

According to requirements of Federal Law, all public housing residents who are **not** exempt must perform Community Service or Economic Self-Sufficiency activities for 8 hours each month. This Community Service Policy Overview explains the exemptions and describes the Community Service requirement. If the attached notice states that you or a household member is required to perform Community Service, please contact and arrange a meeting with your Housing Assistant for a detailed explanation of the program. **If you have any questions about the Community Service Program, you should contact your Housing Assistant. No other office has the necessary information to answer your questions.**

### **I. EXEMPTIONS FROM COMMUNITY SERVICE**

There are many exemptions for which residents may qualify. An exemption will excuse the resident from the performance of Community Service during the tenant's **one** year Lease term, unless the exemption is permanent. NYCHA can identify certain exemptions based on existing data, but most other exemptions may be granted only after submission of a signed exemption verification form. These forms are available from your Housing Assistant. The resident is required to obtain and submit the signed exemption document and bring it to the development management office.

The following is a list of exemptions.

#### **A. EXEMPTIONS THAT NYCHA CAN IDENTIFY BASED ON EXISTING DATA**

1. **Age** - Below Age 18
2. **Age - Age 60 and older** (permanent exemption)
3. **Employed** - An adult with no child below age 13 in the household and earning at least \$8,034 per year, or working a minimum of 30 hours per week
4. **Employed** - A single adult family with at least one child below age 13 in the household and earning at least \$5,356 per year, or working a minimum of 20 hours per week
5. **Employed** - A two adult family with at least one child below age 13 in the household: either or both adults must work and must earn at least \$9,373 per year, or either or both together must work a minimum of 35 hours per week, on the average
6. **Disability Income** - Receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
7. **Public Assistance** - All authorized family members living in the same apartment will be exempt from performing community service for one year if at least one family member receives welfare assistance or participates in a program that receives welfare monies and is in compliance with the rules of the program. *(This exemption may require signed documentation.)*

#### **B. OTHER EXEMPTIONS - GRANTED ONLY WITH SIGNED DOCUMENTATION**

8. **Blind / Disabled** (A permanent exemption is granted only if the blindness or disability is certified as permanent by a doctor.)
9. **Receiving Social Security Disability (SSD) Income**
10. **Primary caretaker for the blind or disabled**
11. **Vocational educational training** (available only **one** time per resident)
12. **Job skills training** directly related to employment, including attendance in a trade school (The resident might not be currently employed, but employment may be dependent on successful completion of job training.)
13. **Education directly related to employment**, in the case of an individual who has not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency, if employment is dependent on successful completion of job training.
14. **Satisfactory attendance at secondary school** or higher
15. **Satisfactory attendance in a course of study** leading to a certificate of general equivalence, if the resident has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate
16. **Work experience** (including work associated with the refurbishment of publicly assisted housing) if sufficient private sector employment is not available, e.g., Youthbuild
17. **On-the-job** training

**18. Childcare provider** to a NYCHA child resident age 5 or younger (including your own child), if the child's parent - also a NYCHA resident:

- Is performing Community Service, OR
- Is exempt by NYCHA from performing Community Service because the parent is employed

A child age 6 through 12 may also qualify if the child does not attend school due to Home Schooling, Home Instruction or is exempted by a school from attending for that year

**19. Childcare provider to your own child** if childcare is otherwise unavailable:

- You must be a single adult family
- Your child must reside in your apartment
- Your child must be age 5 or younger
- Your child age 6 through 12 may also qualify if the child does not attend school due to Home Schooling, Home Instruction or is exempted by a school from attending for that year
- You must submit a letter from one local Child Care Center, on the Center's letterhead, stating that appropriate child care is not available. The Child Care Center must be licensed by the NYC Department of Health and be subsidized by NYC

**20. Childcare provider to your own child:**

- You must be a single adult family
- Your child must reside in your apartment
- Your child must be age 12 months or younger
- You must submit valid proof of the infant's birth, by providing a Birth certificate, and/or Court papers which indicate that the tenant is either the birth/natural parent, adoptive parent or court ordered guardian of the infant child

## II. COMMUNITY SERVICE CREDITS

The following are CREDITS that reduce or eliminate the number of community service hours that a resident must perform in one year. These credits apply to the following special circumstances or activity. Note that the maximum number of hours that any resident must perform in one year is 96 hours (8 hours per month). One credit is equal to one hour of community service performed.

- 1. Tenant Association (TA) Officer:** A TA President or TA executive board members receive a credit of 8 hours of community service during any month in which they serve in office.
- 2. Foster Parent:** A foster parent whose foster child(ren) lives in the same NYCHA apartment receives a credit of 8 hours of community service for every 30 days that the foster care relationship continues. Even if there is more than one foster child in the apartment, the credit remains at 8 hours per 30 days.
- 3. Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance:** The resident is credited with **16** hours of community service (and not more than 16) for any job search activities during any lease year. This is **not** an Exemption although verified on the *Community Service Exemption Verification – Education Job Training* form.

*Job readiness assistance* includes any of the following criteria:

- a) Training in job-seeking skills
- b) Training in the preparation of resumes or job applications
- c) Training in interviewing skills
- d) Participating in a job club
- e) Other related activities that may assist an individual to secure competitive employment

Receipt of Unemployment Insurance Benefits qualifies as job search

- 4. Military Service:** Any resident performing military service who is either on Active Duty (in the: Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard) or in a Reserve Component (in the: Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve or Coast Guard Reserve) receives a credit of 96 hours of Community Service.

5. **Pregnancy:** A resident who is pregnant receives a total credit of 8 hours upon proof of pregnancy. No other medical factors are needed. This credit can be given only once during the same pregnancy. (This credit does not prevent a woman from qualifying for the Disability exemption based pregnancy.)
6. **Temporary illness:** A resident who is ill and unable to work shall receive a credit of 8 hours for every 30 days of illness.
7. **Victims of Domestic Violence, Intimidated Victims and Intimidated Witnesses (VDV/IV/IW):** A resident whose request to transfer to another development as a VDV/IV/IW has been approved, receives a credit of 8 hours of community service for every 30 days that the transfer request is pending, or until the resident moves out of the apartment.
8. **Incarceration:** A resident shall be credited for 8 hours of community service for every 30 days during his/her incarceration. Upon release from jail, the resident is required to perform community service, unless otherwise exempt.

### III. COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

Residents who are **not** exempt must perform Community Service or Economic Self Sufficiency activities at the rate of 8 hours per month. These hours may be performed flexibly. It is acceptable to perform less than 8 hours during any month if those hours are made up during another month. The resident **must**, however, be in compliance with the full number of hours required at the annual review period, as reported on the Status Notice.

#### A. Service Status Notice

**If the Service Status on the Status Notice for any household member is “Community Service Required,” you must arrange a meeting with your Housing Assistant for an explanation of Community Service.** If the Service Status listed on the attached Notice for all household members is “exempt,” no meeting is required.

#### B. Performance of Community Service

Residents may perform Community Service either at a facility located within a NYCHA development or at a non-NYCHA facility. Your Housing Assistant will assist you in identifying various Community Service providers within the neighborhood. There are a wide range of providers so that a resident may choose from many different types of Community Service. A resident may, but does not have to, perform all Community Service activity for one provider. The resident may perform Community Service at different Community Service providers.

<b>NOTICE:</b>	NYCHA does not endorse any particular organization or assume any liability in connection with a resident’s Community Service. Each resident is solely responsible for seeking an appropriate organization to fulfill this federal law requirement.
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In order to perform Community Service the resident must first give the *Community Service Performance Verification* form (available from a Housing Assistant) to the intended provider. This form allows the provider to agree to supervise the performance of the Community Service and certify the number of hours performed. Once the form is completed, you should keep a copy and return the original to your development management office.

Definitions of Community Service and Economic Self-Sufficiency and examples of qualifying activities are:

**Community Service** is defined by the law as: the performance of voluntary work or duties that are a public benefit, and that serve to improve the quality of life, enhance resident self-sufficiency, or increase resident self-responsibility in the community. Community Service is not employment and may not include political activities.

**Examples of Qualifying Community Service Activities**

Residents may volunteer to perform Community Service with NYCHA or for federal, state or municipal agencies, or for community or faith-based organizations. Community Service providers may be identified after discussion with your Housing Assistant or through the following:

- The **Mayor’s Office - Voluntary Action Center** - located on the internet at [www.nyc.gov/volunteer](http://www.nyc.gov/volunteer)
- By calling **3-1-1** - the NYC Citizen Service Center
- The **Volunteer Match** database, located on the internet at [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)

A resident may also pick a Community Service provider that is not on a database listed above, provided that permission is obtained from the development Manager prior to performance of Community Service.

**Examples of NYCHA Community Service Activities**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tenant patrol</li> <li>● Attend Resident Association meetings</li> <li>● RAB Delegate/Alternate – meeting attendance</li> <li>● Attendance at meetings called by NYCHA</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community Center / Senior Center volunteer</li> <li>● Applicant Review and Orientation Committee (AROC) member</li> <li>● NYCHA gardening program</li> <li>● Resident sponsored community clean-up day</li> </ul> |
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**Examples of Non-NYCHA Community Service Activities**

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| <p><b>Volunteer</b> for local government or community organizations which serve a public benefit, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Food bank</li> <li>● Hospital</li> <li>● Nursing Home / Hospice</li> <li>● Ambulance service</li> <li>● Programs providing support to families with hospitalized members</li> <li>● Parks Department</li> <li>● Library</li> <li>● Reading Program</li> <li>● School</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings</li> <li>● After School Programs</li> <li>● Day Care Facility</li> <li>● Habitat for Humanity</li> <li>● Boys or Girls Club</li> <li>● AmeriCorps</li> <li>● Police Department</li> <li>● Auxiliary Police</li> <li>● Youth Mentoring</li> <li>● Vista</li> <li>● Court ordered Community Service</li> </ul> |
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**Economic Self-Sufficiency** is defined by the law as: any program that is designed to encourage, assist, train or facilitate the economic independence of its participants and their families. An *Economic Self-Sufficiency* program can also provide work for its participants.

**Examples of Qualifying Economic Self-Sufficiency Activities**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Work placement</li> <li>● Household budgeting or management</li> <li>● Apprenticeship</li> <li>● Any program necessary to prepare a participant for work (including a substance abuse or mental health treatment programs)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employment counseling</li> <li>● Basic skills training</li> <li>● English proficiency</li> <li>● Workfare</li> <li>● Financial management</li> </ul> |
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