

What is Public Health AmeriCorps (PHA)?

AmeriCorps and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) joined forces to launch Public Health AmeriCorps in FY22 to support the recruitment, training, and development of the next generation of public health leaders who will be ready to respond to the nation's public health needs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the urgent need to further enhance public health resources across the country. This effort starts with investing in a future workforce to help local communities respond to and recover from COVID-19. Public Health AmeriCorps has two main goals:

- 1) Address public health needs of local communities by providing support in state and local public health settings and advancing more equitable health outcomes for underserved communities.
- 2) Create pathways to good quality public health-related careers through onsite experience and training, with a focus on recruiting AmeriCorps members who reflect the communities in which they will serve.

Fine out more here: <https://americorps.gov/about/what-we-do/public-health-americorps>.

What is AmeriCorps role in Public Health?

AmeriCorps has a long history of members serving in public health roles:

- AmeriCorps members have served as recovery coaches to help individuals overcome opioid addiction, provide drug abuse prevention and education, build the capacity of drug treatment and recovery organizations, support safe disposal of prescription drugs, improve opportunities for employment for those in recovery, provide substance abuse screening and assessments, and more. In 2020, the Office of National Drug Control Policy formally designated AmeriCorps as part of the National Drug Control Strategy and Budget, an important milestone and recognition of the value of our work.
- AmeriCorps partners with health departments, nonprofits, and community-based organizations through which AmeriCorps members serve in roles related to healthcare access, health and housing, substance use, health promotion, community engagement, emergency management, and more.
- AmeriCorps members serve in public health and clinical settings where they provide education, strengthen access, and expand capacity related to healthcare and social services.

What does “in service to a public health agency” mean?

Members can serve at public health agencies or in service to public health departments at a community partner or similar. Member service activities should be aligned with the mission and goals of the public health agency/ies that serve the local community/ies. AmeriCorps encourages applicants to design programs and create or enhance local partnerships that will meet the public health needs of their communities.

How does the competitive PHA opportunity differ from the traditional competitive AmeriCorps opportunity?

The competitive PHA opportunity is a special AmeriCorps funding opportunity. There are slight differences in the PHA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The primary difference is the priority areas and program design to center public health. Another difference is the maximum cost/msy, which is higher for PHA. This increased rate is in partnership with the CDC and allows for reduced match requirements. It is not known if PHA will continue beyond this special funding opportunity.

Is there a match requirement?

Public Health AmeriCorps does not have a match requirement. This means that no Public Health AmeriCorps subgrantee will be required to raise additional funds to support the project. Subgrantees may raise additional funds to support the project and should consider if this is necessary beyond the federal award. Traditionally, AmeriCorps programs are a public/private partnership requiring matching funds to operate a successful program. While there is no minimum match requirement for PHA, Serve Washington suggests budgeting and raising matching funds necessary based on program design.

The initiative appears to be time-limited, currently only a total of two years, will PHA exist thereafter? What if I want my program to continue beyond a PHA designation?

It is not known if PHA will continue beyond this special funding opportunity. If PHA dissolves after the two-year project period, subgrantees would be required to apply under the traditional AmeriCorps NOFO and follow traditional requirements such as a potentially reduced cost/msy and increased minimum match requirements. Serve Washington is committed to working with subgrantees on various funding approaches should this occur.

Are Public Health AmeriCorps grants fixed amount or cost reimbursement?

All Public Health AmeriCorps funds will be disbursed through cost reimbursement grants. Fixed amount grants are not offered for Public Health AmeriCorps.

Can you please clarify the difference between a Public Health AmeriCorps member and a PHAP associate?

Public Health AmeriCorps and Public Health Associate Program (PHAP) are two separate programs. Public Health AmeriCorps (PHA) is a partnership between AmeriCorps and the CDC and the Public Health Associate Program is hosted by the CDC. Public Health AmeriCorps applicants have the opportunity to design an AmeriCorps program based on the needs of the communities. Members can serve in full-time, three-quarter time, half-time, and reduced halftime terms. Most AmeriCorps members have up to 12 months to complete their term of service. The actual term may be shorter and is rarely longer than 12 months. The PHAP program is the Public Health Associate Program (PHAP) is a competitive, two-year, paid training program with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. More information can be found at CDC.gov website.