

KEHA LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEER SERVICE UNIT (VSU) PROGRAM

The Volunteer Service Unit (VSU) Program is a system for documenting and certifying time spent in volunteer activities. The VSU program is intended to recognize individual volunteer efforts in your club and community. It also is intended to help you grow personally in volunteer leadership skills, and to show you how you might use those skills. For example, you might want to climb a “volunteer career ladder.” That is, you may want to go on to more responsible volunteer positions in KEHA or in other organizations. In addition, volunteer experience is often accepted and equated to paid employment if described in comparable terms when seeking employment.

- 1) **What is a volunteer?** A volunteer is an individual who agrees to do a job or perform a service for others (not a household member) for which the only pay is the personal satisfaction of a job well done. A volunteer can share time, knowledge, skills, materials, etc. with others.

Volunteers are not paid for their work. out-of-pocket expenses related to the volunteer work can be covered, such as mileage or supplies to teach a class.

- 2) **What is a Volunteer Service Unit (VSU)?** A VSU is an hour of volunteer service. These include hours spent in preparing to carry out a volunteer activity as well as the hours spent directly involved in volunteer work. This includes hours spent within the KEHA organization, in volunteer roles with Cooperative Extension and other community work.
- 3) **How can I record VSUs?** Regularly record volunteer service hours on the VSU log and submit your log to your county club/county Leadership Development Chair. VSUs should be reported in the KEHA program year in which the service occurred (July 1 – June 30).
- 4) **How are VSUs categorized?** The VSU program includes four categories of service. Those categories include Extension (4-H and other), KEHA, Community and Personal. NOTE: 4-H hours are included on the VSU log and reported under the Extension category in a separate column and count as Extension hours for VSU reporting.
- 5) **What counts as volunteer hours in each category?** NOTE: The following examples are not all inclusive.

Extension – Unpaid service to assist with any Extension Agent directed programs. This category also includes assisting with any program organized and presented by an Extension agent. Counted hours should include your training, preparation time, travel time and delivery time to your audience. The key here is agent-led and directed programs where the KEHA member is a volunteer.

Examples:

- Participating in agent-led training to become a Leader Lesson leader
- Judging a 4-H event or leading a 4-H club
- Volunteering at 4-H Camp, Project Days, or other 4-H events
- Helping agents with county fair tasks
- Volunteering at an Extension field day
- Helping with Farm Safety Days
- Volunteering with LEAP
- Serving on the County Extension Council, Extension District Board, State Extension Council
- Serving on the County 4-H Council or FCS Council

KEHA – Programs that originate and are directed by KEHA leaders and members. This includes unpaid service to a club, county, area, or the state as a committee member or officer. Participating in training sessions and organizing and leading KEHA-sponsored events should be counted. All volunteer hours from planning, preparing, and conducting the meeting or activity should be included, as well as travel time, phone and/or messaging time and activity/presentation time. All volunteer time for club, county, area, or state KEHA projects, fundraisers and special initiatives would be counted in this category.

Examples:

- Leading a Leader Lesson with a homemaker club
- Making quilts that will be donated
- Bazaar and craft sales to benefit KEHA
- Fundraisers for KEHA scholarships
- Hosting an ovarian cancer tea fundraiser
- Creating social media promotions
- Planning/conducting KEHA Week activities
- Baking for club-sponsored bake sales
- Planting trees as a club project

Community – This category is for unpaid service as a member or officer within community groups. Service counts as community as long as the volunteer role is not related to an Extension-led activity or Extension Homemakers activity. This category is also for reporting volunteer time mentoring/tutoring students at school. All volunteer hours from planning, preparing, and conducting the meeting or activity should be included, as well as travel time, phone and/or messaging time and activity/presentation time.

Examples:

- Local homeowner’s association
- Library board
- Rotary, Kiwanis, Eastern Star, etc.
- Parent-teacher organizations, school boards, etc.
- First responder
- Literacy programs
- Senior home visits
- American Cancer Society, Red Cross, etc.
- Judging FCCLA events
- Community beautification projects

Personal – This category is for reporting of any unpaid service provided to family, friends, and neighbors not living with you. Religious activities also can be included in this category.

Examples:

- Babysitting relatives not living with you
- Driving someone to a doctor’s appointment
- Picking up groceries
- Mowing someone’s lawn
- Shoveling snow or raking leaves
- Teaching Sunday School
- Church choir practice
- Driving the church van

- 6) Each hour of your service should be counted in only one category. In the case of projects or programs that may cross category lines, choose the category that best represents that activity.
- a. *Example:* Happy Homemakers Club partners with a 4-H agent to conduct a sewing camp for kids. If leadership is shared by an agent and a KEHA leader, count those hours as **EXTENSION** due to agent involvement.
 - b. *Example:* Country Ladies Club partners with a local school to teach basic sewing skills to students after school. Since the project is organized and presented by KEHA members, these hours count as **KEHA** hours.
 - c. *Example:* Susie Smith volunteers with the Cancer Society and provides local residents transportation to oncology appointments. These hours are reportable under **COMMUNITY** because it is a specific function through a community group. However, If Susie transports Aunt Lulu as a personal favor, the hours count as **PERSONAL**.

- 7) **How do members report their individual hours?** Hours may be tracked in any manner you see fit. A log form should be used for reporting. The log for recording VSUs can be found in the KEHA Manual Appendix. Make as many copies as necessary and total the number of hours per category before sending the log to the Club/County Chair for Leadership Development.
- 8) Club hours will no longer be collected. Only individual hours should be submitted. Counties are encouraged to recognize specific clubs for going above-and-beyond at the local level. Clubs also can choose to participate in the Community Volunteerism Award.
- 9) **How are hours reported at each level?**
VSUs are reported in two ways:
 1. The **Leadership Development Program of Work Report** collects county totals for hours, which will be compiled to state totals. These totals are used to calculate how much those hours are valued monetarily in the Commonwealth.
 2. The **VSU Report Form** collects the top hour-earning individuals and those with more than 500 hours. This is utilized for individual awards.

Reporting Process for Volunteer Service Units (VSU):

1. Clubs report to county, county reports to area, and area reports to the state Leadership Chair.



2. The Club Leadership Chair will collect the VSU log from members, ensure that hours are totaled by category and complete the Program of Work report form. The VSU logs and Program of Work Report forms should be sent to the County Chair **by July 1**.
3. The County Chair will complete the County VSU Report Form and the Leadership Development Program of Work Report form. The county reports are due **by August 15**. The VSU forms should be forwarded to the Area Chair. The Program of Work Report form should be submitted online and a copy sent to the Area Chair.
4. The Area Chair will complete the Area VSU Report Form. All pages should be submitted to the State Leadership Development Chair **by September 15**.
5. The State Leadership Chair will award a gift card to the individual with the greatest number of hours STATEWIDE in each category and will award certificates to the 2nd and 3rd place recipients for each category STATEWIDE annually at the State Meeting.

It may be helpful for members of clubs to go over, collect, and tally all VSU logs at the last meeting of the Homemaker year in spring. Reporting can be made more fun by organizing a “party” for collecting information from all clubs or members, roundtable style. Some counties have utilized a theme with snacks or a meal to make the reporting process more enjoyable.

Recognition:**At the COUNTY level:**

- a. All members reporting any hours should be recognized by category. This can be at the annual county meeting, a newsletter, social media, website, etc. The county council should work with the County Leadership Development Chair to determine the most appropriate means of recognition.
- b. The top three members in each category should be recognized and presented with a certificate at the annual county meeting. The County Leadership Development Chair is responsible for this recognition.
- c. Using the VSU reporting forms, the County Leadership Development Chair will submit a report to the Area Leadership Development Chair. This report includes the top three members in each category and all members in the county with 500 or more total hours across all categories.
- d. Hours may not be held over to the next year; all hours will be recognized at some level each year.
- e. If your county annual meeting is held before the end of the KEHA year when these reports are due, this information will need to be saved by the County Leadership Chair for certificate presentation at the next annual meeting or at another time designated by the county council.

At the AREA level:

- a. The Area Leadership Development Chair will compare the top three individuals reported in each category and identify the top three members from the area in each category.
- b. The Area Leadership Development Chair will use the VSU report to submit the top three area members from each category to the State Leadership Development Chair by the deadline.
- c. The three area members in each of the four categories and all area members with 500 or more hours across all categories will be recognized with a special certificate at the annual area meeting. This will be the responsibility of the Area Leadership Development Chair.
- d. If the area annual meeting is held before these numbers are known, the information will be saved and certificates presented at the next annual meeting.

At the STATE level:

- a. The State Leadership Development Chair will compare the top three area winners from each category to identify the top three members in each category from across the state.
- b. At the annual KEHA State Meeting the top recipient from each category across the state will receive a gift card. The 2nd and 3rd place recipients will receive a certificate.