

Community Service Leave

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Policy

In recognition of the State's interests in supporting its employees who wish to volunteer in schools, communities, institutions of higher education, State agencies, and not-for-profit organizations, and recognizing the commitment of State employees to engage in volunteer service, Community Service Leave, within the parameters outlined below, may be granted to:

- parents for involvement with their child in the schools (as defined below)
- any employee for volunteer activity in the schools (as defined below); or
- any employee for volunteer activity in a not-for-profit Community Service Organization (as defined below), or
- any employee for volunteering in a State of North Carolina Public University, Community College System or State agency provided that the service is outside of the employee's normal scope of duties and responsibilities and that the employee is not receiving any form of compensation for the services rendered.

In addition, there are special provisions (Section 5, Page 18.3) for granting Community Service Leave to:

- any employee for tutoring and mentoring in public or private schools, or
 - any employee to volunteer in a literacy program in any public school
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Definitions

Following are definitions of terms used in this policy:

Terms	Definition
Community Service	The act of supporting citizens of North Carolina through volunteer service.
Volunteer	A person who willingly chooses to perform hours of service for civic, charitable or humanitarian reasons without promise or expectation of compensation for services provided.
School (public or private)	<p>An organization that is authorized to operate under the laws of the State of North Carolina and is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an elementary school, • middle school, • high school, or • a licensed child care program <p>Advisory Note: For employees who live in a state adjacent to North Carolina, the agency may grant community service leave to parents for involvement in the child's school</p>
Public University	A constituent institution of the University of North Carolina.
Community College	An educational institution that is a member of the North Carolina Community College System.
State Agency	A State government agency that is authorized to operate under the laws of the State of North Carolina.
Child	<p>A son or daughter who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a biological child, • an adopted child, • a foster child • a step-child, • a legal ward • a child of an employee standing in loco parentis

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Community Service Organization	<p>A not-for-profit, non-partisan community organization which is designated as a IRS Code 501(c)(3) agency, or a human service organization licensed or accredited to serve citizens with special needs including children, youth, and the elderly.</p> <p>Advisory Note: Although religious organizations may be 501(c)(3) agencies, this leave does not apply to activities designed to promote religious beliefs.</p>
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Covered Employees and Credits

With approval of the supervisor, an employee is eligible for Community Service Leave as follows:

Type of Appointment	Amount Granted
Full-time - permanent, probationary, or time-limited	24 hours per calendar year* <i>See special provision (Section 5, Page 18.3) options for volunteering in a literacy program or tutoring/mentoring</i>
Part-time (half time or more) – permanent, probationary, or time limited	Prorated proportionately to percentage of full-time equivalent for the position. Example, an individual with a half-time appointment is eligible for 12 hours per calendar year.
Temporary, intermittent, or part-time (less than half-time)	None

*The twenty-four hours (24) of paid leave shall be credited to each employee on January 1 of each year, unless the employee chooses one of the special provision options for volunteering in a literacy program or tutoring/mentoring.

Newly hired employees shall be credited with leave immediately upon their employment, prorated at two hours per month for the remainder of the calendar year. Separated employees that are re-employed within the same calendar year are credited Community Service Leave the same as newly hired employees; however, the combination of re-

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employment credit hours and total hours used prior to separation in the same calendar year cannot exceed the annual 24-hour maximum leave benefit.

Changing Options

If an employee chooses to change options from regular Community Service Leave to the special provisions for volunteering for the literary program or tutoring/mentoring or vice versa, during the calendar year, the maximum hours that may be granted is the maximum allowed under the new option chosen minus the amount already used.

What is Community Service

Community service, for this purpose, is:

- meeting with a teacher or administrator concerning the employee's child,
- attending any function sponsored by the school in which the employee's child is participating. This provision shall only be utilized in conjunction with nonathletic programs that are a part or supplement to the school's academic or artistic program,
- performing school-approved volunteer service approved by a teacher, school administrator, or program administrator,
- performing a service for a community service organization
- performing volunteer service for a public university** that is approved by a university administrator or other authorized university official;
- performing volunteer service for a community college that is approved by a community college administrator or other authorized community college official, or
- performing volunteer service for a State agency** that is approved by the agency head or his/her designee.

**An individual shall not be considered a volunteer if the person is otherwise employed by a State agency or State university to perform the same type of service as those for which the person proposes to volunteer.

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Notes:

- (1) Service does not include activities designed to promote religious beliefs such as teaching or leading religious assemblies or in raising funds to support religious activities. Service would include activities supported by religious organizations such as volunteering in soup kitchens, homeless shelters or other community activities.
- (2) Service may include serving inside a polling facility to assist voters with the voting process as long as the employee is not receiving pay for the service. Vacation leave rather than Community Service leave must be used if the employee is receiving pay for the "inside" poll work or if the employee is distributing brochures, transporting voters or other partisan campaigning outside of the polls.
- (3) Service for a fundraising event is eligible for Community Service Leave if there is a bona-fide volunteer relationship and the fundraising event is directly sponsored and supported by an eligible community service organization. For example, playing in a golf tournament that is raising money for the American Cancer Society is not considered a volunteer activity that would be eligible for Community Service Leave; however, setting up tents, handling parking and registration, or serving at the food tent at the fundraising golf event would be considered a volunteer activity and would be eligible for community service leave. Volunteering at a fundraising event for an individual citizen or political party is not eligible for Community Service Leave.
- (4) Disaster relief service must be performed through a recognized eligible disaster relief organization; example, the American Red Cross.
- (5) The 'child involvement' provision of the policy is limited to child day care, elementary school, middle school or high school involvement. A parent cannot, for example, use community service leave for on-site visits to colleges for the purpose of selecting a college, or to attend college orientations or assist with moving the child in and out of the on-campus housing, or for attendance at college graduations.
- (6) Community Service leave for volunteer service is meant to be used for actual service time. Time spent training to be a volunteer is not covered by Community Service Leave. Also, time spent in administrative duties such as attending organization meetings, electing officials, or attending social events sponsored by an organization shall not be covered by Community Service Leave

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Approval of Leave

Employees must receive approval from their supervisor to use this leave. The supervisor or other agency/institution manager may require that the leave be taken at a time other than the one requested, based on the needs of the agency. Leave shall only be requested and approved for community service that occurs during the employee's regularly scheduled hours of work. Agencies with shift employees regularly scheduled to work evening or night shift with a shift schedule in excess of a regular 8 hour shift may allow the use of community service leave in situations where the employee's participation in community service outside of the normal work schedule significantly impacts the employee's normal sleep period.

The agency may require acceptable proof that leave is being utilized in accordance with the purpose of this policy. Reasonable travel time may be included in approved time for community service, but only for the time that intersects the employee's regular work schedule. The majority of the leave shall be used for direct volunteer service.

Inter-Agency Transfer

If an employee transfers to another State agency, any balance of community service leave not used shall be transferred to the new agency. Under the tutoring/mentoring option, the employee should secure approval from the new supervisor to continue with that option prior to the transfer.

Not Cumulative

Leave not taken by the end of the calendar year is forfeited; it shall not be carried into the next calendar year.

Separation

Employees shall not be paid for any such unused leave upon separation.

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Records

The use of Community Service leave shall be reported separately from all other paid leave. Employees and supervisors are responsible for timely and accurately reporting the use of Community Service leave on the employee's time record.

Partisan Political Involvement

Partisan political activity during State time and the use of State equipment or property for any community service are not permitted. Special care must be taken to avoid any possible interpretation that the State is, in fact, permitting time off and in so doing supporting a political candidacy. State employees engaging in political activity must do so in accordance with G.S. 126-13 of the Human Resources Act.
