



# Frequently Asked Questions: Volunteer Services

(VS denotes Volunteer Services.)

**What is the primary objective of Volunteer Services (VS)?** To encourage volunteerism and the reporting of volunteer hours by all FREA unit members and Members at Large (M@L).

**How many FREA districts are in the state? There are 10 (ten) FREA districts in the state.** Each district and its local units are listed online at [www.frea.org](http://www.frea.org).

**What does REA mean on the Individual Member VS Hours Report form?** "REA" means Retired Educators Association.

**What if my area doesn't have a unit, or I don't belong to one?** You may submit your hours on the Unit VS Form found on the website. Just fill in and send to the Office. It will be counted in its own category as M@L.

**What services qualify for volunteer hours?** Any unpaid services to individuals, groups, or entire communities qualify for volunteer hours.

**What are some examples of services that qualify for volunteer hours?** Tutoring, judging at science fairs or spelling bees, hospital service, personal help to the disabled, church-related work, serving with: Retired Educators Associations, civic committees and boards, the board of a literacy council, mentoring to high at-risk youth, preparing training materials for a workshop or program, preparing for a scholarship fundraiser, reading to clients at a nursing home, these all qualify for volunteer hours.

**Does time spent caring for family members qualify as volunteer hours?** While time spent caring for family members is important, these activities are family obligations and would not qualify as volunteer hours.

**How should I record my volunteer hours each month?** First, follow the instructions of your local Unit VS Chair. Second, if you need the Individual Member VS Hours Report form and/or other volunteer services forms, they are located online at [www.frea.org](http://www.frea.org).

**When should I submit my volunteer services hours to my local Unit VS Chair?** VS hours should be submitted as per the requests of your local Unit VS Chair. Some preferences include the following: Submit your hours monthly, quarterly or at the end of the year. Most importantly, each FREA member should keep an updated ongoing record of their VS hours available to submit if asked.

**When are local unit VS reports due to District Volunteer Services Chairs?** All VS reports are due to your assigned District VS Chair by **February 15** who will send it on to the State VS Chair for data collection.

**What time frame are VS hours counted?** Your VS hours reflect hours served from January – December.

**If I volunteered less than twelve (12) months during the year, should I still record and submit those hours?** Yes, ALL VS hours are valued and should be counted in your Total Unit hours.

**Is each reporting FREA member counted on the VS report?** Yes, each member who submits VS hours is counted and recorded on the Unit VS Report.

**Should the District Volunteer of the Year (VOY) Judging Criteria be used by the Local Unit as a guideline when completing the VOY nomination form and selecting their winner?** It is the discretion of the local unit and its VOY committee to create their selection method. The District VOY Judging Criteria Form is used by the District VOY Committee in determining the District VOY winner.

**Are all VS forms and information updated on our [www.frea.org](http://www.frea.org) website?** Yes, all online VS forms and information are current.

**What should be submitted to the District VS Chair by February 15?** The Unit VS Report, Unit VOY Nomination form with attachments, and one 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest winning entry with Cover Page, student photo and updated home address should be sent to your District VS Chair.

**When should 5<sup>th</sup> Grade teachers and/or schools be contacted regarding the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest?** Contact all school officials at the beginning of the school year to encourage their participation and solicit support.

**What is the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay topic?** Students must describe an experience or experiences with a grandparent or older adult who has influenced their life in a positive way.

**What prizes are awarded to the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest winners?** The State Winner will be awarded \$150.00 and a poster of their winning essay. Second and third place winners also receive the poster, and receive \$100.00 and \$50.00, respectively.

**When must District VS Chairs reports be sent to the State VS Chair?** District VS Chairs must submit their reports to the State VS Chair by **March 1**.

**Should the District VS Chair complete the VS District Chair Reporting Form when submitting all VS district reports?** Yes

**When is the VS District Chair Reporting form due to the State FREA VS Chair?** By March 1.