

From: Martin-Jahn, Amber (OFM) <amber.martin-jahn@ofm.wa.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2020 11:53 PM
To: Martin-Jahn, Amber (OFM) <amber.martin-jahn@ofm.wa.gov>
Cc: Benson, Jenny (OFM) <jenny.benson@ofm.wa.gov>; Harris, Robyn (OFM) <robyn.harris@ofm.wa.gov>; Van Verst, Mary (OFM) <Mary.VanVerst@ofm.wa.gov>
Subject: Serve WA update COVID-19

Dear National Service Partners,

Serve Washington, like you, continues to closely monitor the developments of COVID-19. Our hearts are with those impacted by COVID-19 – directly and indirectly. We hope everyone is taking precautions to be safe and healthy during this time.

I want to first acknowledge the tremendous work of AmeriCorps Program Directors who are actively navigating this disruption in service for AmeriCorps members and communities alike. We are witnessing tremendous effort to keep AmeriCorps members engaged, to keep communities thriving, and where safe, to respond when critical local needs arise.

Second, Serve Washington echoes what you've heard from the Governor today. Each of us have a responsibility to modify our actions to slow the spread of the virus. One of the ways we can do that is through staying home and staying healthy as the Governor stated. While it is absolutely critical we each do our part, the Governor also recognized essential services and noted the need for continued involvement and [volunteers within the food delivery system](#). The balance of these two messages can be challenging to interpret and respond to in this quickly changing environment. Please know that I and the full Serve WA team stand ready to partner with you as you navigate this situation.

The Governor's message included a reference to essential services, a list of which can be found [here](#). I found many examples of the service AmeriCorps members provide on this list.

We know that in many cases AmeriCorps is considered an essential service by community organizations – and not just in Washington, all across the country. Much of our work as national service programs contributes to the “healthy functioning of our communities.”

While we think we can safely meet both our personal responsibility in slowing the spread of the virus and our spirit of service through continuing to closely assess risk in all service activities, practicing social distancing, increasing sanitation and hygiene methods, and deploying remote and/or virtual teleservice options where feasible, you will need to believe that too.

Please think critically about the types of service opportunities you continue to host and the safety mitigation efforts you are putting in place. Modify traditional service opportunities to utilize teleservice when possible. When service cannot be provided remotely, assess opportunities using the essential services document. If a service opportunity ‘feels’ essential to your community or organization but isn't on the list, reach out to us for additional guidance or support. We will continue to post a myriad of resources on our sub grantee meeting page under COVID-19.

Lastly, please continue to work with your Serve Washington Program Officer for support and thought partnership during this unprecedented time. I am also happy to talk with any of you and appreciate the conversations I have had with some of you to date. The world around us is changing

– often faster than we can keep up. It is only with the support of each other, our AmeriCorps members, and our community partners that we will meet our mission – a mission of resilient communities.

In Service,
Amber

Amber Martin-Jahn | Executive Director

Serve Washington

Office of Financial Management

(O) 360-902-0669 | (C) 360-764-0423

She/Her



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