



Serve Washington

Changing Communities. Changing Lives.

Planning Grants – Member/Site Development (I)

November 19 – 10:00AM

Please sign-in via the chat box:

- Organization/Program
- Name(s)
- If you had a boat – what would you name it?

Announcement!

Regional Training Conference

Location: NOW VIRTUAL!

Dates: May 4-7, 2021

(original schedule said "spring")

Stay Tuned!



Learning To Date

Previous Content

- Orientation/AmeriCorps 101
- Quarter 1 Content

Today's Agenda

- **Member/Site Development**
 - **Benefits**
 - **Eligibility**
 - **Recruitment/Selection**

Next Up (*December 17*)

- Member/Site Development – Orient/Train/Supervise/Monitor



Quarterly Questions

- *Are any partner agreements necessary for data collection?*
- *How will members/sites be oriented to data collection?*
- *What checks and balances will be needed to ensure fidelity in data collection?*
- ***How will the program ensure a diverse/inclusive AmeriCorps team?***
- *How will the program encourage esprit de corps among the AmeriCorps team?*
- *How will the program prepare AmeriCorps members for Life After AmeriCorps?*
- ***If using host sites, what role will they have in member development?***
- ***How does this new knowledge change the budget/match in order to run a successful program?***



Member Benefits

Program Handbook – Chapter 3

- Segal AmeriCorps Education Award
- Living Allowances
- Health Care
- Child Care
- Student Loan Forbearance
- Interest Accrual Payment
- Program Defined Benefits

In-Service	Post-Service	Program Pays	CNCS Pays
	X		X
X		X	
X		X	
X			X
X			
	X		X
X	X	X	



Segal AmeriCorps Ed Award

- *Why Segal?*
 - The AmeriCorps Education Award is named after Eli Segal, a pioneer of national service and the first CEO of CNCS.
- *What is it exactly?*
 - A post-service benefit.
 - Earned by individuals who successfully complete a term of service.
 - Used to pay educational expenses at eligible post-secondary and technical institutions OR repay qualified student loans.
 - The dollar amount is tied to the US Pell Grant and is determined annually based on which fiscal year (NOFO) the AmeriCorps position is funded out of.



Segal AmeriCorps Ed Award

- *What is considered successful, eligible, and qualified?*
 - Earned by individuals who successfully complete a term of service.
 - Serve the minimum number of hours that correlate to the term. For example, FT = 1700 hours minimum.
 - Serve the period of service as noted in the member service agreement. For example, August 15 – June 30.
 - Receive an exit for compelling personal circumstances*. For example, early exit due to documented medical issues. **More in later trainings.*
 - Used to pay educational expenses at eligible post-secondary and technical institutions OR repay qualified student loans.
 - Title IV Schools – most colleges, universities, tech schools
 - Title VII or VIII Loans – contact loan provider
 - If 55+ at the start of service, may transfer award to child, grandchild, foster child.
 - Award expires seven years from the date it is earned.



Segal AmeriCorps Ed Award

- *Wait, how much is the award?*
 - It depends on which fiscal year (NOFO) the AmeriCorps position is funded out of.
 - Once earned, the amount does not change, no matter when used.
 - FFY21 example:

Participation Types	Minimum # of hours	Amounts
<i>Full-time (FT)</i>	<i>1,700 (365 days for VISTA)</i>	<i>\$6,345.00</i>
<i>Three Quarters Time (TQT)</i>	<i>1,200</i>	<i>\$4,441.50</i>
<i>Half-Time (HT)</i>	<i>900</i>	<i>\$3,172.50</i>
<i>Reduced Half-Time (RHT)</i>	<i>675</i>	<i>\$2,417.14</i>
<i>Quarter-Time (QT)</i>	<i>450</i>	<i>\$1,678.57</i>
<i>Minimal-Time & Summer Associate (MT & SA)</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>\$1,342.86</i>
<i>AmeriCorps Affiliate (AT)</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>\$357.08</i>



Segal AmeriCorps Ed Award

- *What else should I know?*
 - Education awards are paid by the National Service Trust.
 - Programs DO NOT budget for this expense.
 - Education award benefits are managed by the member.
 - Via the member My AmeriCorps portal.
 - Although an individual can serve more than two terms, a person cannot earn more than the value of two, full-time education awards.
 - If the value has been reached or is less than the value of a term, the member will need to acknowledge this during enrollment.
 - Currently, awards are considered taxable income by the IRS.
- [More information](#) on the CNCS website.



Living Allowance

- *Why a living allowance and not a living wage?*
 - AmeriCorps members are not employees and no employer/employee relationship exists. As such, service is not directly tied to minimum wage requirements. AmeriCorps service has its own statute and regulations to be followed. Service itself has many other intentions and benefits and is an opportunity not to be confused with work or a job.
- *Ok, what is the requirement?*
 - Programs must provide a living allowance to FT members.
 - Programs may choose to provide a living allowance to less than FT members.
 - Minimum and maximum living allowances change annually and are dictated by the fiscal year (NOFO) the AmeriCorps position is funded out of.



Living Allowance

- *What else should I know?*
 - Living allowances should be paid in regular increments; such as weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly.
 - Payments should not fluctuate.
 - Payments are not tied to the number of hours served in a pay period.
 - Situations where little to no hours are served should be rare. Preapproval should occur in most cases and be documented. If unaware, the program should take immediate action to identify and problem solve.
 - PTO/Leave is allowable and defined by the program. This should not affect living allowance payments.
 - Don't forget taxes and insurance!
 - FICA
 - Federal Income Tax (W4s and W2s)
 - Worker's Comp (LNI – required in WA)



Health Care

- *What are the requirements?*
 - Programs must provide or make available health care to FT members.
 - Programs may choose to provide health care to less than FT members.
- *How does the program satisfy the requirement?*
 - Establish a health plan provider and ensure plan is MEC/ACA compliant.
 - Develop and document each member's decision to enroll or waive member health care.
 - Enroll those requested.
 - Make available enrollment anytime someone requests (ends waiver).



Child Care

- *What do I need to know?*
 - AmeriCorps Child Care Benefits are available for qualified, active, FT members who need the benefit to serve.
 - Household income must not exceed 75% state median income.
 - Must not be currently receiving another child care subsidy.
 - Parent or legal guardian of child under 13.
 - Child must reside with member.
 - Benefits are paid directly to a qualified child care provider on a reimbursement basis.
 - Member must initiate and manage benefit.
 - Program will be asked by provider to confirm service.
- Current Provider: <https://www.americorpschildcare.com/>



Student Loans

- *What do I need to know?*
 - Individuals who are serving in a term of service in an approved AmeriCorps position may be eligible to temporarily postpone the repayment of their qualified student loans through an action called loan forbearance.
 - Individuals who have successfully completed a term of service in AmeriCorps are also eligible to have the National Service Trust pay as much as 100% of the interest that accrued on their qualified student loan during their service. This is in addition to the Education Award and is consider taxable income.
 - Student loan benefits are managed by the member.
 - Via the member My AmeriCorps portal.
- [More information](#) on the CNCS website.



Program Defined Benefits

- *What do I need to know?*
 - Programs may provide other member benefits if the treatment of such benefits is equitable for all members or a defined subset of members, is defined in policy, is an allowable federal expenditure, and follows basic OMB cost principles. Program should consult with their Program Officer before determining such benefits.
 - Mileage reimbursement for all members traveling to/from required events.
 - Increased living allowance for returning members in leadership positions.



Questions?



Member Eligibility

- An AmeriCorps member must:
 - Be at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service; or under special circumstances be an out-of-school youth 16 years of age at the commencement of service.
 - Have a high school diploma or GED or agree to obtain prior to using the education award; or under special circumstances obtain a waiver.
 - Be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident of the United States.
 - Satisfy the National Service Criminal History Check eligibility criteria.
- Federal Regulation: [45 CFR 2522.200](#)



Member Eligibility

- An AmeriCorps member must:
 - Be at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service; or under special circumstances be an out-of-school youth 16 years of age at the commencement of service.
 - *How does a program document age?*
 - Passports, government issued birth certificates, and driver's licenses, are the most common examples of documents that confirm a member is old enough to serve.
 - For members under age 18, parental consent is required.
 - Document parental consent on NSCHC authorization form.
 - Document parental consent on Member Service Agreement.



Member Eligibility

- An AmeriCorps member must:
 - Have a high school diploma or GED or agree to obtain prior to using the education award; or under special circumstances obtain a waiver.
 - *How does a program document education attainment?*
 - Enrolling in the My AmeriCorps portal requires members to certify their educational status. Such certification fulfills the subgrantee's verification requirement.



Member Eligibility

- An AmeriCorps member must:
 - Be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident of the United States.
 - *How does a program document “citizenship”?*
 - Passports, government issued birth certificates, certificates of naturalization, and INS Forms I-551 are the most common examples of documents that confirm eligibility. Consult the federal regulation for alternative examples.
 - Also, during pre-enrollment via eGrants, the system will attempt to confirm “citizenship” via the Social Security Administration. If successful, this will fulfill the subgrantee’s verification requirement. If returned as unsuccessful, the program will need to supply documentation to CNCS to have eligibility manually verified. Members CANNOT be enrolled or serve hours until verification (either automatically or manually) is resolved.



Member Eligibility

- An AmeriCorps member must:
 - Be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident of the United States.
 - *What else do I need to know?*
 - Currently, individuals under the status of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) do not meet requirements and are not eligible to serve in AmeriCorps.
 - I-9 forms alone do not meet or ensure eligibility. Organizations may choose to use the I-9 for internal requirements but are not considered primary documentation for AmeriCorps compliance.
 - As a border state to Canada, Serve WA has permission from CNCS to use the WA State Enhanced Driver's License (EDL) and Washington State Enhanced Identification Card (EID) and the USA NEXUS Card as acceptable proof of citizenship. *Caution! Review carefully, a standard driver's license or ID card does NOT prove citizenship.*



Member Eligibility

- An AmeriCorps member must:
 - Satisfy the National Service Criminal History Check eligibility criteria.





Criminal History Checks

- CNCS Federal Regulation: [45 CFR 2522 and 2540](#)
- CNCS NSCHC [Manual](#)
- Program Handbook: [Pages 26-29](#)
- NSCHC E-Course: [CNCS Learning Management System \(Litmos\)](#)
 - Staff identified as having a role or responsibility in conducting and documenting NSCHCs must complete this training **annually**.
- *Who must satisfy the National Service Criminal History Checks?*
 - All **covered positions**. A “covered position” is one in which an individual serving or employed receives a living allowance, stipend, education award, or salary, through either the federal share or grantee share of a national service program. For example, common covered positions include, but are not limited to, AmeriCorps members and program staff.



Criminal History Checks

- *What checks are required for covered positions?*

Individuals WITHOUT recurring access to vulnerable populations require two components:

- 1) National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW)
- 2) State of Service Check and State of Residence Check

OR

FBI Check

Individuals WITH recurring access to vulnerable populations require a heightened check with all three components:

- 1) National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW)
- 2) State of Service Check and State of Residence Check **AND**
- 3) FBI Check



Criminal History Checks

- *What is the definition of vulnerable populations?*
 - Children age 17 or younger;
 - Persons age 60 or older;
 - Persons with disabilities.
 - Additionally, this applies to the person providing service to vulnerable populations, not providing service with vulnerable populations.
- *What is the definition of recurring access?*
 - Recurring access is defined as “the ability on more than one occasion to approach, observe, or communicate with, and individual, through physical proximity or other means, including but not limited to, electronic or telephonic communication.”



Criminal History Checks

- *When must checks be completed? **On time, every time!***

The **NSOPW** must be performed and adjudicated **before** the start of service/employment. In all cases, service/employment cannot begin before the NSOPW is complete.

The **State(s)** and **FBI** checks must be initiated before the individual starts service/employment. If/While the State(s) and FBI check(s) are pending, accompaniment must be performed. The program **CANNOT** cease accompaniment of the individual until it has received results clearing the individual through both the State component(s) and the FBI component.



Criminal History Checks

- *What results would prohibit an individual from service or employment?*
 - Anyone listed, or required to be listed, on a sex offender registry is ineligible to serve.
 - Anyone convicted of murder is ineligible to serve.
 - Anyone refusing to undergo required checks is ineligible to serve.
 - Anyone who makes a false statement regarding their criminal record is ineligible to serve.
 - Programs may develop additional criteria.
 - Define in policy.
 - Be consistent.



Criminal History Checks

Serve WA NSCHC Documentation Checklist

- Verify identity through government-issued photo identification (maintain documentation)
- Obtain written consent (maintain documentation)
- Document candidate's understanding that position is contingent on eligibility determined by results (maintain documentation)
- Perform each component of the applicable checks (maintain documentation)
- Adjudicate results of each check (maintain documentation)
 - More than just “look and print” – sign, date, explain any record/hit
- Document, document, document!



Criminal History Checks

[Serve Washington NSCHC Policy & Procedure Checklist](#)

Every program is required to have a policy/procedure in this area.

[CNCS Truescreen and Fieldprint Manual](#)

Serve Washington **REQUIRES** the use of CNCS Vendors. (In rare cases will allow a different process with justification and clear policy/procedure – no program yet has this!)

- Truescreen
 - NSOPW, State of Service, State of Residence
- Fieldprint
 - FBI





Site Eligibility

- Indian Tribes (2 CFR §200.54)
- Institutions of higher education (2 CFR §200.54)
- Local governments (2 CFR §200.64)
- Nonprofit organizations (2 CFR §200.70)
- States (2 CFR §200.90)



Questions?



Member Recruitment/Selection

- A successful recruitment strategy is the foundation to a thriving AmeriCorps program and the initial step necessary for programs to reach their desired community impact goals.
- AmeriCorps members are the face of any program; selection and placement of members is crucial to the overall health of AmeriCorps at the national, state, and local level.
- Being up front about both the benefits and challenges can help place members who are more likely to complete their service term.
- AmeriCorps recruits for diversity. Programs must be accessible to all persons with or without reasonable accommodation. CNCS embraces both a non-discrimination and non-harassment policy.
- Program Handbook: [Pages 24-25](#)



Reasonable Accommodation

Programs and activities must be accessible to persons with disabilities, and the subgrantee 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.

The vast majority of accommodations are inexpensive. For those cases where reasonable accommodations are more costly, there is a limited amount of money available through CNCS.



Non-Discrimination

AmeriCorps is available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or parental status, genetic information and military service.

By legislation or design, some programs are tailored to particular age groups.

CNCS has zero tolerance for the harassment of any individual or group of individuals for any reason.



Member Recruitment/Selection



WHAT IS AMERICORPS?



Member Recruitment/Selection



Member Recruitment/Selection

- *How do I recruit nationally? Is this required?*
 - Yes, CNCS requires all AmeriCorps programs to advertise recruitment in eGrants via the My AmeriCorps portal.
 - Programs create “service opportunity” listings. This will connect the program to the national recruitment effort and will provide a one stop shop for programs to search for applicants (and applicants to find programs).
- *How do I recruit locally?*
 - Most programs choose to also recruit locally outside the national system, and is encouraged as a holistic approach to recruitment. Successful local recruitment may look different in each community.
 - Suggestions: Serve WA Platform – Service Year, Serve WA Marketing Starter Pack, CNCS Recruitment Hub Materials, Word of Mouth – Members and Alumni, Newspapers or Online Sources, Organization’s Website, High Schools and Colleges, Career and Volunteer Fairs



Member Recruitment/Selection

- *What else do I need to know?*
 - Programs must develop their own selection process (screening, interviewing, etc.) and implement the process consistently.
 - Document (at minimum) application or resume and two references.
 - Programs may not charge an application fee.
 - AmeriCorps is not a J-O-B or W-O-R-K; remember to use terms such as serve, serving, performing service, national service position.



Site Recruitment/Selection

- Community Needs Assessment
- RFP Process
- Within Grant Award Focus Areas
- Overall Capacity
 - Knowledge of National Service
 - Dedication to Service Philosophy
 - Member Experience
 - Member Support/Supervision
 - Data Collection/Reporting
 - Financial Support (Match/Site Fee)
 - General Sustainability (3-yr Minimum)
- *Passing Through/Granting Dollars???*
 - *Additional Considerations, Discuss with Serve WA PO*



“Homework”

- *Continue any unfinished objectives from Quarter 1.*
- *Continue any unfinished objectives; such as, Performance Measures and Data Collection.*
- *Continue budget adjustments as necessary.*
- **Ensure Fiscal Systems are in place to support Member Benefits.**
- **Ensure Program Systems are in place to comply with Member Eligibility (for example, NSCHC P&P).**
- **Begin developing a Member Recruitment and Selection process (if using Host Sites, also a Host Site Recruitment and Selection process).**



Deliverables

- Performance Measures
- Data Collection Plan
- Member Orientation/Training/Supervision Plan (next webinar)

Submit to Program Officer anytime through January 31 (end of quarter) for general feedback.

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Closing

Questions?