



Public Law 96-114, The Congressional Award Act

Congressional Award

As you advise youth in the Congressional Award program Keep the following things in mind:

- Has the young person **REGISTERED** for the Congressional Award program? All youth must register **PRIOR** to setting goals or counting activities toward the Award. Youth may register at www.congressionalaward.org!
- Has the young person presented his or her goals and activities well? Encourage the young person to keep neat records and clearly describe goals and activities.
- Are the participant's goals specific? Goals that are too broad, such as “I will help serve my community” or “I will get into shape” are not acceptable. Please be sure that goals clearly state a specific objective and are challenging as well as measurable.
 - Are the participant’s goals SMART? (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely)
- Has the participant spread out his or her hours of Voluntary Public Service, Personal Development, and Physical Fitness? Earning a Congressional Award is a marathon not a sprint; the Congressional Award honors young people who develop lifestyles of service and personal challenge. Participants should make a commitment to their activities over a significant period of time, not simply complete the required hours quickly.
 - Does the participant meet the minimum number of **months of activity** required for each program area?
- Assure that the participant listed only the hours and dates that he or she worked on a certain activity at the current level. The National Office will keep track of cumulative hours and dates as the participant advances through the program.
 - Is the participant counting the same hours of activity in multiple program areas?
 - Within one program area, are months of activity only counted once?
- Has the participant provided you with documentation of the completed activities?
- Has the participant completed all four Program Areas to earn their Congressional Award? To earn a Congressional Award, youth must complete the requirements for each Voluntary Public Service, Personal Development, Physical Fitness, and Expedition/Exploration!
- Do the young person's Voluntary Public Service goals and activities benefit the **community at large**?
 - Was the participant paid for his/her volunteer work?
- Did the participant receive School Credit for any of his/her activities?
- Has the participant played a major role in the planning and executing of the Expedition/Exploration? Activities which are substantially planned by others, or in which the participant is not self-reliant would not qualify for the Congressional Award.