
The 2022-2023 AmeriCorps Program Director Manual



A Resource for State Program Directors

August 2022

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Welcome to the 2022-2023 AmeriCorps Program Director Manual!

Congratulations on being funded as an AmeriCorps State Program! The Bureau of Volunteerism and Community Service in partnership with the Serve Illinois Commission will be working with you to ensure that your AmeriCorps State program is successful.

We are here to provide guidance, oversight, and support to help you create a strong AmeriCorps program. Please use this manual as a place to start to understand the many moving parts of national service, your role as a program director, and the importance of understanding federal rules and regulations to ensure that your program is compliant.

Bureau of Volunteerism and Community Service Staff:

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- Board of Commissioners: [Commissioners - Commissioners \(illinois.gov\)](https://www.illinois.gov/commissioners)
- Executive Director – Andres J. Fernandez

Purpose of This Manual

The AmeriCorps Program Director Manual has been specifically designed by the Bureau of Volunteerism and Community Service (BVCS) as a guide for those who administer Illinois AmeriCorps programs. This manual will assist in detailing the process for monitoring, supporting, and evaluating programs and, above all, for working collaboratively to make AmeriCorps programs in Illinois successful.

Please note that the information contained in this manual does not include all legal requirements of an AmeriCorps grant. It does not constitute the AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service's official interpretation of factual or legal questions. Program directors or individuals with particular questions should consult the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42

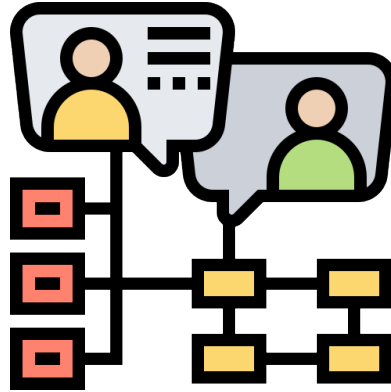
U.S.C. § 12501 et seq.), the regulations issued under the Act (45 C.F.R. § 2500.1 et seq.), the AmeriCorps Grant Provisions and Grants Policy guidance, and relevant state law and regulations. If there is a conflict between the content of this handbook and the AmeriCorps provisions, the provisions are the controlling authority.

The AmeriCorps Program Director Manual is intended to:

- Provide a roadmap for AmeriCorps awardee/site management
- Lay out a typical administrator's general workload
- Illustrate legal requirements
- Show where there is both control and flexibility to shape each AmeriCorps program

It is important that awardees become familiar with all the information contained in this manual. *The AmeriCorps Program Director Manual* will be updated as needed. Notice of revisions will be sent to each Illinois AmeriCorps Program Director and posted on the Illinois AmeriCorps Basecamp site.

Unit 1: Program Management



Chapter

1

National Service and Serve Illinois

**Serve Illinois Commission
Training and Technical Assistance
State and Regional Volunteer Conferences**

Serve Illinois Commission

Mission

Serve Illinois strengthens communities through volunteerism, national service, and recognition.

Vision

We envision an Illinois where the needs of every community are met, and all Illinoisans have the opportunity to give their time, talents, and resources.

Means to Achieving the Vision

The Commission in partnership with BVCS will expand volunteerism throughout the entire state, connecting rural, suburban, and urban communities, and integrating people of all backgrounds, cultures, ages, and abilities. The Commission and BVCS will also embrace and promote the idea that everyone can recognize their ability and responsibility to strengthen our communities through voluntary service.

Serve Illinois Commission:

- Provides guidance and direction to BVCS regarding funding decisions including all AmeriCorps funded programs in Illinois.
- Prepares and updates three-year national service plan for the state of Illinois.
- Prepares a three-year strategic plan in partnership with the BVCS.
- Supports the development of informational materials to increase awareness of volunteers and their organizations.
- Promotes service and volunteerism through awards and other recognition opportunities.
- Supports the coordination of National Days of Service at the state level.
- Promotes awareness of and attendance at training and professional development offerings for volunteers, AmeriCorps Members, and program staff.
- Provides support to the statewide network of volunteer organizations.

BVCS Staff Responsibilities and Support to AmeriCorps State Programs

- Administers federally funded AmeriCorps State programs; this includes selection, oversight, and evaluation of these grant recipients.
- Facilitation of monthly meetings with Program Directors (mandatory for all programs)
- Provision of annual Program Directors trainings (mandatory for all programs)
- Ongoing training opportunities for program directors and support staff
- Provide technical support and assistance to programs on programmatic and fiscal issues
- Provide updates as necessary on emerging program issues and changes
- Program monitoring

For more information and news about the Serve Illinois Commission, and to get a current and complete listing of Commissioners and Staff, go to www.Serve.Illinois.gov

Training and Technical Assistance

It is important for volunteer and service programs to succeed and thrive. Critical to the development of the programs is training and access to information that is both timely and comprehensive. The following provides a listing of different levels of training and training resources available for programs.

AmeriCorps Program Trainings

Annual AmeriCorps Program Director Training/Program Orientation

- Held in July/August of each year to coincide with the program start up
- Mandatory for all programs to attend

National Service Summit

- Will be held in June 2023 at the Bank of Springfield Center, Springfield, IL
- Educational component offered for Program Directors, Members, and program staff
- Mandatory for all programs to bring the required number of members

Monthly Meetings

- Virtual meeting with Illinois AmeriCorps program provider staff (required)
- Sharing of information and opportunity to ask questions

Webinars

- Topics related to Program and Fiscal Management, etc.

National Service Criminal History Check eCourse

- The National Service Criminal History Check eCourse has been updated to reflect the May 1, 2021, rule and is now available on Litmos. AmeriCorps grant terms and conditions require grantees to retain the eCourse certificate of completion and assign staff to retake the course annually prior to the expiration of the certificate. Grantees should not allow their training certificate to expire and should ensure they complete the NSCHC eCourse that is available in Litmos. [Click here.](#)

ASC Midwest Regional Conference

- ASC provides a conference for AmeriCorps program providers and Commissions annually. The focus of the conference is to improve implementation and goal achievement for AmeriCorps programs in the Midwest. All Illinois AmeriCorps programs are invited and encouraged to attend.
- The conference for PY23 will be held in Louisiana, Spring 2023.

Litmos

Litmos is the Learning Management System for the AmeriCorps. For technical support, to request a new account, or assistance accessing these pages using assistive technology email serviceresources@cns.gov (Password reset only applies to existing accounts). (See the Litmos Getting Started Guide in the Appendix.) The direct link is now [Americorpsonlinecourses.litmos.com](https://americorpsonlinecourses.litmos.com)

State and Regional Volunteer Conferences

The following opportunities provide volunteer organizations training on capacity building that enhance the skills of volunteer managers, staff, and volunteers. These trainings provide valuable networking opportunities as well as quality professional development opportunities. The following is a listing of those conferences and a link to more information on each. Serve Illinois is a sponsor and part of each of the conference planning committees; however, each event is ran independently by a group of individuals. Attendance is not limited by region but intended to be a way to reach more volunteer managers where they are.

Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference (usually in June each year)

<http://www.civconference.org/>

- The Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference provides quality professional development opportunities for volunteer managers/administrators that focus on the key areas of a volunteer delivery system including personal readiness, organizational readiness, engagement of volunteers, education of volunteers, and sustainability of volunteer efforts.

Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration (usually in August each year)

<http://www.icova.info/>

- The Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration (ICOVA) is a two-day event designed for those who supervise, manage, or otherwise lead volunteers. ICOVA offers professional development and continuing education through conference workshops and keynote speakers focusing on key areas of a volunteer delivery system. ICOVA also provides that much needed networking experience with peers in the field.

Northwest Illinois Volunteerism Conference (usually in April each year) The link for this conference is provided annually as the conference is in the planning stage.

- This is the first volunteerism conference set up for the Serve Illinois Northwest Region which includes Rockford, Freeport, the Illinois Quad Cities and all the areas between. Centrally located in Dixon, this conference was created to provide quality development opportunities and valuable networking experience for anyone who manages, motivates, or mobilizes volunteers to make a difference. Participants will enjoy networking opportunities and a broad variety of learning opportunities with workshop topics that include motivating Baby Boomers, developing meaningful volunteer opportunities, recruiting, and rewarding volunteers, understanding personality traits, and building volunteer disaster preparedness projects.

Southern Illinois Volunteerism Conference The link for this conference is provided annually as the conference is in the planning stage.

- The Southern Illinois Volunteerism Conference (SIVC) has existed for over 12 years in various forms to provide capacity-building training opportunities to enhance the skills of volunteer leaders and managers in the public, private, and particularly nonprofit, sectors and to provide professional development workshops for volunteers themselves.

Volunteerism National Conference (June 14 – 16, 2023, Chicago)

- The Points of Light Conference is a global convening of nonprofit, government, business, and civic leaders who connect, collaborate, gain, and share the knowledge and resources needed to galvanize the power of people to create change. It is typically held in the summer timeframe. <http://www.volunteeringandservice.org/>

Program Compliance

Compliance

Governing Documents and Regulations

Progress Reports

Final Reports

Staff Time Keeping and Time and Effort Reporting

Deductions to Living Allowance

Sustainability

My AmeriCorps and Egrants

Member Reporting

Due Dates

Record Retention

Compliance

Compliance is defined as the action or fact of complying with a wish or command, the state or fact of according with or meeting rules or standards. AmeriCorps State and National Programs are required to follow Office of Management and Budget Circulars, federal regulations, and provisions for financial management of the program. Programs must report on project accomplishments and participate in statewide training and service projects.

Governing Documents and Regulations.

Compliance begins with knowing and understanding the federal and state laws, regulations, and guidance. AmeriCorps programs face an increasing large list of compliance requirements. Compliance also needs to be seen as not just a one-time exercise, but rather a continuous effort. Many of the AmeriCorps compliance pieces require ongoing updates and checks to ensure they are accurate and complete. Due to this complexity, it is important that grant recipients become very familiar with all program guidance resources.

AmeriCorps is a federally funded program so all programs receiving those funds are subject to federal regulations. AmeriCorps State programs receive their notice of grant award and monitoring/oversight from the Illinois Department of Human Services via BVCS. Please note that even though these items are issued and/or undertaken by the state that the funding is Federal, and all grant recipients are held to all AmeriCorps federal regulations.

In order to maintain compliance, there are multiple regulations/rules/policies that AmeriCorps programs must adhere to. Here is a list of documents that each grantee should maintain and have a clear understanding of what each document requires. (See

<https://americorps.gov/about/agency-overview/statutes-regulations>) :

- National and Community Service Act of 1990
- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)
- Uniform Guidance (part of CFR)
- Uniform Grant Agreement (UGA)
- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
- Notice of State Funding (NOSA)
- Certifications and Assurances
- Notice of Grant Award (NOGA)
- Terms and Conditions/AmeriCorps Policy and Guidance/Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Program Director's Manual

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended by the Serve America Act – This is the statute that authorizes AmeriCorps to exist and governs all AmeriCorps activity. While it is important to know about this, it is unlikely that you will have to refer to the statute in the day-to-day management of your program.

The grant certifications and assurances were electronically agreed to in the grant application process by the authorized representative. The certifications and assurances include agreeing to follow basic Federal and AmeriCorps procedures such as: non-discrimination, non-duplication and non-displacement, grievance procedures, drug-free workplace, and lobbying. They are also listed on the same page as the grant terms and conditions.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity or NOFO. This document is published annually by AmeriCorps and provides details on the appropriate use of AmeriCorps grant funds, the content and process for submitting an application, and information on AmeriCorps priorities.

The Notice of Grant Award or NOGA. Each AmeriCorps program is governed by this and it is provided by AmeriCorps for AmeriCorps National Direct programs and the State Commission/state agency for AmeriCorps State programs. This document will contain the number of member slots and MSY's awards, grant budget amounts and grant start and end dates for the Commission/state agency as the prime applicant to AmeriCorps.

The Notice of State Award or NOSA. This document is written notification from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to each sub-grantee (program provider) of the approved funding amount. This document will also list the requirements and conditions for receiving the award from the IDHS.

Code of Federal Regulations. The Code of Federal Regulations or CFRs AmeriCorps' interpretations of the Statute and they set out the agency's purpose, powers and the circumstances of applying the statute, and guides all AmeriCorps activities. There are 252 pages of regulations that apply to AmeriCorps and their programs. The CFR's that specifically apply to AmeriCorps can be found in Title 45, Chapter 25 and section 2520-2550. Any changes to the CFR's must go through the rulemaking process which last happened with the new NSCHC regulation. During the rulemaking process, there is always a public comment period allowing for public input on any proposed changes. Whenever looking for clarification or an answer to a question, this is the document to start with first since it is the federal law in relation to AmeriCorps.

This document is ordered to allow you to drill down to a specific answer. Some of the main headings in this document are:

- General provisions
- Eligible AmeriCorps program applicants and types of grants available for award
- AmeriCorps participants, programs and applicants
- Agreements with other Federal agencies
- AmeriCorps technical assistance and other special grants
- National service trust
- Eligibility for an education award
- Determining the amount of an education award
- Using an education award
- Payment of accrued interest
- Transfer of education awards
- Solicitation and acceptance of donations

Terms and Conditions are published annually and govern AmeriCorps programming activities. A copy of the terms and conditions usually accompanies the notice of grant award. They can also be found on the AmeriCorps website.

AmeriCorps State and National Policy and Guidance documents. These documents are published by AmeriCorps on various aspects of grant and program management. They can be

updated/added throughout the grant year and provide policy guidance to grantees. It is important to remember that these strictly provide guidance and do not carry the force of the law, so it is recommended to consult the CFRs and terms and conditions prior to these policy and guidance documents. Serve Illinois has added a sample of the most often used documents in the Appendix. In fact, AmeriCorps states on many of the document's language such as – "This guidance outlines a training tool designed to help new AmeriCorps program staff create a strong member position description. It will be most helpful when used alongside the Grant Terms and Conditions, AmeriCorps Regulations, and other agency-specific guidance."

National Service Criminal History checks. This is an area that AmeriCorps has emphasized heavily and has the potential for high cost-findings.

AmeriCorps has developed multiple resources to assist programs with carrying out National Service Criminal History checks that are compliant with AmeriCorps rules and regulations. Included in the Appendix is a copy of the National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Manual. NSCHC regulations and requirements can also be found in CFR 2540.200-2540.207. It is important that sub-grantees are fully aware of all of the NSCHC rules and regulations.

The purpose of the NSCHC is to protect individuals served by members. It is a multi-part check with a lot of information to track. It is important that programs have written policies and procedures on how they conduct their NSCHC and ensure that what they are actually doing matches their written policies and procedures.

There are a few options available for where to conduct the NSCHCs.

As of January 1, 2019, AmeriCorps developed a process for grantees to conduct background checks through AmeriCorps approved vendors. These vendors are Fieldprint for the FBI fingerprint check and Truescreen for the NSOPW and State checks. Under the AmeriCorps agreements with these two vendors, AmeriCorps is ensuring high compliance on background checks. It is important to note, that if a program uses these vendors, it must be done under the AmeriCorps agreement to experience the compliance benefits. If you have questions on how these vendors work, please visit the AmeriCorps NSCHC resource page.

It is important to note that if a program makes a mistake on a NSCHC, depending on the mistake it can be **VERY** costly. As of July 2019, a cost-based disallowance went into effect. This means that if a member or staff member was serving or working for weeks or months with a non-compliant NSCHC than all costs associated with that individual will be disallowed. This means the salary/stipend/living allowance (as applicable) and FICA during the period of noncompliance for which costs are disallowed will need to be paid back. Additionally, the State Commission and/or AmeriCorps has the discretion to enforce other administrative remedies if a program is particularly lacking in oversight of NSCHCS. These include:

- Grant Suspension
- Grant Termination
- Impact of future awards
- Manual holds on reimbursement requests

Progress Reports - go to next page

Progress Reports

IDHS/Office of Community Service and Youth Development Periodic Performance Report (PPR): these reports are due on a quarterly basis with a final report submitted at the end of the actual program year. Providers submit five PPRs total by the end of the program year. Refer to the guidance on completing PPR reports for instructions and more information.

ASN GPR/PROGRESS REPORT: includes information on: progress toward performance measures, Member and volunteer hours, program challenges, and any program changes. GPR’s are submitted semi-annually.

The GPR is built from several components including in My AmeriCorps. Note the following:

MEMBER DATA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enrollment -My AmeriCorps ■ Exits –My AmeriCorps ■ Time Logs
PERFORMANCE MEASURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Data continually collected by program ■ Reported to BVCS via a semi-annual form
ACCOMPLISHMENTS & CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Narrative

AmeriCorps Agency Support for Performance Measures

The AmeriCorps Agency has developed resource materials and tutorials to help awardees, sub-awardees and sponsors understand the AMERICORPS STATE AND NATIONAL performance measures.

You are encouraged to use this material to improve your understanding of key performance measurement concepts including:

- Performance Measurement Basics
- Theory of Change
- Evidence
- Quality Performance Measures
- Data Collection and Instruments

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement>

Final Reports

Programs completing the final year of their three-year grant cycle must submit a Final Project Report in addition to their Progress Report due October 31 of each year. A Final Progress Report is a cumulative report covering the entire project period. This report is due by the date determined by BVCS (most likely January 20th) following the end of the three-year grant cycle and should include the following information:

The narrative should include a three-page, double-spaced summary of the qualitative accomplishments that the AmeriCorps grant has made for the duration of the grant period. Include a discussion of the impacts of any special initiatives that fall within this grant. Discuss what exists now in the communities that are served that did not exist prior to the grant. Use of quantitative data to support the impact statements is encouraged.

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Final Federal Financial Report

BVCS aggregates the Federal Financial Report (FFR) for Illinois. The EDF (reimbursement requests) that program providers submit to BVCS are used to complete this form. There is no action program providers need to take to complete this form. This is shared with you for planning purposes for FFRs are used to determine if and when a program provider will be selected for a pay integrity audit conducted by the AmeriCorps Agency. Pay integrity audits can be conducted years after the end date of your program year or 3-year program cycle.

Equipment and Supply Inventory Form

Programs completing the final year of their three-year grant cycle must submit two (2) inventory forms. These are due March 1 following the end of the three-year grant cycle. One form is for any equipment inventory having a current fair market value of \$5,000 or more and purchased with federal grant funds. The second form is for any unused or residual supplies inventory purchased with federal funds exceeding \$5,000 in value. These reports should be completed on the Equipment and Supply Inventory Form included in this chapter. If no equipment or supplies were purchased using federal funds, programs should reflect this on each form. For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps Provisions.

Staff Time Keeping and Time and Effort Reporting

Staff time keeping plays an important if not critical role in effectively managing program costs. Staff time keeping records must also be completed and maintained following federal requirements.

Under 2CFR 200 (formerly A-122), Federal guidelines and provisions require the program have internal controls in place that ensure charges are accurate, allowable, and properly allocated.

Any time and effort report, be it timesheets or another form of reporting, must reasonably reflect total activity for which the employee is compensated. The report must also support the distribution of employee's salary/wages among specific activities/cost objectives.

The report must not be solely based on budget estimates made prior to the service are performed. These estimates must be backed up by actual data that shows they are accurate. This information most likely will be reviewed during a pay integrity assessment.

Deductions to Living Allowances

Program providers occasionally request the ability to deduct amounts from living allowances for Member absences and other purposes. Programs may make deductions to living allowances or other payments made to AmeriCorps Members; however, programs may not deduct any portion of the living allowance paid to the Member by the AmeriCorps Agency.

Before making any deductions, programs are advised to consider the implications related to the treatment of employment laws, including those laws addressing minimum wage and unemployment compensation. Further, programs that deduct amounts from Member living

allowances may be required to increase their match funds as a result.

For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps Provisions.

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Sustainability

BVCS defines “sustainability” as a plan that, through an organization’s use of various resources, will provide for a stronger infrastructure, stronger programs, and community self-sufficiency regarding supporting the needs of its constituents, its financial health, and its ability to be well managed and accountable.

Sustainability Policy

Programs must also follow the Sustainability Policy. Each program is required to gradually decrease reliance on federal funds, while continuing to meet the minimum match requirements.

More information on these topics may be found in the AmeriCorps Provisions.

Policy Guidelines

The AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service has published the following increasing match requirements for all AmeriCorps programs.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Minimum Overall Share	24%	24%	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

Under this policy, each program is required to gradually decrease its reliance on federal funds, yet still meet the Overall Minimum Match requirements. By either cash or in-kind matches in any category, programs must reach the required match level each year. Please note that the AmeriCorps Agency has created an alternative match requirement for awardees located in either a rural or a severely economically distressed area prior to submitting their grant application.

The Commission will provide assistance to programs in the area of sustainability by sponsoring additional training and technical assistance on collaborations and partnerships, leadership, and fundraising, as needed.

Policy Implementation

The intent of the policy on sustainability is to decrease program dependency on federal funds, to ensure that services provided by AmeriCorps Members will continue if federal funding is discontinued, and to make more funding available to support new programs.

Each awardee must submit a Sustainability Plan as part of the initial application for funding. This plan must provide details on community outreach and collaborations, community, new partnerships, and new resources provided to, or received from, the community. Subsequently, a Sustainability Progress Report must be submitted with each Continuation Application showing the progress made that year in the Sustainability Plan.

My AmeriCorps

Member Reporting Information

Programs need to know what is required of program/sites in terms of Member data collection in order to monitor that they have met their reporting requirements. The specific AMERICORPS NATIONAL rules as to when some of these forms must be completed are shown in the table below:

MEMBER FORM	DEADLINE
Member Information Profiles	Must be completed before enrollment can be created
Member Site Assignment in Portal	Within 30 days of enrollment
Member Enrollment Forms	Within 30 days of enrollment
Change of Term/Status Forms	Within 30 days of change
Member Exit Forms	Within 30 days of exit
Member Early Exit Form	Prior to exiting any Member before their term of service is completed

These forms are created through the Members My AmeriCorps Portal and approved by Program staff. It is important that Member forms are completed in a timely manner. Timely completion could also play a role in future grant funding decisions, especially for competitively awarded funds.

Timesheets track hours served by Members in direct service, fundraising and training. (Note: the average of Member training hours can be no more than 20% per awardee. Member fundraising hours may be no more than 10% per person.) Timesheets need to be completed on a regular basis in order to ensure that the program/site is tracking Member hours accurately as timesheets data is aggregated into the APR, and ultimately the GPR. It is critical that timesheets be up to date prior to the submission of these reports. Make sure all timesheets are signed and dated by both the Member and supervisor. Member timesheets must be kept on file at the program provider level. Submission of Member timesheets can be requested at any time using the process determined by IDHS.

My AmeriCorps has tools to help programs monitor Member progress. These tools can identify Members who are falling behind and at risk of not being able to complete their required number of hours of service to earn an education award before the end of the program year.

Record Retention

All financial records, supporting documentation, statistical records, evaluation and performance data, Member information, and personnel records must be retained for three years after the close of an AmeriCorps grant cycle (cycles are usually three years).

If any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit, or other action involving the records has been started before the expiration of the 3-year period, the records must be retained on site until completion of the action and resolution of all issues which arise from it, or until the end of the regular 3-year period, whichever is later.

TYPE OF DOCUMENTATION	EXAMPLES
All Materials Related to the Grants Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NOFOs ■ RFPs or RFAs ■ all applications received (not just those funded) ■ all correspondence and notes from negotiations ■ score sheets ■ reviewer confidentiality/conflict of interest agreements ■ AMERICORPS NATIONAL approvals of awards
Grant Agreements and Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Grants and contracts between State Commissions and awardees ■ Grants and contracts between National Programs and sites
Program Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reports ■ Correspondence ■ Policy Statements
Monitoring Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Monitoring Reports ■ Site visit tools ■ Reports on site visits to awardees/sites
Official Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Letters on Other Matters

Program Startup

Recruitment

Required Staff Training

Member Position Descriptions

Screening and Interviewing

Background Checks

Nondiscrimination Laws

AmeriCorps Branding

Member Slots

Tutoring Requirements

Living Allowance

Prohibited Activities

Non-Duplication and Non-Displacement

Allowable Activities

Days of Service

Recruitment

Successful recruitment strategy is the foundation for a thriving AmeriCorps program. AmeriCorps programs live and die by how well they network. The individuals you select and place within the community represent your program every day; their interactions either enhance or detract from your organization's reputation.

Community Recruitment

As an AmeriCorps program, you must actively seek to recruit program Members from the community in which the project is conducted. Members of diverse races and ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, education levels, both men and women, and individuals with disabilities, unless and to the extent that the approved program design requires emphasizing the recruitment of staff and Members who share a specific characteristic or background. However, in no case may you violate the nondiscrimination and non-displacement rules governing participant selection.

National Recruitment

The AmeriCorps Recruitment and Placement System has been retired and replaced by the new **My AmeriCorps** system. All programs will be required to have their program on this system by the beginning of their program year.

Creating a Service Opportunity Listing in My AmeriCorps

What you will need to have

- An eGrants user account (for more information read the Creating an Account in eGrants resource)
- Enough details about your organization and the AmeriCorps Member position to complete the Service Opportunity Listing
- A short, two-line description or "teaser" for the Member position
- A concise program description

Process Overview

1. Gather details about your organization and Member position(s) by reviewing the Service Opportunity Listing Step-by-Step instructions below. This document mirrors the Service Opportunity Listing form in My AmeriCorps including all fields and drop-down menu options. Use this document as a worksheet to gather information. Collecting this information in advance of logging into the system ensures you have all the details needed to complete your listing the first time.

2. Draft content in advance. Review the Marketing for Recruitment resource on the AmeriCorps website for ideas and suggestions for crafting a compelling two-line teaser and program description.
 - A. The two-line teaser is limited to 200 characters. The more complete and enticing your listing is, the more applicants you will attract.
 - B. The program description is limited to 2,000 characters.
3. Enter the Service Opportunity Listing into My AmeriCorps. My AmeriCorps is the member portal for eGrants. Applicants will view and apply for Member positions through the portal.

Required Staff Training

To request access to the [Learning Management System \(Litmos\)](#) email serviceresources@cns.gov. You can also review the Getting Started Guide and other [Litmos Training Resources](#) on the Knowledge Network.

How to Access the AmeriCorps online course site:

Please use these instructions to create an account.

1. Visit this page in any web browser: <https://americorpsonlinecourses.litmos.com/self-signup/>
2. Enter the required information.
3. In the Code field, enter: **CNCS-Litmos**
4. Click “Register.”
5. You're in! You can come back at any time to explore more and take any courses that interest you by visiting the Course Library.

The AmeriCorps Litmos system will send a follow up email with LITMOS login information.

Per AMERICORPS NATIONAL compliance requirements, each awardee is required to complete two trainings annually.

- National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) e-course .
[Click here for the e-course](#)
- Key Concepts of Financial and Grants Management e-course

A certificate of completion for each course will be reviewed during your monitoring visit.

Member Position Descriptions

Service assignments must be meaningful to the AmeriCorps Member (a function of the placement and recruit matching system) and the community in which the service is performed. The goals of each position must be achievable. Members must be connected with people in the local community so ownership of the experience will be shared, ultimately assumed by the local community, and consequently, long lasting. Everyone must have true involvement (input and control) in the work. Projects must be possible within the time available (project duration, resources, terms of service, etc.).

Position descriptions should include all professional elements necessary, including expectations, qualifications, and duties to define the service assignment and the qualifications necessary to

achieve it. Typically, position descriptions are too short, non-existent, unfamiliar to the AmeriCorps Member, or filed away and never used once a project is begun. These documents should be revisited regularly to encourage Member feedback, measure success, and find areas which need enhancement. They should be modified to reflect changing needs as they develop and are useful in evaluating Members' performance.

The position description should be able to distinguish between the Member's position and an employee position description at the organization to ensure non-displacement procedures are abided by.

Screening and Interviewing

After receiving applications, screening and placement of Members is the next most critical step an AmeriCorps supervisor or director faces. After screening out clearly unqualified applicants, it's important to involve host agencies who will work directly with new Members. This allows for a "second look" at the applications by an involved party, creates buy-in with the host agency staff, and adds another level of assessment for specific talents or skills that a director or supervisor may not be looking for during the initial screening.

Once the potential candidates are agreed on, the next step is to decide how to conduct the interviews. We generate a list of potential questions to ask each candidate, agree on which ones to use, and then commit them to writing so that each applicant is asked the same questions. This ensures all prospective Members are treated equally and fairly, allowing for an "apples to apples" comparison when evaluating multiple candidates after the interviews. It is definitely worth considering including host agency staff in the interview process; this creates buy-in from the host agency and adds another level of insight for those candidates with similar qualifications. During the interviews good notetaking is crucial, especially if you interview many candidates. Don't rely on your memory to supply the details.

Background Checks

For more details, visit: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check>

The Rule

All programs must conduct background checks on all AmeriCorps Members as well as on all employees and others who receive a salary, an education award, living allowance or stipend through a program receiving assistance under national service laws, regardless of their level of contact with a vulnerable population. This also includes individuals paid for with match.

What is "recurring access" and a "vulnerable population?"

Recurring access is defined as the ability on more than one occasion to approach, observe or communicate with an individual through physical proximity or other means. This "other means" can be communication by phone, text, or email. **All Members of AmeriCorps Illinois are considered to have recurring access.**

Vulnerable population can be anyone 17 years of age or younger or it can person aged 60 years or older with physical or mental disabilities which substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Why do we have to have background checks?

First of all, background checks are not a check for employment. It is a check to clear someone to perform service or be a part of a program that delivers service, is put in a position of trust and is in contact with vulnerable populations. This policy was put in place by the AmeriCorps Agency in 2009 **to protect both the programs and their staff and vulnerable populations being served.** The background checks ensures that individuals participating in our programs have no criminal or other history that would keep them from participation. Although this is no guarantee against criminal acts, it does reduce the likelihood and could reduce liability for the programs in the event a crime occurs.

Who must have background checks?

Individuals who are required to have background checks are referred to as being in “covered positions.” A “covered position” refers to any individual serving or employed through a National Service grant. Specifically, this means anyone, program staff or Members who receive salaries, stipends, living allowances or education awards connected to/through National Service funding. Another way to look at it is anyone with direct costs or costs associated with program match are in covered positions. When there is doubt, use the “on the budget” or “expenditure report” tests. Individual listed in the approved grant budget receiving either a stipend or salary or in other words “are on the budget” are in covered positions. The “expenditure report” test involves the EDF (reimbursement report). If the cost of the payment to an individual is included in the federal/state or matching share of the report, then it is also a covered position.

Who does not have to have background checks?

Program staff whose compensation is only claimed within indirect/fixed grant costs and community volunteers with no affiliation to the program and no financial remuneration.

What types of background checks are required?

There are four types of background checks. All AmeriCorps State programs are required to complete these checks on Members and staff in covered positions. They are:

- National Sex Offender Public Registry (NSOPR)
- Illinois and State of Residency Police Criminal History Record
- Home State Background Check
- FBI Fingerprint Background Check

Either a name or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the candidate’s State of residence on his/her application **and** in the State where the individual will serve or work must be done.

Use of the Criminal History Authorization Form

All programs are required to use the Criminal History Authorization Form. This form provides a quick reference for tracking the dates the various types of background checks were submitted and received. It is required to be part of the Member file. The form should be signed and dated by the applicant or potential Member.

**See Attachment - Criminal History Authorization Form.*

When do they have to be done?

Under no circumstances may an individual be hired or enrolled or begin service or employment without first having cleared the NSOPR component of the check. The FBI and Illinois State Police Criminal History check must be initiated before the Member begins service.

If you receive a large number of applicants for either employment or AmeriCorps positions, you need only perform checks on those who are likely to be offered a position. Use your application screening process and your interview process to bring the number of candidates down before starting the checks and/or incurring any costs. The National Sex Offender Public Registry (NSOPR) produces immediate results and therefore no one can log hours or receive a stipend before this check has been completed. Because of the time it takes to receive the results of the FBI, State Police and DCFS reports, individuals may start before the results, but they cannot serve unless they are accompanied at all times by someone who has cleared a criminal history check.

If these remedial steps are not followed, service hours and costs will be disallowed.

Program's responsibility with staff and potential Members

As the program begins the process of completing the checks, it is imperative that they verify the identity of the individual to be checked, fingerprint the individual for fingerprint-based searches, and complete authorization forms to authorize the search and to later release the information.

It is very important to explain to the individual what the process is for, how it works, and what findings would result in their not being selected to be a part of the program.

Verify Identity and Citizenship

To verify their identity, the applicant is required to produce a government –issued photo identification card. This includes Government- issued photo cards, State Driver's License; non-driver photo IDs issued by the State, federally issued photo IDs, Passports and Citizenship ID's. To verify United States Citizenship or United States National the applicant can use passports or government issued birth certificates.

If a prospective Member is not a US Citizen, they must then be a Lawful Permanent Resident Alien of the US (LPR) to be eligible. There are a number of ways they can prove they are eligible: (1) a Permanent Resident Card, INS Form I-551; (2) an Alien Registration Receipt

Card, INS Form I-551, (3) a passport indicating that the INS has approved it as temporary evidence of lawful admission for permanent residence; or (4) an I-94 indicating that the INS has approved it as temporary evidence of lawful admission for permanent residence. NOTE: A student visa does not confer eligibility to enroll in an AmeriCorps program. Just having a "Form I94 Departure Record" is not sufficient unless it is annotated to indicate the Member was a LPR.

Page Break

For more information, please consult the AmeriCorps Regulations 252nd 2.200 Subpart B.

Once enrolled, the My AmeriCorps Portal will note that the Member's citizenship has been verified. Print out that confirmation and place it in the Member's file.

Understanding of the process and findings

It is very important that the applicants understand the process of the three background checks, what each is looking for, how each search is conducted, and how their starting in the program is impacted by the completion and the findings of these checks.

Authorization

Individuals will grant authorization for each of the checks by completing and signing release/permission forms. Some of these forms come from the entities you are requesting checks from. In the absence of forms, forms need to be developed by the programs. Copies of these completed forms should be placed in the Members file for documentation of the date check was initiated. These forms must remain in the file.

What is the process for each of the four types of background checks?

National Sex Offender Public Registry

There is no formal authorization form. Programs must develop their own authorization forms to be used. There is no cost for this check and results are immediate. Go to www.nsopw.gov Print the results off for your records and place in file. Make sure the footer of the printed record has the date the results were generated on it. Remember because of the immediate results no one can start before this check has been completed.

Illinois State Police Criminal History Record

There are two ways to get the information (Fingerprint and Non-Fingerprint.) The Non-Fingerprint uses Alpha –Numeric Subject Identifiers (Name, Sex, Race and Date of Birth.) The Fingerprint method is more accurate since individuals may have other names but only one set of fingerprints. All requests for information from the Illinois State Police must be submitted on a Conviction Information Request Forms. The Non-Fingerprint Request Form is ISP6-405B and the Fingerprint Request Form is ISP6-404B. Forms may be ordered by calling the Bureau of Identification at (815) 740-5160 or by going to www.isp.state.il.us/crimhistory/uciaformreq.cfm.

Non-Fingerprint Reports are approximately \$16, and Fingerprint Reports are \$20.

Home State Background Check

If an applicant is or has been a resident of another state it may be necessary to have a criminal background check run on them from that state. This is determined by checking the Member's permanent address on their Application Form. This will also allow you to start the check prior to the Members start date. You must initiate a background check with that home state unless they are full time college students residing at an Illinois campus.

FBI Fingerprint Background Check

It is also referred to as the Criminal History Record or "Rap Sheet." It utilizes Fingerprint match to gain information from all states and US territories. This information includes name of agency with matching fingerprints, date of arrest, arrest charge and disposition of the arrest or in the case of no matches a report of "No Record."

Individuals being checked must submit request for information using Form OMB 1110-0052 1-783 (Rev.5-5-2011) Applicant Information Form. Completed and signed application must be accompanied a completed fingerprint card. These completed fingerprint card includes, Name, Date of Birth, Descriptive Data (Gender, Race), all 10 rolled fingerprint impressions, plain impressions including thumb of both hands and the card must not be older than 18 months.

In Illinois, electronic responses from the FBI come through the Illinois State Police. Once received, ISP forwards notification to the program. Reports are encrypted.

There is a cost of approximately \$25 per copy for the report.

Use of Third-Party Vendors

Third Party Vendors are private businesses that have contracted with the FBI and/ or obtained certification with State Criminal Data Base Agencies across the country. These businesses are channeling agencies that can conduct fingerprinting, prepare the necessary paperwork for submission, and receive results electronically. They can also conduct non-Fingerprint inquiries. There is a fee for their service in addition to the costs associated with the type of check being conducted. Fees vary by business and by services performed.

For the names of vendors in your area contact the Illinois State Police, Bureau of Identification at (815) 740-5160.

Electronic Responses

Electronic Responses are a quicker way for you to get results. Electronic Responses avoid problems with the mail or items getting lost, forgotten, or misplaced when sent directly to the individual.

Electronic Responses from the FBI and States are federally mandated to be encrypted and

require software to decrypt the reports. This software and instructions for downloading and using are available either through the Illinois State Police or the third-party vendor.

Who pays for the checks?

The costs associated for conducting checks are the burden of the program. However, these costs are an allowable operating cost and should be included in the budget. These costs would include, fingerprinting fees, State and FBI fees, third party fees, mailing costs and notary costs.

Participant's opportunity to review findings

It is important that the program provide an opportunity to review the findings with the individual regardless of the findings including no findings. Individuals should be given copies of all findings. If there is a finding that would/could prohibit them from serving this should be addressed and the next steps in the process discussed. All programs must have a decision tree/memo regarding their background check policy that should be utilized in the event of a finding. If there is some finding the individual wishes to contest, it is their responsibility to pursue this.

Documenting Your Checks

You are required to retain the results .Your records must be stored and secured in the Member's file or the applicant's file. Secured means in a locked area. Electronic records must be printed off and placed in the files. Copies of requests for checks should also be kept in the Member file with date requested. The decision tree/memo that details any findings and what the determination related to those findings was must also be in the file. Access to the Member files should be permitted only to individuals who have official need to review the information. Member files and their contents are to be retained for seven years.

Reading the Results

In the majority of instances, checks results will come back as no matches, no records, or no priors. These and similar type of responses require no additional action. In instances where the check of the individual did not clear or there are "hits" with some type of record or offense noted but not fully disclosed, you will need to take more action. Programs must determine if the offense is one that disqualifies the individual under AMERICORPS NATIONAL regulations or is it another offense your program considers to be disqualifying. Any hits found on any background checks require a Decision tree/memo document to be placed in the Member file even if the results do not disqualify them from service.

Results that prohibit individuals from serving and how to handle

Anyone listed or required to be listed on a sex offender registry is ineligible to serve. Also, anyone convicted of murder is ineligible. Additionally, any offense that the program deems to be in violation of their criminal history check policies will mean ineligibility for the individual. Policies must be fair to the individual while at the same time protecting the populations served and guarding the program and host sites from liability.

Applicant refusal or falsifying information

Anyone who refuses to grant permission or undergo any of the checks disqualifies themselves from service. Anyone who gives or makes a false statement in connection with the Criminal Background History check will also be disqualified from service. Programs should clearly explain to individuals the consequences of not consenting to the checks and of providing false or misleading information.

What happens if we have to de-select a Member based on criminal history?

The slot refill policy currently in place applies.

Risks for noncompliance

Programs can simply be in compliance by assuring that things happen in a timely fashion and that proper records are maintained. Failure to do this will result in the program being out of compliance. Being out of compliance has financial consequences. Service hours, wages, match and living allowances costs may be disallowed. Additionally, corrective action has to be implemented to correct the problem. Corrective action is time consuming and keeps you away from performing the day-to-day tasks associated with your program. Taking corrective action after the fact will not recoup disallowed costs. Background checks are not an area to take short cuts or any risks.

Good Risk Management Practices

Perform NSOPR checks when applications are reviewed.

Initiate State Criminal and FBI Checks before the Member is enrolled in eGrants and have documentation to back this up.

Complete Citizenship and SSN verification before Member is enrolled.

Keep records of all checks and requests for checks in the Members file and those for staff in a separate file. Make sure the files are kept confidential and secure.

If an individual is ok after the NSOPR check, they must be accompanied by an individual who has cleared all the checks for any service hours performed for vulnerable populations while waiting on the results of both the FBI and State check(s). The person who performed the accompaniment must incrementally sign off attesting to the accuracy of the documentation on the Member's timesheet(s).

Key points to remember when performing National Service Criminal History Checks

- Verify the identity of the individual against a government issued photo.
- Obtain written authorization from the individual to perform the checks BEFORE the

checks are initiated.

- Document understanding that selection is subject to the checks.
- Determine the types of checks required and from where they are to be obtained and associated fees.
- Complete the NSOPR check before service/work begins.
- Initiate State and FBI Criminal Checks before the Member is enrolled into eGrants.
- Once results are available provide opportunity for review of the findings.
- Decision tree/memo is completed for any Member who has any hits on their background checks, even if the hits do not disqualify them from service.
- Keep the information secure and confidential.
- Accompany all Members with pending checks and ensure the accompaniment is with a Staff or other Member who has cleared all checks and documented on their timesheet
- Document that the checks were part of the selection process by having requests for checks and results in the Member file.

Questions? Contact your Serve Illinois Program Officer.

Nondiscrimination Laws

All programs must comply with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and Regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to, the following law and regulations and all the subsequent amendments thereto:

1. The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5)
2. Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10)
3. The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000a-2000h-6) (as amended)
4. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794)
5. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C 12101 et seq.)
6. Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 (Equal Employment Opportunity)

For further reference, please visit www.ilga.gov for State Laws or <http://uscode.house.gov/search/criteria.shtml> for Federal (USC) Laws.

AmeriCorps Branding

Service Gear

Grant funds may be used to pay for a standard Service Gear package (AmeriCorps T-shirt, sweatshirt, hat, pin, decals, and buttons) for Members. The Commission urges programs to provide this package to Members. If the standard Service Gear package is not purchased, Programs must provide Members with a comparable package.

Members must wear service gear while providing direct service. You should direct Members to

wear their service gear at officially designated AmeriCorps and Commission events such as National Days of Service, National AmeriCorps Week activities, and National Service Recognition Day (Opening Day) and the National Service Summit. Programs may allow Members to wear their service gear at other times consistent with AmeriCorps Agency Guidelines. In addition, Member service sites should also display the AmeriCorps logo at all times.

All Member service gear purchased with federal funds is required to include the AmeriCorps logo. National Service Gear provides an array of Member service gear. <http://www.nationalservicegear.org>

Here is a guideline for communication resources, including logos, image assets, videos, brand guidelines, and more to help promote service: <https://americorps.gov/newsroom/communication-resources>

Material Requests

Grant funds may be used to purchase informational material (brochures, application packets, posters, publications, etc.). On occasion, select items are free of charge.

Items can be ordered online at <http://www.nationalservicegear.org>.

Member Slots

The allowable slot types and associated FTEs or MSYs are listed in the table below.

Service Term	Service Hours	FTEs or MSYs
Full Time (FT)	1700	1
Reduced Full Time (RFT)	1200	0.70000000
Half Time (HT)	900	.5
Reduced Half Time (RHT)	675	0.3809524
Quarter Time (QT)	450	0.26455027
Minimum Time (MT)	300	0.21164022
Abbreviated time	100	

Corrections

Please contact your Program Officer for slot corrections.

Slot Conversions

BVCS may approve occasional changes of currently enrolled Members to lesser-term slots. The program must submit a written request to the Commission for a slot conversion. BVCS and the program must take into account the impact on the program quality. The AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service (AMERICORPS NATIONAL) will not cover health care or childcare costs for less than full-time Members.

Programs may not request a transfer of currently enrolled Members to a lesser-term status simply to provide a pro-rated education award if the Member would otherwise be released for cause. It

is also not allowed to request to convert a slot to a lesser-term slot at the end of a Member's term of service in order to award a pro-rated education award when the Member has not completed the hours required by their original term. Slot conversion requests will not be considered if submitted three months before the program end date. Any slot conversion request made less than three months before the program end date, requires submission by the authorized signatory on the IDHS contract with the program provider in question. No slot conversion, no matter when it was submitted is guaranteed.

Changing less than full-time Members to a greater slot type is discouraged because it is very difficult to manage, unless done very early in the Member's term of service. BCVS may approve such changes only in extenuating circumstances as long as the program's current budget can accommodate such changes. The program must request the slot conversion in writing. Keep in mind that a Member's minimum 1700 hours must be completed within 12 months of the Member's original start date.

**See Attachment - Slot Conversion Form*

Unfilled Slot Conversions

Programs must request an unfilled slot conversion request in writing to the Commission. For example, one full-time position can be converted to up to three quarter-time positions. All conversions must be Trust neutral, are subject to availability of funds in the Trust, and must comply with all assumptions on which Trust prudence and continued solvency are predicated. The total number of MSYs and education award amounts in the grant may not increase as a result of the slot conversion.

For example: 1 full-time Member position (1 MSY) may be converted into 2 half-time slots (2 x 0.5 Members = 1 MSY) or 1 full-time Member position may not be converted into 4 quarter-time positions as the education awards would total more than the original (4 X 0.26455027); in this example, the maximum number of allowable quarter-time positions would be 3.

Awardees may also combine and convert less than full-time positions to full-time positions as long as such changes do not increase the total MSYs, or total education award amounts awarded in the grant.

Refill Slots

Eligible AmeriCorps State and National programs that have fully enrolled their awarded Member slots are allowed to replace any Member who terminates service before completing 30 percent of his/her term (effective May 17, 2007) provided that the Member who terminates is not eligible for and does not receive a pro-rated education award. Programs may not refill the same slot more than once.

As a fail-safe mechanism to ensure that the AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service (AMERICORPS NATIONAL) resources is available in the national service trust to finance any Member's education award, AMERICORPS NATIONAL will suspend refilling if either: the total AmeriCorps enrollment reaches 97 percent of awarded slots, or the number of refills reaches five percent of awarded slots.

A Member who is put into a refill slot must complete all hours as if the slot were new regardless

of how many hours the previous Member served. They will receive a normal stipend and education award amount.

Tutoring Requirements

A tutor is defined as someone whose primary goal is to increase academic achievement in reading or other core subjects through planned, consistent, one-to-one, or small-group sessions and activities that build on the academic strengths of students in kindergarten through 12th grade and target their academic needs. A tutor does not include someone engaged in other academic support activities, such as mentoring and after-school program support, whose primary goal is something other than increasing academic achievement. For example, providing a safe place for children is not tutoring, even if some of the program activities focus on homework help.

§ 2522.940 What are the requirements for a program in which AmeriCorps Members serve as tutors?

A program in which Members engage in tutoring for children must:

- (a) Articulate appropriate criteria for selecting and qualifying tutors, including the requirements in §2522.910 of this subpart.
- (b) Identify the strategies or tools it will use to assess student progress and measure student outcomes;
- (c) Certify that the tutoring curriculum and pre-service and in-service training content are high-quality and research based, consistent with the instructional program of the local educational agency or with State academic content standards;
- (d) Include appropriate Member supervision by individuals with expertise in tutoring;
- (e) Provide specialized high-quality and research-based, Member pre-service and in-service training consistent with the activities the Member will perform;
- (f) Curriculum must be consistent with both state academic standards and the instruction program of the local educational agency.
- (g) Certify that Members serving as tutors possess a minimum of a high school diploma.

Serve America tutor

§ 2522.920 Are there any exceptions to the qualifications requirements?

The qualifications requirements in §2522.910 of this subpart do not apply to a Member who is a K–12 student tutoring younger children in the school or after school as part of a structured, school-managed cross-grade tutoring program.

Living Allowance

Full-time Members, unless in a EAP or Professional Corps program must receive a living allowance/stipend at the minimum amount for the current grant year.

A living allowance is *not* required for less than full-time Members. If you choose to provide less than full-time Members with a living allowance, you may use the following chart as a guide. Three Quarter-time 1,200 n/a \$23,103 Half-time 900 n/a \$16,502 Reduced Half-time 675 n/a \$12,542 Quarter-time 450 n/a \$8,581 Minimum-time 300 n/a \$6,931 Abbreviated-time 100 n/a \$1,980

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Total Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full Time	1700	\$16,502	\$33,004
Reduced Full Time	1200	N/A	\$23,103
Half Time	900	N/A	\$16,502
Reduced Half Time	675	N/A	\$12,542
Quarter Time	450	N/A	\$8,581
Minimum Time	300	N/A	\$6,931
Abbreviated time	100	N/A	\$1,980

Programs occasionally request the ability to deduct amounts from living allowances for absences and other purposes. Programs may make deductions to the *non-federal portion* of living allowances or other payments made to AmeriCorps Members. Programs **may not deduct any federal** portion of the living allowance paid by AmeriCorps Agency funds.

Before making any deductions, programs are advised to consider implications related to the treatment of employment laws. Further, programs making deductions in this fashion, it may be required to increase their matching funds. Please contact your Program Officer for more information.

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

Amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

The amount of the AmeriCorps Education Award depends on the length of a Member's term of service. The current amount of the Education Award for each term of service is as follows:

Payments made from AmeriCorps Education Awards are considered taxable income in the year that the AmeriCorps Agency makes the payment to the school or loan holder. A Member serving in a full-time term of service is required to complete service within 12 months.

Learn more about the Education Award amount, eligibility, limitations, and tax implications here: <https://americorps.gov/members-volunteers/segal-ameri-corps-education-award/find-out-more>

Eligibility

Members are eligible for a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award if they successfully complete their term of service in accordance with the Member service agreement with one of the following approved AmeriCorps programs:

AmeriCorps*State and National
AmeriCorps*VISTA
AmeriCorps*NCCC

As the Member uses the AmeriCorps Education Award, they must have received a high school diploma, or the equivalent of such diploma.

Award Limitations

Currently, the maximum numbers of terms that you can serve in each AmeriCorps program are:

- four for AmeriCorps State and National
- two for VISTAs
- two for NCCC

Full-time, half-time, reduced half-time, quarter time, and minimum time terms of service each count as one term of service.

- Generally, if you are released for cause before completing your term of service and do

not receive an education award, that term of service counts as one of your terms.

- The Trust does not make payments to anyone other than qualified schools and loan holders. See your financial aid counselor for information on how they handle disbursements and reimbursements.
- If you withdraw from the school at which you have used the education award, the school may be required to refund the Trust. If any refund is owed, it is credited to your education award "account," and is subject to the award's original expiration date (seven years from the date the award was earned). For general information on how withdrawing from school may affect your student financial aid, ask your financial aid counselor, or refer to the U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Handbook.
- Under certain circumstances, you can use the education award to study outside the U.S. Contact the **National Service Hotline** at 1-800-942-2677 for further information.
- You have seven years to use the education award from the date of your completion of service. You can divide up your award and use portions of it at different times, as long as it is for authorized expenditures within the specified time period. You could, for example, apply a portion of it to existing qualified student loans, and save the remainder to pay for authorized college costs a few years down the road.

Transfer of the Education Award

The Serve America Act allows for the transfer of AmeriCorps State and National and Silver Service education awards under certain conditions. Basically, the person who earned the award has to have been at least 55 years old **when they began the term of service** and the person to whom the award is transferred has to be the transferring individual's child, grandchild, or foster child.

To transfer an award, an individual must:

- have earned an education award in an AmeriCorps State and National or a Silver Scholar term of service;
- have been at least 55 year of age before beginning the term of service for which the award is attached;
- have begun this term of service on or after October 1, 2009;
- transfer the award before the original expiration date;

- designate all or a portion of the unused award for the transfer; and
- complete the on-line forms authorizing the transfer, which includes providing information and certifying eligibility to make the transfer.

Taxes

Remember, the IRS has determined that payments made from an education award are considered to be included in a Member's taxable income in the year the payment is made to the school or loan holder. Interest payments are also considered taxable. This increase in a Member's income could affect their tax liability for that year. Members should be made aware of this.

Frequently Asked Questions

Understanding and learning how to use and transfer Education awards can be very challenging as every award winners situation and intended use can be different and unique. The AmeriCorps Agency has developed a comprehensive FAQ to provide direction and clarification on Term Limitations, Award Amounts and Values, Transfers, Extensions, Allowable Use and Using My AmeriCorps Portal to access Awards. Go to:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/alumni/segal-ameri-corps-education-award/education-award-faqs>

Colleges and Universities that Provide Scholarships and Resources to AmeriCorps Alumni

Colleges and Universities across the country actively recruit talented AmeriCorps alumni for their reputation and perseverance, drive and proven active citizenship. Because of these qualities in AmeriCorps Alumni, many of these institutions seek Alumni and offer them a variety of incentives such as service scholarships or matching tuition funding to the amount of their Segal AmeriCorps Education Award. Currently there are 112 colleges and universities that match the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award for their students. The complete list may be found by going to <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/segal-ameri-corps-education-award/matching-institutions>.

For more details relating to the Education Award Amount, Eligibility, and Limitations, please go to <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/segal-ameri-corps-education-award>.

Prohibited Activities

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or AMERICORPS NATIONAL, staff and members may not engage in the following activities (see 45 CFR § 2520.65):

1. Attempting to influence legislation;
2. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
3. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
4. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
5. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
6. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for

- or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
7. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
 8. Providing a direct benefit to—
 - a. A business organized for profit;
 - b. A labor union;
 - c. A partisan political organization;
 - d. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
 - e. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph C. 7. above, unless AMERICORPS NATIONAL assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
 9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using AMERICORPS NATIONAL funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
 10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
 11. Such other activities as AMERICORPS NATIONAL may prohibit.

AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-AMERICORPS NATIONAL funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

Non-Duplication and Non-Displacement

Non-duplication:

Serve Illinois/AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless non-displacement requirements are met, Serve Illinois/AmeriCorps assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.

Non-Displacement:

- a. An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps Agency assistance.
- b. An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program

- receiving AmeriCorps Agency assistance.
- c. A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
 - d. A participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps Agency assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
 - e. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that –
 - i. Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
 - ii. Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
 - f. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any –
 - i. Presently employed worker;
 - ii. Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
 - iii. Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
 - iv. Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
 - v. Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

Allowable Activities

After reading the list of prohibited activities there may still be questions about what kind of service work can be credited to the Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards hours.

The most important piece of information to relay to the Members is that at least 80% of their time must be spent doing direct service and the other 20% can be credited to education and/or training that they receive that relates to their work or to AmeriCorps. No more than 20 percent of the aggregate of all AmeriCorps Member service hours in your program, as reflected in the Member enrollments in the National Service Trust, may be spent in education and training activities.

Direct service is work that addresses human need, the environment, public safety, and/or education in one form or another. It is working directly with people to make change or doing work that is involved in making that direct change. It can be outreach, case management, training, teaching, tutoring, mediating, cleaning, counseling, recruiting volunteers, catching up on paperwork related to clients, preparing for class, coaching, listening, cooking, serving, providing health care, food, clothing, etc. Direct service hours should constitute 80% or more of an AmeriCorps Member's total hours served. The remainder will be *indirect* service hours.

Indirect service hours, or education and training, hours are only applicable when they reflect the AmeriCorps service that the Member credits to the education award he or she will receive. Any on-the-job training that refers to direct service would be part of this category. All orientations, including the AmeriCorps orientation, would be included, as well as any state or regional trainings, seminars, or workshops pertaining to issues related to direct service. Examples would be conflict resolution seminars, teacher development days, team-building exercises, or a class on

training techniques. Only 20% of all Member's credited service hours can be dedicated to education and training, even if more hours have been spent in this area.

Members may raise funds directly in support of service activities that meet local, environmental, educational, public safety, homeland security, or other human needs. This fundraising should not exceed 10% of their service hours. Examples of fundraising activities that Members may perform include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers tutor children to read;
- b. Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers;
- c. Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals;
- d. Securing financial resources from the community to assist a faith-based organization in launching or expanding a program that provides social services to the Members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the Members of the faith-based organization; or
- e. Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current Members.

All AmeriCorps service activities will take place within the State of Illinois or Iowa only.

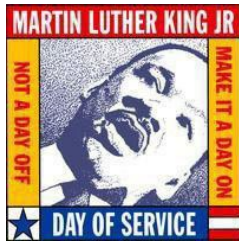
All Member questions should be directed to program directors.

National Days of Service – Two required for PY2022-2023

Service celebration and awareness across the nation and provide opportunity to bring visibility. There are various National Days of Service celebrated each year. They are part of a National and recognition to programs. They also provide opportunity to engage Members and volunteers in unique and creative service projects in the community. Lastly, they also provide a great opportunity to promote programs and volunteerism and recruit volunteers and Members. Guidance for participation in the individual days is provided by AmeriCorps and/or the Serve Illinois Commission or the sponsor of the celebration.

Required Participation in National Days of Service in Illinois

The Serve Illinois Commission requires programs to participate in the number of national services days determined by the commission annually. The Commission provides guidance and coordination for these Days of Service. The following are the Service Days under our purview:



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (REQUIRED)

“A day ON...not a day off”, occurs on the day of observance of the federal holiday honoring Dr. King’s birth each year. AmeriCorps is responsible for promoting this day as a day of service to honor the life and teachings of Martin Luther King, Jr. This day is held on the federal holiday during the month of January each year as a required national day of service. For 2022, this date will be Monday, January 17, 2022. Go to <http://mlkday.gov/> for more information.

You can also provide service for an additional Day of Service from the following list:



Veterans Week of Service– Serving Those Who Served

Serving Those Who Served is a day of service created to thank service men and women, our veterans, and their families. During the week surrounding November 11, people all over the great state of Illinois will spend the day engaged in volunteer service projects focused on benefiting our heroes! This is not a national recognized day of service, but one that the Serve Illinois Commission required in partnership with the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs. **For 2022, the week will be defined as November 7-12, 2022.**



9/11 Day of Service

September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance is the culmination of efforts, originally launched in 2002 that promotes community service on 9/11 as an annual and forward-looking tribute to the 9/11 victims, survivors, and those who rose up in service in response to the attacks. Go to <https://www.911day.org/> for more information regarding events.



Global Youth Service Day- Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) is an annual

celebration of young volunteers around the world. It is designed to encourage youth to participate in community service and service-learning and to honor those who have contributed to their communities through voluntary commitment. GYSD is usually observed on a weekend in April, beginning on Friday and ending on Sunday.



Memorial Day is the time when we honor those who have died in the nation's wars. It originated during the [American Civil War](#) when citizens placed flowers on the graves of those who had been killed in battle. A large observance, primarily involving African Americans, took place in May 1865 in [Charleston, South Carolina](#). [Columbus, Mississippi](#), held a formal observance of the dead in 1866.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Serve Illinois requires all programs to register the events they will be holding associated with each day of service, as well as report actual numbers based on those events. Registration and reporting due dates, as well as detailed instructions for each will be communicated by Serve Illinois staff in advance of the event. Lack of participation and reporting is noted for performance metrics purposes and determination of future funding.

Required Member Recognition Event



National AmeriCorps Week: March 7 – 13, 2023

This week provides the perfect opportunity for [AmeriCorps](#) Members, alums, awardees, program partners, and friends to shine a spotlight on the work done by Members—and to motivate more Americans to serve their communities. Many events are scheduled across the country. Individuals and organizations with a special interest in AmeriCorps—especially, Members, programs, and alums—are encouraged to use their creativity to mark the week in any way they see fit. The choice is up to you BUT recognition must be a part of it!

Actual dates each year are determined by AmeriCorps but are typically in March. This is a requirement. For more information, visit <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/current-members/ameri-corps-week/>

Serve Illinois requires all programs to register the events they will be holding associated with this day of service, as well as report actual numbers based on those events. Registration and reporting due dates, as well as detailed instructions for each will be communicated by Serve Illinois staff in advance of event dates. Lack of participation and reporting is noted for performance metrics purposes and determination of future funding.

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Program Monitoring

- **Purpose of Program Monitoring**
- **Monitoring Visits**
- **Preparation**
- **High-Risk Programs**
- **High-Risk Site Visits**
- **Desk-Based Monitoring**
- **Member File Recruitment/Retention
Program Close-Out**
- **Program Evaluation**

Purpose of Program Monitoring

As stewards of public funding, the Serve Illinois Commission needs to ensure the programs they fund are aware of their contractual requirements and are in compliance with all of the rules, regulations, and provisions governing AmeriCorps funds. To accomplish this, the Commission Program Officer must create adequate systems for monitoring programs.

First year programs will receive a site visit by their Program Officer during to the start of their first grant cycle. In addition, first year programs will be considered high risk and will also have a monitoring review scheduled during their first year.

Programs with staff changes, i.e., Program Director, will also be considered high risk and will have a monitoring review scheduled during the first year with the new staff.

Other factors that may determine if your program is at high risk, include, but are not limited to, late reporting, not participating in mandatory calls, trainings, and serious issues that arise during the Program Year, etc.

This approach helps to ensure high quality AmeriCorps programs are implemented while maximizing staff time and meeting the recommendations of the Inspector General in regards to program monitoring.

Monitoring Visits

Based on a state or organization's risk-based monitoring strategy, a programmatic site visit may be made to every awardee or site one time per grant cycle, one time per year, or more often as may be appropriate. It is the goal of the Commission to complete monitoring visits to each program every year; however, this depends on staffing levels.

In most cases, on-site monitoring visits will be scheduled at least 30 days in advance. Your Program Officer will contact you to schedule the monitoring visit for your program.

Preparation

To prepare properly for an on-site monitoring visit, your program staff should:

- Make certain appropriate staff will be available.
- Send all documents electronically ahead of time per the instructions you will receive.
- Understand that Program Directors are not included in the Member interviews.
- Review the Documentation request provided by your Program Officer and be prepared to send the requested documentation electronically.
- Make certain all required forms are in the Member files and in the order listed on the Member File Checklist.
- Verify that Member time sheets are up to date and signed/dated by the Member and their

immediate supervisor (from their host site).

Typical on-site activities during the Monitoring Review include but not limited to the following:

1. Discussion with Program staff;
2. Member File documentation compliance check;
3. Financial compliance check;
4. Policy & Procedures compliance check;
5. Host site visit; and
6. Member interviews.

ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED
Discussion	Program Director & Staff
Member File Compliance Check	Program Director and/or Staff
Financial Compliance Check	Program Director & CFO
Policy & Procedures Compliance Check	Program Director
Host-Site Visit	Program Director & AmeriCorps Members
Member Interviews	AmeriCorps Members

The purpose of an on-site monitoring visit is to assess the program’s compliance with federal regulations and to help the program improve systems to pass an OIG audit. Member files, program policies and fiscal records will be reviewed during the visit. The Serve Illinois AmeriCorps Program Review Instrument will be used to assess program compliance.

On-Site visits by program staff can have many purposes, some of the most important are summarized in the table below:

LEARNING	Finding out about AmeriCorps awardees’/sites’ service activities and community partnerships.
PUBLICITY	Hearing success stories.
COMPLIANCE	Assuring that all federal, state, local, contractual, and organization-specific regulations, policies, and provisions are being followed.
MONITORING PROGRESS	Comparing actual outputs and outcomes to the performance measures outlined in an awardee/site contract.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	To improve overall quality of the program.
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During the on-site monitoring visit, your Program Officer will use the following modules of the Serve Illinois AmeriCorps Program Review Instrument:

Module A: Reporting and Communication Compliance and Early Issue Detection

Portions of this Module will be completed by your Program Officer prior to the monitoring visit using information provided in eGrants. Results will be reviewed with the program and important issues, or concerns will be discussed. Programs that are not performing in this area must show improvement and demonstrate a commitment to improving. Any concerns in this area will be addressed in the site visit feedback letter and a corrective action plan to improve future performance will be required.

Module B: Financial Compliance

The majority of this module will be completed with the assistance of the program's fiscal staff, but some questions will most likely be answered by program staff. Programs should have copies of their expenditure forms and the Federal Financial Reports submitted via EGrAMS available for review. A copy of the program's final approved budget should also be available. In general, a program must have all required documentation for each item on the list.

Module C: Policies and Procedures Compliance

All programs must be in compliance with all of the policies and procedures listed in Module C. Documentation and/or proof of compliance is necessary in case of an audit. Programs must have all documentation listed for this compliance check readily accessible to your Program Officer during the monitoring review.

Module D: Member Documentation Compliance

Your Program Officer is required to review ten percent (10%) or ten (10) Member Files, whichever is greater. If your program has 40 Members, 10 Member Files are required to be reviewed. If your program has 300 Members, 30 Member Files are required to be reviewed.

Member files are reviewed to determine if required documentation is being kept by the program. Proof of compliance is necessary in case of an audit. Your Program Officer will randomly select the Member files to be reviewed. All Member files reviewed must contain the required documentation and be placed in order in the Member file as listed on the MODULE D: Member Documentation Compliance form. In addition, each Member file must have the Member File Coversheet along with the completed documents attached to it.

Module D2: Staff or Site Supervisor Compliance

Your Program Officer is required to review all Staff listed under Section 1 of the application. Staff files reviewed must contain the required documentation and be placed in order in the Staff file as listed in MODULE D2.

Module E: Host Site Visit

You and the monitoring team will visit one or more sites where Members are serving.

Module F: Member Interviews

The monitoring team will interview a group of Members during the visit. Program staff will not be involved in this interview, and responses will be kept confidential. A summary of the discussion will be made available with the rest of the monitoring report.

**See Attachments –*

Program Review Instrument – Monitoring Tool

Member Service Agreement (MSA)

Member File Coversheet

Review Outcome

An AmeriCorps Program Review will be sent to the Program Director and/or designee by your Program Officer which may request additional documents. Programs will have 10 working days to respond with the requested documentation showing full compliance. Once the review is completed, the Program Officer will notify the Program Director and/or designee in writing that the monitoring review has been completed and all issues have been resolved. Copies of all completed forms and correspondence sent to the SIC Program Officer will be kept in the program file

Programs that are not performing must show improvement and demonstrate a commitment to improving. Any concerns in this area will be addressed in the Program Review and a corrective action plan to improve future performance will be required.

High Risk Programs

Programs designated as high risk or who request a site visit to focus on specific issues may receive additional visits.

High risk factors may include, but are not limited to:

- A first-year program
- A change in program director or other key staff
- Legitimate Member complaints to the Commission
- Poor past performance by the program (based on progress reports and/or previous site visits)
- Concerns regarding prohibited activities
- Compliance with reporting deadlines and Financial Compliance Issues

These visits will be conducted on an on-going basis throughout the program year. High Risk on-site visits may not be scheduled 30 days in advance. These visits will occur when issues are brought to the attention of the Program Officer. Commission staff will determine the need for a High-risk on-site visit.

High Risk Site Visits

High risk on-site visits are conducted to provide targeted assistance on specific issues or concerns.

First year programs will receive an on-site visit by their Program Officer and/or SIC Staff prior to the start of their first grant cycle. In addition, first year programs will be considered high risk and will also have a monitoring review scheduled during their first year.

Programs with key staff changes will also be considered high risk and will have an on-site monitoring review scheduled during the first year with the new staff.

Other factors that may determine if your program is at high risk, include, but are not limited to, late reporting, not participating in mandatory calls, trainings, serious issues that arise during the program year, etc.

For program-related visits being conducted because of high risk factors, the agenda will be determined by the reason for the visit. For example, the agenda for a visit that is being held because of a change in program director will focus on expectations of programs, AmeriCorps regulations and relationship building. The agenda for a visit that is being conducted because of concerns regarding prohibited activities will focus on meeting with Members, site supervisors, and program staff to assess whether prohibited activities were taking place and to ensure that prohibited activities do not occur in the future.

A Program Review will be completed for each High-Risk On-Site Visit.

Desk-Based Monitoring

While an on-site monitoring visit can provide a valuable, direct view of a program's operations, it is a resource-intensive form of monitoring. Desk-based monitoring is more sparing of scarce resources of staff time and money and, properly used, can forestall the need for more intensive intervention later on to resolve awardee problems.

Throughout the year, your Program Officer manages each program in their portfolios. Areas that require your Program Officers attention include:

- Reviewing and approving performance measures
- Reviewing timeliness of reporting
- Reviewing program participation in required calls, trainings, service days & Recognition Day

- Reviewing each program/site's progress on Member recruitment and retention
- Tracking Member progress toward completing service hours
- Conducting Member enrollment queries
- Review progress towards performance measures

Your Program Officer will also utilize PPRS AND EDFS as effective management and monitoring tools.

Member File

The Member File Cover Sheet and Checklist are **required** forms that are to be used in all Member files by all programs. These mandatory forms must be placed at the top or the beginning of the Member file. These forms not only serve as a checklist for all the items that are required to be in the Member file, but it also serves a tool to help you keep all the items in the proper order and sequence. It is a working sheet that will be updated and completed during the course of the Member's service and will serve as a quick reference on nearly all aspects of Member information. It is also a valuable tool to help you with retrieval of information and will be helpful to the Commission during reviews and monitoring of Member files.

**See Attachment - Member File Coversheet and Checklist*

Member Service Agreement

As stated in Chapter 3, the Member Service Agreement (MSA) is a critical part of administering AmeriCorps programs. The Member Service Agreement provides the legal basis or contract by which the terms, conditions and rules regarding participation are delineated. This contract between the program and Member is the legal document which would be used to resolve any issues between the program and a Member. Because of its importance, The Commission has developed a template for the programs to use. The template includes all the required provisions required by the AmeriCorps Agency. **Programs are required to use the Serve Illinois MSA for each Member.** You can place your logo on the MSA, but you may not alter it and it must demonstrateto be the original Serve Illinois MSA.

Programs will need to complete various parts of the Agreement to make it specific to the Member's service. Programs will also need to attach/insert the position description to the Agreement. Signed and completed Member Service Agreements are required to be in each Members file.

Member Orientation

Orientation materials should also be reviewed carefully to ensure that your program has provided Members with appropriate training for beginning their term of service. We have provided you with a SIC AmeriCorps Member Orientation (required items) Checklist. Please use this checklist to make certain all required topics are covered during your Orientation.

Recruitment/Retention

In light of the AMERICORPS NATIONAL standards for Member enrollment and retention, it is important for your Program Officer to monitor their awardees/sites closely to keep track of how they are doing in these areas. The standards are:

ENROLLMENT RATE = Total slots filled/total slots awarded.

Enrollment for programs should be 100%.

RETENTION RATE = Total Members exiting with an Education Award/total slots filled.

A target of 90% for retention or completion is desired.

AMERICORPS NATIONAL realizes that many programs not yet meeting these rates are nevertheless performing well in their individual circumstances. Also, retention may vary among effective programs depending on the target populations for those programs. However, in order to leverage limited program dollars, AMERICORPS NATIONAL expects programs to strive toward improving their rates of enrollment and retention. During the application process, programs that are not meeting these standards need to offer a rationale for why not, as appropriate.

Recruitment/Retention Rate Calculation

To calculate enrollment and retention using the data in My AmeriCorps:

1. Log into your eGrants account
2. Select S/N Reports
3. Select Report via pull down menu
4. Select Program year
5. Select format (PDF, Excel etc.)
6. Select Submit
7. You may print the report created

Program Close-Out

The AmeriCorps Agency grants are usually awarded for a three-year Project Period, consisting of three yearly budget periods. The Serve Illinois Commission is required to submit documentation of program close outs to the AmeriCorps Agency.

The following Final Close-Out reports are due to your Program Officer within 60 days after the close of your 3-year grant cycle. (Close out begins once all of your Members have completed their term of service.)

Final Project Report

The narrative should include a three-page, double-spaced summary of the qualitative accomplishments that the AmeriCorps grant has made for the duration of the grant period. Include a discussion of the impacts of any special initiatives that fall within this grant. Discuss what exists now in the communities that are served that did not exist prior to this grant. Quantitative data may be used to support the impact statements.

Equipment and Supply Inventory Form

A program completing the final year of its three-year grant cycle must submit two (2) inventory forms. One for any equipment inventory with a current fair market value of \$5,000 or more purchased with federal grant funds. The second form for unused/residual supplies inventory purchased with federal funds exceeding \$5000. Reports should be completed on the required forms. If no equipment or supplies were purchased, forms should reflect such. For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps Provisions.

IDHS Grant Close-Out

At the end of each IDHS grant period, providers will be required to complete a certain documents. Your program officer will provide you with any documents for close out that are required by IDHS.

**See Attachments -*

Closeout Equipment Inventory

Closeout Inventory of Residual Supplies

Certification of Subgrant Closeout

Program Evaluation

As articulated in the AmeriCorps regulations [45 CFR §§ 2522.700-740](#), all AmeriCorps State and National awardees that receive an average annual AmeriCorps Agency grant of \$500,000 or more must conduct an independent evaluation. An independent evaluation uses an external evaluator who has no formal or personal relationship with, or stake in the administration, management, or finances of the awardee or of the program to be evaluated.

All other AmeriCorps State and National awardees must conduct an internal evaluation. An internal evaluation is designed and conducted by qualified program staff or other stakeholders, such as board Members, partners, or volunteer affiliates.

If you are a...	You will submit an...
State formula program	Internal evaluation
State competitive program with an average annual AmeriCorps Agency grant of \$500,000 or more	Independent evaluation
State competitive program with an average annual AmeriCorps Agency grant under \$500,000	Internal evaluation

If you are recompeting for the first time, you are required to submit “a summary of your evaluation efforts or plan to date, and a copy of any evaluation that has been completed, as part of your application for funding” ([45 CFR § 2522.730](#)). If you are recompeting again, you are required to submit a completed evaluation with your application. The AmeriCorps Agency will consider the results of your evaluation “in assessing the quality and outcomes of your program” ([45 CFR § 2522.470](#)).

If you receive an average of \$500,000 or more per year from the AmeriCorps Agency, averaged over the last three years of funding you have received before you re compete, we expect you to conduct an independent evaluation by contracting with an external evaluator. The AmeriCorps regulations describe how this evaluation should provide evidence of a causal relationship between program activities and outcomes ([45 CFR § 2522.700](#)). You may consider using an experimental or quasi- experimental design or compare your results with national/state/local data. Your external evaluation method should match the size, scale, and purpose of your program.

In our ongoing effort to reduce burden on awardees, especially those with smaller grants, awardees an average annual grant under \$500,000 may submit an internal evaluation. The primary difference between the independent evaluations that awardees that receive \$500,000 or over are required to submit and the internal evaluation is who conducts the evaluation study. Your own staff and other stakeholders can serve as internal evaluators.

We encourage you to design your internal evaluation so that it will yield data most useful to you. You may opt for an impact evaluation, or you may conduct a process or management evaluation. You are not required to conduct an experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation that proves causality, which is required of awardees that receive \$500,000 or over, although you are allowed to conduct this type of study. We expect the same high quality that we expect of a larger

awardee, regardless of the type of evaluation you decide to conduct.

Unit 2: Member Management



Member Supervision and Responsibilities

Member Orientation
Member Service Agreement
Member Supervision
Member Policy and Procedure Manual
Other Required Documents
Member Status
Member Supervision
Grievance Procedure
Drug Free Workplace
Worker's Compensation
Wage Garnishment
Member Timesheets
Continual Training of Members
Illinois Disaster Corps
Military Service
Member Death or Injury
Performance Reviews

Member Orientation

A good Member Orientation lays the foundation for providing information that will be used by the Member throughout the year. At this point and time in the Service Year, Members are trying to determine their place in the program and are developing their understanding of what this year is about. They need to clearly understand their roles and responsibilities, as well as have an understanding of national service and AmeriCorps. Orientation begins this on boarding process for Members. It provides valuable information on important requirements, pieces of information they will use throughout the service year, and other useful tools knowledge, and skills they will need to conduct themselves properly and have a successful year. An organized and creative orientation program will go a long way towards setting the stage to helping all “get the job done.”

Below are the items the AmeriCorps Agency mandates to be covered in any Orientation program:

- Specific skills and knowledge needed to perform service
- Member rights and responsibilities
- Program’s Code of Conduct
- Prohibited Activities
- Drug Free Workplace
- Suspension and Termination Rules
- Grievance Procedures
- Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Non-Discrimination Activities
- Preventing Sexual Harassment Education
- Specific Safety procedures for Member safety
- Diversity Awareness
- Inclusion and Reasonable Accommodation Requests
- Member Benefits

- Background Checks
- Member Wage Garnishment
- Introduction to National Service and AmeriCorps
- My AmeriCorps Portal (Loan Forbearance, Education Award, and Interest Accrual)
- Time sheets

In order for your orientation program to be comprehensive and cover all pertinent aspects of service, the Commission strongly urges programs to include the following topics:

- National Service: The Big Picture
- History of Service in America (available in this manual)
- Roles and Responsibilities of Host Sites
- AmeriCorps Network of National and State programs, Members, and alumni
- AmeriCorps ethics and motto (Getting Things Done)
- Service in the Local Community
- Civic Reflection and Civic Responsibility (Meaning of Service)
- Understanding the objectives of the program
- Program Rules, Regulations and Benefits
- Member Handbook
- Allowed Activities (available in the manual)
- Living allowance
- Staff and Member roles
- Completing National Trust Enrollment Forms
- Eligibility of full time Members for HealthCare/Childcare

Member Service Agreement

The Member Service Agreement is a critical part of administering AmeriCorps programs. Member Service Agreement provides the legal basis or contract by which the terms, conditions

and rules regarding participation are delineated. This contract between the program and Member is the legal document which would be used to resolve any issues between the program and a Member. Because of its importance, The Commission has developed a template for the program to use. The template includes all the required provisions required by the AmeriCorps Agency. **Its use by the programs is mandatory. All blanks must be completed by program before Member reviews and signs.**

Programs will need to complete various parts of the Agreement to make it specific to the Member's service. Programs will also need to attach/insert the position description to the Agreement. A signed and completed Member Service Agreement is required to be a part of every Member file.

Member Service Agreement includes:

- Purpose of Agreement
- Minimum Qualifications
- Terms of Service
- Position Description
- Benefits; including, Living Allowance, Health Care Insurance, Child Care Allowance, Education Award, Loan Forbearance, and Interest Payments.
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Rules of Conduct; including Prohibited Activities, Code of Conduct, Civil Rights Requirements, Complaint Procedures, Rights of Beneficiaries, Non-Duplication and Non-Displacement, Drug Free Workplace, Criminal Drug Convictions, Disciplinary Action, and Suspension
- Release From Terms of Service; including, Release for Cause, and Release for Compelling Personal Circumstances
- Grievance Procedures
- Unemployment Benefits
- Edits to Member Service Agreement
- Authorization Signatures

**See Attachment - Member Service Agreement (MSA)*

Other Required Documents

Members must complete the Criminal History Authorization Form, Media Consent Form, Healthcare Enrollment Form (Full-time only), and Childcare Enrollment Form (Full-time only). Those waiving healthcare and childcare must still complete the form.

**See Attachments –*

Criminal History Authorization Form

Media Consent Form

Healthcare Enrollment Form

Childcare Enrollment Form

Member Policy and Procedure Manual

All programs must have a Member policy and Procedure manual separate from their organizational policy and procedure manual that includes all items listed on the Orientation checklist. The manual should be distributed to every Member, and it should be readily available to the Members throughout the year. The manual will be reviewed during monitoring visits for completeness and accuracy.

Member Status

Member Invitation

The process of enrolling new Members in My AmeriCorps begins with inviting a Member to join the Program in eGrants. This will begin the onboarding process and the citizenship verification.

The AmeriCorps Agency requires the program to invite the Member **prior to the first day of service**. This serves to notify the AmeriCorps Agency of the agreement.

Member Enrollment

All Member Enrollment Forms must be completed, signed, entered and approved in My AmeriCorps/eGrants **by the Member's first day of service**. The enrollment cannot be approved unless all background checks are completed/initiated. Members must create a My AmeriCorps Portal account in order to complete their enrollment. Programs may enroll Members throughout the program year without permission from the Commission as long as they can complete their hours within twelve months or by the end of the program year (*December 31 of the following year*) whichever comes first. Programs must receive approval from the Serve Illinois prior to

enrolling full-time Members after **October 31**.

To request approval for **enrolling full-time Members after October 31**, programs **must** submit a written request to their Program Officer stating:

- The number and type of position to be filled
- Expected start and end date of the Member
- How the Member will be trained
- How many hours per week the Member will need to serve to complete service.

Due to recent member enrollment issues, the Serve Illinois Commission would like to remind Illinois AmeriCorps Program Directors that AmeriCorps members cannot earn service hours or educational award benefits prior to confirmed enrollment in the eGrants system.

Any service hours worked (and benefits associated with those hours) prior to completion of the member enrollment process as outlined in the Member Enrollment Flow Chart and the confirmed enrollment in the eGrants system will be the responsibility of the Program Agency and not the responsibility of the National AmeriCorps or the Serve Illinois Commission.

The 2022-2023 AmeriCorps Program Director Manual, August 2022 states, “All Member Enrollment Forms must be completed, signed, entered and approved in My AmeriCorps/eGrants **by the Member’s first day of service.**” The National AmeriCorps website provides a detailed member enrollment flowchart at [Member Enrollment Flowchart](#). The member enrollment process is also outlined in the [Navigating the Member Enrollment Process document](#).

It is important to note that allowing members to work prior to completing the entire member enrollment process including the confirmed enrollment in eGrants puts the member at jeopardy of losing valuable AmeriCorps benefits and puts your Program in the position of being liable for the restitution of the member benefits including the education award and stipend for service hours completed.

Member Exit

All Member Exit Forms **must** be completed, signed, entered and approved in My AmeriCorps **within 30 days** of a Member exiting the program. Members must create a My AmeriCorps Portal account in order to complete their exit information and to manage their education award.

All Members must complete their term of service within one year of their start date. This completion requirement is for all Members. Members who have had their term suspended may increase their service agreement by the number of days suspended but not to exceed December 31st of the Program Year. Exiting members is a function of the program provider and not Serve Illinois staff.

Change of Status

Programs **must** have approval from the Commission prior to entering and approving a Change of Status Form in My AmeriCorps. Programs shall submit a written letter requesting approval.

Refer to the AmeriCorps Provisions for policy guidance.

Program Transfer

A Member may transfer to another AmeriCorps program if both programs in question approve of the transfer and the new program has an open slot available for the Member. The Members previously served hours transfer over to the Member. This transfer is done in eGrants. Contact your Serve Illinois Program Officer for more information. A state commission or National parent organization may grant permission to transfer a member to another AmeriCorps State and National program for compelling personal circumstances. The following procedures are required:

1. Program A must first determine that compelling personal circumstances warrant a transfer.
2. Prior to initiating a transfer, Program A must provide written confirmation to Program B that valid compelling circumstances support the transfer to Program B.
3. The member must apply to and be accepted by Program B, which must have an available slot in the incoming class (this means the program is able to provide an entire term of member support costs and an education award).
4. The member must be able to finish their term of service within twelve months of their original start date.
5. Program B must approve the transfer in writing.
6. No funds can be transferred from Program A to Program B.
7. If Program A has already conducted the mid-term evaluation, they will provide it to Program B. If Program A has not yet conducted the mid-term evaluation, Program B will conduct the mid-term evaluation with consultation with Program A.
8. The transferred member cannot be counted twice for purposes of enrollment and/or retention.
9. The slot that remains with Program A will revert to new, unfilled status regardless of the length of time the member served.

Generally, members may not transfer across different streams of service. For example, a member may not transfer from an AmeriCorps State and National program to an AmeriCorps VISTA position or to AmeriCorps NCCC.

Programs with multiple sites may transfer members to other sites for program management purposes without following the procedures listed above.

Using the Illinois AmeriCorps*State Member Early Exit Form

Programs are required to complete the Illinois AmeriCorps*State Member Early Exit Form within 30 days from the date the Member took an early exit from the program. This must be done BEFORE the Member is exited from the program. The completed form including Member

name, program name, reason for early exit, start date, exit date, total hours served, and any additional documentation must be submitted to the Serve Illinois Program Officer. The Program Officer will review and make a determination to either approve or disapprove. The program will be notified by the Program Officer of this decision. For those approved, this is simply done by returning the Illinois AmeriCorps*State Member Early Exit Form with approval granted by signature of the Program Officer. This function is completed by the program provider. Once completed, this form is required to be kept in the Member file.

**See Attachment - Early Exit Form*

Release for Compelling Personal Circumstance

Conditions attributable to the program or otherwise unforeseeable and beyond the participant's control, such as a natural disaster, a strike, relocation of a spouse, medical reasons or the nonrenewal or premature closing of a project or program, that make completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible;

Those that the AmeriCorps Agency, has for public policy reasons, determined as such, including:

- (A) Military service obligations;
- (B) Acceptance by a participant of an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work; or
- (C) Acceptance of an employment opportunity by a participant serving in a program that includes in its approved objectives the promotion of employment among its participants.

Compelling personal circumstances do not include leaving a program:

- (A) To enroll in school;
- (B) To obtain employment, other than in moving from welfare to work or in leaving a program that includes in its approved objectives the promotion of employment among its participants; or
- (C) Because of dissatisfaction with the program.

Suspension

As an alternative to releasing a participant, an AmeriCorps*State/National program may, after determining that compelling personal circumstances exist, suspend the participant's term of service for up to two years to allow the participant to complete service with the same or similar AmeriCorps program at a later time. A suspension request form must be completed and submitted to the Serve Illinois Program Officer prior to suspending the Member.

**See Attachment - Suspension Approval Form*

Release for cause

- (1) A release for cause encompasses any circumstances other than compelling personal circumstances that warrant an individual's release from completing a term of service.
- (2) AmeriCorps programs must release for cause any participant who is convicted of a felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance during a term of service.
- (3) A participant who is released for cause may not receive any portion of the AmeriCorps education award or any other payment from the National Service Trust.

- (4) An individual who is released for cause must disclose that fact in any subsequent applications to participate in an AmeriCorps program. Failure to do so disqualifies the individual for an education award, regardless of whether the individual completes a term of service.
- (5) An AmeriCorps*State/National participant released for cause may contest the program's decision by filing a grievance. Pending the resolution of a grievance procedure filed by an individual to contest a determination by a program to release the individual for cause, the individual's service is considered to be suspended. For this type of grievance, a program may not—while the grievance is pending or as part of its resolution—provide a participant with federally-funded benefits (including payments from the National Service Trust) beyond those attributable to service actually performed, without the program receiving written approval from the AmeriCorps Agency.
- (6) An individual's eligibility for a subsequent term of service in AmeriCorps will not be affected by release for cause from a prior term of service so long as the individual received a satisfactory end-of-27 term performance review as described in § 2522.220(c)(2) for the period served in the first term.
- (7) Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, a term of service from which an individual is released for cause counts as one of the terms of service described in § 2522.235 for which an individual may receive the benefits described in §§ 2522.240 through 2522.250.

Suspended service

- (1) A program must suspend the service of an individual who faces an official charge of a violent felony (e.g., rape, homicide) or sale or distribution of a controlled substance.
- (2) A program must suspend the service of an individual who is convicted of possession of a controlled substance.
- (3) An individual may not receive a living allowance or other benefits, and may not accrue service hours, during a period of suspension under this provision.

**See Attachment - Suspension Approval Form*

Reinstatement

- (1) A program may reinstate an individual whose service was suspended under paragraph (c) (1) of this section if the individual is found not guilty or if the charge is dismissed.
- (2) A program may reinstate an individual whose service was suspended under paragraph (c) (2) of this section only if the individual demonstrates the following:
 - (i) For an individual who has been convicted of a first offense of the possession of a controlled substance, the individual must have enrolled in a drug rehabilitation program;
 - (ii) For an individual who has been convicted for more than one offense of the possession of a controlled substance, the individual must have successfully completed a drug rehabilitation program.

The program must submit the original approved Suspension Form with the return section completed for approval before Member can resume service.

Release prior to serving 15 percent of a term of service

If a participant is released for reasons other than misconduct prior to completing 15 percent of a term of service, the term will not be considered one of the terms of service described in § 2522.220(b) for which an individual may receive the benefits described in § 2522.240 through § 2522.250.

Term of Service Limit

(a) *General limitation.* An individual may receive the benefits described in § 2522.240 through § 2522.250 for no more than four terms of service in an AmeriCorps State and National program, regardless of whether those terms were served on full-, part-, or reduced part-time basis.

(b) *Early release.* Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, a term of service from which an individual is released for compelling personal circumstances or for cause counts as one of the terms of service for which an individual may receive the benefits described in § 2522.240 through § 2522.250.

Maximum Number of Terms:

In blending summer, part-time, and full-time terms, you can serve a maximum:

- 4 with AmeriCorps state and national
- 2 with VISTA (you can do a third term with VISTA and elect not to receive an Education Award. See our VISTA resource for more information.)
- 2 with NCCC

If you max out the number of terms you serve with one stream of service, you can start a new term with another and receive additional awards -- as long as you have not yet reached the full value of two full-time awards. You can also serve terms (and elect not to receive an award) up to the limits shown above.

For more information, contact your Program Officer.

Note: If you make any changes to My AmeriCorps, you must add that same information to the Member file. The My AmeriCorps system and the Member files should include the same information.

Member Supervision

Programs must provide Members with adequate supervision throughout their service year. The groundwork for this supervision is laid out during Orientation training and when going through and completing the Member Service Agreement. Programs are encouraged to routinely and regularly communicate with Members and sites, not just when something happens or is needed. Regular communication provides opportunity to get to know Members and sites so that relationships are developed. Communication can happen in a number of different ways. It can be at a distance through phone or webinars. It can be in person at the site or at another location. It can be in a groups or one on one. It can be a part of training or regularly scheduled meetings. Communication is critical in getting important messages out to your Members, encouraging responsibility and expanding their opportunities for growth.

No AmeriCorps Member may directly supervise another Member or interview a potential AmeriCorps candidate. AmeriCorps Members should only be supervised by program staff or designees.

Grievance Procedure

In accordance with 45CFR 2540.230 all programs must establish and implement a process for filing and adjudicating grievances from Members, labor organizations and other interested parties. This grievance process may include dispute resolution such as mediation, facilitation, assisted negotiation and neutral evaluation.

To aid programs in developing and establishing their grievance policy and procedures, the Commission has implemented the use of a mandatory grievance procedure for Members. These grievance procedures are part of the mandatory Member Service Agreement to be used by all programs. By using this template and having the Member and program representative sign this

agreement and then having this agreement in the Member's file, the program will be compliance with the federal regulations.

In addition to the use of the template, the program must develop and establish a grievance procedure for the program that is inclusive of Members, labor organizations and other interested parties which will include more detailed specific to their program and its structure.

To ensure all AmeriCorps programs are in compliance with federal regulations regarding grievance procedures, Member files will be reviewed during monitoring site visits to ensure Members have signed a Member agree service agreement containing the grievance policy and procedures.

The Commission encourages programs to informally resolve disputes through the use of methods such as mediation or facilitation. These means of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) must be initiated within 45 days of the date of the alleged occurrence. At the initial session of the ADR proceedings, the party must be advised in writing of the right to file a grievance and right to arbitration. If the matter is resolved and a written agreement is reached, the party will agree to forego filing a grievance.

While going through the grievance procedure, be sure to make it very clear to all parties what stage they are in, what the time-line is, and what the next steps are (i.e. whether they are in mediation, grievance hearing or binding arbitration).

There are time limits that must strictly be adhered to during the grievance process. Except for a grievance that alleges fraud or criminal activity, a grievance must be made no later than one year after the date of the alleged occurrence. If a hearing is held on a grievance, it must be conducted no later than 30 calendar days after the filing of such grievance. A decision on any such filed grievance must be made no later than 60 days after the filing.

The grievant can request binding arbitration if decision is adverse to grievant or if decision is not reached within 60 calendar days. The arbitrator must be independent and selected by mutual consent of the parties involved. If the parties cannot agree on the arbitrator, AMERICORPS NATIONAL will appoint one within 15 days of receiving the request. The arbitration hearing must be held no later than 45 days after request for arbitration and no later 30 days after the arbitrator's appointment. An arbitration decision must be made within 30 days after the commencement of arbitration proceedings. The cost of arbitration must be divided evenly between the parties, unless the aggrieved party prevails. In that case the program will be responsible for paying the total cost of the proceedings including any attorney fees of the prevailing party.

In the event an aggrieved party files a grievance after participating in an informal dispute resolution process, the neutral party may not participate in the formal grievance proceeding. In addition, no communication or proceeding of the informal dispute resolution process may be referred to or introduced into evidence at a grievance or arbitration proceeding.

NOTE: Programs are **required** to contact the Commission if a Member starts a grievance procedure process. The written grievance should be sent to the Commission and any

correspondence with the Member should also be included. All grievances that allege fraud or criminal activity will be brought to the attention of the AmeriCorps Agency.

**See Attachment - Grievance Procedure Review Checklist*

Drug-Free Workplace

In accordance with the AmeriCorps Provisions, programs are required to give notice about the Drug-Free Workplace Act to Members and to conduct a drug-free awareness program. This program is a mandatory part of the orientation for Members.

In 2019, Illinois decriminalized the use and possession of certain amounts of marijuana. As this is a federal program, marijuana possession or usage while serving or wearing AmeriCorps gear is prohibited.

If a Member is arrested for or convicted of a drug offense, he or she must notify the Program Director in writing within five (5) days. Appropriate action must be taken including suspension and referral to a drug rehabilitation program, or release for cause consistent with the AmeriCorps Agency's rule on termination and suspension of service.

The conviction **must be reported to the Commission**, in writing, within ten (10) days. The Commission will then notify the AmeriCorps Agency in writing.

Worker's Compensation

Illinois law requires employers to provide workers' compensation coverage for their AmeriCorps Members. Most employers buy commercial worker's compensation insurance. Other employers obtain the state's approval to self-insure. No part of the workers' compensation insurance premium or benefit can be charged to the Member.

Wage Garnishment

Any type of garnishment of the federal portion of a Member's living allowance is not permitted due to issues of sovereign immunity. Sovereign immunity protects the property interests of the United States from suits to which it has not consented. The federal government has a continuing property interest in AmeriCorps grant funds until they are expended in accordance with the grant's terms. With respect to the living allowance, the AmeriCorps Agency has a property interest in the federal share of the Member's living allowance, until the AmeriCorps Member actually receives it, and this property interest is protected by sovereign immunity. Only Congress may waive this immunity.

Whether or not the non-federal portion of the living allowance—i.e. the funds provided as match at the program level—is subject to garnishment is a state law issue. Because the AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service is not a party to this action, and because it involves application of state law, programs should consult their own local counsel.

Member Timesheets

The Commission will conduct random reviews of Member timesheets. If problems are found during the initial review such as inconsistent calculations, unauthorized timesheets, prohibited activities, etc., it will be considered a compliance issue and may require a complete review of all Member timesheets.

The review of timesheets will include the following:

Do all timesheets include:

- Member's original signature and date
- Program original signature and date
- Original signature and date of person(s) providing accompaniment, if needed
- A secure connection for the Member to submit timesheets
- Guidelines for submitting timesheets noted on the sheet
- Member service activities listed in line with the approved objectives and are not prohibited activities
- Members on target to attain their intended number of service hours
- Tracking the service activities to ensure adherence to the 20% rule related to training
- Tracking the service activities to ensure adherence to the 10% rule related to fundraising?

The Government Paperwork Elimination Act of 1998 (GPEA) states that electronic records and related electronic signatures are not to be denied legal effect, validity, or enforceability merely because they are in electronic form. (Pub. L. 105-277, Title XVII).

AMERICORPS NATIONAL policy allows AmeriCorps State and National awardees to use electronic timekeeping systems as the system of record. It also provides minimum standards that such systems must meet.

MINIMUM STANDARD FOR ELECTRONIC TIMEKEEPING SYSTEMS:

Electronic timekeeping systems are allowed as the system of record when three conditions are met:

1. A written policy is in effect establishing the use of electronic timekeeping system as your system of record; and,
2. A secure, verifiable electronic signature system (a) identifies and authenticates a particular person as the source of the electronic signature; and (b) indicates such person's approval of the information contained in the electronic message.
3. Once appropriate electronic signatures have been applied, no changes may be made unless there is a clear, auditable record of the revision.

All current grant provisions including access restrictions, security, privacy, and retention of paper records, also apply to records maintained in an electronic timekeeping system.

The use of regular e-mail to communicate approval is not a secure, verifiable electronic signature system.

**See Attachment - Sample Member Timesheet*

Child Care Benefit Program

The AmeriCorps Child Care Benefit Program is available for qualified, active full-time AmeriCorps Members who need the benefit to serve. To qualify for this benefit the Member must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Member's household income must not exceed 75% of the state's median income for a family of the same size. In determining household income the Member's living allowance is disregarded.
- Member must not currently receive a child care subsidy from another source at the time of acceptance into the program (including a parent or guardian) which would continue to be provided while the Member serves in the program
- Member must be the parent or legal guardian of a child under the age of 13
- Child must reside with the Member

Child care benefits are paid to qualified child care providers for all or a part of the Member's child care costs during their active time of service with AmeriCorps. These payments are paid directly to child care providers and are not paid to the Member. Child care providers must meet eligibility requirements as regulated under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990.

GAP Solutions, Inc. (GAPSI) administers the AmeriCorps Child Care Benefits Program for the AmeriCorps Agency. Members must apply directly to GAPSI for the benefit. Interested and eligible Members should call (855) 886-0687 toll free for more information or visit their website at <https://www.americorpschildcare.com/>.

Health Care Coverage

Except for EAPs, Professional Corps, Partnership Challenge awards, or Members covered under a collective bargaining agreement, the recipient must provide, or make available, healthcare insurance to those Members serving a 1700-hour full-time term who are not otherwise covered by a healthcare policy at the time the Member begins his/her term of service. The recipient must also provide, or make available, healthcare insurance to Members serving a 1700-hour full-time term who lose coverage during their term of service as a result of service or through no deliberate act of their own. AMERICORPS NATIONAL will not cover healthcare costs for dependent coverage.

Less-than-full-time Members who are serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period of time (e.g. a full-time summer project) are eligible for healthcare benefits. Programs may provide health insurance to less-than full-time Members serving in a full-time capacity, but they are not required to do so. For purposes of this provision, a Member is serving in a full-time capacity when his/her regular term of service will involve performing service on a normal full-time schedule for a period of six weeks or more. A Member may be serving in a full-time capacity without regard to whether his/her agreed term of service will result in a full-time Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.

Any of the following health insurance options will satisfy the requirement for health insurance for full-time AmeriCorps Members (or less than fulltime Members serving in a full-time capacity): staying on parents' or spouse plan; insurance obtained through the Federal Health Insurance Marketplace of at least the Bronze level plan; insurance obtained through private insurance broker; Medicaid, Medicare or military benefits. AmeriCorps programs purchasing their own health insurance for Members must ensure plans are minimum essential coverage (MEC) and meet the requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

On Friday May 2, 2014 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for Members in AmeriCorps State and National programs, who are not provided health insurance options or who are provided short-term limited duration coverage or self-funded coverage not considered MEC. Members in the AmeriCorps State and National programs and their dependents in the Federally-facilitated Marketplace (FFM) are eligible to enroll in Marketplace coverage when they experience the following triggering events:

- On the date they begin their service terms; and
- On the date they lose any coverage offered through their program after their service term ends. (Source: 45 CFR § 155.420(d)(9)).

Members have 60 days from the triggering event to select a plan. Coverage effective date is prospective based on the date of plan selection.

If coverage is being provided via the Healthcare Marketplace, and thus third party payment is not an option, programs must develop a process to reimburse Members for monthly premiums. Reimbursements for health insurance premiums are considered taxable income for the Member, and programs must have a way to document such reimbursements

Loan Forbearance/ Interest Accrual

Loan Forbearance

AmeriCorps Members who are earning a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award are uniquely eligible for one type of postponement of the repayment of their qualified student loan called forbearance. During the forbearance period, interest on the principle amount of the loan continues to accrue. If a Member successfully completes their term of service and earns an Education Award, the National Service Trust will pay all or a portion of the interest that has accrued on the qualified student loans during this period. This accrued interest paid by the Trust, like the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award itself, is subject to income taxes.

AmeriCorps Members enrolled in an AmeriCorps project are eligible for forbearance for most federally-backed student loans. For other types of student loans, Members must ask their loan holder if their AmeriCorps service qualifies for a deferment or forbearance.

This postponement of the student loan payment (forbearance) is not automatic. Members must request it from their loan holders by completing the National Service Forbearance Request Form. Members may complete the Forbearance Request Form online by accessing their My AmeriCorps Portal.

The National Service Trust does not grant forbearances. Loan holders do. The Trust merely verifies Membership in AmeriCorps and forwards the documents to the loan companies. The Trust is able to verify Membership only when it has proof from a project that the individual is an AmeriCorps Member.

Interest Accrual Payments

AmeriCorps Members who have earned a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award are eligible to have the Trust pay up to 100% of the interest that accrued on their qualified student loan during their service. To have the Trust pay all or a portion of the interest accrued on a qualified student loans, the Trust must receive verification from the Program indicating the Member has completed their service and are eligible for an award. A Member and their lender also must complete the Interest Accrual Form, which indicates the amount of interest accrued during your service period. The loan holder sends this completed form to the Trust for payment.

Defaulted Loans

Most student loans that are in default are not eligible for forbearance. If a Member has loans that have gone into default before they begin their AmeriCorps service, they can attempt to negotiate an arrangement with the loan holder or collection agency to bring the loan out of default so forbearance can be granted and interest paid. Also, Members can use their Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to repay defaulted student loans as long as the loans meet the definition of qualified student loans.

My AmeriCorps Portal

In order to prevent a delay in the processing of interest payments, individuals must request payments electronically using our on-line system, My AmeriCorps. This is a secure, fast, and user friendly method for requesting interest payments to be remitted to your loan holders. It also provides electronic records of payments requested and paid and there are no forms to mail in. The AmeriCorps Agency for National & Community Service cannot guarantee the prompt and accurate processing of requests for interest payments using paper forms. Payments requested by paper cantake up to six months or more for processing and are less secure.

It is fast and easy to access your National Service Participant account in My AmeriCorps. To register, go to <http://my.americorps.gov/mp/login.do> and click on “Register to create a new Member/Alum account” and follow the instructions.

Continual Training of Members

All programs are responsible for the continual training of their Members throughout their terms of service. Serve Illinois recommends that training of Members be done on both an individual and group basis. Training hours may not take up more than 20% of the Member’s time, and training may not exceed 20% of your program’s aggregate of all Member service hours.

Listed below are items that Serve Illinois **recommends** to be covered during a Members' term of service:

- **Civic Engagement/ Reflection/ Meaning of Service**
- **Disability Inclusion**

End of Term Training of Members

All programs are responsible for the end of term training of their Members. Serve Illinois recommends that training of Members be done on both an individual and group basis. Training hours may not take up more than 20% of the Member's time, and training may not exceed 20% of your program's aggregate of all Member service hours.

Listed below are items that Serve Illinois **mandates** to be covered during a Members' term of service:

Life After AmeriCorps

Résumé building

Seeking Employment

Continuing your service after AmeriCorps

Illinois Disaster Corps

All programs are required to designate one to two Members to serve in the Illinois Disaster Corps.

Disaster Corps is Serve Illinois' approach to utilizing National Service members to respond to disasters in Illinois. With help from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), we are able to train members to respond to communities that lack the support or ability to effectively respond to disaster recovery. Serve Illinois will train the Members to help manage a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC).

As an Illinois Disaster Corps Member, they will be required to take one online course through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and attend two classes over 3 day class given by IEMA. It will also be expected of they will be willing to respond to a disaster site if called, which could include deployment for up to a week. The Members will count service hours as they would if they were at their normal host site. They must be highly motivated, responsible, and able to work with diverse populations.

Questions should be directed to Michelle Hanneken at Michelle.J.Hanneken@Illinois.gov or 217-524-2251.

Military Service

Deployment

The deployment of a Member or their spouse is a compelling reason to exit from service, and the Member would receive a pro-rated education award.

The Member can also be placed in suspension, if the program and the Member determine that the Member will be able to complete service after deployment. See the section of suspensions for more information.

Reserves

Generally, the Reserves of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, the Army National Guard, and the Air National Guard require reservists to serve one weekend a month plus 12 to 15 days a year (hereafter referred to as the two-week active duty service). To the extent possible, the program should seek to minimize the disruption in Members' AmeriCorps service as a result of discharging responsibilities related to their reservist duties. If Members have a choice of when to fulfill their annual two-week active duty requirement, they should do so when it will not disrupt their AmeriCorps service. In instances where the dates of active duty are inflexible and conflict with AmeriCorps service, Members should be granted a leave of absence for the two-week period of active duty service in the Reserves.

Members may not receive time-off for additional Reserves-related service beyond the two-week active duty service. No AmeriCorps service credit is earned for the once-a-month weekend service in the Reserves. The program should credit Members for AmeriCorps service hours during their two weeks of active duty service in the Reserves if it occurs during their AmeriCorps service. The Member would receive credit for the number of hours he or she would have served during that period had there been no interruption. For example, if a full-time Member is signed up to serve 30 hours of AmeriCorps service one week and 40 hours of AmeriCorps service on the following week, she or he would receive 70 hours of AmeriCorps service credit for the two weeks of active duty service regardless of the actual number of hours served in the Reserves.

Reservists in the U.S. Armed Forces receive compensation for their mandatory two weeks of active duty service. The compensation regulations governing the Army and Air National Guard may vary by state.

The program should continue to pay the living allowance and provide health care and child care coverage for the two-week period of active duty.

Member Death or Injury

The awardee must immediately report any Member deaths or serious injuries to their Serve Illinois Program Officer.

Performance Reviews

The program must conduct and keep a record of at least a midterm and an end-of-term written evaluation of each Member's performance for Full and Half Time Members and an end-of-term written evaluation for less than Half-time Members. Evaluations should be signed by both the Member and the supervisor and placed in the Member file. The end of term evaluation should address, at a minimum, the following:

- Has Member completed the required number of hours?
- Has Member satisfactorily completed assignments?
- Has Member met other performance criteria as communicated at the beginning of the term of service?

Public Assistance Programs

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Benefits (SNAP)

Public Housing

Unemployment Benefits

Public Assistance Programs

Supplemental Security Income

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Benefits (SNAP)

A Member's SNAP benefits are not affected because a Member receives the AmeriCorps living allowance. This means that a Member's benefits should not be decreased, increased, or terminated because he or she receives the living allowance.

Public Housing

AmeriCorps Members' benefits do not affect a Member's eligibility for federal, need-based housing assistance, such as Section 8 housing and other federally subsidized housing. This means that the living stipend cannot be taken into consideration when a Member applies for or if a Member's eligibility for public housing is being re-examined. This is a federal rule and is the same in all states.

[*Federal Register, DOCID fr20ap01-79*](#)

Unemployment Benefits

AmeriCorps Members are **not entitled** to unemployment benefits. The AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service has interpreted federal legislation to mean that there is no employer-employee relationship between Members and programs. Illinois has chosen to agree with this interpretation and denies unemployment benefits to Members; hence, programs are not required to pay unemployment taxes.

**See Attachment - Illinois Administrative Rules, Section 2732.215*

Public Assistance Programs

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

A Member's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits are affected by the AmeriCorps living allowance. For TANF purposes, the living allowance is considered non-exempt earned income. This means that for every \$3.00 a Member earns before taxes and other payroll deductions, the TANF grant is reduced by \$1.00. For example, the TANF grant of a Member that makes \$600 per month before payroll deductions would be decreased by \$200 (one-third of \$600).

Serving as an AmeriCorps Member is considered an allowable work activity as long as a Member serves at least 30 hours per week (effective October 1999). This means that the lifetime benefit clock for Members serving at least 30 hours per week will be stopped.

Federal legislation allows each state to determine how AmeriCorps benefits will affect TANF grants and if serving as an AmeriCorps Member is an allowable work activity. The information above is for Illinois only and will vary by state.

Supplemental Security Income

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal program that provides a monthly cash benefit to low-income individuals who are aged, blind, or who have a disability. Prior to the passage of the Heroes Earnings and Relief Tax Act of 2008 (HEART Act), receiving an AmeriCorps living allowance could disqualify an individual from eligibility. Under the HEART Act, the Social Security Administration will ignore an individual's receipt of AmeriCorps benefits for purposes of SSI 42 eligibility. The Heart Act excludes "any benefit (whether cash or in-kind)" and so covers the living allowance, health insurance, child care, and the education award (and related interest payments).

Additionally, SSI recipients who serve in AmeriCorps State and National and National Civilian Community Corps automatically qualify for the Student Child Earned Income Exclusion if they meet applicable age and marital status requirements.

SSI recipients who are (1) under the age of 22 and (2) neither married nor the head of a household are eligible for the student earned income exclusion, which excludes from countable earned income \$1,290 per month and up to \$5,200 per year (amounts as of January 1, 2001). This exclusion may be combined with existing SSI work incentives and other income disregard rules, which should encourage more young people with disabilities to participate in AmeriCorps State and National and NCCC.

Note that the Student Child Earned Income Exclusion policy change does not affect AmeriCorps VISTA Members, whose benefits are already fully excluded from income under section 404 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act.

Any portion of an education award used by an SSI recipient to pay for tuition, fees, and other necessary education expenses (not including room and board, or repaying student loans) will not count as income. Any portion of the education award that is not used for tuition, fees, or other necessary educational expenses counts as income in the month that it is used. For general questions about SSI or the terms used in this answer, go to <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/index.htm>

See <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/benefits/the-heart-act/> for information regarding the HEART Act.

Unit 3: Fiscal Management



Chapter

7

Reporting and Records Retention

Match
Budget Modifications
Fiscal Reports

Match

Programs must meet proposed match **every quarter**.

Programs that are not meeting proposed levels of match at the end of a quarter should include the following comments in their Periodic Expense Report (PER):

1. An explanation as to why match was not met, and
2. Plans to meet match the next quarter.

Programs that do not meet match requirements and do not include comments in their EDF reports will be required to submit a letter addressing the two issues noted above.

AmeriCorps Agency funds may be reduced by the Serve Illinois Commission for failure to meet the proposed or minimum match requirements. This would be done to bring the program in linewith the match requirements as submitted in the application.

Programs must provide and account for the matching funds as agreed upon in the approved application. This means that the proposed match included in the application must be met even if it exceeds the minimum match requirement.

Cash or in-kind matching contributions that exceed the required minimum will be considered voluntary cost share. Programs that cannot meet the amount of voluntary cost share proposed in their application may submit a request to reduce the amount of cost share their program will contribute. However, the cost share/match cannot be reduced below the minimum percentage requirements as indicated above. See the budget modifications section for more information.

Overall Cost Match

Subject to the requirements of § 2521.45, your overall share of program costs will increase as of the fourth consecutive year that you receive a grant, according to the timetable below. The program must have contributed matching resources by the end of a grant period in an amount equal to the combined total of the proposed or minimum overall annual match for each year of the grant period.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Minimum Overall Share	24%	24%	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

*During the 2022-2023 program year, match requirements have been waived due to COVID-19, but match will still be tracked on a monthly basis. Programs will be held harmless if they do not make their match requirement.

Alternative Match

If your program is unable to meet the match requirements and is located in a rural or a severely economically distressed community, you may apply to the AmeriCorps Agency for a waiver that would require you to increase the overall amount of your share of program costs beginning in the seventh consecutive year that you receive a grant. Contact your Program Officer if you believe you meet the requirements and are interested in applying. If you receive alternative match, you will follow the timetable below.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Alternative Minimum Overall Share	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	29%	31%	33%	35%

Administration Cost Match

Programs may bill a maximum 5.26% of the AmeriCorps Agency funds actually expended in the operation of the program to the administration line of the budget. Programs must meet this requirement **by the end of the program year.**

Each quarter that programs have more than 5.26% of grant funds charged to Administration, a letter will be sent noting the fact and reminding the program it must be in compliance by the end of the program year. Programs will be required to respond to this letter with an explanation as to why the 5.26% has been exceeded and plans for compliance by the end of the program year.

AmeriCorps Agency funds in this line may be reduced at the end of the program year if the 5.26% maximum is exceeded. This would be done to bring the program in line with allowable maximum Administrative charge against AmeriCorps Agency funds.

Federal Indirect Cost Match

If you have a Federally Approved Indirect Cost (IDC) rate and choose to use it, the IDC rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs including the 5.26% maximum payable by the AmeriCorps Agency. Please provide a copy of your IDC rate letter to your Program Officer.

Budget Modifications

The Serve Illinois Commission understands that AmeriCorps programs must sometimes modify their budget during the program year.

These budget modification guidelines summarize the AmeriCorps Provisions on this issue. They

are intended only as guidance and are not a substitute for the Provisions or other federal rules and regulations. For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps Provisions.

Deadline and Process

Programs must submit budget modification request to the Commission in a timely manner. While budget modification requests will be accepted on a rolling basis, programs are requested to submit budget modifications that require the **approval of the AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service by April 1 of the current program year**. This will provide sufficient time for the Commission and the AmeriCorps Agency to review the request before Members complete their terms of service.

Programs submitting a budget modification request must submit the following:

- A letter detailing the request and explaining why the modification is needed,
- A revised budget form, and
- A revised budget narrative.

Programs should not consider budget modification requests approved until written notice is received from the Commission and the AmeriCorps Agency.

Line Item Changes

Programs may move funds between line items if the modification is less than 5% of the total budget (grant and match). For example, a program that has a total budget of \$100,000 may move up to \$5,000 between line items as long as the transfer is in compliance with all other applicable grant requirements. Modifications between 5 and 10% must be made in EGrAMS and approved by Serve Illinois. Modifications over 10% require a grant amendment in eGrants. Programs who wish to transfer funds totaling more than 10% of the federal award must receive prior approval from the Commission and the AmeriCorps Agency. (OMB Circular A-11, Subpart C, Section 25.)

Sub-granting Funds

Programs must receive prior approval from the Commission and the AmeriCorps Agency to sub-grant or subcontract program activities not previously approved in the application for funding. Programs must receive prior approval from both the Commission and AmeriCorps Agency to transfer the grant or to sub-grant to a different organization. For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps Provisions.

Equipment

Programs may not purchase equipment costing more than \$5,000 with grant funds unless specified in the approved budget or application without prior approval from the Commission and the AmeriCorps Agency. All purchases of equipment and supplies should be handled in accordance with 45 CFR 2541 – “Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments” or with 45 CFR 2543 – “Grants and Agreements with



institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and other Non-Profit Organizations.” For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps Provisions.

Matching Funds/Voluntary Cost Share

Programs must provide matching funds as agreed upon in the approved application and budget. At a minimum, Programs must meet the proposed level of match every quarter. Programs that do not meet this match at the end of the quarter should include comments on their fiscal reports (both the Periodic Expense Report and Financial Status Reports, when applicable) explaining why the match was not met and how the program will ensure it will meet the match requirement at the end of the next quarter. If comments are not included, a letter from the program addressing these two issues will be required.

Voluntary cost share is defined as cash or in-kind matching contributions that exceed the required minimum levels of match as noted above. Programs will be held accountable for meeting the amount of voluntary cost share they proposed in their application. Programs who cannot meet the proposed levels of voluntary cost share must submit a revised budget and budget narrative to the Commission and AmeriCorps Agency for approval. All programs are encouraged to raise funds from the private sector. For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps Provisions.

Fiscal Reports

Report Type	Due Date
EDF (Monthly)	Refer to guidance on EDF reports for the corresponding program year.

EDFs (Expenditure Documentation Form)

AmeriCorps*State programs must submit EDFs on a **monthly** basis using the submission process dictated by IDHS (Illinois Department of Human Services).

The Commission will issue a reimbursement payment based on timely monthly expense reports submitted by programs. The monthly payments will result in year-to-date payments being equal to year-to-date reported expenditures, by program.

Failure to report monthly expenditures by the due date will result in a delay in issuing reimbursement payments or possible non-payment.

Appendix

Online Resources

Litmos Getting Started Guide: (Login Instructions)

1. Visit this page: <https://americorpsonlinecourses.litmos.com/self-signup/>
2. Enter the required information.
3. In the Code field, enter*: CNCS-Litmos
4. Click "Register."
5. You're in! You can come back at any time to explore more and take any courses that interest you by visiting the Course Library.

***If you are an AmeriCorps Seniors grantee use the following for the Code field:**

- Foster Grandparent Program: SC-FGP
- Senior Companion Program: SC-SCP
- RSVP Program: SC-RSVP

Note: If you are affiliated with two different AmeriCorps Seniors programs (for example, if your sponsor has both an RSVP Program and a Foster Grandparent Program), enter only one code at first.

After you hit "Register" the first time, visit <https://americorpsonlinecourses.litmos.com/self-signup/> again, fill out the form in full, and enter the code for the second program only. Use the same email address both times to avoid duplicating your account.

AmeriCorps Seniors Litmos Orientation can be [accessed here](#). Technical Support For technical support, to request access, or assistance accessing these pages using assistive technology email servicerresources@cns.gov.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is Litmos? Litmos is a platform for online learning, also known as a learning management system or LMS.

How to get to Litmos? Use the following link to access Litmos:
AmericorpsOnlineCourses.Litmos.com

Do I need an email address to create an account? Yes, an email address is required to setup an account. You'll also need to create a user name and password.

I did not receive any instructions from my program about accessing the system. What do I do?

To request access to Litmos, email servicesresources@cns.gov.

National Service Criminal History Check Training

This link of resources from AmeriCorps provides the Federal Regulations related to background checks, a comprehensive and detailed FAQ and training materials.

<https://americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/history-check>

eGrants and MyAmeriCorps

This link provided by AmeriCorps provides tutorials, PowerPoint slide shows, FAQs and other resources that guides you through the functions of eGrants and MyAmeriCorps. The comprehensive array of topics include: creating and managing eGrants accounts, Member recruitment, enrollment and management, program management and user roles and management.

NOTE: This link is for VISTA programs but the information is basically the same for ASN programs: [Corporation for National & Community Service \(CNCS\) \(americorps.gov\)](https://americorps.gov/cnscs)

Serve Illinois Website

This is the site for everything “volunteer” in Illinois. It contains comprehensive information about the Serve Illinois Commission, AmeriCorps and National Service programs in Illinois, volunteer opportunities across the state and the latest information and news on volunteering and service in Illinois.

www.Serve.Illinois.gov

Performance Measures Guidance-

https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/ASN_FY2022_PerformanceMeasuresInstructions_FINAL.508.pdf

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): <https://www.ada.gov/> The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, state, and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications. It also applies to the United States Congress. Section 504 of the ADA states that “no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that either receives Federal financial assistance or is conducted by any Executive agency or the United States Postal Service.

America’s Promise Alliance: <https://www.americaspromise.org/> America’s Promise Alliance is a nationwide movement to improve the lives and futures of America’s youth. By bringing together hundreds of national nonprofits, businesses, community and civic leaders, educators, citizens, and young people, the Alliance catalyzes action on a scale that reaches millions of young people. The Alliance’s work is rooted in the belief that every young person deserves to succeed and every adult is responsible for making that happen, campaigns and initiatives align organizations behind a common vision for a better future and bold goals to reach it. Through this alignment, they spark and support collective action across organizations, communities, and individuals to overcome the barriers that stand in the way of young people’s success. These efforts have reached millions of young people.

AmeriCorps State and National Glossary of Terms

Administrative costs	Administrative costs are costs associated with the overall administration of a program.
AmeriCorps member, corps member, member	An individual serving on a full-time or part-time basis in an AmeriCorps program who is eligible to receive an education award or alternative post- service benefit.
AmeriCorps National Service Network	The network of all AmeriCorps programs, including AmeriCorps State/National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps NCCC.
AmeriCorps Promise Fellows	Promise Fellows serve in a leadership corps of approximately 500 full-time AmeriCorps members who spearhead community efforts to deliver the Five Promises of the Presidents’ Summit for America’s Future to children and youth across the nation.
AmeriCorps NCCC	AmeriCorps NCCC (pronounced ‘N triple C’) is a 10-month, full-time residential program which combines the best practices of civilian service with the best practices of military service, including leadership development and team-building.
AmeriCorps State and National	Members participate in local service programs operated by not-for-profits, local and state government entities, Indian tribes, territories, and institutions of higher education, local school and police districts, and partnerships among any of the above.
AmeriCorps VISTA	Members of AmeriCorps VISTA work and live in the communities they serve, creating or expanding programs that can continue after they complete their service.
Benefits	AmeriCorps member benefits do not include paid time off, paid holidays, or paid sick leave. Time is credited, however, for voter registration, voting, jury duty, and military reserve and guard duty (for a period of no more than the two-week annual active duty). Also included in AmeriCorps member benefits are training/education, health insurance (for full-time AmeriCorps members not otherwise covered), and child care (for eligible full-time AmeriCorps members).
Community-based agency	A private nonprofit organization (including a church or other religious entity) that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and is engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety community needs.
Competitive grants	Competitive grants are awarded during a national grant competition for CNCS prime grant applicants. State commissions, tribes, and multi-state programs participate in the Competitive grant cycle.

AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service (CNCS), the AmeriCorps Agency	A federal AmeriCorps Agency which funds AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and Senior Corps projects. The AmeriCorps Agency was authorized by the signing of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993.
Corps	This word is used to describe a team of AmeriCorps members. Corps is pronounced like ‘core; the last two letters are always silent.
Education award	A benefit that AmeriCorps members may receive after successful completion of a term of service . The award is paid directly to a lending or educational institution and may be used to pay off federal student loans (Perkins, Stafford, PLUS, etc.) or to finance college, graduate school, or approved vocational training.
eGrants	The AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service's online grant application and management system.
End outcomes	End outcomes are the positive changes that your program ultimately hopes to achieve for beneficiaries. End outcomes address community conditions or needed changes in the condition, behavior, or attitudes of beneficiaries.
Federal Financial Report (FFR)	The FFR is the financial report submitted in eGrants that details the status of CNCS and Grantee funds within a specific timeframe.
Formula grants	Formula grants are awarded to states based on a population formula each year. Each state commission manages a Formula grant competition and conducts a state grant review process to determine the Formula grant recipients.
General Equivalency Diploma (GED)	A degree obtained by examination that may substitute for a high school diploma. An AmeriCorps member must agree to obtain a GED or high school diploma before using her or his AmeriCorps education award.
Grant Application Review Process (GARP)	GARP is the CNCS annual grant review, clarification, and award process for the funds provided under the Competitive or other special grant cycles.
Grantee Progress Report (GPR)	The GPR is a report submitted in eGrants that details progress toward achievement of approved performance targets within a specific timeframe.
Host site	This is a group or organization that acts as a project sponsor and is responsible for the actual location where a project is to be performed. This entity may provide task-specific training, technical assistance, supervision, or other services as agreed to in a contract or other formal agreement between the program and the host site.
Intermediate outcomes	Intermediate outcomes are changes or benefits experienced by your service recipients during the course of their service.
Living allowance	A living allowance is a stipend, not a wage or salary. It is provided to AmeriCorps members enrolled and active in an AmeriCorps program.

Member Portal	The Portal is the CNCS online member management system used by all grantees and AmeriCorps members.
National and Community Service Act of 1990	The Act of 1990 was passed by Congress and signed into law in 1990 to establish the Commission on National and Community Service.
National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, the Act	The Act of 1993 amended the National and Community Service Act of 1990, to establish the AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service by combining the Commission for National and Community Service and ACTION.
National service identity	The sense of purpose and membership in a common program that all AmeriCorps members share. National identity can be promoted and strengthened by everything from buttons and T-shirts to reflection activities, common national service projects, and civic education. AmeriCorps program and commission staff play key roles in cultivating a national service identity, training members to represent the field well, and continually promoting the program and field in local communities.
National Service Trust Fund, the Trust	The trust fund in the United States Treasury Department was established by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 to hold and to disperse AmeriCorps education awards.
Non-displacement	AmeriCorps members may not perform any services that would result in a paid employee losing a job or a failure to hire a paid employee.
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)	The NOFO (pronounced ‘No Foe’) is the document published annually by CNCS; it provides details on the appropriate use of AmeriCorps funds for a particular grant year.
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)	The federal government’s Office of Management and Budget assists the President in preparing the annual federal budget and oversees its execution. OMB must approve CNCS regulations, applications, forms, and any other documents that affect the public.
Outputs	Outputs refer to the amount of work or products completed and services delivered by your program. Examples include service hours completed by members and volunteers, neighborhood cleanup projects completed, and disaster preparedness training sessions conducted.
Performance measurement	Performance measurement is the process of regularly measuring the outputs and outcomes produced by your program. Performance measurement allows you to track both the amount of work done by your program and the impact of this work on your program beneficiaries.
Prime grantee	A prime grantee is a direct recipient of an AmeriCorps grant from CNCS; prime grantees include state commissions, national/multi-state programs, and tribal programs.
Program	A coordinated group of activities linked by common elements such as recruitment, selection, and training of participants and staff, regular group

	activities, and assignment to projects organized for the purpose of achieving the mission and goals of national and community service.
Project	An activity or a set of activities carried out as part of a program.
Request for Proposal (RFP)	An RFP is issued by CNCS, or another agency, to solicit applications for available grant funds.
Service site	A service site is a place where service is being performed by AmeriCorps members and perhaps other people who are volunteers and/or employees. A service site is not a work or job site; it should not be referred to with that terminology.
Stakeholder	One or more people or organizations that have a high degree of interest in your organization's vision, mission, and success.
State Service Commission	A 15 - 25 member independent, bipartisan commission appointed by a governor to implement service programs in a state. Each state commission receives funding from CNCS and is overseen by an executive director.
Subgrantee	A subgrantee in organization that receives AmeriCorps grant funds or member positions from a prime grantee of CNCS. These include state or local programs funded in the Competitive or Formula grant cycles that are subgrantees of State Service Commissions.
Term of service	A term of service is determined by each program and must contain at least 1,700 hours served within 9 to 12 months (full-time); a minimum of 900 hours served within 2 years (part-time).
Training and Technical Assistance (TTA)	The support and assistance provided to AmeriCorps programs to strengthen program operations.

Attachments

1. [AmeriCorps Frequently Asked Questions](#)
2. Member File Checklist
3. NON Member File Checklist
4. Member File Coversheet
5. Criminal History Authorization Form
6. Member Service Agreement (MSA)
7. Media Consent Form
8. Healthcare Enrollment Form
9. Childcare Enrollment Form
10. Grievance Procedure Review Checklist
11. Member Timesheet
12. Member Timesheet with Notes
13. Slot Conversion Form
14. Early Exit Form
15. Suspension Approval Form
16. Program Review Instrument – Monitoring Tool
17. Closeout Equipment Inventory
18. Closeout Inventory of Residual Supplies
19. Certification of Subgrant Closeout
20. [General AmeriCorps FAQs Link](#)
21. National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Manual
22. National Service Criminal History Check Steps
23. Illinois Administrative Rules, Section 2732.215
24. [COVID 19 Frequently Asked Questions Link](#)
25. [CFRs Applicable to AmeriCorps](#)
26. AmeriCorps Performance Measures Instructions

For additional resources, visit: [Illinois AmeriCorps Training and Technical Assistance Portal \(basecamp.com\)](#)



Go to next page



AmeriCorps

Member Files Checklist

****MEMBER FILES SHOULD FOLLOW THIS ORDER****

Regular Member Orientation Documentation

- _____ 1. Member File Coversheet*
- _____ 2. Orientation Checklist*
- _____ 3. Member application (From eGrants when member first applied)
- _____ 4. Updated and complete Member information page from eGrants
- _____ 5. Member Enrollment Form (from eGrants – edit member info – print pages)
- _____ 6. Photo ID
- _____ 7. High School Diploma or GED (if not self-certified on enrollment form)
- _____ 8. Parental Consent form - Completed (Only if member is age 17)
- _____ 9. Member Service Agreement*
- _____ 10. Position Description
- _____ 11. Media Consent form*
- _____ 12. Healthcare Enrollment Form* (Only for FT members)
- _____ 13. Childcare enrollment form* (Only for FT members)
- _____ 14. Criminal History Authorization Form*
- _____ 15. National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) report
- _____ 16. FBI Background check report
- _____ 17. State of Illinois Background Check Report
- _____ 18. Additional State Background Check report – if required
- _____ 19. Decision Tree/Memo – required if ANY results come back on state or FBI background check
- _____ 20. W4 Tax Document copy (These can be found online through google)
- _____ 21. Timesheets including accompaniment documentation if applicable – can be viewed electronically but accompaniment timesheets must be in file

Member Discipline Documentation

- _____ 22. Member discipline documentation

Evaluations

- _____ 23. Midterm evaluation
- _____ 24. End of Term evaluation

Suspension & Exit documentation

- _____ 25. Suspension Forms
- _____ 26. Early Exit Forms & Documents



NON - Member Files Checklist

**** FILES SHOULD FOLLOW THIS ORDER****

*****REQUIRED FOR ALL NON MEMBERS LISTED IN SECTION 1 OF YOUR BUDGET*****

- _____ 1. NON - Member File Checklist*

- _____ 2. Photo ID

- _____ 3. Position Description

- _____ 4. Media Consent Form

- _____ 5. Criminal History Authorization Form*

- _____ 6. National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) report

- _____ 7. FBI Background check report

- _____ 8. State of Illinois Background Check Report

- _____ 9. Additional State Background Check report – if required

- _____ 10. Decision Tree/Memo – required if ANY results come back on state or FBI background check



2022-2023 Criminal History Authorization Form

All background checks are required for all persons listed in the budget section 1 of the grant and must be initiated **BEFORE** the start date (member, staff/site supervisor in budget Section 1 of grant, match or in-kind included)

I hereby authorize _____ to conduct the following required criminal history and background checks:

	1. FBI fingerprint criminal history record information. (Must be initiated BEFORE start date) Date Submitted: ___ / ___ / ___ Date Received: ___ / ___ / ___
	2. Illinois State Police background check. (Must be initiated BEFORE start date) Date Submitted: ___ / ___ / ___ Date Received: ___ / ___ / ___
	3. Additional State (Not IL) Police background check. (Must be initiated BEFORE start date) State listed as permanent address on Member Information in eGrants: _____ Date Submitted: ___ / ___ / ___ Date Received: ___ / ___ / ___
	4. National Sex Offender Public Website Registry (NSOPW) (Must be <u>COMPLETED</u> BEFORE start date) Date Completed: ___ / ___ / ___ (Member cannot begin service until the NSOPW is completed in all 50 states, tribes and territories)

- I understand this information will be used, in part, to determine my eligibility to serve as a member/staff/site supervisor in this program and approval to serve the program is contingent upon a review of the information received. If I dispute the record as received, I understand I will have an opportunity to review the criminal history as received by this agency and provide clarification.
- I acknowledge that I have voluntarily provided the above information and I have read and understand this authorization.
- I understand that all persons, regardless of their access to vulnerable populations, are required to be accompanied at all times until either their FBI or State of Illinois background check report has been received, reviewed and a decision tree/memo filed if applicable.

Applicant's Signature

Date (Must be BEFORE Background Checks Initiated)

Applicant's Printed Name

Program Director Signature

Date



AmeriCorps



MEMBER SERVICE AGREEMENT 2022-2023

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Member Service Agreement (MSA) is to delineate the terms, conditions, and rules of membership regarding the participation of _____ (hereafter called the "Member") in the _____ AmeriCorps Program (hereafter called the "Program").

The Member understands that by participating in the Program, the Member does not become an employee of the _____. Any benefits received by the Member or allowances paid to the Member are paid and provided only by and to the extent of the terms of a grant provided through the AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service.

II. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The Member certifies that he/she:

- Is a citizen of the United States, a United States national, or a legal permanent resident of the United States,
- Is at least 17 years of age as of the first day of service – Date of Birth: _____ / _____ / _____,
- Has obtained a high school diploma or GED (or agrees to obtain a high school diploma or GED before using an Education Award).

The Member must satisfactorily pass the required criminal background checks before entering the Program. If circumstances are warranted that another check should be done within the program year, the Member must also pass that check to remain in the Program. Failure to pass that check is grounds to be terminated for cause.

(Programs may change qualification in age or education requirement to meet the needs of the Program)

III. TERMS OF SERVICE

A. The Member's term of service begins on _____ / _____ / _____ and is anticipated to conclude on _____ / _____ / _____. The length of term shall be _____ months (no more than 12 months from the start of service). The Program and the Member may agree to extend this term of service, in writing, for the following reasons:

1. The Member's service has been suspended due to compelling personal circumstances.
2. The Member's service has been terminated, but a grievance procedure has resulted in reinstatement.

B. The Member will complete a minimum of:

- Full-time Member serving at least 1700 hours.
- Reduced Full-time Member serving at least 1200 hours.
- Half-time Member serving at least 900 hours.
- Reduced Half-time Member serving at least 675 hours.
- Quarter-time Member serving at least 450 hours.
- Minimum-time Member serving at least 300 hours.

- C. The Member must successfully complete the term of service hours as stated above to be eligible for the Education Award. In addition, the Member must satisfactorily complete pre-service training and appropriate education/training required by the Program.
- D. To be eligible to serve a second term of service the Member must receive satisfactory performance reviews for any previous terms of service. The Member's eligibility for a second term of service with this program will be based on a 12-week, mid-term and/or end-of-term evaluation of the Member's performance.
- E. Eligibility for an additional term of service does not guarantee selection or placement.

IV. POSITION DESCRIPTION

(Please attach Member's Position Description)

The Member's immediate host site supervisor is [REDACTED]. The Member will also report to [REDACTED], AmeriCorps Program Director.

V. BENEFITS

The Member will receive the following benefits:

A. Living Allowance

- A living allowance totaling [REDACTED] during the term of service for the Member's participation in AmeriCorps. (this amount is before taxes)
- The living allowance is taxable income.
- The living allowance will be disbursed by the Program
- The living allowance is not an hourly wage or a salary. The Member is **not** an employee of the Program.
- The Member must satisfactorily complete the hours as documented in weekly time sheets and weekly activity reports.
- The Member will receive the same prorated amount of living allowance for each period, regardless of the number of hours served during that period. Payments will be made [REDACTED] time(s) a month. The Member will receive the prorated period amount of \$ [REDACTED].
- If on suspension in the AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Services' AmeriCorps Portal, the Member will not be paid, and all benefits will be suspended including health care and child care.
- If the entire living allowance is paid out prior to the Member completing all required service hours, the Member may continue to serve for up to a year after the start date without living allowance.
- If called for jury duty, the Member will continue to accrue normal service hours and receive the living allowance and health benefits.
- Members with military reservist responsibilities should attempt to fulfill their two-week annual active duty requirement when it will not disrupt their AmeriCorps service. If this is not possible, Members will receive AmeriCorps service hour credit during their two-weeks of active duty in the reserves. No AmeriCorps service credit is earned for the once-a-month duty weekend service in the military reserves.

B. Health Care Insurance

The Program will provide health care insurance for full time Members (who are not currently covered by another healthcare provider) during their term of service (single coverage only, no family plan is available). The Member is responsible for co-payments and/or deductibles. AmeriCorps Programs purchasing their own health insurance for members must ensure plans meet the minimal essential coverage and meet the requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

C. Child Care Allowance

A childcare allowance will be provided by Gap Solutions, Inc. directly to the member-identified provider, if the Member qualifies for the allowance. More information can be found at <https://www.americorpschildcare.com/>.

D. Educational Award

Upon successful completion of the Member's term of service, the Member will receive an Education Award from the National Service Trust in the amount of:

___\$6,495.00 ___\$4,546.50 ___\$3,247.50 ___\$2,474.27 ___\$1,718.25 ___ \$1,374.60

The Education Award can be used toward:

- The cost of attending a Title IV institution of higher education.
- The balance on an existing federally insured student loan.
- The cost of attending a qualified vocational school.
- The cost of participating in an approved school-to-work program.

The Member must use the Education Award within seven years of the completion of the AmeriCorps service. The Member may apply to the National Service Trust for an extension if, during the seven-year period, the Member performs another term of service of an approved AmeriCorps position or was unavoidably prevented from using the award.

- Education Awards are subject to income taxes in the year in which they are used.
- The Member understands that his/her failure to disclose to the program any history of having been released for cause from another AmeriCorps program will render him/her ineligible to receive the education award.
- The Education Award is transferable under the following conditions:
 1. The Member must have been at least 55 years of age in an AmeriCorps State or National Program when he or she began the term of service.
 2. The recipient of the award has to be the transferring individual's child, stepchild, foster child, grandchild, or step-grandchild.
- Prior to using the Education Award, the Member must (if he/she has not already done so) obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent. This requirement may be waived if the Member is enrolled in an institution of higher education on an ability to benefit basis or if the program waives the requirement due to the result of the Member's education assessment.
- The Member may be eligible for a prorated Education Award if the Member is released due to compelling personal circumstances and has completed at least 15% of their total hours of service. If the Member is released without a compelling reason, the Member will receive no portion of the Education Award.
- A Member may only earn an equivalent of two full-time education awards in his/her lifetime, regardless of the length of the term of service.

E. Loan Forbearance

The Member is eligible to have the repayment of certain student loans postponed during their term of service. Members must request forbearance from their loan holders with the National Service Forbearance Request Form. The National Service Trust does not grant forbearances; the loan holders do. Members whose loans are in current default status are not eligible for this benefit.

F. Interest Payments

If the Member has received forbearance on a qualified student loan during the term of service, upon completion, the National Service Trust will repay a portion or all of the interest that accrued on the loan during the term of service. However, if the Member leaves for non-compelling reasons, even if the loan was in forbearance, the Trust will not pay the interest. The interest paid will be taxed as income.

VI. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Programs and activities must be accessible to persons with disabilities, and the grantee must provide reasonable accommodation to the known mental or physical disabilities of otherwise qualified members, service recipients, applicants, and staff. All selections and project assignments must be made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation.

Any reasonable accommodation requests can be made to _____.

VII. RULES OF CONDUCT

A. Prohibited Activities

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the AmeriCorps Agency, staffand Members may not engage in the following activities:

- a. Attempting to influence legislation;
- b. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- c. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- d. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- e. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- f. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
- g. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
- h. Providing a direct benefit to—
 - i. A business organized for profit;
 - ii. A labor union;
 - iii. A partisan political organization;
 - iv. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
 - v. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph g. above, unless CNCS assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
- i. Conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
- j. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
- k. Such other activities as CNCS may prohibit.

AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-CNCS funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

B. Fundraising

Under what circumstances may AmeriCorps members raise resources?

- (a) AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of your program's service activities.
- (b) Examples of fundraising activities AmeriCorps members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (1) Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read;
 - (2) Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers;
 - (3) Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals;
 - (4) Securing financial resources from the community to assist in launching or expanding a program that provides social services to the members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the members of a community-based organization;
 - (5) Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current members.
- (c) AmeriCorps members may not:

- (1) Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment;
- (2) Write a grant application to the AmeriCorps Agency or to any other Federal agency.

How much time may an AmeriCorps member spend fundraising?

An AmeriCorps member may spend no more than ten percent of his or her originally agreed upon term of service, as reflected in the member enrollment in the National Service Trust, performing fundraising activities, as described in §2520.40.

C. Code of Conduct

45CFR § 2543.42: The recipient shall maintain written standards of conduct governing the performance of its employees engaged in the award and administration of contracts. No employee, officer, or agent shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds if a real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any Member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for an award. The officers, employees, and agents of the recipient shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, or parties to subagreements. However, recipients may set standards for situations in which the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value. The standards of conduct shall provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, or agents of the recipient.

The Member is expected to, at all times while acting in an official capacity as an AmeriCorps Member:

- Demonstrate mutual respect towards others.
- Follow the directions of the AmeriCorps Program office and Host Site.
- Have a neat and clean appearance and wear attire appropriate for the work site and activity. When on AmeriCorps time, the Member should wear one or more pieces of service gear, even if it is just the pin. Wearing the AmeriCorps shirt is especially important when working on a community service day project.
- Conduct himself or herself in a manner exemplary as a role model to youth and others and in compliance with AmeriCorps standards.
- Direct concerns, problems and suggestions to his or her Site Supervisor.
- Keep the Site Supervisor informed of his/her schedule and activities during service hours and report changes in a timely manner so the appropriate action can be taken to cover or reschedule activities.
- Keep confidential and proprietary information strictly confidential, consistent with state and federal laws.
- The Member understands that the following acts also constitute a violation of the Program's rules of conduct: *(Programs may make changes to acceptable conduct based on their Program, however, it must be included in this MSA as an attachment).*
 - a. Unauthorized tardiness.
 - b. Unauthorized absences.
 - c. Ingesting or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or any illegal drugs during the performance of service activities.
 - d. Repeated use of inappropriate language (i.e. profanity) at a service site.
 - e. Failure to wear appropriate clothing at worksite and when participating in service assignments.
 - f. Performing personal business, such as making excessive phone calls or running errands, during AmeriCorps service hours.
 - g. Stealing, lying or falsifying AmeriCorps reports.
 - h. Inappropriate or unprofessional behavior.
 - i. Destroying or defacing any Program property or service site property.
 - j. Refusing to follow the Site Supervisor or Program Director's instructions.
 - k. Failure to notify the Program of any criminal arrest or conviction that occurs during the term of service.
 - l. Assault on another person while on service assignment or off duty.

- m. Possession of a weapon while on service assignment.
- n. Failure to follow the rules and regulations set in this contract.
- o. Falsifying critical information (especially information related to eligibility) during the application process or during the term of service.

D. Civil Rights Requirements, Complaint Procedures, and Rights of Beneficiaries

It is against the law for organizations that receive federal financial assistance from the AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, sex, age, political affiliation, or, in most cases, religion. It is also unlawful to retaliate against any person who, or organization that, files a complaint about such discrimination. In addition to filing a complaint with local and state agencies that are responsible for resolving discrimination complaints, you may bring a complaint to the attention of the AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service. If you believe that you or others have been discriminated against, or if you want more information, contact:

Serve Illinois Commission
Attn: Karrie Rueter
823 E. Monroe
Springfield, IL 62701
Karrie.Rueter@Illinois.gov

Or

Office of Civil Right and Inclusiveness
AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community
Service 1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
(800) 833-3722 (TTY and reasonable accommodation line)
(202) 565-3465 (FAX); eo@cns.gov

E. Non-Duplication and Non-Displacement

The Member may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program.

An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of the Member. An organization may not displace a volunteer by using the Member.

The Member may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.

The Member may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that:

- a. will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
- b. are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.

The Member may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any:

- a. presently employed worker;
- b. employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
- c. employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
- d. employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
- e. employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

F. Drug Free Workplace

Members will be expected to adhere to all provisions of service in a drug-free workplace in accordance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act, 41 U.S.C. 701 et seq., implementing regulations, 45 C.F.R. 2542;

You are hereby notified that:

- i. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and Program;
- ii. Conviction of any criminal drug statute must be reported immediately to the Program Site Supervisor;
- iii. The member's participation is conditioned upon compliance with the notice requirements; and
- iv. Certain actions will be taken against Members for violations of such prohibitions.

G. Criminal Drug Convictions

As a Member you must notify the Program Site Supervisor in writing of any criminal drug convictions for a violation occurring in the workplace or during the performance of project activities no later than 5 days after such a conviction. The Program Site Supervisor must take appropriate action up to and including termination or Member release for cause consistent with the AmeriCorps Agency's rules of termination and suspension of service.

H. Disciplinary Action

For violating the above stated rules of conduct, as well as the policies and procedures stated in this Member Service Agreement, the Program will take the following action for those infractions where the Program sees the possibility of reversing the behavior:

- a. For the Member's first offense, the AmeriCorps Program Director (or other appropriate program official) will issue a verbal warning to the member, documented in the Member's file.
- b. For the Member's second offense, the AmeriCorps Program Director (or other appropriate program official) will issue a written warning and reprimand the Member, a copy of which will be put in the Member's file.
- c. For the Member's third offense, the Member may be suspended for one day or more without compensation and will not receive credit for any service hours missed, documented in the member's file.
- d. For the fourth offense, the program may release the Member for cause.

I. Suspension

The Program Site Supervisor may temporarily suspend or impose fines on a Member for minor disciplinary reasons, such as chronic tardiness. If the Member is charged with a violent Felony or sale or distribution of a controlled substance, or convicted of possession of a controlled substance, the Program Site Supervisor must suspend the Member without any AmeriCorps benefits, including living allowance, and without receiving credit for hours missed.

VIII. RELEASE FROM TERMS OF SERVICE

The Member may be released from his or her term of service for the following reasons:

A. Release for Cause

Members exiting the program for cause will cease to receive the living stipend, the health care benefits and the child care benefits and will receive no portion of their education award. The program will release the Member for cause for the following reasons:

- The Member has dropped out of the program without obtaining a release for compelling personal circumstances from the appropriate program official.
- During the term of service the Member has been convicted of a violent felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance.
- The Host Site requests that the Member be terminated from service at the site.
- The Member has committed any of the offenses listed below:

1. Engaging in any activity that may physically or emotionally damage other Members of the program or people in the community.
 2. Unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of any controlled substance or illegal drugs during the term of service.
 3. Consuming alcoholic beverages during the performance of service activities.
 4. Being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs during the performance of service activities.
- Any other serious breach that in the judgement of the Program staff or Host Site would undermine the effectiveness of the program.

B. Release for Compelling Personal Circumstances

Members exiting the program because of compelling personal reasons will cease to receive the living stipend, the health care benefits and the child care benefits, but Members will receive a prorated education award, provided the Member has completed at least 15 percent of the hours needed to complete the term of service. The Program may release the Member from the term of service for compelling personal circumstances if the Member demonstrates that:

- The Member has a disability or serious illness that makes completing the term impossible.
- There is a serious injury, illness, or death of a family member, which makes completing the term unreasonably difficult or impossible for the Member.
- The Member has military service obligations.
- The Member has accepted an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work; or
- Some other unforeseeable circumstance beyond the Member's control makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for the Member to complete the term of service, such as a natural disaster, relocation of a spouse, or the non-renewal or premature closing of the Program.

A Member who wishes to be released from service for compelling personal circumstances is required to do the following before the final living allowance check can be received:

- Discuss the terms of the release with the Program Director;
- Provide a written letter outlining the reason the Member wishes to be released from the program; and
- Complete an exit form.

IX. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

(All programs must establish a grievance procedure for Members. The timeframes below are mandated. Programs should provide more detailed procedures for their specific programs.)

In the event that informal efforts to resolve disputes are unsuccessful, AmeriCorps Members may seek resolution through the following grievance procedures. These procedures are intended to apply to service-related issues, such as assignments, evaluation, suspensions, or release for cause. All grievances that allege fraud or criminal activity must be brought to the attention of the AmeriCorps Agency for National and Community Service.

- A grievance must be filed within one year of the alleged occurrence.
- A grievance hearing will be held no later than 30 days after the filing of the grievance. This timeframe may only be extended by written agreement of both parties.
- Prior to the hearing, one or more pre-hearing conferences will be arranged by the Program. The pre-hearing conference is intended to facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution of the matter to make a hearing unnecessary or to narrow the issues to be decided at the hearing.
- The person conducting the hearing may not have participated in any previous decisions concerning the issue in dispute.
- A written decision to the hearing will be made no later than 60 days after the initial filing of the grievance.
- The grievant can request binding arbitration if decision is adverse to the grievant or if the decision is not reached within 60 calendar days. The arbitrator must be independent

and selected by mutual consent of the parties involved. If the parties cannot agree on the arbitrator, CNCS will appoint one within 15 days of receiving the request.

- The arbitration proceeding must be held no later than 45 days after the request for arbitration, and no later than 30 days after the arbitrator's appointment. An arbitration decision must be made within 30 days after the commencement of arbitration proceedings.
- The cost of arbitration must be divided evenly between the parties, unless the aggrieved party prevails, in which case the program must pay the total cost of the proceedings as well as the prevailing party's attorney fees.

X. UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Members understand they **do not qualify** to receive unemployment benefits after the completion of their term of service or their release from the Program. Members agree not to apply for unemployment benefits from the Program following their term of service.

XI. EDITS TO MEMBER SERVICE AGREEMENT

This Member Service Agreement is an approved Commission document – edits are **not** permitted.

XII. AUTHORIZATION

The Member and Program hereby acknowledge by their signatures that they have read, understand, and agree to all terms and conditions of this agreement.

_____ Date

AmeriCorps Member

_____ Date

Program Director

For Parent or Guardian of a Member **under 18 years of age**, who is a high school graduate:

I have reviewed this Member Service Agreement, and understand the responsibilities and benefits. I authorize my son/daughter/legal ward to participate in the _____ AmeriCorps Program.

_____ Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian



2022-2023 Illinois AmeriCorps State Media Consent Form

I, the undersigned, authorize _____, its officers, agents, and employees or other authorized representatives of magazines, newspapers, periodicals, radio, television and other news and educational media to take photographs or videotape of:

Name of Photo Subject Age (if under 18)

Address

Phone Number

I also authorize _____, its officers, agents, and employees or other authorized representatives of magazines, newspapers, periodicals, radio, television and other news and educational media to use and publish (including publication on the World Wide Web) such information and/or photographs or videotape together with such identification as may be reasonable for the purpose of publicity or communications.

Signed: _____
Signature of Photo Subject

Print: _____
Printed Name of Photo Subject

Date: _____

****REQUIRED TO BE COMPLETED BY ALL MEMBERS****



AmeriCorps

2022-2023 HEALTH CARE ENROLLMENT FORM



In order to accurately process your claims, information regarding other health care coverage is needed. Please complete the information below (please print legibly) and then sign at the bottom of the form.

LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____ MI: _____

LAST 4 DIGITS OF YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: _____

YOUR ADDRESS: _____

Do you have any other insurance coverage for health, dental, vision or Medicare?

YES I have coverage and am declining coverage (complete form and sign.)

NO I do not have coverage and am required to (sign form and return to your Program Director.)

NAME(S) OF POLICYHOLDER & TYPE OF COVERAGE

HEALTH INSURANCE:

Health Insurance Provider: _____ Policy #: _____

Is the Policyholder your Spouse Parent Other _____
(State Relationship)

Type of Coverage: Group Individual

MEDICARE:

Health Insurance Provider: _____ Policy #: _____

Is the Policyholder your Spouse Parent Other _____
(State Relationship)

Type of Coverage: Group Individual

I attest the information provided on this form is accurate.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

****REQUIRED TO BE COMPLETED BY ALL FT MEMBERS – EVEN IF DECLINING****



AmeriCorps



2022-2023 CHILD CARE ENROLLMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____ MI: _____

LAST 4 DIGITS OF YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: _____

YOUR ADDRESS: _____

Do you need assistance with child care in order to serve as an AmeriCorps Member?

YES

NO

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

****REQUIRED TO BE COMPLETED BY ALL FT MEMBERS – EVEN IF DECLINING****

Grievance Procedure Review checklist

Program/Program Year: _____

The following items are **mandatory** for program staff to have as part of their program:

- Grievance procedures are part of the member service agreement.
- Members are required to read and sign a copy of the grievance procedures.
- Commission ensures that grievance procedures address each of the following required components:
 - Grievance filed within one year of alleged occurrence.
 - Grievance hearing held within 30 calendar days of filing a grievance.
 - Decision made within 60 calendar days of filing a grievance.
 - Hearing conducted by a person not involved in previous decisions on the issue.
 - Grievant can request binding arbitration if decision is adverse to grievant or if decision is not reached within 60 calendar days.
 - Binding arbitration hearing is held within 45 days after request for arbitration or within 30 days after CEO appoints arbitrator,
 - Within 30 days of the binding arbitration hearing, there is a decision
- Commission maintains records of its review of sub grantees' grievance procedures.
- Commission holds sub grantees accountable for making any needed revisions in their grievance procedure.
- Other

Notes:



2022-2023 Illinois AmeriCorps*State Member Slot Conversion

Program requesting: _____

Program Officer Name requesting: _____

Date of Request: _____

Current Member Slots requesting Conversion:

___FT ___RFT ___HT ___RHT ___QT ___MT

Requesting conversion to:

___FT ___RFT ___HT ___RHT ___QT ___MT

MSY Conversion:	FT= 1	RFT = 0.70000000
	HT= .5	RHT= 0.3809524
	QT= 0.26455027	MT= 0.21164022

Program Director's Signature Date

For SIC Program Officer:

Approved and Completed by:

SIC Program Officer's Signature Date

Date Conversion Completed by program provider in eGrants: _____



2022-2023 Illinois AmeriCorps State Member Early Exit Form

(to be completed for any Member that does not fully complete their term of service)

Member Name _____

Program Year _____

Program Name _____

Member is being exited early due to:

_____ Compelling Personal Circumstances (documentation attached) (may be eligible for an award)*

- Medical reasons requires a physician’s statement specifying that member can no longer serve. It does not require to include specific medical information, it is just required to specify that they can no longer serve their term of service due to medical reasons.
- Pre enrollment delay of verification requires a screenshot of the enrollment verification dates and a statement of when they were supposed to start and end their term.
- COVID-19 Related

_____ Release for Cause (documentation attached) – can no longer serve in AmeriCorps (not eligible for an award)

_____ Member did not fully complete service requirements (not eligible for an award)

Member Start Date: ____/____/____

Member Exit Date: ____/____/____

Total Hours Required for Completion: _____ Total Hours Served: _____

Percentage of hours completed: _____%

Education Award Amount*: \$ _____ (Only allowed for Compelling Personal Circumstances)

**If exiting for compelling personal circumstance, the Member is eligible for a prorated award if they have served at least 15% of their hours. If exiting for COVID-19 related reasons, the Member is eligible for a full award if they have served at least 50% of their hours. If they have not, the compelling personal circumstance rule applies.*

Program Director’s Signature _____

Date _____

Approved by:

Serve Illinois Program Officer’s Signature _____

Date _____

For Serve Illinois Program Officer:

Was Member exited in eGrants within 30 days? Yes ___ No ___ If no, how many days? ___



2022-2023 Illinois AmeriCorps*State Member Early Temporary Suspension of Term

Must be completed before suspension

S u s p e n d	<hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Member Name Program Year </div>
	<hr/> Program Name
	Member is being temporarily suspended due to the following reasons: (attach appropriate documentation) <hr/>
	Member Start Date: ___/___/___ Member Suspension Date: ___/___/___
	<hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Program Director's Signature Date </div>
	Approved by: <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> SIC Program Officer's Signature Date </div>
R e t u r n	Member Return from Suspension Date: ___/___/___
	Program Officer please initial that a plan is in place to ensure the member is able to complete the required number of hours before the end of the grant period.
	<hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Program Director's Signature Date </div>
	Approved by: <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> SIC Program Officer's Signature Date </div>

For Program Officer:
Was Member suspended in eGrants correctly? Yes___No___If no, how many days? ___



AMERICORPS PROGRAM REVIEW INSTRUMENT

Module A: Reporting and Communications Compliance

Program Information				
Program Name:	Grant Cycle Dates:			
	Grant Type:			
Date(s) of Monitoring Visit:	Program Year:			
Name(s) of Program Staff Interviewed:				
Program Monitoring Officer:				
Member Slots <i>Complete this section using the current Member Roster in eGRANTS.</i>				
How many slots were granted to this program?	Total Slots	Filled Slots	Open Slots	Comments and Justifications
Full Time				
Reduced Full Time				
Half Time				
Reduced Half Time				
Quarter Time				
Minimum Time				
TOTAL MEMBERS:				
AVERAGE ENROLLMENT RATE:				
How many earned an Ed Award?				
How many did not earn an Ed Award?				
How many are currently earning an Ed Award?				

	Yes	No	N/A	Comments and Justifications
Member Enrollment <i>Complete this section using the Enrollment Approval Cycle Time report in eGRANTS.</i>				
Were all Members enrolled in the Portal on the start date? What was the: Lowest days until approved: _____ Highest days until approved: _____				
Were any <u>Full Time Members</u> enrolled after October 31 st ? If so, was prior approval requested and approved?				
Does the Program have member commitment waiting to be entered into the Portal? If Yes, how many? _____				
Were all Members assigned to a site in the Portal within 30 days?				
Member Change of Status <i>Complete this section during pre-site visit monitoring</i>				
Did the Program have any change of status for Members? If so, was prior approval requested and approved? Member Name: _____ Member Name: _____				
Was the change of status form entered within 30 days?				
Member Early Exits <i>Complete this section using the Member Roster report in eGRANTS.</i>				
Did any Members earn a partial award/exit for compelling circumstances? If yes, what are the Member's names? Member Name: _____ Member Name: _____ If yes, were appropriate reasons listed on the Early Exit Form and documented in the Member File?				
End of Term <i>Complete this section using the Exit Approval Cycle Time report in eGRANTS.</i>				
Were End of Term Forms approved within 30 days of exiting the Member?				
How many End of Term Forms were checked?				
Number approved within 30 days of completion date?				
Number not approved within 30 days of completion date?				

Other Program Requirements					
Did the Program participate in the following :					
Program Meetings/Training Certifications (Mandatory)					
Month/Year	Yes	No	Month/Year	Yes	No
August, 2022			May, 2023		
September, 2022			June, 2023		
October, 2022			July, 2023		
November, 2022			August, 2023		
December, 2022					
January, 2023					
February, 2023					
March, 2023					
April, 2023					

Days of Service	Yes	No	N/A	Comments and Justifications
Did the Program participate in the following :				
National Service Opening Day (Mandatory)				
Additional Service Project (from 4 options)				
MLK Day Service Project (Mandatory)				
AmeriCorps Week Service Recognition (Mandatory)				
Program Director Orientation (Mandatory)				
National Service Summit (# of staff; # of members/presentations)				

AmeriCorps Progress Reporting Dates <i>Complete this section by reviewing reporting dates posted in PPR submission guidance</i>					
	Due Date	Date Submitted	Late	Missing	Comments and Justifications
Progress Report Submissions	5 total for year				
Progress Report Information Summary			Yes	No	Comments and Justifications
Were all Progress Reports submitted by the due date?					
Do all Progress Reports provide required information?					
Program Objectives (Performance Measures)					
Do they have procedures that tracks progress & shows achievement toward Program objectives?					
Does they produce reports that accurately capture Program accomplishments?					
Commission Approval					
Do they obtain written approval of program changes from their SIC Program Officer when required?					
Has program completed the following required trainings?			Yes	No	Comments and Justifications
1	Annual CNCS Fiscal eCourse				
2	Annual CNCS National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) eCourse				

Notes:

Program Monitoring Officer: _____

Date: _____

MODULE B: Fiscal Compliance

Make certain the Program has documentation for the items listed.

Program:

Date:

AmeriCorps Reporting Dates *Complete this section by reviewing reporting dates in EGrAMS.*

	Due Date	Date Submitted	Late	Missing	Comments and Justifications
Reimbursement Reports Submissions	8/16/2022				
	9/15/2022				
	10/15/2021				
	11/15/2021				
	12/15/2021				
	1/18/2022				
	2/15/2022				
	3/15/2022				
	4/15/2022				
	5/16/2022				
	6/18/2021				
	7/15/2022				
	8/15/2022				
	9/15/2022				
	10/17/2022				
	11/15/2022				
12/15/2022					
1/17/2023					
Reimbursement Information Summary			Yes	No	Comments and Justifications
Were all Reimbursements submitted by due date?					
Were all Reimbursements accurate?					
Do all Reimbursements meet match requirements?					

		Y	*N	NA	Additional Info	Comments and "N" justification
1	Does the Program have signed staff time and attendance records indicating time spent on various activities, e.g. AmeriCorps grants, other projects, etc.? (Provide Completed Staff Timesheet reference)					
2	Does the Program obtain SIC prior approval for equipment purchases when required?					
3	Does program have a policy in place to require at least 2 signatures for all payments?					
4	Does the Program accurately document and track cash matching contributions?					
5	Does the Program accurately document and track in-kind matching contributions?					
6	Does the Program accurately track and monitor expenditures by budget line item?					
7	Does the Program withhold personal income tax from the Member living allowance? (Provide Pay stub)					
8	Does the Program withhold FICA from the Member living allowance? (Provide Pay stub)					
9	Does the Program have approval for any subcontracts?					
	If yes, provide proof they maintain appropriate documentation of sub grant agreements					
10	Does the Program sign and indicate payment on invoices and vouchers?					
11	Does the Program have vouchers for in-kind contributions?					
12	Does the Program meet matching requirements?					
13	Does the Program keep administrative cost charged to the grant within the 5.26% cap?					
14	Does the Program obtain written approval from SIC prior to significant budgetary changes that are over 5% of their budget?					

		Y	*N	NA	Additional Info	Comments and "N" justification
15	Does the program have receipts and other financial documents to correspond with all expenditures claimed on Section 1 and Section 2 expenditures for the month selected for review: MM/YR: _____					

Notes:

Program Monitoring Officer: _____

Date: _____

MODULE C: Policy and Procedures Compliance

Make certain the Program has documentation for the items listed.

Program:	Date:
-----------------	--------------

		Y	*N	NA	Additional Info	Comments and "N" justification
1	Policy & Procedures Manual					
	<i>Does the Program have a Policy & Procedures Manual that is specific to AmeriCorps Members?</i>					
	<i>Is the Policy & Procedures Manual kept where everyone can see it and have access to it?</i>					
2	Displacement of Employees					
	<i>Does the Program have a policy that ensures it does not supplant/duplicate services or displace employees? (Union Concurrence)</i>					
3	Recruitment Plan					
	<i>Does the Program have a local recruitment plan that encourages diversity?</i>					
	<i>Does the Program have a policy that ensures AmeriCorps Members are selected in a fair and non-discriminatory manner?</i>					
4	Orientation					
	<i>Does the Program utilize the mandatory Member Service Agreement for all Members?</i>					
	<i>Does the Program ensure that orientation is designed around the Member Service Agreement and other Programmatic requirements?</i>					
	<i>Does the Program review all Policy & Procedures during Member Orientation?</i>					

		Y	*N	NA	Additional Info	Comments and "N" justification
5	Ongoing Training					
	<i>Does the Program provide on-going training that ensures Members are adequately skilled to perform their service? (Life after AmeriCorps, Civic Engagement/Reflection), Disability Inclusion)</i>					
	<i>Does the Program ensure that support is provided Members who are completing terms of service and transitioning to other educational career opportunities? (Life after AmeriCorps, etc.)</i>					
6	Disability Inclusion					
	<i>Does the Program have a policy in place to provide reasonable accommodations for disabled Members?</i>					
7	Prohibited Activities					
	<i>Does the Program have a policy which ensures that Members do not engage in Prohibited Activities?</i>					
8	Host Site Agreement					
	<i>Does the Program ensure that each site is aware of the requirements outlined in the Host Site Agreement?</i>					
	<i>Does the Program ensure that Members are primarily engaged in activities as described in the host site agreement?</i>					
9	Host Site Supervision					
	<i>Does the Program have a policy which ensures that supervisors are appropriately trained and knowledgeable about AmeriCorps?</i>					
	<i>Are supervisors trained regarding the Prohibited Activities?</i>					
	<i>Are Members provided with appropriate supervision by qualified supervisor in accordance with approved application?</i>					

		Y	*N	NA	Additional Info	Comments and "N" justification
10	Tutoring					
	<i>Does the Program meet the qualifications for Members serving as tutors under CFR2522.910 through 2522.940?</i>					
11	AmeriCorps Logo/Branding					
	<i>Does the Program ensure that Members are wearing the AmeriCorps logo at all times while serving?</i>					
	<i>Does the Program ensure that they incorporate AmeriCorps signage in their office(s)?</i>					
	<i>Does the Program ensure that AmeriCorps signage is visible at all host sites?</i>					
12	Safety					
	<i>Does the Program institute appropriate safety precautions for Members?</i>					
	<i>Does the Program report serious injuries to their Program Officer?</i>					
13	Drug Free Workplace Act					
	<i>Does the Program apply service release and resumption policies appropriately in compliance with the Drug Free Workplace Act?</i>					
14	Voting					
	<i>Does the Program have a policy that encourages, but does not require, Members to vote and allow Members time to vote with no penalty?</i>					
15	Jury Duty					
	<i>Does the Program have a policy that allows Members to serve on a jury with no penalty?</i>					
16	Military Service					
	<i>Does the Program have a policy that allows Members to serve in the Armed Forces with no penalty?</i>					

		Y	*N	NA	Additional Info	Comments and "N" justification
17	Education					
	<i>Does they have a policy that ensures the availability of support services to Members earning a GED during their AmeriCorps service?</i>					
18	Program Objectives (Performance Measures)					
	<i>Do they have procedures that tracks progress & shows achievement toward Program objectives?</i>					
	<i>Does they produce reports that accurately capture Program accomplishments?</i>					
19	Volunteers					
	<i>Does the Program utilize community volunteers?</i>					
	<i>Does the Program have a tracking system that shows number of volunteers they have utilized?</i>					
20	Commission Approval					
	<i>Does they obtain written approval of Program changes from their SIC Program Officer when required?</i>					
21	Member Files					
	<i>Member files stored in a secured/locked area?</i>					
22	Grievance Procedures					
	<i>Do you have grievance procedures specific to AmeriCorps Members?</i>					
23	Enhanced Whistleblower Protection					
	<i>Enhanced Whistleblower Protection included in their Policies and Procedures Manual?</i>					
24	State Travel Policy					
	<i>Do Program's travel policies conform to the Illinois Travel Control Board policies?</i>					
25	Criminal History Background Checks					
	<i>Does the program have a policy in place that aligns with CNCS and Serve Illinois National Service Criminal History Check procedures?</i>					

Notes:

Program Monitoring Officer: _____

Date: _____

MODULE D: Member Documentation Compliance

Member Files

Review twenty five percent (25%) or ten (10) Member, whichever is GREATER.

Program Monitoring Officer: _____ Start Date: _____

PROGRAM: _____ PROGRAM YEAR: _____

MEMBER NAME: _____ Service Year: _____

	Are the following items in Member file?	Y	*N	NA	Additional Information	Comments and "N" justification
1	Member Files					
	<i>Are Member files stored in secured/locked area or password protected electronically?</i>					
2	Member File Checklist					
	<i>Is Member File Checklist present and complete?</i>					
3	Member File Coversheet					
	<i>Is Member File Coversheet present and complete?</i>					
4	Orientation Checklist					
	<i>Is Orientation Checklist present and complete?</i>					
5	Member Application					
	<i>Is Member App. to program present?</i>				Dated:	
6	Member Enrollment form					
	<i>Member Enrollment Form present? (electronic version from eGrants)</i>					
7	Updated "Member Information" page printed from eGrants					
	<i>Is current member Info page present?</i>				Date Printed:	
	<i>Is SSN listed as "Verified"?</i>				Date Verified:	
	<i>If not, is there documentation additional steps to verify were completed by program</i>					

	Are the following items in Member file?	Y	*N	NA	Additional Information	Comments and "N" justification
	<i>Is citizenship listed as "Verified"?</i>				<i>Date Verified:</i>	
	<i>If not, is there documentation additional steps to verify were completed by program</i>					
8	Photo ID indicating age (only one required – circle which one is present)					
	<i>Driver's License / State ID Citizenship-Naturalization ID / Passport</i>				<i>State: DOB:</i>	
9	Parental Consent Form					
	<i>Present for members age 17?</i>					
10	High School Diploma or equivalency (only one required)					
	<i>Copy of diploma or GED (circle which)</i>				<i>Diploma or GED</i>	
	<i>Copy of Certification of Completion (Persons with Disabilities)</i>					
	<i>Self-identity on enrollment form</i>					
	<i>Statement that Member agrees to earn one prior to using Education Award</i>					
11	Tax Documents					
	W4 <i>(Only if paying member using CNCS funds)</i>					
12	Member Service Agreement includes:					
	<i>II. Date of Birth listed</i>				<i>DOB:</i>	
	<i>III. Terms of Service listed</i>				<i>Begin: End:</i>	
	<i>III. The minimum service hours required</i>				<i>Hours required:</i>	
	<i>IV. All blanks filled in on MSA</i>					
	<i>V-A. Living allowance total and amount of monthly increments</i>				\$	
					\$ # per month	
	<i>V-D. The amount of the Education Award upon successful completion</i>				\$	

	Are the following items in Member file?	Y	*N	NA	Additional Information	Comments and "N" justification
	<u>Are the following sections also included</u> <i>Sections: I, IV, V-B, V-C, V-E, V-F, VI, VII-A, VII-B, VII-C, VII-D, VII-E, VII-F, VII-G, VII-H, VII-I, VIII-A, VII-B, IX, X, XI</i> (9 pages)					
	<i>MSA signed & dated by Member</i>				<i>Dated:</i> <i>(must be dated before start date)</i>	
	<i>MSA signed & dated by Program Rep</i>				<i>Dated:</i> <i>(must be dated before start date)</i>	
13	Additional Required forms					
	<i>Position Description</i>					
	<i>Media Consent Form</i>				<i>Dated:</i> <i>(must be dated before start date)</i>	
	<i>Documentation of health care enrollment or waiver</i> <i>(only required for FT members)</i>				<i>Dated:</i> <i>(must be dated before start date)</i>	
	<i>Documentation of child care enrollment or waiver</i> <i>(only for FT members)</i>				<i>Dated:</i> <i>(must be dated before start date)</i>	
14	Criminal background check results (Criminal History Checklist)					
	<i>Authorization Form Signed and dated</i>				<i>Dated:</i> <i>(must be dated before start date)</i>	
	<i>Initiation date for FBI Background checks?</i>				<i>FBI Initiation Date:</i>	
	<i>Initiation date for FBI Background checks on or before start date?</i>					
	<i>Initiation date for IL Background checks?</i>				<i>IL Initiation Date:</i>	
	<i>Initiation date for IL Background checks on or before start date?</i>					
	<i>Initiation date of background checks ON or AFTER the date the form is signed?</i>					

	Are the following items in Member file?	Y	*N	NA	Additional Information	Comments and "N" justification
15	National Sex Offender search results (prior to enrollment)					
	<i>Was the National Sex Offender search completed on or before the first day?</i>				<i>Dated:</i>	
	<i>Was every listing on NSOPW initialed, dated, and statement with reason why cleared listed?</i>					
	<i>Was every state tribal and territory listed as completed on the check?</i>					
	<i>If no, was another check completed daily until all states were cleared?</i>					
	<i>Did program ensure member did NOT serve until all were cleared?</i>					
16	Background Checks					
	<i>FBI background check results present?</i>				<i>Completion Date:</i>	
	<i>Illinois State Police check results present?</i>				<i>Completion Date:</i>	
	<i>Is the state of permanent residence listed on the Member Information form in eGrants outside of Illinois? (N/A if NO)</i>				<i>Home State listed in eGrants:</i>	
	<i>Home state background check results? (state listed as permanent address on Member Application, unless member is a full time ENROLLED college student at an Illinois College)</i>				<i>Initiation Date: Completion Date:</i>	
	<i>Decision Tree/Memo present for ANY results on either or both of the backgrounds checks? (FBI, State of IL or Additional State Background checks)</i>					

	Are the following items in Member file?	Y	*N	NA	Additional Information	Comments and "N" justification
17	Timesheets					
	<i>Member signature and date</i>					
	<i>Supervisor signature and date</i>					
	<i>Is the timesheet official? (There are no alterations to timesheet after member signed and submitted.)</i>					
	<i>Any alterations after member signed? (required to resubmit timesheet)</i>					
	<i>Are direct service hours separate from and notated as training hours or fundraising hours on all timesheets?</i>					
18	Did Member receive direct supervision/accompaniment until either FBI or State of IL background check received and cleared?					
	<i>Date accompaniment should have stopped? (Date first background check report received back – IL or FBI)</i>	Date:				
	<i>Is accompaniment documentation listed <u>ON</u> timesheets to include dates accompanied notated, name of staff member accompanying, signature of staff member and date?</i>					
	<i>Was the accompaniment documentation completed before that timesheet was processed for payment?</i>					
	<i>Date accompaniment stopped (as shown on timesheets)?</i>				Dated:	
	<i>Did accompaniment stop after ONE of the FBI or IL background checks were received back?</i>				Date first was received:	
19	Member discipline documentation					
	<i>If the member had discipline, is it included in file?</i>					

	Are the following items in Member file?	Y	*N	NA	Additional Information	Comments and "N" justification
20	Mid-term Evaluation (required for FT or HT Members)					
	<i>When is mid term evaluation due?</i>				Date:	
	<i>Is Mid term eval present? (If applicable)</i>					
	<i>Does the evaluation include hours completed to date? If hours are extremely low compared to timeline progress – is there a plan in place to ensure hours are met?</i>					
21	End of Term Evaluation (required for all Members)					
	<i>Does the evaluation include hours completed to date?</i>					
	<i>Has the Member completed the required number of hours?</i>					
	<i>Has the Member satisfactorily completed assignments?</i>					
22	Member End of Term/Exit Form					
	<i>Completed online (screen print from AC Portal)</i>					
	<i>Signed and dated by Member</i>					
	<i>Signed and dated by program staff</i>					
	<i>Completed within 30 days of exit</i>					
23	Documentation of Compelling Personal Circumstances (if applicable)					
	<i>Did the SIC approve this request prior to exiting the member?</i>					
	<i>Are compelling reasons included on the Exit Form? (Attached)</i>					
	<i>Are the reasons due to no cause of the Member?</i>					
24	Documentation of Cause (if applicable)					
	<i>Did the SIC approve this request prior to exiting the member?</i>					
	<i>Are reasons included on the Exit Form? (Attached if applicable)</i>					

	Are the following items in Member file?	Y	*N	NA	Additional Information	Comments and "N" justification
25	Family and medical leave coverage					
	<i>Was FMLA available where appropriate?</i>					
26	Member Suspension Form (if applicable)					
27	Member Change of Status Form (if applicable)				<i>Dated:</i>	
28	Member Early Exit Form (if applicable)				<i>Dated:</i>	

Notes:

Program Monitoring Officer: _____

Date: _____

MODULE D2: Staff or Site Supervisor Documentation Compliance

Staff or Site Supervisor Files

**Review twenty five percent (25%) or ten(10) Staff or Site Supervisor, whichever is GREATER.
This includes any person listed in Section 1 of the budget, to include those listed as match/in kind**

Program Monitoring Officer: _____ Date: _____

PROGRAM: _____ PROGRAM YEAR: _____

STAFF NAME: _____ Service Year: _____

	Are the following items in file?	Y	*N	NA	Additional Information	Comments and "N" justification
1	Photo ID indicating age (only one required)					
	<i>Driver's License; or State ID (circle which)</i>				State: DOB:	
	<i>Passport; or</i>				DOB:	
	<i>Citizenship/Naturalization ID</i>				DOB:	
2	Additional Required forms					
	<i>Media Consent Form</i>					
3	Criminal background checks					
	<i>Authorization Form Signed and dated</i>				Dated: <i>(must be dated before start date)</i>	
	<i>Initiation date for FBI Background checks?</i>				FBI Initiation Date:	
	<i>Initiation date for FBI Background checks on or before start date?</i>					
	<i>Initiation date for IL Background checks?</i>				IL Initiation Date:	
	<i>Initiation date for IL Background checks on or before start date?</i>					
	<i>Initiation date of background checks ON or AFTER the date the form is signed?</i>					

	Are the following items in file?	Y	*N	NA	Additional Information	Comments and "N" justification
4	<i>National Sex Offender search results (prior to enrollment)</i>					
	<i>Was the National Sex Offender search completed on or before the first day?</i>				<i>Dated:</i>	
	<i>Was every listing on NSOPW initialed, dated, and statement with reason why cleared listed?</i>					
	<i>Was every state tribal and territory listed as completed on the check?</i>					
	<i>If no, was another check completed daily until all states were cleared?</i>					
	<i>Did program ensure member did NOT serve until all were cleared?</i>					
5	<i>Background Checks</i>					
	<i>FBI background check results present?</i>				<i>Completion Date:</i>	
	<i>Illinois State Police check results present?</i>				<i>Completion Date:</i>	
	<i>Home state background check results? (out of state ID requires additional background check)</i>				<i>Initiation Date: Completion Date:</i>	
	<i>Decision Tree/Memo present for ANY results on either or both of the backgrounds checks? (FBI, State of IL or Additional State Background checks)</i>					

Notes:

Program Monitoring Officer: _____

Date: _____

MODULE E: Host Site Visit

Program Name:					
Host Site:		Date:			
		Yes	*No	Additional Info	Comments and "N" justification
1	<i>Are AmeriCorps Members on site during visit? If yes, how many? _____</i>				
2	<i>Are the AmeriCorps Members performing prohibited activities?</i>				
3	<i>Are AmeriCorps Members wearing the AmeriCorps logo?</i>				
4	<i>Is the AmeriCorps logo visible at the host site exterior entrance?</i>				
5	<i>Is there a sign in log for everyone to sign in and out at all times?</i>				
6	<i>Any other questions or concerns they have or would like to talk to the Commission about?</i>				
7	<i>Do the Site Supervisors ensure no Prohibited Activities are conducted?</i>				
8	<i>Can the site supervisors name the prohibited activities?</i>				
9	<i>Do the Site Supervisors have regular contact with the Program Director?</i>				
10	<i>Is the Program Director readily available when the Site Supervisors have questions/concerns?</i>				
11	<i>How often do the Site Supervisors have training sessions with the Program Director?</i>				
12	<i>Was the Site Supervisor given a copy of the Policy & Procedure Handbook for Members?</i>				
13	<i>Any other questions or concerns they have or would like to talk to the Commission about?</i>				

Notes:

Program Name:	Date:
----------------------	--------------

		Yes	*No	Additional Info	Comments and "N" justification
1	<i>How many AmeriCorps Members are participating in this interview?</i>			No. _____	
2	<i>Can Members list the Prohibited Activities?</i>				
3	<i>Do the Members have regular contact with the Program Director?</i>				
4	<i>Is the Program Director readily available when the Members have questions/concerns?</i>				
5	<i>How often do members have training sessions with the Program Director?</i>				
6	<i>How often does the Program Director visit the host sites?</i>				
7	<i>Are the Members wearing the AmeriCorps logo?</i>				
8	<i>Any other questions or concerns they have or would like to talk to the Commission about?</i>				

Member Names:

Notes:

To be completed if findings require repayment of funds.

Program Name:	Date:
----------------------	--------------

For each finding note the referenced review instrument module and number.	Disallowed Costs			Comments and Justifications
	Federal	Match	Education Award	
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

Disallowed Cost Recovery	Date	Comments and Justifications
Notice of disallowed costs letter sent to program.		
Disallowed costs returned to Serve Illinois.		
Disallowed costs returned to CNCS/Trust.		

Additional Corrective Actions			Comments and Justifications
Corrective Action Needed	Due Date	Completion Date	

Overall Site Visit Notes and Summary Comments

Monitoring Officer Notes:

Program Monitoring Officer: _____ Date: _____

Program Manager Notes:

Illinois AmeriCorps Program Manager: _____ Date: _____

Executive Director Notes:

Illinois Serve Illinois Executive Director: _____ Date: _____

Official close out date of Monitoring (including Corrective Action and Follow Up): _____

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Items of Equipment with a Current Fair Market Value of \$5,000 or More and Purchased with Federal Grant Funds

Official Signature: _____

Grant Number: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date of submission: _____

Title: _____

Is this program continuing beyond the expiration date of this CNS grant? Yes No

Telephone Number: _____

If the above answer is YES, does the grantee request to continue use of all or part of the equipment? Yes (identify all such equipment below by marking it with a double **) No
or

Does the grantee request the use of the equipment on other federally supported activities? Yes No

Title Holder/ Funding Source (e.g. Grantee/ CNS)	Item Description	Equipment Serial No.	Location/Site and Condition*	Acquisition Date/Cost	Estimated Current Fair Market Value	Disposition/Date

* E-Excellent VG-Very Good G-Good F-Fair P-Poor

If the grantee does not request continued use of items of equipment, the AmeriCorps Agency will issue disposition instructions upon receipt of the inventory.

CERTIFICATION OF SUBGRANT CLOSEOUT

Grant #:

Grantee Name:

I certify that our agency has completed all closeout actions; accomplished all program and financial requirements; secured all reports; and reconciled all funding with respect to subgrants we have awarded under the above-referenced grant.

Signature

Typed Name


Title

Date



National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Manual

Effective May 1, 2021

A decorative graphic consisting of four horizontal lines in red, dark red, blue, and dark blue, stacked vertically and extending across the width of the page. The lines are slightly wavy and overlap at the right end.

250 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20525
202-606-5000/ 800-942 2677A

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This table lists all the changes made in the most recent revision of this document. See Previous Change Logs for a full list of changes.

#	Date	Section and Page #	Change
16	5/1/21	Throughout	Links updated to reflect new site: https://americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/history-check
17	5/13/21	Throughout	Previous Change log moved to external document
18	5/13/21	Throughout	Links updated to reflect regulations: https://ecfr.federalregister.gov/current/title-45/subtitle-B/chapter-XXV/part-2540/subpart-B

National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC)

The NSCHC is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. NSCHCs have three components:

- A nationwide name-based check of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW). The NSOPW (<https://www.nsopw.gov/>) is a centralized system that identifies people who are registered as sex offenders in states, territories, and with many federally recognized Tribes,
- A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the candidate's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve or work, and
- A fingerprint-based FBI check

NSCHC requirements are baseline screening procedures. Organizations should institute a holistic framework for safeguarding beneficiaries of service.

Safeguarding beneficiaries involves more than screening for criminal history. It includes taking additional actions to ensure the health and safety of beneficiaries, such as having clear guidelines on interactions between individuals, policies, and procedures on appropriate behavior and how to respond to noncompliance with those policies.

NSCHC

Organizations that receive one of the following grants, as a recipient or subrecipient, must conduct NSCHCs:

- Operational grants provided by AmeriCorps State and National
- Foster Grandparent Program Grants
- Retired Senior Volunteer Program Grants
- Senior Companion Program Grants
- Senior Demonstration Program Grants that receive funding from AmeriCorps
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service Grants
- September 11th Day of Service Grants
- Social Innovation Fund Grants
- Volunteer Generation Fund Grants
- AmeriCorps VISTA Program Grants
- AmeriCorps VISTA Support Grants

All grant program provisions, laws and regulations, including the requirement to perform the NSCHC, applies to any subrecipients or of grant recipients identified in the aforementioned list. This requirement applies no matter how large or small the dollar amount of the sub-award, or whether the costs are covered by AmeriCorps federal funds or, in the case of cost-reimbursement grants, non-federal matching funds.

Individuals required to comply with NSCHC

The following individuals, who serve or work under a grant subject to NSCHC requirements, must have an NSCHC:

- AmeriCorps members serving in State and National programs
- AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serving in the Foster Grandparent program who receive a stipend
- AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serving in the Senior Companion program who receive a stipend
- Individuals in positions in which they will receive a salary, directly or reflected as match, under a cost reimbursement grant

The following individuals are exempt from NSCHC:

- Individuals who are under the age of 18 on the first day of work or service who serve on an NSCHC required grant.
- Individuals whose activity is entirely included in the grant recipient's indirect cost rate or cost allocation plan.

AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serving in the RSVP program and AmeriCorps members serving in the VISTA program are not required to comply with NSCHC. AmeriCorps members serving in the VISTA program will undergo a separate criminal history check process managed by the AmeriCorps VISTA program. Grant recipients may choose to conduct criminal history checks on AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serving in the RSVP program.

Contractors: In most cases, contractors are not covered by NSCHC.

AmeriCorps applies the NSCHC requirements based on the legal distinctions between subawards (also known as subgrants) and contracts as defined in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. See [2 C.F.R. § 200.2](#). Organizations may colloquially refer to subawards as contracts.

However, the two are legally distinct and the NSCHC requirements apply to subawards, not contracts. Guidance on how to determine whether you have entered into a subaward or a contract with another entity is available at [2 C.F.R. § 200.331](#), "Subrecipient and contractor determinations."

Subaward: The NSCHC requirement does apply to individuals who work or serve under subawards, as defined under [2 C.F.R. § 200.2](#). This is because subrecipients are responsible for adherence to applicable Federal requirements specified in the original federal award, as stated in [2 C.F.R. § 200.331\(a\)\(4\)](#).

Contractor: The NSCHC requirement does not apply to individuals who provide services under a contract, as defined under [2 C.F.R. § 200.2](#). If your organization enters into a contract with an entity to provide services, the NSCHC requirements do not apply to the contractor because payments made by your organization to the contractor are not grant-funded living allowances, stipends, or salaries.

If the services for which you contracted involve ongoing contact between contractor personnel and service beneficiaries, then even though the specific requirements of the NSCHC do not apply to those contract personnel, AmeriCorps strongly recommends that your organization use prudent and reasonable screening procedures of contractor personnel to protect service beneficiaries from the risk of harm. You may obtain free and immediate results of a sex offender search through <https://www.nsopw.gov/>. The costs of additional screening

for contractors with ongoing contact with service beneficiaries are allowable grant costs.

Please note that this guidance only clarifies existing rules related to the NSCHC. It does not authorize or change a recipient's ability to subaward or contract. By regulation, AmeriCorps Seniors recipients are prohibited from making subawards or from contracting out project management requirements necessary to accomplish the purposes of the grant, as described in 45 C.F.R. [§ 2551.22](#), [2552.22](#), and [2553.22](#). Social Innovation Fund subrecipients may not make further subawards.

Individuals deemed ineligible due to NSCHC

Under the regulation and statute, an individual is ineligible to serve or work on an AmeriCorps grant if they:

- refuse to consent to NSCHC;
- make a false statement in connection with NSCHC;
- is registered, or is required to be registered, on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; or
- has been convicted of murder, as defined in [18 U.S.C. 1111](#).

Grant recipients must maintain adequate documentation that the individual has consented to NSCHC and understands that selection into the program is contingent upon the organizations' review of the individuals NSCHC component results, if any. An organization's policy should describe actions required to inform an individual of their rights related to NSCHC, as well as privacy practices to ensure confidentiality of any information related to NSCHC, consistent with the authorization provided by the applicant.

If the applicant is found to be ineligible because of NSCHC component results, grant recipients must provide a reasonable opportunity for the individual to review and challenge the factual accuracy of the results before action is taken to exclude the individual from the position.

Suitability

Suitability is determined by the grant recipients and subrecipients, or service sites. An individual may be eligible to work or serve in a position, under the NSCHC regulation, but a grant recipient, subrecipient, or service site may determine that an individual is not suitable to work or serve in such a position based on criteria that the grant recipient or subrecipient or service site establishes.

The suitability criteria must be consistent with state and federal Civil Rights and nondiscrimination laws, including [Titles VI](#) and [VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) (and [AmeriCorps' implementing regulations under Title VI](#)). Additional screening criteria should be

clearly described and adhered to within grant recipient and subrecipient or service site policy.

Arrests vs. Convictions: The requirements do not disqualify applicants on the basis of arrest. In certain states, there are legal constraints on how an arrest record may be considered, and some statewide criminal repositories do not include arrest information in the records they release. Recipients should recognize that they have a dual status under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, depending on the nature of their relationship with a candidate.

Grant recipients, because they get federal financial assistance, must comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulation. These regulations prohibit discrimination, including selection and placement of volunteers and members, on the basis of race, color, and national origin, in AmeriCorps-funded programs and activities. And as employers, recipients must also comply with [VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#), which prohibits discrimination in employment decisions. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has issued [guidance](#) explaining when consideration of arrest and conviction records violates Title VII. In addition, grant recipients must comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of the NCSA and the regulations at [45 CFR §2540.210](#).

As the EEOC guidance outlines, recipients should be mindful that arrests alone are mere allegations, and that actual criminal convictions, or actual evidence of conduct underlying an arrest, are the relevant indicators of a person's suitability, or in some cases, eligibility, to serve with, or work for, an AmeriCorps grant recipient. Recipients should make sure that their screening practices are narrowly tailored in a manner that complies with these federal nondiscrimination requirements, in addition to applicable state laws governing the consideration of criminal history records.

Non-disqualifying Convictions: If the NSCHC returns results other than those above, the recipient has the discretion – subject to any federal civil rights law and state law requirements – to decide if the results of a criminal history background check disqualify a candidate from service. Recipients should consider the factors set forth in the [EEOC's guidance under Title VII](#), including the nature and gravity of the offense, the time that has passed since the conviction or completion of the sentence, and the nature of the position. Recipients should have written policies on their disqualification criteria and be consistent in how those criteria are applied.

Additionally, organizations must use national service criminal history check results in combination with other information obtained through the grant recipient's selection process to make an informed choice before selecting an individual for work or service. Recipients should maintain documentation of the evidence used in making suitability determinations for individual's with non-disqualifying convictions.

Grant recipients should be aware of federal reentry policy, which aims, among other goals, to reduce post prison barriers to employment. Participation in national service programs funded by AmeriCorps could help people who have been in prison successfully re-enter society. Therefore, we encourage agencies to minimize barriers to service – without putting their program beneficiaries at genuine risk – for former prisoners who are eligible under the law.

False statements under NSCHC

A false statement in connection with NSCHC is made when an individual intentionally provides false information required to conduct national service criminal history check components found at section [45 CFR §2540.205](#). This would arise when an individual intentionally provides the following to conduct the components of the NSCHC:

- A false name,
- A government-issued identification belonging to another person,
- A false identification, or
- Fingerprints of another individual.

The intentionally false statements, as listed above regarding information required to conduct NSCHC components found at [42 USC 12645g\(b\)](#), render an individual ineligible to serve under [42 USC 12645g\(c\)](#).

As reminder, suitability criteria independent of the NSCHC ineligibility criteria may be established by recipients and subrecipients or service sites, subject to any federal civil rights law and state law requirements.

Considerations Around Grantee-mandated Disqualification Determinations: In cases where individuals provide false information requested for a grantee-mandated disqualification determination, grant recipients have discretion in how to deal with the situation, again consistent with federal civil rights law and state law requirements. Grantee-mandated disqualification determinations, and false statements related to such determinations, have no effect on an individual's eligibility under the statute.

NSCHC check components

NSCHC check components include three distinct components:

- a nationwide check of the National Sex Offender Public website through www.NSOPW.gov;
- a check of the state criminal history record repository or agency-designated alternative for the individual's state of residence and state of service; and
- a fingerprint-based check of the FBI criminal history record database through the state criminal history record repository or agency-approved vendor.

State of residence

NSCHC regulations require organizations to search (by name or fingerprint) the state criminal history record repository.

The state where a candidate “resides” is the location the individual identifies as their place of residence at the moment in time they applied to serve or work.

There is no measure of how long the individual has resided at a location that a program is required to validate to establish the correct state of residence – even a single day as a resident would meet the test for where an individual has made a home.

College Students: For the purpose of AmeriCorps requirements, an individual applying to serve or work who is enrolled as a full-time college student is deemed to be residing in the state where they live for the purpose of attending the school without regards to whether or not that home is on- or off-campus, and whether or not that home is in the same state as the college is located.

The state to check does not change because a student is on semester or summer breaks or temporarily residing elsewhere. There is no test needed to measure duration of residence while attending school.

Programs may not opt to use any other basis for identifying the student’s state of residence, e.g., such as the student’s family home.

Foreign Residents: For those living abroad, the individual’s last state of residence in the United States, as well as the state where the program operates, must be checked. If the individual never lived in the United States, then only the state where they will be serving is required to be checked. Programs are also strongly encouraged to perform additional checks, including making contact with appropriate sources in other countries, whenever possible.

Documentation: While AmeriCorps does not dictate specifics with regard to documentation for establishing state of residence, programs must ensure that the totality of information is accurate and logical. For example, when a government-issued ID address does not match the indicated state of residence address, programs should document the reason for the variance. Programs should have clear, written policies and procedures establishing protocol for discerning state of residence for all covered individuals.

Conducting the NSCHC

NSCHCs can be conducted in the following ways:

NSOPW checks: Use the agency approved vendor (Truescreen) or go directly to www.NSOPW.gov.

State of Residence and State of Service checks: Use the agency approved vendor (Truescreen) or go directly to the appropriate state criminal history repository or AmeriCorps approved alternative statewide source.

FBI checks: Use the agency approved vendor (Fieldprint) or go directly to the appropriate state criminal history repository or AmeriCorps approved alternative statewide source. Please note: the FBI authorizes Fieldprint to conduct FBI checks only for those who are required to comply with NSCHC.

An organization's written procedures should specify the AmeriCorps approved sources to be used for conducting the required checks and the actions required to conduct the required checks using each approved source, including how to document adherence with NSCHC timing requirements. One way for grant recipients or subrecipients to obtain and document the required components of the NSCHC is through the use of agency-approved vendors.

For information on how to conduct agency approved vendor checks see the [Using Fieldprint and Truescreen Manual under the How to Conduct NSCHC header](#).

For information on how to conduct NSOPW/state repository checks see the [Using NSOPW and State Repositories Manual under the How to Conduct NSCHC header](#).

Name-based Checks

AmeriCorps expects that grant recipient staff will undertake reasonable due diligence to determine the current first and last name to conduct name-based checks. It is prudent, but not required, to check any other names that the person has used or is/was known by.

Use of the first name and last name reflected on the following sources is acceptable:

- First and last name reflected on a signed Employee's Withholding Certificate W-4 form
- First and last name reflected on a signed USCIS Employment Eligibility Verification I-9 form
- First and last name reflected on any document on the USCIS Form I-9's List of acceptable documents
- First and last name reflected on benefit or income documentation from SSA, including but not limited to Social Security Benefit statement, SSA-1099, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) documentation, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) documentation

If the individual provides grant recipients with documents that reflect different names, the grant recipient should obtain additional information from the individual to determine the first and last name of the applicant that will obtain the most accurate criminal history records. The process to reconcile documentation reflecting different names to determine the first and last name to be used on a name-based check should be recorded in the grant recipients' policies and procedures and any additional documentation should be maintained as grant records.

NSCHC Timing

The NSCHC must be conducted, reviewed, and an eligibility determination made by the grant recipient or subrecipient based on the results of the NSCHC no later than the day before a person begins to work or serve on a NSCHC-required grant.

Work or service hours include AmeriCorps funded orientation and training activities.

Break in Service

If a person serves consecutive terms of service with the same organization and has a break in service longer than 180 calendar days, then an additional NSCHC is required. A break in service means that a person is no longer providing service through or receiving salary from a recipient or subrecipient. Temporary interruption of work or service without termination of employment or expiration of the agreement under which service is being provided is not a break in service.

It is not necessary to redo the NSCHC for individuals who serve consecutive terms of service with the same organization if the break in service or work is less than 180 calendar days and the original NSCHC checks are compliant.

However, if the person turns 18 before the start of the subsequent term of service, NSCHC is required prior to the individual beginning a subsequent term of work or service.

It is a best practice to document any break in service and retain that documentation as a grant record. For example, if an AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer who receives a stipend has run out of leave and is on leave without pay, the grant recipient should maintain documentation to show that the person is on leave status rather than terminated from the program.

Changing National Service Programs

When someone leaves one national service grant program and begins serving or working in different grant program, the grant program receiving the employee or participant must conduct a new NSCHC, even if there has been no break in service.

However, if an individual moves from one position to another position within the same organization and there has not been a break in service that is longer than 180 calendar days, a recheck is not needed.

NSCHC Documentation

The grant recipient must maintain adequate documentation of their NSCHC **process and practices** as well as documentation of individual NSCHC grant records.

- Evidence of adopted NSCHC Policies and Procedures
 - Describes how grant recipient will address all NSCHC requirements, including the AmeriCorps approved sources to be used for conducting NSCHC and practices for documenting adherence to NSCHC eligibility determination and timing requirements
 - Describes practices for protecting information related to NSCHC. Grant recipients must take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of any information relating to the criminal history check, consistent with authorization provided by the applicant.
 - Describes adopted procedures for informing individuals of their rights related to NSCHC and how NSCHC results will be used by the program
 - Where applicable, describes process for monitoring NSCHC of sub-recipients and/or service locations
 - Describes how notice is provided to an individual that selection into the program is contingent upon the organization's review of the individual's NSCHC component results, if any; and
 - Describes how the program complies with the requirements to provide a reasonable opportunity for the individual to review and challenge the factual accuracy of the result before action is taken to exclude the candidate from the position
- Evidence of required annual staff training by retaining certificate of completion of the AmeriCorps e-course training
 - Ensure staff retake the course prior to expiration of the certificate. Retain certificates of completion from each year as grant records.

The grant recipient must maintain adequate documentation of their NSCHC process and practices as well as documentation of **individual NSCHC grant records**.

- Evidence that all required components (NSOPW, State(s), and FBI checks) were completed and on file ([45 CFR §2540.206](#))
 - All required components (NSOPW, State(s), and FBI) were conducted on time ([45 CFR §2540.205](#)) and documentation reflects evidence of when checks were reviewed (adjudicated) and considered when making an eligibility determination
- All required components ((NSOPW, State(s), and FBI checks) were conducted through sources authorized by AmeriCorps ([45 CFR §2540.204](#)) and are consistent with the sources described in the grant recipient's adopted NSCHC policies and procedures
- Evidence that NSOPW results include searches from all States, Territories, and Indian Tribes ([45 CFR §2540.204](#))
- Evidence that First and Last Names used on name-based checks reflect the current name of the individual

- Documents used to determine an individual's first and last name must be consistent with sources described in the grant recipient's adopted NSCHC policies and procedures. [Refer to agency guidance on name-based checks.](#)
- Documentation of consent from the candidate to conduct State and FBI checks and share results ([45 CFR §2540.206](#))
- Documentation that the candidate is eligible to serve/work if a vendor returns a "do not recommend" result for the candidate ([45 CFR §2540.206](#))
 - NOTE: A vendor's adjudication recommendation not to "recommend" the candidate indicates that the selecting organization needs more information before it can make a final determination as to the fitness of the individual to work or serve. It does not mean that an individual is ineligible for work or service.
 - Grant recipients must maintain adequate documentation of the process implemented to make an eligibility determination and may include a contemporaneously dated memo to the file documenting determination of the individual's eligibility.

Please note that many documentation requirements are obtained and maintained by agency approved vendors. More information on agency approved vendor usage can be found in the [Using Fieldprint and Truescreen Manual.](#)

NSCHC Grant Costs

Applicants seeking to serve or work in a position that requires NSCHC may not be charged for the cost of any component of a National Service Criminal History Check.

NSCHC Waiver

If the grant recipient or subrecipient is unable to abide by the NSCHC rule, the agency can waive requirements for good cause or any other lawful basis. Contact NSCHCWaiverRequest@cns.gov for a waiver request form and more information.

NSCHC Pre-Approved Waivers

Pre-Approved NSCHC Waivers are waivers that grant recipients can use without additional written approval from AmeriCorps. Grant recipients may use these Pre-Approved Waivers at any time, provided they abide by the conditions described below. However, AmeriCorps strongly encourages all grant recipients that intend to use a pre-approved NSCHC Waiver to first consult with their Portfolio Manager to ensure that they understand its requirements. Noncompliance with the NSCHC regulations or with the requirements of a pre-approved NSCHC Waiver may result in a financial impact for the grant recipient.

AmeriCorps may add or remove pre-approved NSCHC Waivers at any time. Maintaining awareness of current pre-approved NSCHC Waivers is the responsibility of grant recipients. Once revoked, an organization may no longer use a pre-approved NSCHC Waiver. When a

pre-approved NSCHC Waiver is revoked, the Waiver does not apply to any individuals who begin work or service after the expiration date of the pre-approved NSCHC Waiver. The use of pre-approved NSCHC Waivers should be clearly described within NSCHC policies and procedures, including actions for maintaining awareness of the active AmeriCorps pre-approved NSCHC Waivers. [Refer to Appendix A for active Pre-Approved Waivers.](#)

Enforcement

AmeriCorps will apply administrative enforcement related to findings of NSCHC noncompliance identified through oversight and monitoring of grant records, such as Payment Integrity Information Act (PIIA) sampling, formerly the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act (IPERIA), compliance assessments conducted by the Office of Monitoring, and Office of Inspector General audits, reviews or investigations.

This guidance does not change the legal requirements for the NSCHC, nor does it prevent AmeriCorps or AmeriCorps-OIG from pursuing other civil or criminal enforcement or preventive remedies available by law.

This guidance will be used by AmeriCorps monitoring officials. This guidance uses the term "monitoring officials" to collectively refer to this group of AmeriCorps individuals (excluding personnel of the Office of Inspector General) and the term "recipients" to refer to AmeriCorps prime grant recipients and subrecipients, unless specifically differentiated. AmeriCorps requires all prime grantees to implement this guidance for NSCHC disallowance.

AmeriCorps will also refer and abide by this document in circumstances where grant recipients appeal determinations of NSCHC noncompliance.

This guidance is effective on May 1, 2021 for the following individuals:

- individuals who start service/work on NSCHC-required grants on May 1, 2021 or later and
- individuals who are serving/working on NSCHC-required grants as of May 1, 2021 and continue to serve/work on or after November 1, 2021.

Any NSCHC noncompliance for individuals who are serving/working on NSCHC-required grants as of May 1, 2021 and exit service/work before November 1, 2021 or exited service/work before May 1, 2021 must refer to the July 1, 2019 National Service Criminal History Check Guide to Enforcement Action for enforcement action.

Ineligibility: Ineligible individuals are barred from working or serving in a covered position on a grant-funded program. All costs associated with an ineligible individual will be disallowed. Costs include any salary/stipend/living allowance (as applicable), FICA, and education award. These requirements apply whether the associated costs were paid with Federal funds or with matching funds.

If AmeriCorps is made aware of an ineligible individual that the recipient failed to report, AmeriCorps may place the grant's funding on manual hold and/or take additional action.

AmeriCorps employees will, without delay, notify the Office of Inspector General, the Office of the Chief Risk Officer, and the Office of the General Counsel of suspected instances of ineligibility arising from disqualifying criminal histories.

NSCHC Compliance: A compliant NSCHC consists of the following elements:

- All required components (NSOPW, State(s), and FBI) were completed and on file ([45 CFR §2540.204](#));
- All required components (NSOPW, State(s), and FBI) were conducted on time ([45 CFR §2540.205](#));
- All required components (NSOPW, State(s), and FBI) were conducted through sources authorized by AmeriCorps ([45 CFR §2540.204](#));
- NSOPW is complete (all States, Territories, and participating Indian Tribes were reporting when the search was performed) ([45 CFR §2540.204](#));
- First and Last Name on name-based checks match the name as reflected in grant recipient policy and procedures
- NSOPW, State(s), FBI checks adjudicated ([45 CFR §2540.205](#));
- Documentation of consent from the candidate to conduct State and FBI checks and share results ([45 CFR §2540.206](#));
- Documentation that notice is provided to individual that the national service position is contingent upon the organization's review of the individual's NSCHC component results, if any ([45 CFR §2540.206](#));
- Documentation that the program complies with the requirement to provide a reasonable opportunity for the individual to review and challenge the factual accuracy of the result before action is taken to exclude the candidate from the position ([45 CFR §2540.206](#));
- Documentation the grant recipient paid for the cost of the NSCHC ([45 CFR §2540.206](#)) and,
- Documentation that the candidate is eligible to serve/work if a vendor check's adjudication recommendation does not endorse the candidate for service ([45 CFR §2540.205](#)).

Administrative Remedies and Enforcement for Noncompliance: Noncompliance refers to a situation in which an individual in a covered position is eligible to serve, but the recipient did not fully comply with all NSCHC requirements.

Remedies and enforcement actions will apply to the grant(s) on which noncompliance is identified. AmeriCorps will disallow costs and may engage in other enforcement activities with respect to a prime recipient if the prime recipient or its subrecipients are found to be out of compliance with NSCHC requirements and the prime recipient has not correctly applied disallowance and/or has failed to identify and correct noncompliance prior to AmeriCorps's monitoring of the prime recipient. If the noncompliant grant recipient has other AmeriCorps

grants, AmeriCorps will expand the NSCHC review as applicable. AmeriCorps may also direct the prime grant recipient to expand the scope of the review.

The remedies and enforcement actions in this section apply solely to those taken administratively by AmeriCorps. Nothing in this guidance is intended to limit any other available civil or criminal enforcement measures, which may be pursued in addition to the administrative remedies herein. The remedies and enforcement actions below may be applied singly or in combination, depending on the type of noncompliance found.

Cost-based Disallowance: Cost-based disallowance refers to the disallowance of costs associated with an eligible individual's work or service during the period of noncompliance, including salary/stipend/living allowances (as applicable) and FICA. Where costs were paid with matching funds, the disallowance of those matching costs may also result in disallowance of the related Federal funds.

Cost-based disallowance will be applied to noncompliance. In general, the cost of disallowance will not exceed six months; however, if the period of work or service is less than six months or the period of noncompliance is less than six months, the cost will be adjusted to coincide with the period of service, work, or period of noncompliance. Moreover, AmeriCorps may disallow costs for more than six months, if facts and circumstances support that a different period of disallowance will further AmeriCorps's compliance objectives.

Cost-based disallowance will not include the disallowance of AmeriCorps member hours. The actual expenditures that shall be considered for disallowance for each noncompliant file appear below. These cost categories reflect substantive grant costs. The maximum disallowance amount of the federal share cannot exceed the value of the federal awarded amount.

Cost Reimbursement Grants:

- Salary/stipend/living allowance (as applicable) and FICA during the period of noncompliance for which costs are disallowed.

Fixed Amount Grants:

- AmeriCorps members serving in State and National programs: For each noncompliant member, a share of the cost/MSY proportional to the period of noncompliance for which costs are disallowed.

Manual Hold: In response to NSCHC noncompliance, specifically circumstances that require corrective action to be taken, AmeriCorps may place grant funds on manual hold review or restriction of funds until the grant recipient demonstrates that it has satisfactorily implemented required corrective action, which may include conducting NSCHC using the AmeriCorps-

approved contract with Truescreen and Fieldprint. AmeriCorps may use either of these remedies as it deems appropriate.

A manual hold may include a manual review of expenses prior to reimbursement or a full restriction of grant funds.

1. Manual Hold Review ([2 CFR §200.339](#)): This includes a review of expenses by AmeriCorps staff prior to the release of funds. The inspection/review of reimbursement or advance requests submitted by a grant recipient is performed prior to the release of funds to the grantee to ensure that all fund requests are necessary, allowable, allocable, and reasonable with Uniform Guidance regulations and grant terms and conditions.
2. Restrictions of Funds ([2 CFR §200.339](#)): This action will prevent a grant recipient from accessing Federal funding from AmeriCorps. For these cases, a letter to Health and Human Services Payment Management System will be processed and forwarded to HHS and the AmeriCorps grant funds will be inaccessible to the recipient.

Manual hold review or restrictions of federal grant funds will be applied to the specific grant(s) on which NSCHC noncompliance is identified. For NSCHC noncompliance identified on a State Commission subrecipient, the Commission will be directed, to the extent possible, to apply the manual hold review or restriction of funds to the noncompliant subrecipient. NSCHC noncompliance detected in multiple State Commission subrecipients may result in a manual hold review or restriction of funds against the State Commission. For non-Commission direct grant recipients, including Social Innovation Fund grantees, manual hold review, or restriction of funds will be applied against the direct grant.

Other Administrative Remedies: AmeriCorps will employ other administrative remedies as deemed appropriate. These other administrative remedies include:

Remedy	Definition	Example
Grant Suspension	A grant suspension includes a hold on all grant activities, including participant service, and funding (2 CFR §200.338).	Grant suspension may be used in response to NSCHC noncompliance. Grant suspension may also be applied in cases of noncompliance for zero-dollar grants.

Grant Termination	Grant termination refers to the ending of the award, in whole or in part, at any time prior to the planned end of period of performance (Grant and Cooperative Agreement Terms and Conditions , Section III.O; 2 CFR §200.340).	Grant termination may be used in response to NSCHC noncompliance. Grant termination may also be applied in cases of noncompliance for zero-dollar grants. Suspension may precede termination proceedings; not all suspensions will result in termination.
Remedy	Definition	Example
Required Use of AmeriCorps Approved Contract with Truescreen and Fieldprint	AmeriCorps has contracted with Fieldprint, Inc., (Fieldprint) to provide FBI fingerprint-based checks and Truescreen to provide State and National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) checks to recipients.	A grant recipient at which NSCHC noncompliance is found may be required to establish accounts through the AmeriCorps contracts with Truescreen and Fieldprint and recheck noncompliant and other files through these vendors, if not already completed through the vendor. Recipients may also be required to use these vendors to conduct NSCHC for the remainder of the grant period (2 CFR §200.339 , §200.208).
Impact Future Awards	Noncompliance with NSCHC may be considered as a factor in the agency's future funding determinations (2 CFR §200.205).	AmeriCorps may consider NSCHC noncompliance part of its awarding considerations for future funding.

Guide to Enforcement Actions and Remedies: AmeriCorps response to NSCHC noncompliance will conform to the chart below. AmeriCorps reserves the right to impose enforcement actions and remedies at its discretion in accordance with applicable laws. In instances of egregious, pervasive, systemic noncompliance of any element, AmeriCorps reserves the right to impose all available remedial measures.

Nature of Noncompliance	Enforcement Action and Remedy (as applicable)
<p>Missing NSCHC component (NSOPW, State(s), and/or FBI)</p> <p>Name-based check conducted on the legal name of the individual, as reflected on documentation used to verify the identity of the individual</p> <p>Noncompliant NSCHC source</p> <p>NSOPW incomplete (missing state, territory, or Indian country)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrective action to cure deficiency and ascertain eligibility • Cost-based disallowance • Manual hold review or restriction of funds pending completion of corrective action • Required use of AmeriCorps-approved contract with Truescreen and Fieldprint (if not already used) for rechecks of all NSCHCs and for remainder of grant period. If vendors already used, rechecks required for noncompliance other than lateness.
Nature of Noncompliance	Enforcement Action and Remedy (as applicable)
<p>Late NSCHC component (NSOPW, State(s), and/or FBI)</p> <p>Grant recipient did not review results and document the individual is cleared to serve (NSOPW, State(s), and/or FBI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrective action to cure deficiency and ascertain eligibility • Cost-based disallowance • Required use of AmeriCorps-approved contract with Truescreen and Fieldprint (if not already used) for rechecks of all NSCHCs and for remainder of grant period. If vendors already used, rechecks required for noncompliance other than lateness
<p>Missing documentation of consent from the candidate to conduct State and FBI checks and share results</p> <p>Missing documentation of understanding from the candidate that the national service position is contingent upon the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrective action to cure deficiency • Manual hold review or restriction of funds pending completion of corrective action • Required use of AmeriCorps-approved contract with Truescreen and Fieldprint (if not already used) for rechecks of all NSCHCs and for remainder of grant period. If vendors

<p>organization's review of the individual's NSCHC component results, if any</p> <p>Missing documentation that the candidate understands his or her ability to review and challenge the factual accuracy of the result before action is taken to exclude the candidate from the position</p> <p>Missing documentation the grant recipient paid for the cost of the NSCHC</p> <p>Missing documentation that the candidate is eligible to serve/work if a vendor check's adjudication recommendation does not endorse the candidate for service</p>	<p>already used, rechecks required for noncompliance other than lateness</p>
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As noted above, noncompliance with NSCHC may also be considered as a factor in the agency's funding determinations and may impact an organization's future grant awards.

In applicable cases, based on facts and circumstances, AmeriCorps may suspend or terminate the grant in response to NSCHC noncompliance.

Identification of Noncompliance: AmeriCorps monitoring officials conducting NSCHC review will conduct a file review. For grant recipients with fewer than 25 individuals serving or working in covered positions, during the period of assessment monitored, AmeriCorps monitoring officials conducting NSCHC review will conduct a file review consisting of 100% of these files. A period of assessment is the period of grant activity being reviewed for compliance, which is specified in advance by AmeriCorps or other reviewers.

For grant recipients with more than 25 individuals serving or working in covered positions, AmeriCorps monitoring officials conducting NSCHC review will conduct a review consisting of 25 files or 10% of the files for currently working or serving individuals in covered positions for the period of assessment monitored, whichever is greater. If the first sample of NSCHC files are compliant, the monitoring official may elect to conclude his or her NSCHC review. If noncompliance is detected within the review of files for those who worked or served during the period of the assessment, the remainder of files from the period being monitored must be reviewed. AmeriCorps may direct the prime grant recipient, as applicable, to conduct the expanded scope review.

Appendix A: Pre-Approved NSCHC Waivers

AmeriCorps may add or remove pre-approved NSCHC Waivers at any time. Maintaining awareness of current pre-approved NSCHC Waivers is the responsibility of grant recipients. Once revoked, an organization may no longer use a pre-approved NSCHC Waiver. When a pre-approved NSCHC Waiver is revoked, the Waiver does not apply to any individuals who begin work or service after the expiration date of the pre-approved NSCHC Waiver.

The use of pre-approved NSCHC Waivers should be clearly described within NSCHC policies and procedures, including actions for maintaining awareness of the active AmeriCorps pre-approved NSCHC Waivers.

Noncompliance with the NSCHC regulations or with the requirements of a pre-approved NSCHC Waiver may result in cost disallowance.

1. Use of Truescreen for NSOPW and/or State Checks

Effective May 1, 2021: In July 2018, AmeriCorps contracted Truescreen to provide State and NSOPW checks to grantees for individuals who are required to comply with NSCHC.

Grantees who use Truescreen must set up an account with Truescreen through <https://applicationstation.truescreen.com> with the AmeriCorps specific agreement code.

Truescreen does not provide information for the following states and territories:

States	Territories
California	Guam
Delaware	Northern Mariana Islands
Louisiana	Puerto Rico
Nevada	
New Mexico	
Virginia	
Massachusetts (added 12/20/18)	
Mississippi (added 6/1/2019)	

Between 11/15/18 to 8/12/19, Truescreen did not provide information for New Hampshire. As of 8/12/19, New Hampshire is accessible by Truescreen and was removed from this pre-approved ASP.

Between 11/15/18 to 8/21/19, Truescreen did not provide information for American Samoa and Virgin Islands. As of 8/21/19, American Samoa and Virgin Islands are accessible by Truescreen and was removed from this pre-approved ASP.

Grantees using Truescreen will not be required to get a check from an unavailable state/territory for individuals required to comply with NSCHC if they have:

- 1) obtained an NSOPW check from Truescreen,
- 2) obtained any required state checks that **are** available from Truescreen, and
- 3) conducted a fingerprint-based FBI check.

Please note:

This ASP does not apply to grant recipients who obtain NSCHC from Truescreen through an account **not** established with the AmeriCorps specific agreement code. Such checks are noncompliant.

Example 1: One state check is not available from Truescreen

An individual required to comply with NSCHC will serve in California (state of service **is not** available from Truescreen) and is residing in Alabama at the time of application (state of residence **is** available from Truescreen). The grantee must conduct a Truescreen NSOPW check, a fingerprint-based FBI check, and a Truescreen Alabama state criminal history check. The grantee does not need California state criminal history check.

Example 2: Both state checks are not available from Truescreen

An individual required to comply with NSCHC will be serving in Virginia (state of service **is not** available from Truescreen) and is residing in Puerto Rico at the time of application (state/territory of residence **is not** available from Truescreen). The grantee must conduct a Truescreen NSOPW check and a fingerprint-based FBI check. No separate state and territory checks are required.

Example 3: All state checks are available from Truescreen

An individual required to comply with NSCHC will serve in Illinois (state of service **is** available from Truescreen) and is residing in Indiana at the time of application (state of residence **is** available from Truescreen). The grantee must conduct a Truescreen NSOPW check, a fingerprint-based FBI check, a Truescreen Illinois state criminal history check, and a Truescreen Indiana state criminal history check.

2. National Fingerprint File States

Effective May 1, 2021: The National Fingerprint File (NFF) is an electronic information sharing system maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The NFF allows the FBI and the States to exchange criminal history records for noncriminal justice purposes authorized by federal or state law, such as background checks for governmental licensing and employment.

States that participate in the NFF respond to record requests for all authorized noncriminal justice purposes and, as such, the FBI ceases to maintain duplicate criminal history data for these states. When a state participates in the NFF system, an FBI fingerprint check is duplicative of the search of a state's criminal history record repository. An FBI fingerprint check eliminates the need for grantees to conduct duplicative state criminal history record checks in states that participate in the NFF system.

Therefore:

- If a required state check is from a state that **participates in the NFF**, then the grantee does not need to conduct the check in that NFF state if they have conducted a fingerprint-based FBI check.
- If a required state check is from a state that **does not participate in the NFF**, then this pre-approved Waiver is not applicable, and the grantee must obtain the appropriate NSCHC state check(s).

The following states participate in the NFF program:

Colorado	Florida	Georgia	Hawaii	Idaho
Iowa	Kansas	Maryland	Minnesota	Missouri
Montana	North Carolina	New Jersey	New York	Ohio
Oklahoma	Oregon	Tennessee	West Virginia	Wyoming

Example 1: One state participates in NFF

An individual who is required to comply with NSCHC will serve in Maine (state of service **does not** participate in NFF) and resides in Colorado at time of application (state of residence **does** participate in the NFF). The grantee must conduct an NSOPW check, a fingerprint-based FBI check, and a Maine state criminal history check. The grantee does not need a separate state of residence criminal history check from Colorado. The Colorado criminal history record information is included in the fingerprint-based FBI check.

Example 2: Both states participate in the NFF

An individual who is required to comply with NSCHC will serve in Ohio (state of service **does** participate in NFF) and resides in Iowa at time of application (state of residence **does** participate in the NFF). The grantee must conduct an NSOPW check and a fingerprint-based FBI check. No separate state checks are required. Ohio and Iowa criminal history record information is already in the fingerprint-based FBI check.

Example 3: No states participate in the NFF

An individual who must comply with NSCHC will serve in Wisconsin (state of service **does not** participate in NFF) and resides in New Mexico at time of application (state of residence **does not** participate in the NFF). The grantee must conduct an NSOPW check, a fingerprint-based FBI check, a Wisconsin state criminal history check, and a New Mexico state criminal history check.

3. Disability Accommodation Exemption for FBI Fingerprint Checks

Effective May 1, 2021: AmeriCorps will exempt the fingerprint FBI check requirement for individuals who are required to comply with NSCHC, if conducting a fingerprint check is a physical impossibility as a result of disability, such as the absence of limbs. The grantee is still required to conduct NSOPW and name-based state check(s) on the individual.

Appendix B: Who is required to conduct NSCHC? Graphic

- Is your AmeriCorps grant one of the following?
- Operational grants provided by AmeriCorps; State and National;
 - Foster Grandparent Program Grants
 - Retired Senior Volunteer Program Grants
 - Senior Companion Program Grants
 - Senior Demonstration Program Grants that receive funding from CINCS
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service Grants
 - September 11¹¹¹ Day of Service Grants
 - Social Innovation Fund Grants
 - Volunteer Generation Fund Grants
 - AmeriCorps VISTA Program Grants
 - AmeriCorps VISTA Support Grants

Yes

- Is the individual an/a:
- AmeriCorps State and National member
 - Foster Grandparent who receives a stipend;
 - Senior Companion who receives a stipend; or
 - If staff, is the individual in a position in which they will receive a salary, directly or reflected as match, under a cost reimbursement grant?

Yes

Is the individual over the age of 18 on the first day of work/service?

Yes

Is this individual's entire activity included in the grant recipient's direct work rate or work allocation plan?

No

NSCHC IS required

No

NSCHC IS NOT required

Yes

No

National Service Criminal History Check Steps: Effective May 1, 2021

	Grant Recipient action using NSOPW.gov and State Repository for NSOPW, State and FBI checks	NSCHC Tip	Grant Recipient action when using agency approved vendors for NSOPW, State and FBI checks	How vendors assist NSCHC process
Policies and Procedures	Develop and maintain your organization's NSCHC policies and procedures	See Office of Monitoring's Recommendations for Effective NSCHC Policy and Procedures	Develop and maintain your organization's NSCHC policies and procedures	
NSCHC Annual E-Course	Take NSCHC annual e-course training (and maintain documentation)	eCourse training should be completed by the individual responsible for conducting NSCHC	Take NSCHC annual e-course training (and maintain documentation)	
Consent	Obtain and maintain a person's consent before conducting the state and FBI components of the National Service Criminal History Check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As soon as you selected a candidate, begin the NSCHC process. Remember all checks must be completed and eligibility must be determined no later than the day before an individual starts work/service! If an individual refuses to consent to NSCHC, they are ineligible to serve/work 		Vendors will capture and maintain consent from applicant
Service/Work is contingent on NSCHC	Provide and maintain notice that selection for work or service is contingent upon the organization's review of the NSCHC component results			Vendors will provide and document notice the applicant understands that selection for work or service is contingent upon the organization's review of the NSCHC component results
Conduct the checks	Go directly to: NSOPW.gov to conduct NSOPW checks; State criminal history repository or CNCS designated alternative to conduct State of Service and Residence checks and FBI checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State of Residence Checks: The state the individual is in physically at the time of application If an individual refuses to consent to NSCHC, they are ineligible to serve/work Applicants seeking to serve or work in a position that requires NSCHC may not be charged for the cost of any component of a National Service Criminal History Check. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order NSOPW and State checks from agency approved vendor, Truescreen Provide AmeriCorps Fieldprint code to applicant to set up a fingerprinting appointment 	
Receive the results	Receive the Results; Turnaround time varies by state		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive the Results Average turnaround time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Truescreen: 1-5 days Fieldprint: 2 days 	
Adjudicate	Adjudicate the Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitability is determined in by the grant recipients and sub recipients, or service sites. The suitability criteria must be consistent with state and federal Civil Rights and nondiscrimination laws. An individual may be eligible to work or serve in a position, but a grant recipient, sub recipient, or service site may determine that an individual is not suitable to work or serve in such a position based on criteria that the grant recipient or sub recipient or service site establishes. If the individual is registered, or is required to be registered, on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; or has been convicted of murder, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 1111., they are ineligible to serve/work 	Review adjudication recommendations	Vendors will provide an adjudication recommendation.
Document Adjudication	Document adjudication decision		Document adjudication decision in vendor system	
Opportunity to Challenge	Grantees must provide a reasonable opportunity for the person to review and challenge the factual accuracy of a result before action is taken to exclude the person from the position. This must be documented.			Vendors will notify and provide opportunity for applicant to review and challenge the review and challenge the factual accuracy of a result before action is taken to exclude the person from the position. Vendor will also maintain this documentation.
Protect Information	Grantee must take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of any information relating to the criminal history check, consistent with authorization provided by the applicant			Vendor systems protects PII; if grantees print any documentation be sure to protect the confidentiality of any information

**TITLE 56: LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
CHAPTER IV: DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY
SUBCHAPTER c: RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF EMPLOYERS
PART 2732 EMPLOYMENT
SECTION 2732.215 EXEMPTION FROM THE DEFINITION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR
PARTICIPANTS IN THE AMERICORPS PROGRAM**

**Section 2732.215 Exemption From The Definition Of Employment For
Participants In The Americorps Program**

Activities performed by an individual as a "participant", as that term is used in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended (42 U.S.C. Sections 12501 et seq.), shall not be considered to be in employment under the Act [820 ILCS 405], and payments made to the individual for such activities shall not constitute wages subject to the payment of contributions.

(Source: Added at 21 Ill. Reg. 9456, effective July 2, 1997)

