



**GUIDELINES FOR TRACKING VOLUNTEER/COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS**

The University of South Alabama Office of Community Engagement (OCE) supports USA students, faculty, and staff in meeting the volunteer needs of the community at large. The OCE manages the [SOUTH SERVES](#) website as a tool to support volunteerism and service learning, to provide a one-stop location for communication about opportunities to serve, to allow users to build a volunteer resume, and to allow faculty and staff to partner with community agencies to provide community engagement and service learning academic opportunities. The OCE collaborates with departments across the USA main campus, USA Health, and organizations throughout the greater South Alabama region. The Office of Greek Life, the Office of (ff)1g55(n)9(n)9g)-2.1 ( a)10AAAAAAAmi()uc of (ff)1g5



but rather to provide a very basic framework for understanding volunteerism. If you have any questions, please contact us at [communityengagement@southalabama.edu](mailto:communityengagement@southalabama.edu).

WHAT COUNTS AS VOLUNTEERISM / COMMUNITY SERVICE *AND CAN BE TRACKED IN SOUTH SERVES?*



agency/organization to ensure the event showcases their mission and programs, and that event activities help reflect the values of the agency)

Working a fundraising event, helping with check-in, participant management and assistance, set-up, tear-down, etc.

- Directly participating with the population served by the organization, such as time spent with families and children during Special Olympics
- Activities completed for the benefit of a University department that is an agency on SOUTH SERVES or has posted a specific need (i.e., tabling, being a student organization officer or departmental ambassador, peer mentoring, career fairs, study abroad fairs, etc.)
- Giving blood (maximum of 45 minutes)

Due to the nature of some activities or circumstances, some service hours may be subject to evaluation by Greek Life, the Office of Community Engagement, and the Office of Student Affairs, including:

- Community trainings/workshops with a civic engagement focus, which should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Office of Community Engagement

**WHAT DOES NOT COUNT AS VOLUNTEERISM / COMMUNITY SERVICE AND CANNOT BE TRACKED IN SOUTH SERVES?**

- Donations of any type, including but not limited to money, supplies, clothing, food, etc.
- Indirect philanthropy and fundraising activities:
  - Attending a fundraising activity, but not engaging in direct service, or the staffing/implementation of the activity
  - Greek philanthropic events, such as percentage or profit-share nights or working a-1 (t)-12 (at)-2 (io

- Conducting the regular business of a student organization (i.e., member recruitment, membership meetings, etc.)
- Participating in a research project either as a participant (i.e., focus group) or a researcher (i.e., lab assistant)

## ARE THERE OTHER GUIDELINES TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN TRACKING VOLUNTEER / COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS?

To help facilitate and ensure timely approval of service hours, students, faculty, and staff are asked to add hours to SOUTH SERVES within 30 days of participating in the volunteer/community service activity. Hours submitted after 30 days may not be approved.

Hours approval is the responsibility of the benefitting agency/organization or the Office of Community Engagement in conjunction with the agency/organization. In cases where the benefitting agency/organization cannot verify the service hours, the agency/organization may be asked to confirm the project/activity and while student leaders approve the service hours in SOUTH SERVES. For student groups in these cases, the Presidents or Community Service Chairs are asked to be responsible for verifying and approving hours.

Some service hours, including those not verified by the benefitting agency/organization, are subject to standardization, including the following:

- 2 hours for coordinating a supply or other donation drive
- Up to 20 hours for student organization officer(s)/service chair(s) for coordinating/planning fundraising events such as Relay for Life, etc.
- Up to 10 hours for student organization assistant(s)/committee member(s) for coordinating/planning fundraising events such as Relay for Life, etc.
- 1 hour for participating in a 5K run, walk, or cycle for charity event
- 3 hours for participating in a 10K run, walk, or cycle for charity event
- For multi-day run, walk, or cycle events, where some aspects of the event include direct service, students groups/volunteers should consult their advisor, community service chair, etc. about the number of permissible hours

Due to the nature of some activities or circumstances, some standardized service hours may be subject to evaluation on a case-by-case basis. If volunteers have questions or want to request review of any standardized hours, please contact the Office of Community Engagement by e-mailing [communityengagement@southalabama.edu](mailto:communityengagement@southalabama.edu).

When planning any direct philanthropic



giving, the planning process should include working with the benefitting agency/organization to ensure the event showcases their mission and programs, and that event activities help reflect the values of the agency. Also, the event or activities should be reviewed and approved by the faculty/staff advisor(s) for the hosting student organization and/or the Office of Student Affairs.

Given that the University is located in an area occasionally impacted by natural disasters, volunteers looking to participate in local disaster relief efforts need to have the oversight of a supporting community organization