



# OMEGA PHI ALPHA

NATIONAL SERVICE SORORITY

## **Virtual Service Guide**

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## Fall 2020 Service Requirements

Individuals and chapters are expected to meet the minimum national requirements as set forth in the national constitution and bylaws (Bylaws Article VII). This mandates that:

- Sisters log a minimum of 10 individual service hours in chapter planned projects; and
- All chapters complete at least one project in each of the six areas of service with 60% of the active chapter participating.

If your chapter constitution or bylaws has a higher individual service hour requirement, we encourage you to make an exception this semester and lower those hours to meet the national requirement.

Each chapter will still be required to plan at least one service project in each of the six areas of service with 60% participation.

## Umbrella Projects

An umbrella project is a project that has multiple dates, times, and/or locations. Umbrella projects allow the chapter to increase the percent of participation and give sisters the opportunity to attend more than once. These projects also allow for sisters to participate in a hybrid service model. For example, if the chapter decides to volunteer at a soup kitchen several times throughout the semester or some sisters wish to volunteer in person while others prefer to volunteer remotely, all hours and participation could be counted towards the one project rather than many individual projects.

## Virtual Service

Virtual service allows you to share your time and talents as members away from any physical project site. It is a great way to expand your reach and create positive change from afar or in a time of physical distancing. The spirit of service that our sorority is founded on is not limited to in-person interaction and can be adapted and changed to a more virtual environment to fit the needs of the chapter, campus, community, and cause.

## Benefits of Virtual Service

<b>Flexibility</b>	Virtual service projects are flexible and suit many individual needs or interests.
<b>Availability</b>	Virtual service projects can be done from anywhere, even from your couch in your pajamas!
<b>Variety</b>	Virtual service projects allow engagement with a variety of industries.

## How to Utilize Virtual Service

Your chapter can offer virtual service opportunities that can be done simultaneously or individually as part of a chapter planned project. For example, you all can schedule a virtual project where you all tune into a web conferencing platform at the same time and complete the project 'together' from afar. Many projects on the list below can be done this way. You can also have projects such as a pop tab collection for Ronald McDonald house that is done individually by many members of the organization on their own time to count as a group project.

Determine in advance how each project will count towards service hour requirements. For example, if you're writing letters to residents of a nursing facility, a minimum number of letters could equal 1 service hour.

Have members complete service projects and submit proof of project completion via GreekTrack. The officer in charge of approving service hours and requirements should let the member know the number of hours they will be receiving.

The list below is intended to be a resource and starting place for virtual projects. There are databases of online only ideas such as:

- [Catchafire](#)
- [VolunteerMatch](#)
- [United Nations e-Volunteering](#)
- [Do-It](#)

To better prepare your members for virtual service projects, consider assembling a "Service Kit" to distribute to each active member. This kit would contain the materials needed for the projects you've planned. For example, if you intend to have a campus clean up, write thank you notes to send to your on campus health clinic, and make dog toys for a local humane society, you would provide each sister with a trash bag and nitrile gloves, stamps, and t-shirt scraps. If you need help assembling these kits, consider utilizing your service committee.

## Virtual Service Project Ideas

The national service team has put together a list of projects that can be completed virtually only, mostly virtual with a small in-person component, and in small, physically distant settings.

### Service to the University Community

- Socially distanced campus clean-up
  - Example: Sisters can gather trash across campus. The Service Director can provide the trash bags at a specific day/time, or sisters can gather trash on their own time and send a photo for proof.
  - Trash=hours; e.g. 1 bag of trash equals 1 hour
- Organize appreciation weeks with other student organizations to thank university staff (especially the custodial or health clinic staff or campus bus drivers) by sending thank you notes or care packages
  - Example: Service Director can schedule a zoom call for sisters to write letters or assemble care packages virtually. To avoid shipping costs, Service Directors can ask members to drop the care packages off at the intended organization. If a sister chooses to assemble items on their own time, request a photo for proof.
  - Note: Please contact the office you intend to thank and make sure they are comfortable receiving care packages.
  - Participation=hours; e.g. 4 letters equals 1 hour, 1 package equals 1 hour
- Donating to your university's food pantry
  - Example: Service Director asks active members to donate to the university food pantry. Reach out to the pantry ahead of time to ask what food items are needed and the best way to coordinate donations.
  - Note: If this project is selected, it cannot count for the President's Project as well. An additional service project must be selected for food insecurity.
  - Donations=hours; e.g. 5 cans of food equals 1 hour, \$5 monetary donation equals 1 hour

- Take nominations for best “virtual professor” and award the winner with a certificate
- Write appreciation emails to your favorite instructors/professors on campus
  - Example: Each sister has most likely been influenced by the educators in their life. During COVID, these teachers and professors are working hard to continue providing these learning opportunities. Writing an email for appreciation is a great way to encourage them. Service Directors could ask to be blind carbon-copied directly on the emails or forwarded the emails.
  - Emails sent=hours, e.g. 4 appreciation emails equal 1 hour
- Random Acts of Kindness
  - Example: The [Rock Project](#), Create and print inspirational and uplifting posters to hang around campus ([Canva](#) is a great resource for this!), Send a motivational text to a friend who is struggling, Leave a dollar at a vending machine with a note for the recipient. Service Directors can ask for photos of proof.
  - Participation=hours, e.g. two RAK equal 1 hour
- Virtual Voter Registration Campaign
  - Example: Service Director can request a registration drive toolkit from [Rock the Vote](#). Their website also has an [online voter registration platform](#) and a [list of states](#) that allow online voter registration. Sisters could send 10 emails to friends to promote voter registration.
  - Note: When promoting voter registration, DO NOT endorse political parties or candidates. You cannot promote or oppose any candidate, political party, or campaign.
  - Participation=hours, e.g. designing 4 posts to promote voter registration equals 1 hour, sending 10 emails to friends equals 1 hour

## Service to the Community-at-large

- Letters to nursing home residents
  - Consider working with a local nursing resident to “adopt” the nursing home and schedule phone calls between sisters and residents.
  - Participation=hours; e.g. 4 letters earns 1 hour, 1 phone call equals 1 hour
- Random Acts of Kindness: The [Rock Project](#)
  - Number of act of kindness=hours; e.g. 10 acts equals 1 hour
- Can/Pop Tab or Box Top collection
  - Number of tabs or tops=hours; e.g. 100 tabs equals 1 hour
- Read a book to a virtual class
  - Time spent translates directly to hours
- Donate books with diverse characters to a local school
  - Books=hours
- Face mask donation drive for people experiencing homelessness
  - Masks=hours
- Donate backpacks with school supplies to local schools
  - Supplies=hours; e.g. 5 supplies equals 1 hour
- Organize or join a virtual 5k
  - Participation=hours
- Become a tutor for youth learning virtually
  - Time spent translates directly to hours with a set maximum
- Work virtually with local animal shelters to create adoption flyers and/or videos for animals

- Number of flyers/videos=hours
- Contribute your skills and passions to help people with print disabilities read with [Bookshare](#)
  - Time spent=hours
- [Write cards to hospitalized children](#)
  - Cards=hours

## Service to the Members of the Sorority

- Letters to Sisters/Colonists
  - Examples: Find another OPA Chapter in your district and connect with them. Connect with the Old Dominion colony and send them letters! The Service Director can reach out for contact information, and can host a virtual “meet your sisters” event that can help sisters connect across the US. Then send members the addresses for the intended chapter/colony.
  - Letters=hours; e.g. 4 letters earns 1 service hour
- Teach-A-Sister: sisters can host workshops to teach others a new skill or hobby
  - Example: Schedule virtual “teaching” sessions where sisters can share their expertise! Some example topics might be How to change a tire, Make-up Tutorials, How to bake their favorite treat, Take your sisters on a [virtual tour](#) of your favorite museum
  - Attending or Leading a session=hours, e.g. attending one Teach a sister session equals 1 service hour
- Partner with other local non profits to host educational workshops
  - Example: Sign up with a Girl Scout Troop to do virtual science experiments
  - Participation=1 hour
- Sister Safety Crew
  - Example: Sisters can create resources like floor markers and come to event spaces early to mark off 6 feet spaces. Different sisters could sign up to help with different events. Sisters not on campus can help make the markers (design cute ones on [Canva!](#)) and send in.
  - Participation=hours, e.g. setting up and taking down markers for an event equals 1 hour, making 10 markers equals 1 hour.
- Complete a leadership development module as a chapter
  - Example: Service Director coordinates a core value workshop for the chapter or asks all actives to complete a module of the Omega Phi Alpha Leadership Program. To participate in the Leadership Development program or to request a core value workshop for your chapter, please email [leadteam@omegaphialpha.org](mailto:leadteam@omegaphialpha.org).
  - Note: Participating in this program earns your chapter points for the Chapter Excellence Program (CEP)
  - Participation=hours, e.g. attending core value workshop equals 1 hour
- Tutor a Sister
  - Example: Older sisters who aced that Chemistry or Math class that’s notorious for being tough can hold tutoring sessions for sisters that would like their help and advice!(doesn’t have to be exclusive to school topics!)
  - Attending or leading tutor sessions=hours, e.g. leading one tutor session equals 1 hour

## Service to the Nations of the World

- [Operation Gratitude](#): write letters to soldiers and first responders
  - Letters=hours; e.g. 4 letters earns 1 service hour
- [Free Rice](#)
  - Set up an online competition and set a minimum of questions completed to earn 1 service hour
- [Charity Miles](#)
  - Choose a charity of choice as a chapter and everyone log miles in support of that charity. Set a goal of total miles.
  - Miles=hours; e.g. log 5 miles to earn 1 service hour
- [Amnesty Decoders](#): help research and expose human rights violations
  - Participation=hours
- [Be My Eyes](#): help blind and low vision people live more independently by using your eyes to solve tasks
  - Tasks=hours; e.g. 2 tasks equals 1 hour
- [Missing Maps](#): help map areas where humanitarian organizations are working to meet the needs of vulnerable people
  - Areas mapped=hours; e.g. 2 areas mapped equals 1 hour
- [The Smithsonian](#) digital transcription
- I Support the Girls: collect donations to send in
  - Products=hours; e.g. donate 5 products to earn 30 minutes
- Implement a social media campaign to advocate for the environment

## Mental Health

- Virtual NAMI event
- Stress Relief Day:
  - Examples: virtual group baking, coloring, journaling (with prompts), virtual pampering hour, etc.
  - Participation=hours
- [More Love Letters](#)
  - Letters=hours; e.g. 2 letters earns 30 minutes
- Communicating with isolated individuals
  - Example: Writing to nursing homes or children in hospitals
- Anti-racism and Anti-discrimination social media campaigns
  - It's well documented how racism and discrimination negatively impacts mental health so use your social media platforms to share anti-racism and anti-discrimination resources, etc.

## **President's Project - Food Insecurity: Hunger in America**

Read National President Jan Titsworth's article to gain perspective on why she's chosen Food Insecurity as the 2020-2021 President's Project.

When planning service projects for this area of service, consider projects that create lasting impact and change. Some examples of projects include:

- Organize a food drive in support of a local food pantry
- Volunteer to sort food at a food bank/pantry
- Distribute food at a mobile pantry in various sections of the community (ex. Meals on Wheels)
- Work with or establish a community garden
  - Grow seeds at your residence to later be planted in a community garden
- Work with or establish a food pantry at your college/university for underserved students
- Make a meal for a sister (delivered distantly)