



Town of Salem Municipal Court

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR PERFORMING COURT-ORDERED COMMUNITY SERVICE

1. **Where You May Perform Community Service.** You may perform your community service *only* for governmental or non-profit organizations that are approved by the court *in advance*. If an organization is on a list of approved organizations given to you by this court, then it is already approved. Otherwise, an organization is not approved unless and until the judge or the clerk of this court specifically tells you that it is approved. If an organization tells you that they are approved, do not take their word for it (they might be mistaken). **If you perform community service for an organization that is not approved by this court before you start, do not expect the court to count your hours!**

If you are going to do community service for an organization that you already do volunteer work for, the community service must be extra work over and above the volunteer work you already do. If you have to do community service for another court, you cannot count the same community service hours for both courts.

If the court approved only one organization in your case, all of your hours must be performed for that organization, but if the court approved more than one organization in your case, you may divide your hours among those organizations in whatever manner you choose.

If you want to do some or all of your community service for an organization that is not already approved by the court, you may contact the clerk of court to request approval. Be prepared to tell the clerk the name of the organization, its address, its telephone number, what type of organization it is, and whether or not it is a nonprofit organization.

2. **Starting Your Community Service.** As soon as possible, contact an organization to schedule a date and time to start your community service. Do not show up unannounced and expect that you will be able to start right away. Do not wait until a week before your deadline, or you can plan on running out of time. If an organization tells you they have no work for you, ask if you can be put on a waiting list, and contact other organizations. If an organization says they'll call you back, do not just wait for the call, contact other organizations. If you haven't contacted at least 10 places, you really haven't tried.

3. **Performing Your Community Service.** The court expects you to: (a) do your best to perform your community service in a satisfactory manner; (b) do what the organization tells you to, even if it is not what you hoped to do when you signed up with them; (c) show up on time, and if some emergency prevents you from doing so, notify the organization as soon as possible so that they can attempt to find someone to fill in for you; and (d) respect the organization's personnel, policies, and property. The organization has the right not to count hours of service that are not satisfactory in their opinion. The organization also has the right to discontinue the use of your services at any time, and if this should occur, you will need to contact another organization, or several.

4. **Verifying Completion of Your Community Service.** When you have completed the hours of community service you will be performing for an organization, they must provide either you or the court with written verification of the number of hours performed.

It is your responsibility to make sure the organization does so. If they provide it to you instead of the court, you must submit it to the court by mail or by fax or by personal delivery to the clerk of court. As far as the court is concerned, *if there is no written verification in the court's file that you completed the hours, you did not do them.*

5. **Your Review Date.** At the time you were allowed or ordered to do community service, the court gave you a review date. If you cannot remember your review date, ask the clerk of court. On the review date, if the court file contains written verification that you completed **ALL** of your hours, you do not need to appear in court (unless the court specifically instructed you to). However, if the court file does not contain the written verification, you *must* appear in court to explain why your hours have not been completed, and you should bring along verification of the hours that have been completed. If the court is satisfied that there is good cause for your failure to complete all of your hours, the court will grant you an extension of time and schedule a new review date. If the court is not satisfied that there is good cause for your failure to complete all of your hours, the court may impose other penalties, or the court may extend your time to complete your hours at the price of increasing the number of hours required. If you are not present in court on your review date when you are supposed to be, the court may issue a summons requiring you to appear on another date, or the court may issue a warrant for your arrest, or the court may commence proceedings to add additional penalties.

6. **Questions.** If you have questions, contact the clerk of court. Do not just wait until your next court date.

7. **Finding Someplace to Do Community Service.** If you are having trouble finding an organization to do community service for, try broadening the scope of your search. Don't give up after making 3 or 4 calls. Try asking your parents, teachers, counselors, or places of worship for suggestions. If you live outside of Salem, try asking the municipal court in your community for suggestions. If you have special skills that you think an organization could make use of, let them know when you call. Look beyond the street you live on. Keep your eyes open for events that make use of volunteers. For example, churches often hold parish festivals in spring through fall, or fish fries during Lent. Community organizations and schools often sponsor pancake breakfasts or spaghetti dinners or used book sales as fund-raisers. They can often use some additional volunteers. But remember, if you find an organization that will let you serve, you still need to get it approved by this court as explained in Paragraph 1 above.

8. **Penalties for Failure to Perform Community Service (Partial List):**

UNDER AGE 17(non-traffic cases)	AGE 17 OR OLDER (non-traffic cases) AGE 16 OR OLDER (traffic cases)
Suspension of driver's license for up to 3 years.	Suspension of driver's license for up to 2 years
Suspension of hunting/fishing privileges up to 3 years.	Jail time for up to 90 days.
Additional Community Service	Additional Community Service
Money Forfeiture	Money Forfeiture