a community service activity.

**The documentation of the number of hours and dates of service must be signed by the student, the student's parent or guardian, and a representative of the organization for which the student performed the volunteer work.**

Schools should have the community service hours entered onto the student’s electronic records within 2 weeks of submission.

**For Bright Futures Requirements ONLY**

- Students must earn either the required volunteer service (using the criteria described above), paid work hours, or a combination of both.
- Volunteer service hours and paid work hours may not be hours that benefitted the student financially or materially while in the service of family members defined as: parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, and spouses, including aforementioned step relations.
- The agencies where the volunteer service hours or paid work hours were earned must provide on agency letterhead documentation of the number of hours and dates of service or paid work completed. Where a letter can not be obtained, students may submit a copy of their pay stub.
- Reflection: The student must, through papers or other presentations, evaluate and reflect upon their volunteer service or paid work experience.
- Students may begin accumulating paid work hours as early as June 27, 2022
- Paid work may include, but is not limited to, a business or governmental internship, work for a nonprofit community service organization, or activities on behalf of a candidate for public office.
- Volunteer service or paid work must be approved by School Principal or Principal Designee, or the Department of Education for Home Education students.

**The documentation of the number of hours and dates of service must be signed by the student, the student’s parent or guardian, and a representative of the organization for which the student performed the volunteer or paid work.**

**2024-2025 Requirements**

<b>Award Level</b>	<b>Number of Volunteer service hours only</b>	<b>Number of Paid work hours or combination of both</b>
<b>FAS</b>	100	100
<b>FMS</b>	75	100
<b>GSC</b>	30	100
<b>GSV</b>	30	100

\*Please visit the <https://floridabrightfutures.gov/> for more information on Bright Future requirements