

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN DAY SCHOOL**  
*Community Service Program*



**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**Question:** *Why do we require community service hours at FPD?*

**Answer:** We believe the Bible calls Christians to serve others (Mt. 25:45; Mk. 10:45; James 1:27). We also believe that service allows us to meet real needs in the world, and that through our service, God forms us more into the image of Christ. Finally, we believe that true joy in life is found through “giving your life away” in service to God and others.

**Question:** *Who is required to complete community service hours?*

**Answer:** While service is woven throughout the curriculum in lower grades, only high school students are required to complete community service hours each year.

**Question:** *How is “community service” defined at FPD?*

**Answer:** FPD defines community service as unpaid work to benefit the community emotionally, materially, and/or spiritually. FPD understands our community to consist of both our local community in Macon and Middle Georgia, as well as our broader human community in the United States and across the globe. (Note: Community service hours must be completed with ministries and/or non-profit agencies.)

**Question:** *How many hours are required?*

**Answer:** FPD requires 30 hours yearly, with at least 15 of these being direct hours. A total of 120 hours, with at least 60 direct hours, are required for graduation.

**Question:** *I’m a rising 9<sup>th</sup> grader and/or a new high school student at FPD. How do I get started with community service?*

**Answer:** See the [FPD CS Quick Links](#) page for information on how to get started.

**Question:** *By what date do hours need to be completed by each school year?*

**Answer:** Service hours for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students should be completed by May 31 of the current school year. Senior students must submit their hours for graduation by March 1 of their senior year.

**Question:** *What is the difference between direct and indirect hours?*

**Answer:** Direct hours are defined as face-to-face service to distressed people groups (the elderly, sick, impoverished, disabled, widows and orphans, recent immigrants, and those experiencing homelessness). At least 50% of a student’s completed hours must come in

the form of direct service. Indirect hours are a kind of service that may still benefit a distressed population but does not involve direct contact (face-to-face) with that population. An example would be preparing meals or care packages for a distressed group but not actually interacting with that group. Service with animals at non-profit organizations is considered indirect service. Also, preparation for direct service counts as indirect hours. (In the "[Places to Serve](#)" document on the FPD website, the category of service for each organization is specified. Additionally, when service opportunities are shared with students, the category of service is typically listed.)

**Question:** *How do students log their hours?*

**Answer:** Students may upload hours to MobileServe through the MobileServe app on a smartphone, or by visiting [www.mobileserve.com](http://www.mobileserve.com) on a school laptop, personal computer, etc. [Click here](#) for a video on how to upload hours to MobileServe. Here are the step-by-step instructions on how to upload hours to MobileServe:

- Click "Log Hours" at the bottom of the screen.
- Enter the date, number of hours, and service organization.
- Choose either "Direct Hours" or "Indirect Hours."
- Type what you did under "Tell Your Story." Click "Next."
- Enter the supervisor's name and e-mail. (This sends an e-mail to your supervisor to allow them to "verify" your hours.)

**Question:** *How do I check my hours?*

**Answer:** You may check your hours by logging into your MobileServe account (on your smartphone app or through the website on any internet-enabled device). You will see your hours on the home page of your MobileServe account (you may toggle between "Approved," "Pending," and "Total" hours; you may also toggle between "Since 6/01" and "All Time." Another easy way to check your hours is by clicking on the Activity tab on your MobileServe account.

**Question:** *I logged my hours but they are not getting approved by FPD. How can I get my hours approved?*

**Answer:** For FPD to approve your hours, you must have a supervisor "verify" your hours via e-mail *or* you must provide 2 of the 3 items below.

- Supervisor signature. (You must do this on your smartphone when your supervisor is with you.)
- Photos. (You may attach photos as proof of your service.)
- Attach my location. (For this to work, you must have "Location Services" enabled on your smartphone for MobileServe, and you must log your hours on your smartphone while at the service site on the day of your service.)

**Question:** *My son or daughter is saying they must have a smartphone to log community service hours at FPD. Is this true?*

**Answer:** No. While there is a MobileServe app available for smartphones, students can also log their hours on any internet-enabled device by visiting [www.mobileserve.com](http://www.mobileserve.com).

**Question:** *When should students begin completing hours?*

**Answer:** Students are required to begin completing community service hours at FPD the first full semester they are enrolled as a high school student. (Semesters are August-December and January-May. Summer serves as a period where students can make up hours from their previous high school year, or complete hours for the upcoming year. Students are encouraged to use their summers to “get ahead” rather than “catch up” on their hours.)

**Question:** *If a student is not enrolled as a student at FPD for all four high school years, how are hours prorated?*

**Answer:** Students are essentially required to complete 15 total hours (with at least 7.5 of these being direct hours) each semester. See below for several scenarios.

- If a student begins in August, they are required to have 30 total hours for the school year, with at least 15 being direct hours.
- If a student begins in October, they are required to have 15 total hours for the school year, with at least 7.5 being direct hours.
- If a student begins at the beginning of January, they are required to have 15 total hours for the school year, with at least 7.5 being direct hours.
- If a student begins anytime between late January and the end of the school year in May, they are not required to complete any hours for that particular school year.

**Question:** *Where can students find service opportunities?*

**Answer:** There is a document on the FPD website under the Community Service tab that contains a list of local ministries/non-profit agencies where students can serve. Other opportunities will be sent to students throughout the year. Students may also contact Dr. Jordan ([stephen.jordan@fpdmacon.org](mailto:stephen.jordan@fpdmacon.org)) if they need help finding a place to serve.

**Question:** *What does not count as community service at FPD?*

**Answer:** See below for a description of what does not count as community service.

- Work completed for profit-making businesses/services.
- Work completed for individuals who are able to pay for the services rendered (whether they pay or not).
- Work for family members (including family-owned businesses).
- Travel time to and from community service opportunities.

**Question:** *What is the mission/service trip graduation requirement?*

**Answer:** As part of the 120 required community service hours, students must complete one extended service-learning experience, typically known as a mission or service trip. This trip may take place in Macon, the United States, or in a different country. Students must complete their mission/service trip requirement by spring break of their senior year. Mission/service trips are offered through FPD both in Macon and beyond. This requirement may also be met by participation in a church-sponsored mission trip with the prior approval of Dr. Jordan. Hours completed on a mission or service trip count towards the 120 required hours for graduation. However, while on a mission or service trip, only hours in which students are engaged in service/ministry count. Hours not counted are travel, sleeping, eating, social time, and recreation with one's mission/service team. Students may submit training time for a mission/service trip as indirect service hours. Note: To count as a mission/service trip, the trip must be overnight and involve at least 15 hours of service.

**Question:** *What is the mission/service trip reflection?*

**Answer:** A reflection piece ([Service Trip Reflection](#)) must be submitted to Dr. Jordan upon completion of the trip. The Service Trip Reflection should be e-mailed to [stephen.jordan@fpdmacon.org](mailto:stephen.jordan@fpdmacon.org).

**Question:** *Does FPD provide mission/service trips each year to help students satisfy their mission/service trip graduation requirement?*

**Answer:** Yes. FPD provides mission/service trips each year to help students satisfy their mission/service trip graduation requirement. Students can also satisfy this requirement through their local church, if the trip is overnight and involves at least 15 hours of service.

**Question:** *Do students have to be "caught up" on their community service hours to participate in extracurricular activities at FPD?*

**Answer:** Yes. Students lacking 30 hours of community service (with at least 15 of these being direct hours) for each academic year enrolled at FPD will not be eligible to participate in any school-sponsored extracurricular activities until the requisite hours are completed, uploaded to MobileServe, and approved (extracurriculars include athletics, fine arts, club events/competitions, etc.). To participate in extracurriculars at FPD, all hours from all previous academic years must be completed no later than the day before a student's first game, competition, match, performance, etc. If hours are not completed by this time, the student will not be allowed to participate in their first game, competition, match, performance, etc. Students will continue to sit out of extracurriculars until all hours for all previous high school years are completed. (Note: Each individual coach is allowed to use his or her discretion regarding whether students continue practicing with the team until hours from all previous high school years are completed.)

**Question:** *What is the community service diploma endorsement?*

**Answer:** The community service diploma endorsement is a way to demonstrate to colleges that you have gone “above and beyond” in serving others. This is something that is impressive on college applications. Completing this endorsement also makes your high school diploma “stand out” from other high school diplomas. The basic requirements for this diploma endorsement are as follows: 320+ service hours, partner with a non-profit agency or ministry your senior year and complete 40+ hours with this agency or ministry, and a paper and presentation before a committee your senior year. For more details on the community service diploma endorsement, [click here](#).

**Question:** *How should I utilize my summer to complete my service hours?*

**Answer:** Summers are best used to complete hours for an upcoming academic year rather than a previous academic year. A good rule of thumb is to use summers to “get ahead,” not “catch up.” Summer hours must be uploaded to MobileServe by October 1 of the same year to count. For example, if a student completes hours in the summer of 2023, they must log these hours by October 1, 2023. Rising 9<sup>th</sup> grade students may begin counting hours for their high school community service requirement on June 1 (following the conclusion of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year).

**Question:** *By what date do seniors have to complete their service requirements for graduation?*

**Answer:** Seniors must complete and upload all their hours for graduation, in addition to their Service Trip Reflection, by March 1 of their graduation year. Any senior who has not completed these items will lose their off-campus lunch privileges and must attend all study halls until these items have been completed, submitted, and approved. Seniors with unmet service requirements will not be able to walk at graduation and will have their diplomas and transcripts withheld until all service requirements are completed, submitted, and approved.

\*If you have other questions about FPD’s community service program, please contact Dr. Jordan ([stephen.jordan@fpdmacon.org](mailto:stephen.jordan@fpdmacon.org)).