

Community Involvement Hours – Eligible and Ineligible Activities

Thinking about volunteering?

Students under the age of eighteen years will plan and select their community involvement activities in consultation with their parent(s)/guardian(s). Selection of activities should take into account the age, maturity, and ability of the student, and environment of the proposed activity, and the need for any special training, equipment, and preparation. Students with special needs as well as other identified students may have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that outline accommodations and/or modifications related to this component of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

What activities are ELIGIBLE?

While many of the traditional Community Involvement activities may not be possible during the COVID-19 pandemic, students are encouraged to explore virtual opportunities that support the community.

Find below a list of eligible activities with examples, as well as activities which are ineligible.

Where an activity does not clearly fall within the eligibility list below, please consult with your Principal for approval before starting. The Principal of your secondary school, in consultation with the Supervisory Officer, has the discretion to approve or reject any activity or event.

Eligible Activities

An eligible activity is an activity that:

- is a benefit to the community
- is performed outside the regular school day (lunch hours, weekends, after school, or school holidays)
- may be in support of not-for-profit organizations, public sector institutions, and other informal settings
- may be a structured program to promote tutoring and mentoring whose purpose is to assist others
- may support work of a global nature or promotes environmental awareness
- may be with a club, religious organization, arts or cultural association, or political organization that seeks to make a positive contribution in the community
- may promote and contribute to the health and well-being of any group, including some school-based activities (only those school-based activities which extend their service to a wider community)

Examples of Eligible Activities

The following is a list of examples of eligible activities:

- make cloth masks for hospitals, long-term care homes, grocery stores, delivery services and other essential services (e.g. the Sewing for Change COVID-19 Initiative)
- facilitating discussions with newcomer youth
- outdoor volunteer opportunities could include, for example, picking up litter
- contribute your skills and time online for various volunteer projects and roles available to support organizations and causes in local communities or across the globe (e.g. Zooniverse, digital archiving for a library or museum, etc.)
- letter writing to community members who are not able to have visitors such as residents in retirement homes, patients in hospitals, etc. (e.g. Cyber-Seniors)
- start a fundraiser or join a peer-led program (e.g. volunteer walk organizer for Autism Speaks Canada)
- support organizations by following them on social media (e.g. social media advocate for Children's Miracle Network)
- many of your neighbours may require additional support during self-isolation because they are unable to access their usual support networks. Helping with yard work is just one way you can help
- students can leverage their interests and experience by helping with tutoring and mentoring
- calling and mailings for individuals or groups providing charitable or general community benefit
- contributing to youth programs such as Scouts, Guides, etc.
- walking a younger child to and from school, helping younger siblings with school work

*****Please continue to the next page for important information about INELIGIBLE activities**

What activities are Ineligible?

The ministry has developed a list of activities that may NOT be chosen as Community Involvement activities. These are referred to as ineligible activities.

An ineligible activity is an activity that:

- is a requirement of a class or course in which the student is enrolled (e.g., cooperative education portion of a course, job shadowing, work experience);
- takes place during the time allotted for the instructional program on a school day. However, an activity that takes place during the student's lunch breaks or "spare" periods is permissible;
- takes place in a logging or mining environment, if the student is under sixteen years of age;
- takes place in a factory, if the student is under fifteen years of age;
- takes place in a workplace other than a factory, if the student is under fourteen years of age and is not accompanied by an adult;
- would normally be performed for wages by a person in the workplace;
NOTE: Students aged 14 years and older can count up to a maximum of 10 hours from paid employment towards their earned hours at the discretion of the principal.
- involves the operation of a vehicle, power tools, or scaffolding;
- involves the administration of any type or form of medication or medical procedure to other persons;
- involves handling of substances classed as "designated substances" under the Occupational Health and Safety Act;
- requires the knowledge of a tradesperson whose trade is regulated by the provincial government;
- involves banking or the handling of securities, or the handling of jewelry, works of art, antiques, or other valuables;
- consists of duties normally performed in the home (i.e., daily chores) or personal recreational activities; - **WAIVED due to COVID - walking a younger child to and from school, helping younger siblings with school work, or babysitting a sibling/relative is acceptable**
- involves activities for a court-ordered program (e.g., community-service program for young offenders, probationary program).