



## President's Volunteer Service Award Process

### What is the Award?:

In 2003, the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation founded the President's Volunteer Service Award to recognize the important role of volunteers in America's strength and national identity. This award honors individuals whose service positively impacts communities in every corner of the nation and inspires those around them to take action, too.

The PVSA has continued under each administration, honoring the volunteers who are using their time and talents to solve some of the toughest challenges facing our nation.

Led by the AmeriCorps and managed in partnership with Points of Light, this program allows Certifying Organizations to recognize their most exceptional volunteers.

### New Jersey DECA's Role:

New Jersey DECA is a Certifying Organization. We have been granted authority through an application and review process to give out the PVSA to volunteers. Certifying Organizations verify and certify that a volunteer has met the requirements to receive a PVSA within a 12 month period specified by the Certifying Organization. Only Certifying Organizations can certify volunteers' eligibility for the PVSA and order awards.

Certifying Organizations must be established and operate in the United States, its territories (Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Northern Mariana Islands), or on overseas U.S. military and state installations. Additionally, Certifying Organizations must receive or facilitate volunteer service.

- Verify the volunteer hours required to earn the award.
- Verify volunteers are U.S. citizens or lawfully admitted permanent U.S. residents.
- Pay the nominal cost of PVSA awards, including shipping. Certifying Organizations may not charge volunteers for the PVSA award and volunteers are not permitted to purchase awards.

- Receive and distribute the awards package to volunteers.
- Take the Certifying Organization e-course once every 12 months.
- Establish procedures to ensure compliance with PVSA eligibility and other program requirements.
- Conduct business both ethically and without deception. Certifying Organizations under criminal investigation, indictment or who have been convicted of a felony in any State or Federal court within the last two years are not eligible to apply or maintain the status of a certifying organization.
- Revoke a PVSA when information is presented that any awardee did not meet criteria for the Award. If the information reflecting ineligibility did not come from Points of Light or AmeriCorps, inform both parties of any such contemplated revocation and the justification prior to initiating procedures.
- Maintain a data bank that provides the capability to retrieve all information upon which an award was based, by individual awardee's name and year of the award, and certify annually to Points of Light that such data bank is being maintained and is current. The Certifying Organization shall maintain, as part of the databank, a checklist for each awardee by name reflecting that each of the required criteria for an award as detailed under "Volunteer Eligibility Criteria" has been met.
- If there is a time lag longer than 3 months between approving and purchasing the award and the actual award date, the Certifying Organization must recertify that the individual remains eligible for the award and maintains such certification in the data bank.
- Establish procedures to ensure compliance with PVSA eligibility and other program requirements. This includes asking for permission to use the PVSA logo.

### **Volunteer Eligibility:**

- United States citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States (i.e., green card holder)
- Must be at least five years old
- Completes eligible service within a 12-month period (for annual Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards) and over a lifetime (for Lifetime Achievement Awards)

### **Eligible Service:**

- Unpaid acts of volunteer service benefitting others
- Service through National service programs that provide a stipend (e.g., Peace Corps, AmeriCorps) may count towards the Lifetime Achievement Award, but not for the annual Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards)
- Travel stipends, transit/parking passes, membership passes, expense reimbursements, and other nominal volunteer support do not impact service eligibility

### **Eligible Service does not include:**

- Donating funds
- Political lobbying (Non-partisan voter registration is an eligible activity)
- Religious instruction
- Conducting worship service
- Proselytizing
- Volunteer service performed as part of court-ordered community service
- Serving only family members

### **Hours Required to Earn Awards in Each Age Group:**

Age Group	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Lifetime Achievement Award
Kids (5-10 years old)	26-49 hours	50-74 hours	75+ hours	4,000+ hours
Teens (11-15)	50-74 hours	75-99 hours	100+ hours	4,000+ hours
Young Adults (16-25)	100-174 hours	175-249 hours	250+ hours	4,000+ hours
Adults (26+)	100-249 hours	250-499 hours	500+ hours	4,000+ hours

### **How to Report Hours:**

Only chapter advisors may submit. Please prepare a detailed accounting of how hours were accumulated, and what organizations they are accumulated through and submit to [pvsa.njdeca.org](http://pvsa.njdeca.org).

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

Do hours accumulated during chapter community service projects count?

-Yes, as long as they meet the eligible service requirements listed above.

Do hours accumulated in service of DECA count?

-Yes, as long as they meet the eligible service requirements listed above.

Can advisors also receive these awards?

-Yes, as long as they meet the eligible service requirements listed above.

Do hours accumulated in service of non-DECA related matters count?

-Yes, but the detail on those hours must be submitted, and for NJ DECA to certify them, they must be active members of DECA.