

Montana Conservation Corps

2021 Guidance: Non-MCC Volunteering & Public Meeting Attendance

MCC Service Requirements

The purpose of MCC's service requirements is to expose participants to a full spectrum of civic engagement activities. In order to successfully complete a term of service, MCC participants serving a *Half Time* term or greater (900/1200/1700 hours) must attend one public meeting and volunteer twice with a nonprofit organization or agency. MCC participants serving a *Reduced Half-Time* term or less (675/450/300) must attend one public meeting and volunteer once with a nonprofit organization or agency.

Volunteering

The ability to seek out and commit to volunteer opportunities in your community is a strong indicator of engaged citizenship. Please adhere to the following guidance when completing your requirement:

- ◆ Volunteering must be completed with a nonprofit (501(c)3 organization) or a government entity (school, university, city, etc).
- ◆ Volunteering will be documented electronically by the participant and will include the name of the organization, a description of service activities, the date and duration you volunteered, and the name of someone from that organization who was present at the time of your volunteering.

Public Meetings

Understanding the public process is one of the keys to understanding democracy and the role of an engaged citizen. Please adhere to the following guidance when completing your requirement:

- ◆ All meetings must be open to the public and centered on an issue of public concern.
- ◆ All meetings must include an element of public decision making and/or relevance to public policy.
- ◆ Members are instructed to **observe, not participate in public meetings**. If asked, members may identify themselves as members of MCC and share why they are in attendance.
- ◆ Public meetings must be documented electronically by the participant and will include the title of the meeting, its date and time, and a brief description of the meeting's content. Staff may request a copy of an agenda from the meeting.
- ◆ Public meeting attendance does not count toward the volunteer requirement.

Should a member desire to participate in a public meeting as a private citizen they:

- ◆ Are not to wear their MCC uniform
- ◆ Must not identify their participation as a function of the MCC
- ◆ May not document their attendance towards this program requirement

MCC sponsored and co-sponsored events:

- ◆ Participants may be asked to support a MCC Service Day or Service Project. Events will be given a project code and participants are expected to count their hours on their normal timesheet.
- ◆ Participation at a MCC Service Day or Service Project may also be counted toward the volunteer requirement **only** if the participant is serving *Half Time* or greater (900/1200/1700), in which case those hours will not be counted on the participant's normal timesheet.
- ◆ Participants may not count volunteering on another crew's paid project, or hours served completing additional Warm Hearts Warm Homes activities.

National Guard and Reserves:

- ◆ All participants who are serving with the National Guard or Reserves may count this ongoing service as a fulfillment of the volunteer requirement.

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- ◆ All members are still encouraged to attend a volunteer event but might not be required to do so.

Tracking Sheet Submission:

- The Non-MCC Volunteering and Public Meeting Attendance electronic form should be completed with minimal errors/corrections and submitted in a timely manner.
 - Public Meeting: <https://www.tfaforms.com/4604247>
 - Volunteerism: <https://www.tfaforms.com/4613619>
- Supervisors will monitor participant progress, and completion of this requirement for each participant will be ensured prior to the completion of a participant's term.

AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities:

Completion of these program requirements is part of your AmeriCorps term with the MCC and therefore must not violate any AmeriCorps provisions. Please review the AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities found in your manual and on the following page prior to selecting your service site, activities, and public meeting.

AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities

- Participating in efforts to influence legislation, including state or local ballot initiatives or lobbying for your AmeriCorps program
- Organizing a letter-writing campaign to Congress
- Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of any election to any public office
- Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials
- Voter registration drives
- Organizing or participating in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes
- Assisting, promoting or deterring union organizing
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements
- Engaging in religious instruction
- Conducting worship services
- Providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship
- Constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship
- Maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship
- Engaging in any form of religious proselytizing
- Providing a direct benefit to a for-profit entity, a labor union, a partisan political organization, or an organization engaged in religious activities
- Participating in activities that pose a significant safety risk to participants
- Providing fund-raising assistance that does not provide immediate and direct support to a specific and approved direct service activity

Participants are encouraged to consult with staff if they are unclear as to whether or not the activities they select violate the AmeriCorps prohibited activities, or meet the guidance set forth in this document. Both regional and state office staff have the ability to deny completion if they believe the guidance has not been met.