

Spirit of Midway

Frequently Asked Questions

The Spirit of Midway team is so glad you want to serve your community and earn the Spirit of Midway Award! This guide is designed to help students submit a complete and qualifying Spirit of Midway application. Applications that do not meet all criteria will not be accepted. The application form can be found at <https://www.midwayisd.org/programs-services/spirit-of-midway>.

1. Application Requirements

Q: What forms must I submit?

A: A complete application includes all of the following:

- Spirit of Midway Student Information & Honor Code form (completed and signed)
- Spirit of Midway Campus Involvement Form (completed and signed)
- Spirit of Midway Community Service Forms (completed and signed)
- Printed Report Card (showing your name and cumulative GPA)

⚠ Applications missing any form or containing incomplete fields will not be accepted.

Q: My form has blank fields or missing signatures. Is that ok?

A: No. Applications with missing organization names, missing signatures, or with incomplete fields will not be accepted. Please ensure all fields are fully completed before submitting.

Q: Who may sign my community service form?

A: Your community service form must be signed by a representative of the organization where you served. A parent, guardian, or family member cannot sign your form, even if they are associated with the organization. The organization listed at the top of the form must correspond to the representative who signs the form at the bottom.

⚠ Forms signed by a parent will be disqualified, even if the service otherwise qualifies.

Q: How do I print the correct report card?

A: Log in to HAC (Home Access Center), click the Report Card tab, select Period 3, use the Print button so the full report card generates. Do not take a screen shot. The report card must show your cumulative GPA. Period 3 report cards may not be available until January, do not submit with Period 2. Go to <https://www.midwayisd.org/programs-services/spirit-of-midway> for instructions with screenshots.

⚠ Report cards showing only a semester or current-period GPA will not meet the requirement. It must show your cumulative GPA and your name.

2. Community Service Hours

Q: How many community service hours do I need?

A: The required hours depend on your grade level:

- 9th grade: At least 15 hours with at least 2 different community organizations
- 10th, 11th & 12th grade: At least 20 hours with at least 2 different community organizations

Q: What is the service period for my grade?

A: Service must be completed within the following date ranges:

- 9th grade: June 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026
- 10th, 11th & 12th grade: January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026

Q: Do I need to serve with more than one organization?

A: Yes. All grade levels must serve with at least two different qualifying community organizations. If you serve with an organization that covers multiple events, all those events still count as one organization.

Q: Can I count donated items (food, clothing, etc.) as service hours?

A: No. Donated items, monetary donations, and supply drives do not count as service hours, even if a teacher or organization representative signs the form and/or another MHS program counts them. Only time spent actively volunteering qualifies for Spirit of Midway.

Q: What if I both donated items and helped organize or sort a drive?

A: Yes, if you helped bag, load, sort, or organize items as part of a service project, those active volunteer hours may count. The hours must reflect only the time spent actively working, not the value or quantity of donations. The form must accurately describe the active service performed.

Q: Does walking in an event count as community service?

A: No. Participating in a walk, run, or similar event as a participant does not count as volunteering. You must be serving in a volunteer capacity, such as registering participants, or directing walkers.

⚠ Example: Walking in a Walk to End Alzheimer's event does not qualify. Volunteering at the registration table or as a course marshal does qualify.

Q: How do I fill out the service form if I served with the same organization at multiple events?

A: Use one form if you did the same service activity multiple times with that organization. Be sure to list all dates on the form. If you participated in different events or different types of service, even with the same organization, you must complete a separate form for each one. When in doubt, submit separate forms.

3. Qualifying Organizations

Q: What types of organizations qualify for service hours?

A: Organizations must be in McLennan County, and either be a registered nonprofit organization (also called a 501(c)(3)) or a government-run public service organization (such as a public library and city-operated animal shelter). If you're not sure whether an organization qualifies, check with spiritofmidway@gmail.com before you volunteer.

⚠ Service outside of McLennan County does not qualify, even if the organization is a 501(c)(3).

Q: How do I know if an organization is a 501(c)(3)?

A: You can ask the organization directly or search the IRS Tax Exempt Organization database <http://apps.irs.gov/app/eos>. When in doubt, email spiritofmidway@gmail.com to confirm.

Q: Does a nursing home or assisted living facility qualify?

A: Not automatically. The facility must be a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Many nursing homes operate as for-profit businesses and do not qualify. Verify the status before logging hours there.

⚠ Hours served at a for-profit nursing home will not count toward Spirit of Midway.

Q: What counts as a "religious institution" for the 5-hour cap?

A: Any service performed at a church or religious institution count toward the 5-hour cap, including ministries and organizations that operate under or in connection with a religious institution.

⚠ Example: Volunteering at the Central Christian Church Pumpkin Patch counts as religious institution service and is subject to the 5-hour limit for religious institutions.

Q: If a food pantry is located at or run by a church, does it count as church service?

A: Yes. If a food pantry is operated by or affiliated with a church or religious institution, those hours count as religious institution service and are subject to the 5-hour cap, even if the pantry serves the public.

Q: Is there a cap on hours for school-related service?

A: Yes. No more than 5 hours can be earned for service with school-related non-profits such as Midway PTA, Booster Clubs, or the Midway Education Foundation.

⚠️ Midway Education Foundation service counts as school service and is capped at 5 hours.

Q: Can I count service that was part of a school club, team, or class?

A: Generally, no. Service performed as part of a MHS student organization, team, club, or class requirement does not count toward Spirit of Midway hours.

However, service connected to a school organization may count if it meets the following criteria:

- Completed outside of school hours
- Not required for a class or team
- Does not benefit your own organization (e.g., fundraisers).

Examples that meet the criteria and DO count: Working at a school carnival, providing childcare at Meet the Teacher night, volunteering at a community event with your organization (Student Council, FFA, etc.)

⚠️ Important: Your coach, teacher, or club sponsor cannot sign your form. It must be signed by a representative of the organization you are serving, not the person who recruited you to volunteer.

4. Tips for a Successful Application

Before You Serve

- Verify the organization is a 501(c)(3) non-profit or public service organization in McLennan County.
- Confirm your service dates fall within your grade-level service period.
- Make sure your service is voluntary, outside school hours, and not part of any club or class.
- Plan to serve with at least 2 different organizations.

While You Serve

- Keep track of your hours as you go.
- Have an organization representative (not a parent, coach, or teacher) sign your form after each event.
- Make sure the organization name is clearly written on your form.

Before You Submit

- Check that all fields are complete and your email is legible so we can contact you.
- Confirm your report card shows your name and a cumulative GPA of 80 or higher.
- Describe your specific contribution to each campus organization.
- Count your hour totals by category: you may count no more than 5 hours from religious institutions and no more than 5 hours from school-related organizations.

Questions?

- The Spirit of Midway team is here to help!
- Email the Spirit of Midway Coordinator: spiritofmidway@gmail.com
- More resources: midwayisd.org/programs-services/spirit-of-midway