

Citizenship

Required adventure • Citizenship

If you read nothing else

Only two requirements, but they are bigger than they look: the patrol identifies and plans its own service project, then does two hours of it.

One planning meeting plus the project itself. The planning is the requirement — do not hand them a project you already arranged.

Two hours, or multiple projects totalling two hours. Log the hours in Scoutbook: it is JTE objective 8 for the whole pack.

The requirements

Official requirement text. Tick each one off as your Scouts complete it — the meeting plans below cover all of them.

- ☐ 1. Identify a community service project that your patrol or pack could accomplish. Use the Scouting America SAFE Checklist and develop a plan to conduct the service project safely.
- ☐ 2. Participate in a service project for a minimum of two hours, or multiple service projects for a total of two hours.

Requirement 1 says the patrol identifies the project and develops the plan. That planning work is the adventure — the two hours of labor is the easy half.

Meeting 1: Find the need, make the plan

Goal: The patrol identifies a real community need, chooses a project it can actually accomplish, and writes a safety plan using the SAFE Checklist.

Covers requirement 1

Before the meeting

- Do not pick the project. Bring information about needs, and let them choose.
- Call three or four organizations beforehand and ask what they actually need — a food pantry, a park district, a senior center, an animal shelter, your chartered organization, the school. Bring what they told you.
- Clear the possibilities with your committee for budget and calendar, so you are not vetoing their choice later.
- Print the SAFE Checklist and a project planning sheet.

Supplies

- Notes from your calls to local organizations
- Printed SAFE Checklist, one per Scout
- Project planning sheet — what, where, when, who, gear, safety
- Whiteboard
- A calendar showing the next three months

Run of show

Time	What happens
10 min	Gathering: what does our community need?
5 min	Opening: Scout Oath, help other people at all times
20 min	Activity 1: the needs list and the choice
25 min	Activity 2: build the plan, including SAFE
5 min	Closing: assignments

Gathering — What does our community need? (10 min)

Sticky notes, silent brainstorm, five minutes. One idea per note, anything counts.

Then read them all out without judging any of them. You will get “clean up the park” and you will also get something specific and local that you did not know about, because a fifth grader sees the neighborhood differently than you do.

Activity 1 — The needs list and the choice (20 min)

Add what you learned from your calls. Then the patrol filters against three honest questions:

- Can we actually do this, with the people and time we have?
- Does it help somebody who needs it, or does it just make us feel useful?
- Can we do at least two hours of real work on it?

That second question is worth sitting on. A patrol that decides its first idea was mostly for show and picks a harder, less photogenic project has learned the thing this adventure is for.

Patrol leader runs the vote. Majority.

Projects that work well at this age: food pantry sorting and stocking, park or trail cleanup and trail maintenance, a conservation planting, building and installing bird or bat houses, a coat or food drive with the collecting and sorting done by the patrol, yard work for elderly neighbors, cleaning and repair at the chartered organization, flags at a veterans cemetery.

Activity 2 — Build the plan (25 min)

Patrol leader at the board, patrol fills in the planning sheet. Requirement 1 is this document.

- What exactly are we doing, and what does “done” look like?
- Where, and who do we need permission from?
- When, how long, and what is the rain date?

- Who does what job?
- What tools and supplies, and who brings each one?

Then the SAFE Checklist against this project specifically:

- Supervision — how many adults, what ratio, who is the first aider, who is in charge of what.
- Assessment — what could hurt someone here. Sharp objects, broken glass, traffic, heat, lifting, poison ivy, machinery. Name each hazard and say what you will do about it.
- Fitness and skill — can everyone do this work, who needs a different job, has anyone used these tools before.
- Equipment and environment — gloves, closed shoes, long pants, high-visibility vests near a road, water, sunscreen, the forecast.

Assign the follow-up calls to Scouts, with an adult on the line. A fifth grader who calls the park district and asks for permission remembers this project for a long time.

Send home with families

Project date, location, and what to wear on the handout. Gloves, closed shoes, long pants.

Parents are needed — we cannot run this without enough adults. Sign up on the sheet.

Ask your Scout why the patrol chose this project.

Meeting 2: The service project

Goal: Two hours of real work, run by the patrol against its own plan.

Covers requirement 2

Before the meeting

- Confirm with the site the week before and again two days out.
- Check the forecast and call the rain date early rather than late.
- Bring the first aid kit, water, the roster, and spare gloves.
- Brief adults: the patrol leader runs it, adults work alongside rather than directing.
- Bring a way to record hours per person for Scoutbook.

Supplies

- Everything on the patrol's own supply list
- Spare work gloves and spare water
- First aid kit
- Trash bags
- Sign-in sheet with start and end times

Run of show

Time	What happens
15 min	Arrive, safety brief, job assignments
2 hrs	Work, with breaks
15 min	Clean up, tools accounted for
15 min	Debrief circle

Safety brief and jobs (15 min)

Patrol leader runs the brief off their own SAFE plan. Hazards, boundaries, where the first aid kit is, what to do if someone gets hurt, where the bathroom is, and the buddy system.

Then assign jobs from the plan. Rotate midway so nobody does the worst job for two hours.

The work (2 hours)

Two hours is longer than fifth graders expect. Break at the hour with water and a snack, and again if it is hot.

Work alongside them. An adult standing with a clipboard while Scouts haul brush teaches the wrong thing about service.

Record start and end times and who was there. You need it for Scoutbook and for the requirement.

If the patrol finishes early, find more work rather than leaving. If they cannot finish, that is a real and useful outcome — say so honestly at the debrief.

Debrief circle (15 min)

Sit down where you worked, before anyone leaves.

- What did we actually accomplish? Point at it.
- Who is better off because we came?
- What was harder than we planned for?
- What would we do differently next time?

Then the question that connects it to the Oath: what does “help other people at all times” mean after today that it did not mean this morning?

Say something like

You found this yourselves, you planned it yourselves, and you worked two hours in the cold on it. Nobody made you. That is the difference between doing a chore and doing a good turn.

Log the hours in Scoutbook the same week. It is worth JTE points to the whole pack and it is the step most often skipped.

Send home with families

Ask your Scout what the patrol built, cleaned, or collected, and who it was for.

Service hours are logged in Scoutbook — check that your Scout's are recorded.

Leader notes

- The planning is the adventure. A project handed to the patrol ready-made completes requirement 2 and fails requirement 1.
- Two hours is a floor, not a target. Several short projects add up and can be easier to staff.
- Coordinate with the committee so this counts toward the pack's JTE service objective, and so you are not competing with a pack-wide project three weeks later.
- A patrol that picks a project connected to a Scout's own family or neighborhood will work harder at it than one that picks a generic cleanup.
- This is a natural bridge to Scouts BSA — troops run service projects constantly and an Arrow of Light Scout who has planned one arrives ahead.

Safety

Before this adventure

Run the patrol's own SAFE plan, and make the patrol leader deliver the brief.

Gloves, closed-toe shoes, long pants. High-visibility vests and adult spotters for anything near a road.

No power tools, no ladders, no chainsaws, no work at height. Fifth graders do not operate machinery.

Sharps and broken glass are picked up by adults with proper tools, not by Scouts.

Water, shade, and real breaks. Reschedule for extreme heat or cold rather than pushing through.

Photo permission before posting, especially at a shelter, pantry, or senior facility.

Tracking

Write each Scout in and tick the requirement number as it is completed. Report to your advancement chair once the row is full.

Scout	1	2

Scout	1	2