

Washington State Volunteer Service Awards

2024 Nomination Guidelines and Form Sample

Serve Washington, a bipartisan governor-appointed commission on national and community service presents the “Washington State Volunteer Service Awards.” The purpose of these awards is to honor the many acts of kindness in communities by individuals, families, service groups, and organizations and to highlight the importance of volunteerism and community helpers across Washington state. Nominations are open to all types of formal and informal volunteerism: neighbors helping neighbors, giving time to hospitals, disaster preparedness and response efforts, supporting events and food banks, delivering meals, through national service, and those who gave their time, care or assistance to help meet the challenges that 2024 presented.

Serve Washington supports programs that bring diverse individuals and perspectives together to serve our state. Through the Washington State Volunteer Service Awards, we recognize individuals and groups who reflect the diversity of our state for their contributions toward effectively addressing the issues that face our communities.

This award will be presented to **one outstanding individual** (formal or informal) **and one outstanding group of volunteers or volunteer program** in each of the following regions:

Peninsula/Coastal: Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Kitsap counties

South Puget Sound: Mason, Thurston, Pierce, Lewis counties

Southwest: Cowlitz, Skamania, Clark, Wahkiakum counties

South Central: Benton, Franklin, Kittitas, Klickitat, Walla Walla, Yakima counties

Southeast: Adams, Whitman, Garfield, Columbia, Asotin counties

Northeast: Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln, Spokane counties

North Central: Okanagan, Chelan, Douglas, Grant counties

North Puget Sound: King, Snohomish counties

Northwest: Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, Island counties

A panel of judges comprised of Serve Washington commission members and community members will select the award recipients. The deadline to submit your nomination is **November 26, 2024, by 11:59 PM PST**.

Please [join our virtual Information Session](#) on **October 15, 2024, 12:00pm – 1:00pm** via Zoom for a learning opportunity on writing a nomination and ask questions. Click [here](#) to join the call.

Serve Washington will collaborate with nominators to inform selected recipients and determine how best to recognize their nominee within their own community or region.

How to submit your nomination: Complete the [online nomination form](#) via Smartsheet (link address is <https://tinyurl.com/4jrnr5np>). Questions and requests for the nomination guidelines and form in alternate format can be sent to servewa@ofm.wa.gov or 360-902-0656.

Upon selection, we will seek the assistance of the nominator to connect with the volunteer recipient to verify information and obtain a quality photo and media release form.

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Eligibility Guidelines, Definitions and Selection

Eligibility Guidelines:

- Anyone can submit a nomination for a volunteer, group of volunteers or volunteer program.
- Volunteer service over the past calendar year should be the emphasis.
- Volunteer service must be performed in Washington and can include hours served as part of academic credit or court-ordered community service.
- Written nomination statements must be kept to the word count (**500 words total for all elements combined**).
- Serve Washington staff and commission members are not eligible to receive an award, or to nominate volunteers for awards.
- Entries are received in confidence, are scored by a team of commission and community members and become the property of Serve Washington.
- Submissions may be in the format of a 1 ½ minute video or audio, in lieu of a written statement. You will still need to complete the online form and upload the file (no larger than 30 MB) or provide a link to your video/audio in the submission form. Please do not upload any photos or additional items in these fields.

Definitions (these are not exhaustive of the types of activities):

Individual Formal Volunteering - involves helping others through organizations or associations and include activities like supporting public health efforts, conducting wellness checks on isolated seniors, supporting food banks through scheduled activities such as stocking shelves, mentoring or tutoring youth through an after-school program, or walking dogs at animal shelters.

Individual Nonformal Volunteering/Community Helpers - involves helping others outside of an organizational context, including doing favors for neighbors like yard work, watching each other's children, lending tools, running errands, and other things to lend a hand to others in their neighborhood or community.

Group - involves engaging in a volunteer activity as a group, whether with friends, family, colleagues or acquaintances. Group volunteering can involve a specific project with a set timeframe, or it may involve an ongoing commitment shared by a group of volunteers. This can include groups who perform various activities such as roadside cleanup, neighborhood watch groups, beach cleanup and groups who serve food at shelters.

Volunteer Program - is an organizational structure for recruiting and managing volunteers while supporting community volunteer activities. A program can be employer-based, community-based, service or faith-based. A nonprofit, civic, corporate or government entity that mobilizes volunteers as a strategy to achieve its mission and goals and show demonstrable community impact. They go beyond episodic volunteerism and are committed to long-term community engagement. The program addresses real needs of the community and ensures the community's diverse voices are heard.

Selection:

- Award selections are based on the nominee's volunteer efforts, commitment of time, accomplishments, impact and enhancement of the lives of others, as described in the nomination statement. The elements of the statement include:
 - Nominee's outstanding accomplishments.
 - The impact of their service on individual(s), organization or community.
 - Nominee's outstanding commitment to volunteerism.
- Serve Washington reserves the right to withhold distribution of an award if deemed appropriate.

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Nomination Form Sample

(Nominator must ensure all requirements for nomination are met)

Select type of Nomination: Individual Group Volunteer Program

Individual/Community Helper/Group/Program Information:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
(if Group or Program, provide main point of contact)

Group or Program Name: _____

City/Zip: _____ County: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Optional: If volunteer or group formally serves through an organization, provide the following information:

Organization: _____

Address: _____ City/Zip: _____

List County/Counties being served by Nominee: _____

Select the region where the nominee serves:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peninsula/Coastal: Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Kitsap | <input type="checkbox"/> South Central: Benton, Franklin, Kittitas, Klickitat, Walla Walla, Yakima | <input type="checkbox"/> North Central: Okanagan, Chelan, Douglas, Grant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> South Puget Sound: Mason, Thurston, Pierce, Lewis | <input type="checkbox"/> Southeast: Adams, Whitman, Garfield, Columbia, Asotin | <input type="checkbox"/> North Puget Sound: King, Snohomish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Southwest: Cowlitz, Skamania, Clark, Wahkiakum | <input type="checkbox"/> Northeast: Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln, Spokane | <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest: Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, Island |

Nominator Information:

Name: _____ Organization: _____
(if applicable)

City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

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Nomination Statement

Statements should be written in third person. Ensure all elements of the information requested are addressed in the nomination statement. **NOTE: There is a 500-word limit in total for all elements combined. The application review committee will only consider the first 500 words. It is highly recommended to draft each element statement in a Word document to view the combined word count, then copy and paste by section in the online form.**

Elements

Explain the primary reasons for nominating this volunteer or volunteers in the selected region. Nomination statements will be evaluated based on each of the below bullet items. The **items under each bullet are examples** to help as you write your nomination, but you are welcome to highlight other things.

- **Accomplishments over the last year. This can be shown in a variety of ways, using one of the following for an example:**
 - a. Identify what was achieved; focus on results or stories/testimonials to show qualitative impact.
 - b. Share how the nominee's effort has provided direct service.
 - c. Describe any leadership contributions the nominee has made.

- **The impact of volunteer service can be seen in many ways; describe how the nominee has impacted at least one of these:**
 - a. Community.
 - b. Organization.
 - c. Individual.

- **Outstanding commitment to volunteerism. This can be seen in a variety of ways, such as:**
 - a. Describe the time or effort made to meet their commitment. This could include long or challenging commutes to volunteer activity; integration into everyday life such as helping elderly neighbors with yard work or grocery shopping; a single parent carving out time in their schedule; overcoming barriers that could have prevented the ability to volunteer.
 - b. Describe if the nominee has taken on additional volunteer roles or shown leadership with volunteer programs, events or efforts. Did the nominee see a need and jump in to address it?
 - c. Describe if engaged in or committed to volunteer activities with multiple organizations; share information about the other volunteer commitments/activities.

If this nomination is for a volunteer program or group (*required*):

- **Justice, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within volunteer programs.** We believe volunteering can be a tool for connection and community building if we are intentional about how we: talk about volunteering, educate volunteers, recruit volunteers, share our resources, and distribute power.

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- a. Describe how the volunteer program or group is rooted in community and implements services, processes or programs that are informed by underserved, underrepresented or marginalized communities.

If this nomination is for an individual (*optional*):

- **Justice, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in volunteering.** We believe individuals can be key drivers in fostering justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion through volunteering and service to the community.
 - a. Describe how the nominee leads, promotes and/or models respect, compassion and advocacy for all people.

Examples may include how the nominee champions programs, policies and/or practices that foster a more just and equitable society, helps create an environment where everyone feels heard, respected and engaged by accepting diverse beliefs and embracing differences, shares their lived experiences to create connection and increase awareness.