



# Measuring service impact for Lions

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When we share our stories and report our impact, we unify our organization, inspire our communities and capture the attention of a global audience. This guide will enable service reporting by:

- 1 Defining what service means to Lions and Leos.
- 2 Explaining the various ways Lions and Leos measure their impact.
- 3 Providing direction on how to calculate the number of people served.



# What is service?

## Lions and Leos serve in many ways, including:

**Service activities:** Hands-on service activities, such as tree planting, vision screening, rebuilding homes after disaster strikes or serving meals to those in need.

**Advocacy:** Raising awareness of the causes that are important to Lions, educating our communities on issues that impact them and working with others to bring about positive change. Some examples include hosting a Strides walk for diabetes awareness or visiting a local lawmaker to discuss the needs of the blind or visually impaired.

**Donations:** Making charitable donations to individuals or organizations, including Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF). Funds donated to LCIF are tracked by the foundation and need not be reported as a service activity.

**Fundraising:** Raising funds to enable our service.

**Service support activities:** This encompasses four broad categories:

- 1 Holding meetings to strengthen your club, educate and train members, or plan other service activities.
- 2 Fulfilling administrative tasks, such as running errands, maintaining club records, or reporting.
- 3 Attending Lions events such as conventions and forums.
- 4 Engaging in fellowship and fun, together with other Lions.

These activities contribute to Lions' positive impact in various ways, including attracting new members to clubs, helping clubs retain members by providing a positive experience, preparing Lions to serve, or directly benefitting the people we serve.

## What is not reportable service?

Many Lions and Leos serve their communities individually, outside of the activities planned by their clubs, districts or multiple districts. Some examples include bringing a meal to a neighbor, driving a parent to a medical appointment, or volunteering at their place of worship. This type of work is important and commendable; however, it should not be reported as a Lions' service activity.





# Metrics

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## How Lions and Leos measure their service impact

**These are called metrics.** Metrics allow all Lions around the world to report their service and see how local service adds up to make a huge global impact. The metrics used to measure success depend on the type of service.

### Metrics that are currently collected by Lions International include:

- **Number of activities:** Each activity reported by a club, district or multiple district is counted as one activity.
- **Number of people served:** These are the direct beneficiaries of Lions service. Sometimes the number of people served can be counted precisely, and sometimes it must be estimated.
- **Number of volunteers:** The number of people who participate in the planning or implementation of a service project. As Lions often invite friends to join their service activities, the number of volunteers can include both Lions and non-Lions.
- **Number of volunteer hours:** The number of hours spent planning and implementing a service project.
- **Funds raised:** The amount of money collected to fund service activities or charitable donations. This can be from Lions making personal contributions, or funds raised from non-Lions during a fundraising event.
- **Funds donated:** The amount of charitable funds given to an individual or organization. Funds donated to LCIF are tracked by the foundation and need not be reported as a service activity, but if an event was held to raise those funds, that event can be reported as a fundraising activity.



Depending on the type of service project, these metrics are either required or optional for service reporting. The table below provides an overview:

		Metrics collected					
		Number of activities	Number of people served	Number of volunteers	Number of volunteer hours	Funds raised	Funds donated
Type of activity	Service activities	Required	Required	Required	Required	Optional	Optional
	Fundraisers	(this does not need to be entered, as each activity reported counts as one activity)	Optional	Optional	Optional	Required	Optional
	Donations		Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Required
	Meetings		Optional	Required	Required	Optional	Optional

For a service activity, it is required that Lions report the number of people served, the number of volunteers and the number of volunteer hours. Lions can optionally report funds raised or donated, if fundraising or donating take place during the activity.

In addition to the metrics listed above, there are many other ways to measure service impact. For example, during a blood drive, pints of blood might be counted. During a food or clothing drive, the number of items collected might be counted. Service might also generate a feeling of goodwill or community spirit, attract new members to a club, or beautify a public space. While it's not possible to quantify all these outcomes, Lions are encouraged to include them within the description of each activity at the time of reporting.



## Guidelines for calculating people served

Lions International provides guidelines to ensure that service reporting is accurate and consistent. However, Lions and Leos are the true experts in their service, and as such should rely on their own experience when measuring service impact and encouraged to work with local experts whenever possible.

### Step 1

## Determine if people served is a required metric for your activity.

People served is only required for service activities. There are many situations where a club, district or multiple district may want to report people served as an optional metric. Some examples are shared below:

- A **fundraiser** where the beneficiaries are known and present. For example, a club raises money to fund five college scholarships. If the students are present and receive their scholarships at the event, the club could report five beneficiaries.
- A **donation** where the number of people served is known. For example, a club donates US\$10,000 to a local nonprofit that trains service dogs and is told that this amount will cover the training of two dogs. In this case, the club would report two people served.
- A service activity conducted during a **meeting**. For example, a club assembles meal kits for families in need during their monthly meeting. If 50 meal kits are assembled, for an average family size of four people, the club would report 200 beneficiaries.

### Step 2

## Determine if the people served can be directly counted.

If so, be sure to keep a record during the service activity, such as a sheet. If not, you will need to estimate.

People served can be easily counted when Lions work directly with their beneficiaries. For example, when a club volunteers at a school to serve as mentors for students, the number of people served is the number of students mentored.

People served often needs to be estimated when conducting environmental service projects. The first step is to determine who the beneficiary is.

Estimating people served can be done in several ways, including:

- Research publicly available information, such as census data, often found online.
- Consult local organizations such as nonprofits, governments, schools, park districts and chambers of commerce.
- If your club, district or multiple district funds or contributes to the work of a partner organization, such as a school, health clinic or food pantry, consult the partner organization to determine the number of people served by your contribution.
- Estimate based on observation. For example, observe the number of visitors to a beach on the day your club conducts a beach cleanup.





### Step 3

## Determine if your activity is a one-time activity, a recurring activity, or an ongoing activity, and report beneficiaries accordingly.

One-time activities serve beneficiaries one time, and end when the project is completed. These activities can sometimes last more than one day, however they do not regularly repeat. For example, Lions organize a diabetes awareness event and educate 200 people, reporting 200 people served.

Recurring activities are those that regularly repeat, such as cleaning up a highway once a month. In this example, each individual highway cleanup can be reported as one activity. The number of motorists who use the highway on the day of each cleanup should be reported as the number of people served for that activity.

Ongoing activities occur when Lions' contribution will continue to serve people indefinitely. Infrastructure building and capital investments fall into this category.

- When reporting ongoing activities, first determine the most appropriate time frame for each service report. This may be monthly for a transport vehicle, annually for a school, or quarterly for a health clinic.
- Report the activity at the chosen interval, counting only the beneficiaries served during that time. For example, a school attended by 100 students each year could be reported once per year, with 100 beneficiaries reported each time.
- If the ongoing activity does not require the day-to-day service of Lions, such as endowing a chair at a cancer research center, be sure to check in with the partner organization before each service report to ensure that the number of people served is accurate and up to date.
- If the ongoing activity requires ongoing maintenance, Lions should stay actively involved in order to continue reporting the activity. Some examples include the upkeep of a community park, or maintenance on a well that provides clean drinking water. If the investment is no longer functional, that activity should no longer be reported.



## Special considerations

### **Collecting and donating used eyeglasses.**

It can be difficult to know how many people are served by the donation of used eyeglasses. In some cases, used glasses are matched with a beneficiary to correct their vision, and in other cases, the materials that make up the glasses are recycled. Lions should speak with the eyeglass recycling center or partner to whom they are giving the glasses to better understand how they are used. This information will help Lions report the number of people served by their donation.

**Multiple clubs serving together.** Participating clubs should discuss and agree upon the approach in advance of service reporting. If one club initiated the project and did most of the planning, Lions may prefer that club report the activity. If all clubs participated equally, Lions may prefer that each club report the activity. Lions should ensure that metrics, such as people served, are not reported multiple times.

### **District or multiple district initiatives.**

Sometimes, a district or multiple district will recommend that all clubs conduct a certain type of service in a given year. For example, a district governor might request that all clubs in their district focus on diabetes screenings. Clubs that conduct diabetes screenings should still report them as individual club activities. The district governor may consider asking clubs to use a uniform naming convention, such as “2020 District Initiative: Diabetes Screening” in order to easily see which activities were a part of this initiative.

**Tree planting and care.** Tree planting and tree care are popular service activities conducted by Lions and Leos, however determining the number of people served from these activities can be difficult. If Lions can work with local experts to determine the number of people served, they should report that number. If not, Lions can report the number of trees planted or cared for. Lions International will use global best practices to calculate the people served.

**Activities that serve multiple causes.** When reporting, select the primary cause served, or break the activity into multiple activities and report them separately. For example, if you are providing vision screening and diabetes screening at a health fair, you can report the vision and diabetes screenings as two separate activities.

**Signature activities.** A signature activity is a recurring activity which enables a club, district or multiple district to apply their unique strengths and abilities to meet the needs of their community. Signature activities often serve as a part of the club, district or multiple district’s unique identity. Clubs, districts or multiple districts can indicate that any reported service activity is their signature activity, however this designation doesn’t change the reporting process in any way.

**Service reporting caps.** Lions International has a responsibility to ensure the accuracy and credibility of our service reporting. For this reason, when Lions International aggregates and reports Lions service activity, we cap individual club service activities at the following levels:

- 3,000 people served
- 1,200 volunteer hours
- \$200,000 funds donated
- \$250,000 funds raised

These caps allow Lions International to:

- Remove statistical outliers with an outsized impact on metrics.
- Take a conservative approach with numbers that are prone to error and miscalculation.
- Reduce the reputational risk associated with reporting inflated numbers.

### For more information

For additional information on service reporting, visit [lionsclubs.org/en/service-reporting](https://lionsclubs.org/en/service-reporting)

