

A few things to remember:

## **Community Service-Unfortunately, this was the number one reason we had so many kicked back last year.**

1. Service can be organized by a group the applicant is part of (FFA chapter, church, Boy Scouts etc.) **However, the activity cannot benefit the group itself.** So, a student volunteering in a fundraiser that directly benefits the group won't count. If the fundraiser benefits an outside group (Local dog park, for example) then it would count. **Please do not list the student volunteering as part of the annual greenhouse sale or other similar events if the money goes straight back to the chapter.**
  1. if the sole purpose of the group is to raise funds for service, then it can be counted.  
Examples would include: March of Dimes, United Way, American Cancer Society, etc.
2. **No hours can be duplicated on the community service and FFA activities page.** This is very common in ag-ed and service learning applications.
3. Volunteer hours must be conducted OUTSIDE of class time.
4. This is straight from the attached document. "Participating in or conducting religious worship services/practices such as performing in choir, band, play, re-enactment, teaching religion classes" will not count. VBS is often listed, and without extra detail, National FFA will not accept. Be very careful about how you word this. You CAN include church services if you volunteer time by providing meals, building homes, providing child care during VBS or other church activities, etc. Basically, just don't list that you're teaching a religious class, rather focus on the support you gave to make sure that VBS or other church activities happened because of your support. **This is NOT a Tennessee rule, rather it is a National FFA rule.** I've expressed my concerns with this, but it is still a requirement by National FFA. Reach out if I can help with the wording to get it accepted.

## **SAE Placement Hours/Entrepreneurship Areas**

1. **Be DESCRIPTIVE in your entries.** Simply putting "FFA hog project" or "Triple T Farms" will not count. You don't have to write a novel, but you do need to provide details regarding the project and what the student does with their SAE area. Rather, instead of "Triple T Farms" listed in the description, put "I assisted with daily chores during planting and harvesting season that included: spraying, harvesting, running grain trailer, offloading beans." You get the point. This isn't a proficiency, but you do need details.
2. Service Learning/Community Service is a tricky one. It should be developed by the student rather than countless hours of volunteering with the church, chapter, etc. Reach out if I can help determine if a student is eligible.
3. Agriculture Education - practicing for contests, leading in-class discussions, etc. will not count. If the student is organizing, assisting, etc. then it can count. This is another area that we get some pushback on. Please don't treat this area just as a student competing and practicing for contests, rather they should focus on educating others about agriculture.

4. **Fast food and non-ag retail isn't acceptable.** Some situations of student workers in food establishments are acceptable. However, simply working the cash register, taking food orders, etc. will not count. **If the student assisted with food safety, science, meat cutting, etc. then that is acceptable.**
5. **If listing agricultural retail (Tractor Supply, Co-Op, farm stores, etc.) then make sure you list details.** Again, National FFA doesn't necessarily like to accept applications where a student simply works the cash register and has no involvement with the agriculture portion of the establishment.
6. **Only include SAE projects up to December 31, 2022. *If you include 2023 records, they will kick it back.***
7. **The number one thing to remember is that it should be a project area that is related to agriculture.**

### Membership Check

1. Before your student begins working on their application, go through their membership history. We have countless members that have multiple membership numbers. If they have more than one number, you can contact Glenna Gordon ([ggordon@ffa.org](mailto:ggordon@ffa.org)) to combine those.

As always, please let me know if I can help in any way. We have great members in Tennessee and I want to do what I can to help those students be recognized. I know we have several new teachers, so please reach out if I can help get you started. Your student will need an active FFA.org or AET login. They will submit through the application center on FFA.org or AET if you use that as a chapter.