AmeriCorps State Program Director Handbook

2012-2013

Serve DC – The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism

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Executive Director's Message

Greetings Service Partners:

Serve DC – The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism is the DC Commission for National and Community Service, one of more than 50 State Service Commissions that administer federal Corporation for National and Community Service funds and coordinate national service initiatives at the state and local level. As the DC Commission and the District Government agency dedicated to promoting service as a solution to the challenges we face as a community and a nation, Serve DC strengthens city's spirit of service through partnerships, national service, and volunteerism.

As an agency, we focus on three primary functions: We administer funding for AmeriCorps national service programs in the District of Columbia; we train and mobilize residents to respond to disasters and emergencies; and, finally, we promote episodic service opportunities to engage District residents in meaningful community service. In a larger sense, what our office does is provide for District residents and nonprofit organizations with the tools and resources to address pressing social issues – but, government cannot do it alone. It takes the collective effort of all of us to move this city forward – our city, one city. To build and sustain our city, we rely on community partners like you.

We encourage you to actively engage with Serve DC and stay connected. Through our partnership we can make the District a better place to live, work and visit.

In service,

Patricia L. Evans
Executive Director
Serve DC – The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism

Corporation for National and Community Service

The Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) was established in 1993 with the mission to connect Americans of all ages and backgrounds with opportunities to give back to their communities and their nation. The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act of 2009 reauthorized and expanded national service programs administered by the Corporation by amending the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973.

The Corporation is the federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. As the nation's largest grant maker in support of service and volunteering, the Corporation engages 4 million Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to their communities each year through Senior Corps and AmeriCorps (including VISTA, Volunteers in Service to America; NCCC, National Civilian Community Corps; and State/National) programs. Participants in Corporation programs and the community volunteers they help coordinate enable thousands of national and local nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and municipal agencies to solve tough problems and meet local needs in education, environment, public safety, disaster response, and other critical areas. For more information, please visit www.nationalservice.gov.

The Corporation currently manages two national service programs:

AmeriCorps: AmeriCorps provides opportunities for Americans to make an ongoing, intensive commitment to service.

Senior Corps: Senior Corps offers a network of programs that tap the rich experience, skills and talents of older citizens to meet community challenges.

AmeriCorps

Across the country, AmeriCorps programs involve more than 75,000 members each year who meet urgent, local community needs in education, public safety, disaster relief, unmet human needs, and the environment.

AmeriCorps State and National Direct

AmeriCorps State and National Direct members are sponsored by national, state, and local public and nonprofit organizations. To meet the specific needs of the communities they serve, these local AmeriCorps sponsors recruit and train AmeriCorps members. Funding for these programs comes through the Corporation (National/Direct) or through State Service Commissions, like Serve DC.

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America)

AmeriCorps VISTA was authorized in 1964 and founded as “Volunteers in Service to America” in 1965. VISTA was incorporated into the AmeriCorps network of programs in 1993. This program is dedicated to fighting poverty and increasing the capability of people to improve the conditions of their own lives. AmeriCorps VISTA members work full time in the communities they serve, creating programs that continue after they complete their service.

AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps)

AmeriCorps NCCC is a ten-month, full-time team-based residential service program for men and women ages 18-24. AmeriCorps NCCC campuses are located in Maryland, Colorado, Iowa, Mississippi and California. Members complete projects in different areas of the region they are assigned. AmeriCorps NCCC combines the best practices of civilian service with the best aspects of military service, including leadership and team-building.

Serve DC – The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism

Serve DC - Mayor's Office on Volunteerism is committed to making the District of Columbia a better place to live, work and visit. Serve DC's mission is to strengthen and promote the District's spirit of service through partnerships, national service and volunteerism. Serve DC helps to fund and facilitate volunteer and service programs for District residents and communities. Serve DC offers grants and financial support to District nonprofits, government agencies and schools.

History of Serve DC

Serve DC – The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism, also known as the DC Commission on National and Community Service, was established by a Mayoral Executive Order in 2000 to facilitate volunteerism and service initiatives throughout the District of Columbia. There are three distinct lines of service in the office: National Service, Emergency Preparedness, and Communications and Special Initiatives.

National Service

Serve DC funds, monitors, and supports AmeriCorps State programs in the District of Columbia. Combined with AmeriCorps VISTA projects and AmeriCorps National Direct programs, AmeriCorps programs in the District engage more than 1,600 individuals in meaningful service each year.

Serve DC also administers Corporation funds to support national service program development, training, disability inclusion, and a State Service Plan. As a convener for national service in the District, Serve DC supports cross-collaboration, continuous improvement of programming and resource development to ensure that national service sites are inclusive, comprehensive and responsive to local community needs.

Emergency Preparedness

Serve DC recruits and trains District residents to respond and assist during emergencies – ensuring residents play a major role in making their communities safer, stronger and better prepared to address threats of terrorism, crime and disasters. As the District lead for emergency volunteer and donations management, Serve DC provides critical volunteer support to the city's official emergency response effort in the first 72 hours of a crisis.

Serve DC provides free emergency preparedness training and volunteer opportunities as part of Citizen Corps, a national initiative designed to foster a culture of citizenship, service and responsibility. Citizen Corps' mission is to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues, and disasters of all kinds.

Communications & Special Initiatives

Serve DC is dedicated to making the District of Columbia a better place to live, work and visit through a variety of local initiatives, such as the Mayor's Community Service Awards and Seasons of Service Days. Serve DC awards the Mayor's Community Service Awards to deserving individuals, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations that have made a significant contribution to the District community. The Seasons of Service Days portfolio includes DC Public Schools Beautification Day (August), the 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance (September), the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service (January), and Global Youth Service Day (April). These days of service are part of a year-round action plan designed to demonstrate how a single day of service can grow into an ongoing habit of helping communities.

Serve DC Commission

By virtue of the Mayoral Order, a governing body of Commissioners plays an important role in the function of Serve DC. Its core role is in accordance with the provisions of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The Commissioners are responsible for reviewing and approving all grant decisions for funds from the Corporation. Within the District, the Mayoral-appointed Commission is responsible for recommending innovative and creative citywide service programs to increase volunteer participation in all age groups and providing community-based problem solving among diverse participants.

District of Columbia State Service Plan

A State Service Plan is a state commission's three-year strategy for coordinating national service and volunteer service activities across all streams of service. The 2010-2012 District of Columbia State Service Plan is the continuation of a significant collaboration to address citywide needs through service. The State Service Plan guides Serve DC programming with priority areas that include education and youth, emergency preparedness, and economic growth and community renewal. The State Service Plan creates a blueprint for addressing needs in the District through service and expanding opportunities for District residents to serve to the fullest extent of their skills and abilities. By addressing local and national priority areas, the intent of the State Service Plan is to serve as an evolving and living document to guide focused activities around identified programmatic priority areas, demographic and inclusion priorities, collaboration, and accountability. The District of Columbia State Service Plan can be found on the Serve DC website at www.serve.dc.gov. Serve DC will be working collaboratively with community partners in 2012 to develop the 2013-2015 District of Columbia State Service Plan.

Serve DC's 2012-2013 AmeriCorps State Programs

Byte Back

815 Monroe Street NE, Washington DC 20017
(202) 529-3395; www.byteback.org/

Byte Back's mission is to improve economic opportunity for low-income residents in the District of Columbia by providing computer training and employment readiness skills. Byte Back will bring **8 full-time AmeriCorps Members** to serve as technology instructors, teaching basic computer literacy skills and Microsoft Office skills to low-income adults and out of school youth to help reach that goal.

Center for Inspired Teaching

1436 U Street NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20009
(202) 462-1956; www.inspiredteaching.org

Center for Inspired Teaching will engage a cohort of **28 professional AmeriCorps Members** for a year of service. The AmeriCorps Members will work as teachers in DC Public Schools in all eight wards in Washington, DC and will complete the Inspired Teacher Certification Program.

City Year

1875 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 1130, Washington, DC 20009
(202) 776-7780; www.cityyear.org/dc

City Year Washington, DC unites **115 AmeriCorps Members**, ages 17-24, from all backgrounds for a year of **full-time** service, giving them the skills and opportunities to change the world. As tutors, mentors, and role models, these young

leaders make a difference in the lives of children and transform schools and neighborhoods in all eight wards of the District of Columbia.

DC SCORES

1224 M Street NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005
(212) 868-9510; http://dcscores.blogspot.com/

DC SCORES is a nonprofit that combines soccer, poetry, and service-learning in an afterschool curriculum to help youth in 35 District Public Schools become physically fit, feel like a part of a team, and become active in school and agents of change in the community. The AmeriCorps program will have **3 full-time and 12 minimum-time SCORE Corps Members** who will work at all 35 DC SCORES partner schools as writing and soccer coaches during the out-of-school time.

Experience in Action/ Experience Corps

601 E Street, NW, Washington DC 20049
(202) 434-6400; http://www.experiencecorps.org/index.cfm

AARP Experience Corps-Washington, DC engages **30 older adult minimum-time AmeriCorps Members** who serve as tutors and mentors to students in grades K-3 who are struggling to read. The program serves students at Neval-Thomas and Kenilworth elementary schools, two high-needs Title I schools serving the Parkside-Kenilworth communities. Members help students reach reading proficiency by the end of third grade, giving them the tools and support they need to succeed academically in the long-term.

Higher Achievement

1701 K Street, NW, Suite 1000**,** Washington, DC 20006
(202) 861-7753; www.higherachievement.org/index.php

Higher Achievement's mission is to develop academic skills, behaviors, and attitudes in motivated and underserved middle school children, 'scholars', to improve their grades, standardized test scores, attendance, and opportunities: acceptance to top high school programs. Higher Achievement will have **5 full-time AmeriCorps Members**.

Jumpstart

1612 K Street, NW, Suite 704, Washington, DC 20006
(202) 393-3344; www.jstart.org

Jumpstart Washington, DC will serve the year with **234 minimum-time AmeriCorps Members** from the University of the District of Columbia, Howard University, Georgetown University, Catholic University, and George Washington University. Members from these Jumpstart sites will serve children ages 3 to 5 from low income communities, in one-to-one tutoring and mentoring relationships based on language and literacy development. Corps members serve throughout the District in Wards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8.

Latin American Youth Center

1419 Columbia Road, NW, Washington, DC 20009
(202) 319-8640; www.layc-dc.org

Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) currently manages **22 full-time and 8 half-time AmeriCorps Members.** The LAYC AmeriCorps Program works in three teams at elementary and middle schools in the Washington, DC Columbia Heights and Ward 4 neighborhoods. The Education Team serves as educational aides and runs after school programs for

students. The Health Team provides health education classes on a variety of topics that include physical fitness, nutrition, self esteem, life skills and pregnancy prevention to both in-school and after-school students in elementary and middle school. The Community Service Team works to engage students in community service through workshops and the creation of community service projects throughout the program year.

Literacy Lab (Planning Grant)

623 Florida Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001
(202) 494-3050; http://www.theliteracylab.org/

The Literacy Lab is a non-profit organization serving the Washington, DC area with the mission to provide high-quality, individualized reading remediation to low-income students in order to increase their literacy skills, leading to increased academic success and greater opportunities in life.

Playworks

1875 K Street, NW, 5th Floor, Washington, DC 20006
(202) 822-0097; www.playworksusa.org

Playworks is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being of children by providing full-time play and physical activity for low-income schools across the country. Playworks programming has a strong focus on recess, and encourages respectful, inclusive, healthy play for all students. Playworks provides each partner school with a full-time coach who becomes part of the school community. Each Playworks coach works full-time to provide organized play and physical activity programming throughout the school day and after school, organizing games during recess and class game time, and providing after-school games, supervised playtime developmental sports leagues and leadership training. In the Washington area, our **14 full-time AmeriCorps Members** will serve Wards 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 in the 2012-2013 school year.

Serve DC Staff Roles

The following is a list of Serve DC Staff, along with their duties related to AmeriCorps.

Patricia Evans, Executive Director

The Executive Director provides oversight for all Corporation for National and Community Service sponsored grants; sets program goals; recommends, develops and implements policies and procedures; manages and tracks match requirements; and compliance monitoring.

Yolanda Brown, Deputy Director, Grants and Operations

The Deputy Director creates, coordinates and evaluates the financial systems of programs; processes reimbursement requests; prepares program needs assessments and reports; and monitors program financial compliance.

Kristen Henry, National Service Director

The Director of National Service is responsible for managing the direct oversight of Serve DC's national service portfolio and ensuring compliance with federal and local regulations; developing policies and procedures related to grants administration and national service; and developing strategies for outreach and marketing to promote national service.

TBD, AmeriCorps Program Officer*

The AmeriCorps Program Officer is responsible for setting program goals; planning, coordinating, and implementing program evaluation; preparing reports for program evaluation; maintaining member time records; site development and compliance monitoring; working jointly with AmeriCorps program staff to resolve program related issues; and,

processing reimbursement requests. The AmeriCorps Program Officer will disseminate information such as grant requirements, policies and procedures, and best practices to subgrantee staff.

***Please note: Kristen Henry is the temporary point of contact for the AmeriCorps programs** and can be reached at Kristen.henry@dc.gov or 202-727-8003.

Sarah Watkins, Learning and Disability Inclusion Program Officer

The Training and Disability Inclusion Program Officer is responsible for overseeing program development through the Program Development and Training Calendar. This role also oversees the inclusion of people with disabilities in AmeriCorps programs and management of the DC AmeriCorps Leadership Council. The Training and Disability Inclusion Program Officer can set up individualized trainings for AmeriCorps programs.

Member Management

Recruiting AmeriCorps Members

AmeriCorps programs are tasked with recruiting qualified members who will successfully carry out programs in their communities. Each AmeriCorps program is unique and has different needs of qualities in their members. The key to successful recruitment and engagement of AmeriCorps members is creating a comprehensive AmeriCorps Member Position Description. The Position Description is how you will "sell" your program to prospective members, so be clear, concise and honest about the service that members will provide.

The Member Position Description must also clearly align with goals and objectives in the program's approved grant proposal and it must also adhere to AmeriCorps rules and regulations for allowable Member activities.

All AmeriCorps Member Position Descriptions should include at least the following:

- A "one-liner" about your agency and what you are looking for in a member;
- A paragraph describing your organization's mission and work;
- A list of the duties and responsibilities of the member position;
- A list of required and preferred qualifications;
- A description of benefits if applicable: stipend amount, Education Award, health insurance, loan deferment, and other benefits, tangible and otherwise;
- A list of all the necessary background checks they must agree to conduct – National Sex Offender Public Registry, State criminal check, and FBI;
- A short sentence or two about any unique opportunities offered—advanced training in a particular skill, for example, or anything that is unique about your community;
- Contact or resource for requesting additional information;
- Equal Employment Opportunity Council and American with Disabilities Act language ("will not discriminate against a member on the basis of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, union membership, age, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, nor political affiliation"); and
- Term of service and hours requirement.

The three areas you need to consider in developing your recruitment plan are: your recruitment activities, your recruitment timeline, and your budget to carry out successful recruitment. There are three questions to ask when you are developing your recruitment plan:

1. How and what will we do?

- What existing events can we take advantage of (career fairs, festivals, community days, other local events)?
- Where are we likely to find concentrations of potential applicants?
- What sorts of materials will we need (brochures, position descriptions, handouts)?
- Who will create our materials?
- Are there social media and online outlets that we can use (My AmeriCorps, Facebook, websites, national/local listservs)?
- What community partners should we work with?
- Who will work on member recruitment in my organization?

2. When will we do it?

- When do members need to start?
- How long will it take to conduct our recruitment campaign?
- When do career fairs or other outreach events take place?
- How long will interviews take?
- When will orientation sessions begin?
- How long after recruiting a member can he or she start?
- When will we be ready to start recruiting?

3. How much will it cost?

- Are there costs associated with posting our positions to publications, websites, or attending career fairs?
- Are there costs associated with creating alternative formats?
- Are there additional costs associated with printing copies of applications, brochures, etc?
- How much staff time (and consequently payroll costs) be spent on recruitment?

The Corporation has made it increasingly easier to recruit AmeriCorps members via the Internet. The Corporation-hosted website, www.my.americorps.gov, allows for programs, once approved for funding, to post available AmeriCorps positions free of charge and provides a searchable database for prospective members. Organizations can post service opportunities to the My AmeriCorps Portal through the Member Management Portal in eGrants. Here are step-by-step instructions to create a service opportunity through eGrants to be posted on the My AmeriCorps Portal:

1. On the main screen of eGrants, select 'Recruitment' under "View My AmeriCorps Portal"
2. Select "Service Opportunities" on the Recruitment Workbasket screen.
3. Select "Create Opportunity Listing"
4. Fill in the appropriate information specific to your Service Opportunity on the proceeding screens.

*The eGrants system will not let you proceed until all required information (noted with a red star) is filled in.
*You can decide to make the Service Opportunity immediately available or save the information to post at a later date.

Enrolling AmeriCorps Members

Once your organization has recruited qualified individuals to serve in your AmeriCorps Program, it will be time to enroll the members into your organization and into the required AmeriCorps systems. Enrollment in the **egrants system** must be done within 30 days of the member start date. This 30 day period of time also applies to when a member is exited from the program. This is a requirement of the grant. Failure to do so will be reported to Serve DC and the Corporation. Additionally, Serve DC requires all subgrantees to enroll members into the **OnCorps system**. This is required for member timekeeping and approval of Periodic Expense Reports (PERs).

AmeriCorps Member Files

A critical administrative responsibility for AmeriCorps Program Managers is the maintenance of AmeriCorps member files. These files are required by the Corporation to ensure compliance with statutory regulations, such as eligibility to receive federal assistance. The following are the content requirements of the member file. Discrepancies in files or additional information related to the member file must be documented and requires a "memo to file". An example AmeriCorps Member File Checklist can be found in Appendix 1.1.

Citizenship Requirement

To be eligible to serve as an AmeriCorps Members, an individual must satisfy the Citizenship Requirement at time of enrollment.[1] A significant change in documenting citizenship is that sub-grantees will no longer need to provide proof of citizenship documents in the Member File. From the Corporation's website: *In 2012, the Corporation announced that the process for verifying the identity and citizenship status of individuals applying to serve in AmeriCorps has been automated. By law, to serve in an approved AmeriCorps position, an individual must be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent alien of the United States (42 U.S.C. 12602(a)(3)). With the signing of this agreement, upon an individual accepting a position, the individual's information will be automatically reviewed by the Social Security Administration within 3 business days. If the individual's information is verified, the AmeriCorps grantee or sponsor will not need to do anything. The individual's status will appear as "Verified" in their My AmeriCorps account and in eGrants for your records. If the individual's information cannot be automatically verified by the Social Security Administration, sub grantees will receive an email regarding next steps which will include a request for documentation. For both grantees and sponsors in this scenario, the grantee or sponsor will need to review and verify the individual's documentation and provide copies to CNCS. Within eGrants, the status of an individual's identity and citizenship review can also now be seen at any time and this information must be accessible to Serve DC staff for monitoring and auditing purposes.* Additional information can be found at: www.americorps.gov.

While not required in the Member File, AmeriCorps Program Managers should be familiar with the appropriate documentation for this requirement as listed below.

- *Primary documentation of status as a U.S. citizen or national:*
  - A birth certificate showing that the individual was born in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, or the Northern Mariana Islands
  - A United States passport
  - A report of birth abroad of a U.S. Citizen (FS–240) issued by the State Department
  - A certificate of birth-foreign service (FS 545) issued by the State Department
  - A certification of report of birth (DS–1350) issued by the State Department
  - A certificate of naturalization (Form N–550 or N–570) issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service
  - A certificate of citizenship (Form N–560 or N–561) issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

[1] Sec. 2522.200 of 45 CFR.

- *Primary documentation of status as a lawful permanent resident alien of the United States:*
  - Permanent Resident Card, INS Form I–551
  - Alien Registration Receipt Card, INS Form I–551
  - A passport indicating that the INS has approved it as temporary evidence of lawful admission for permanent residence
  - A Departure Record (INS Form I–94) indicating that the INS has approved it as temporary evidence of lawful admission for permanent residence.

* On July 1, 2010, Puerto Rico began issuing new, more secure certified copies of birth certificates to U.S. citizens born in Puerto Rico. Effective October 30, 2010 any member using a Puerto Rican birth certificate to establish citizenship status for AmeriCorps eligibility is required to produce the new, certified document. Members enrolled prior to October 30, 2010 with the old birth certificate are not required to obtain a new one. For more information, see: http://www.prfaa.com/birthcertificates/

Although the combination of obtaining a Driver's License or Government-Issued ID and Social Security Card are acceptable forms of identification for the I-9 Federal Employment Eligibility Form, these documents are not sufficient for proving United States Citizenship.

Proof of Age

AmeriCorps members must be at least 17 years of age to be able to serve.[2] The document that satisfies the Citizenship Requirement should be able to provide an age of the individual and therefore prove their age. If a member is under 18 at the time of enrollment, they must get parental consent to serve.[3] Your organization must solicit parental consent for the member to serve before the member begins their term of service. The parental consent form must be maintained in the AmeriCorps member's file.

Educational Attainment Requirement

Because a great benefit of AmeriCorps is the Eli Segal Education Award, the Corporation has stipulated that all AmeriCorps members have a high school diploma or GED by the time they utilize the Award.[4] Members are allowed to complete classes towards their GED during their year of service to satisfy this requirement if necessary. An AmeriCorps Member will not be eligible to utilize their Segal Education Award unless they have satisfied the Educational Attainment Requirement.

- **High School Diploma/GED –** In cases such as the Tutoring Program Requirement where members must meet education requirements, each site must obtain a written declaration from the member that they have received their high school diploma or GED. It is **strongly encouraged** that programs obtain a copy of the member's diploma, GED, or official transcript and place it in their member file; a program can place a memo-to-file if they have attempted to obtain the required document and have been unsuccessful.

***** A program may accept a self-certification from the potential member as proof of high school graduation. Applicants do not have to produce a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate nor are programs required to retain a copy of the high school diploma or other documents confirming education level, such as an official transcript. However, a self-

[2] Sec. 2522.200 of 45 CFR.
[3] AmeriCorps Provision 2012 IV.C.2.
[4] Sec. 2522.200 a.2 and Sec. 2522.200 b of 45 CFR.

certification must include the person's signature, under penalty of law, specifically certifying that he or she has completed high school or its equivalent or will obtain a high school diploma prior to using the education award[5].

- **GED Agreement Letter –** If a member does not have a GED or a high school diploma, the member must sign the GED Agreement Letter which states that the member will obtain a GED by end of the service term. The letter must also include a projected date of completion and the stated penalty of loss of education award if the GED is not obtained. An example of a GED Agreement letter can be found in Appendix 1.5.

- **College Diploma –** this does not satisfy the requirement. Do not use college diplomas as proof of high school or GED completion.

Additionally, all AmeriCorps Members who will be participating in tutoring programs must meet the minimum education requirements outlined in the Tutoring Program Requirements Checklist (Appendix 1.4).

AmeriCorps Enrollment & AmeriCorps Member File Documents

Other documents are required to fully enroll a member into your AmeriCorps program. The following documents should be maintained in the AmeriCorps Member File.

- **Member Application <u>or</u> Resume:** include the completed member application and/or the resume submitted to apply for the position.
- **AmeriCorps Enrollment Form[6]** : Although enrollment takes places within egrants, programs can also document enrollment through this form, which can be found online. The member's date of enrollment should be the same start date as outlined on the Member Agreement/Contract. Use of this form is not a requirement.
- **I-9 Federal Employment Eligibility Form:** A standard employment form that can be found here: http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-9.pdf.
- **Member Eligibility Verification Form:** Signing this form certifies that you have verified their eligibility to participate in this program and receive federal assistance under the law. Samples can be found online.
- **W-4 Tax Withholding Form:** A standard employment form that is required if your members will be receiving a living allowance. For a copy of this form, visit: www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw4.pdf.
- **Criminal History Checks**: All AmeriCorps sites <u>must</u> administer a State Criminal Registry and National Sex Offender Public Registry (NSOPR) <u>check on all AmeriCorps members and grant funded staff</u> (this includes staff funded by match) enrolled in their program as well as any staff included in the AmeriCorps budget (exception: individuals holding covered positions as of 9/30/09). *If your program enrolls members in a second term of service and the member has less than 30 days of a break in their service, your organization does not need to re-check the member.* Requirements and specifics of both checks are listed below.[7]
    - Statewide Criminal Registry: This check must be completed for the state that the individual will be serving in and for the state of residency prior to enrollment in the AmeriCorps Program (if different), using the designated statewide criminal repository. This check must be *initiated* by the AmeriCorps Program upon enrollment or hiring of the individual into the program. If the check is still being processed when the AmeriCorps Member starts serving, the Member *must* be supervised if in contact with vulnerable populations, by an individual that has been cleared through the State Criminal Registry.

[5] AmeriCorps FAQ B.11
[6] AmeriCorps Provision 2012 IV.C.1.
[7] Sec. 2540.203 of 45 CFR.

- National Sex Offender Public Registry (NSOPR): This check must be completed on the member upon *application* to your program, using the National Sex Offender Public website (www.nsopr.gov). This check must be completed and documented (date of search must be included in the print out or electronic copy) before 1) the member has access to a vulnerable population; 2) the member starts their term of service.
- FBI: the National Service Criminal History Check will consist of three parts for individuals who are predicted to have recurring access to a vulnerable population (those who are 17 or younger, 60 and older, or have a disability). An FBI check will no longer substitute for the one or two required State repository checks. Currently, unless a program is operated by a law enforcement agency, programs cannot request or directly receive FBI checks. Some programs obtain them by:
    i. Using the State Repository: Many State criminal history repositories that offer finger print-based statewide checks also offer FBI checks. The FBI prefers that programs use State repositories to obtain FBI Criminal History Record Information (CHRI), and State repositories can be the fastest way to obtain the FBI check. Some State repositories have identified a point of contact in their office, informed on our requirements, to assist our programs. A list of such contacts identified so far is attached.
    ii. Using non-law enforcement sources. The FBI can provide checks to organizations operating under federal laws designed to help protect vulnerable populations. One example is the SafetyNET program operated by MENTOR. These organizations disqualify candidates on criteria that often goes beyond the Corporation's eligibility criteria. For guidance, go to: http://apps.mentoring.org/safetynet/factsheet.adp.
    iii. Asking the individual to request his/her own FBI check. Individuals can ask the FBI for their own CHRI. These records arrive unscreened, presenting the full FBI database information. See: http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/background-checks/background_checks
    iv. Using local law enforcement agencies. Some programs work with their local law enforcement agencies to obtain FBI and statewide checks.
    v. Using checks conducted by program partners. Some placement site partners (e.g., public school systems, nursing homes, etc.) may perform checks that include FBI records.

More information can be found here: http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/files/faqs-published-5-10-12-edited-5-24-12.pdf

*An individual is ineligible to serve in an AmeriCorps Program if they: 1) refuse to consent to a State Criminal Registry and FBI Check, 2) make a false statement in connection with a Program's inquiry concerning the individual's criminal history, 3) are registered or required to be registered on a State Sex Offender Registry, 4) have committed murder.

*An AmeriCorps site must have procedures in place for soliciting, completing, and documenting both Criminal History Checks. Procedures must include the following:

1. Verification of identity of the individual
2. Acquiring prior, written authorization to complete the State Criminal Registry and FBI Check (not required for the NSOPR check)
3. Documenting the individual's understanding that selection is contingent upon the review of both Criminal History Checks
4. Providing reasonable opportunity for the individual to challenge the factual accuracy before action is taken
5. Providing safeguards to ensure confidentially
6. Ensuring individuals with pending State Criminal Registry checks are supervised while interacting with vulnerable populations

7. Document identity was verified/checks performed
8. Maintaining all original documentation with date verification (printout)
9. Document that selection was based on results
10. Program pays for the costs of the check
11. Requesting of alternate search protocol when necessary

Resources for completing Criminal Background Checks and the National Sex Offender Public Registry Check:

- District of Columbia: Metropolitan P.D. Criminal Records Section, 300 Indiana Ave. NW MPD HQ Room 3055. Washington D.C. 20001; (202) 727-4245.
- National Sex Offender Public Registry Check: www.nsopr.gov.
- FBI: http://apps.mentoring.org/safetynet/factsheet.adp; http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/background-checks/background_checks,

If the program would like to use an alternative criminal background check, other than those listed above, the program must obtain an Alternate Search Protocol (ASP) from the Corporation. This applies to those who use alternate searches provided through school systems, commercial vendors, and screening authorities (other than National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, no approval needed) instead of the statewide criminal history repository. The program must first request approval from the State Commission who will then seek the ASP from the Corporation.

Reminder: Programs in contact with vulnerable population must obtain both the state-wide criminal history repository check AND an FBI national criminal history check. This is in addition to the NSOPR check.

- **AmeriCorps Member Agreement or Contract** (See Appendix 1.2 for an example): This is the contract that Members and supervisors must sign before the start of service that details the working arrangement for their term of service, including requirements of their service, duties, and discipline policies.[8] Failure to sign before the start of service will result in loss of accrued time and reported expenses if signed after the start of service. The AmeriCorps Program must ensure that there is an alignment with all enrollment documentation with start dates as designated in My AmeriCorps Portal and OnCorps.

  *Member Agreements/Contracts **must** state the Member's position description, outline the Member's term of service (start date and end date *must* fall within the grant year awarded to your organization), Member's type of term of service (full-time, half-time, etc.), the benefits associated with their type of term of service, standards of conduct, specified prohibited activities, requirements under the Drug-Free Workplace Act, suspension and termination rules, circumstances under which a member may be released for cause, grievance procedures, and any other requirements established by the grantee.

- **Proof of Health Care Enrollment or Health Care Enrollment Waiver**: Except for EAPs, Professional Corps, or Members covered under a collective bargaining agreement, the grantee must provide, or make available, healthcare insurance to those members serving a 1700-hour full-time term (Full Time) who are not otherwise covered by a healthcare policy at the time each begins his/her term of service. The subgrantee 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. The Corporation will not cover healthcare

[8] AmeriCorps Provision 2011 IV.D.2

costs for family members. An example AmeriCorps Health Insurance Verification Form can be found in Appendix 1.6.

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.

Note: Please do not include the following in the Member's file. These documents should be placed in a separate locked file cabinet/box.

- Medical condition information
- Disability disclosure and accommodation information

- **Child Care Benefit Enrollment Documents or Waiver of Benefit**: Full-time AmeriCorps Members have the benefit of applying for Child Care Coverage provided by the Corporation. If a Member decides to utilize this benefit, the AmeriCorps Program must maintain all documentation in the member's file. All full-time AmeriCorps Members must sign a waiver of this benefit if they decide not to utilize this benefit. The waiver must also be maintained in the member's file.

- **Photo Release:** Members must sign a photo release form (or include it in the Member Contract/Agreement) that will enable their pictures to be used in publications.[9] Members under 18 years of age must have parental consent.

- **Documentation of Loan Forbearance**: Must document to verify members are aware of benefit of ability to request forbearance to loan holder via MyAmeriCorps Portal (loan forbearance is only available to full-time members)

- **Service Logs:** Time and attendance records of Members' service required in OnCorps. Service logs *must*:
    - Note location of service performed
    - Separate time for direct service, training, and fundraising
    - Separate lunch hours (lunch hours cannot be counted towards hours required for completion of the program). The program should develop a policy about lunch hours and other non-service hours and train their members on it. Members should report whether or not they have taken a lunch break during their work day. If lunch was not taken members should list out what activities they were doing while working through lunch. If program is only using OnCorps, lunch should be noted in "comments" section.
    - Be signed in ink by both the AmeriCorps Member and their direct supervisor within a reasonable amount of time from the date of the service performed. Electronic timekeeping systems are allowed as the system of record when three conditions are met:
        - A written policy is in effect establishing the use of electronic timekeeping system as your system of record;
        - 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; and

[10] AmeriCorps Provision 2011 IV.G.3.

- Once appropriate electronic signatures have been applied, no changes may be made unless there is a clear, auditable record of the revision.

- **Mid-Term Performance Evaluation:** All full-time and half-time AmeriCorps Members *must* be assessed at the mid-point of their term of service. AmeriCorps Programs may complete these evaluations for less than half-time members, but it is not required. This document must include the number of hours completed to date and how many hours the member has left to serve.[10] Mid-Term Evaluations must be signed by the program supervisor. Mid-Term Performance Evaluations are not required for members who exit before the mid-point of their terms, but an End-of-Term Performance Evaluation *must* be completed for these members.

- **Documentation of Member Discipline and Change of Status:** In the event that you have disciplinary challenges with Members, it is important to keep a paper trail of your challenges and corresponding attempts to correct the problems. Additionally, all programs must maintain copies of 'Change of Status' forms from the eGrants Member Management System and document suspensions of service in the Member File. Member Files must include documentation of release of any member for compelling circumstances or for cause.

Exit Documents

- **End of Term/Exit Form:** This form qualifies members for the Education Award. This must be signed and dated accurately to reflect the Member's final day with your organization. The End of Term Form must be signed and dated in ink by the program supervisor on or after the member's dated signature and the end date on the Form must be consistent with the end date listed in My AmeriCorps Portal. This form can be found online. Exit date on form must match exit date in eGrants.

- **End-of-Term Performance Evaluation /Exit Interview:** Include documentation of the member's final evaluation with a program supervisor signature. End of Term Performance Evaluation must discuss the member's ability to satisfactorily complete assignments and to meet other performance criteria outlined in member contract. The Evaluation should note if the member completed the required number of hours making them eligible for an Education Award. It should be noted if the Member was released with compelling personal circumstances making them eligible for an Education Award or if the Member was release for cause, making them ineligible for an Education Award. **[2011 AC IV.F and AmeriCorps Rulemaking published in Federal Register Vol. 73, No. 181]**

My AmeriCorps Portal

My AmeriCorps (my.americorps.gov) is an online space designed to help members manage their AmeriCorps experience and it helps programs manage their program's recruitment and enrolled members. It provides an easy way for individuals to get and give important information.

For Potential & Current AmeriCorps Members

My AmeriCorps makes it easy to search and apply for AmeriCorps service opportunities in all three types of AmeriCorps programs. After registering and creating a profile, potential applicants can apply and allow programs to offer service opportunities to them.

For those who apply to a program, My AmeriCorps makes frequently used and requested forms available online at any time. For Serve DC's sub-grantees, this site will allow Members to:

[11] AmeriCorps Provision 2011 IV.H.3

- Modify contact information (address, email address)
- View and print 1099 forms
- Complete Loan Forbearance forms
- Complete Interest Accrual Benefit requests
- Access to Service Certification forms
- Use all of the features and forms that were available in the AmeriCorps Online Payment System
- Complete Member Surveys (to include the End of Term Exit Survey)
- Connect to Alumni Services

In addition, My AmeriCorps includes comprehensive online help, frequently asked questions, and an enhanced customer service feature, "Contact My AmeriCorps," to get the answers you need about the programs or the system. For more information on My AmeriCorps, go to http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/members/index.asp.

For AmeriCorps Programs

Serve DC subgrantees, and all AmeriCorps programs, can access the My AmeriCorps Portal through the eGrants system. Through the Portal, programs can post service opportunities, extend offers to accepted applicants, verify U.S. citizenship, enroll members, exit members, complete slot conversions (this can done directly by the program once it has received approved by the Commission), and complete slot transfers (only available to AmeriCorps National/Direct grantees). For more information on using the My AmeriCorps Portal, please visit the Corporation's Resource Center at: http://nationalserviceresources.org/ac-training-support-state.

Enrollment Policy

Member enrollment refers to the number of slots filled divided by the number of slots awarded. Programs that are not able to reach 100% enrollment may be required to develop a corrective action plan and low enrollment rates adversely affect the program's risk level and may reduce the amount of grant allocation in future years. Serve DC reserves the right to recommend a smaller amount of AmeriCorps members in a subgrantee's second or third year of funding based on enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.

Service Location Designation

In the My AmeriCorps Portal, programs are able to create accurate operating sites and service locations for their members. Programs are required to do this for all members. This requirement will allow for better tracking of resources, increase transparency, align with federal-wide open government initiatives, enhance communication among national and state stakeholders, and build capacity to accurately tell the story of national service. For more details and procedure please see Appendix 1.7.

Refill Policy

Eligible programs that have fully enrolled their awarded member slots are allowed to replace any member who terminates service before completing **30%** of his/her term. Programs may not refill the same slot more than once. If a member leaves with compelling personal circumstances, the slot cannot be re-filled if the exited member accepts a partial Education Award.

As a fail-safe mechanism to ensure that Corporation resources are available in the National Service Trust to finance any Member's Education Award, Serve DC will suspend refilling if either the total AmeriCorps program enrollment reaches 97% of awarded slots or the number of refills reaches five percent of awarded slots.

Subgrantees whose awards have special grant conditions are not eligible to refill positions. In order to qualify for refilling, subgrantees will be evaluated on the basis of the outcomes of Inspector General audits, site visits, and oversight by Serve DC program and grants officers. Serve DC must forward all changes and appropriate forms to the Corporation after approval. Any requests for changes that fall outside of the parameters set forth above must come to the Corporation for written approval with concurrence from Serve DC.

Supervising Members

AmeriCorps State programs must provide opportunities for professional and personal development for each member as one of its goals. The member also provides an opportunity for your organization to build capacity and offer increased services in communities. Quality supervision and mentorship is critical in helping to maximize the benefits of service for the member and the organization.

AmeriCorps Members should be supervised by qualified staff of your organization and **should not** be supervised by other AmeriCorps Members. AmeriCorps Members cannot be supervised by other AmeriCorps Members because it potentially violates the non-displacement requirement of the AmeriCorps Regulations[11]. Additionally, AmeriCorps Members look to their supervisors for guidance, mentorship, and other professional development opportunities.

Remember to:

- Provide ongoing supervision through regularly scheduled meetings with your Member(s). Focus on reviewing and developing service plans to achieve objectives;
- Maintain open communication with Member(s);
- Identify and document training needs and opportunities for professional development for the Member;
- Involve the Member in appropriate staff meetings, retreats and training events;
- Provide direct and honest feedback on all aspects of the Member's performance on a regular basis-positive aspects as well as constructive criticism.

Always provide supervision to your AmeriCorps Members. AmeriCorps Members **cannot** acquire service/training/fundraising hours during time when they are unsupervised. AmeriCorps Members cannot complete service tasks from home or in any other location where they are unsupervised. For more information on Member Supervision see http://encorps.nationalserviceresources.org/supervisors_toolkit.php

Service Objectives

Outlining service expectations with the AmeriCorps Member, upon their arrival and revisiting those expectations at regular intervals, ensures that there is a clear understanding of what the Member should accomplish over the course of the service year. Objectives should focus on outcomes within the community which are clearly linked to service activities and the program's performance measures. The aim is for the Member to have a true sense of ownership in their service plan for the year.

In order to facilitate the full understanding of Member expectations:

- Review the specific responsibilities of his/her service year with the Member
- Establish goals and objectives for program success
- Provide projects, tasks, and assignments throughout the year that allow the Member to develop and exercise leadership

[12]Sec. 2540.100, Subpart A of 45 CFR

- Communicate periodically with the Member regarding the progress and attainment of goals and objectives
- Revisit objectives periodically and revise them if necessary. Please be sure to keep the AmeriCorps Program Officer informed of any changes that may require Serve DC approval
- Make certain that supervisors/site partners delegate activities to AmeriCorps Members that are allowable:
  a. The AmeriCorps Members you support under your grant may perform direct service activities that will advance the goals of your program, will result in a specific identifiable service or improvement that otherwise would not be provided, and that are included in, or consistent with, your Corporation-approved grant application.
  b. Your Members' direct service activities must address local environmental, educational, public safety (including disaster preparedness and response), or other human needs.
  c. Direct service activities generally refer to activities that provide a direct, measurable benefit to an individual, a group, or a community.
  d. Examples of the types of direct service activities AmeriCorps Members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:
     - Tutoring
     - Helping to run an after-school program
     - Engaging in community clean-up projects
     - Providing health information to a vulnerable population
     - Teaching as part of a professional corps
     - Providing relief services to a community affected by a disaster
     - Conducting a neighborhood watch program as part of a public safety effort[12]

Please note that service activities should NOT include clerical work, research, or fundraising unless such activities are directly related to the service project and do not exceed the percentage established by the Corporation. Regulations state that Fundraising hours cannot exceed 10% of the member's total time; Training Hours cannot exceed 20% of the member's total time.[13]

Reporting Service Activities

Once Member objectives are set, the Member should keep records of his/her activities. These records will:

- Help provide information about the Member's activities and accomplishments
- Assist in identifying any challenges that the Member is facing and developing strategies to address them
- Help both the Member and supervisor in planning any personal or professional development for the Member
- Help the Member to reflect on his/her year of service and translate that reflection for career development purposes and "Life After AmeriCorps"
- Support data collection for the program to track progress towards goals and performance measures

Periodically, Members should track their progress in meeting their service objectives to the service site. Serve DC will provide resources to support tracking progress if needed.

Prohibited Service Activities

While charging time to the AmeriCorps Program, accumulating service, training hours, or performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and members may not engage in the following activities,

[13] Sec. 2520 – 2520.65
[14] Sec. 2520.45 and 2520.50 of 45 CFR.

and the subgrantee may not use grant funds (Serve DC funds or matching funds supporting staff or member time and effort) to support the following activities:

- Attempting to influence legislation;
- Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- Assisting, promoting or deterring union organizing;
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- 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;
- 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 engaging in any form of religious proselytizing;
- Providing a direct benefit to:
  - A for-profit entity
  - A labor union
  - A partisan political organization
  - An organization engaged in the religious activities described in the preceding sub clause, unless Grant funds are not used to support the religious activities
  - A nonprofit entity that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c) (3) of U.S. Code Title 26;
- Voter registration drives by AmeriCorps members is an unacceptable service activity. In addition, Corporation funds may not be used to conduct a voter registration drive.
- Members may not provide abortion services or make referrals to such services, including members enrolled prior to October 1, 2009. In the past, AmeriCorps members have joined with clinics that offer abortion services and partnered with Planned Parenthood chapters to work on public health education topics. The new stipulation will allow members to volunteer or provide their services on their own time, but not while affiliated with AmeriCorps, itself.
- Other activities as Serve DC determines will be prohibited, upon notice to the AmeriCorps State subgrantee. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the above activities on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-Corporation funds. The AmeriCorps logo should not be worn while doing so.

Also, a Member's service activities may **not** include:

- Raising funds for his or her living allowance
- Raising funds for an organization's operating expenses or endowment;
- Writing grant applications for AmeriCorps funding or for any other funding provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service
- Writing grants applications for funding provided by any other federal agency

Rules of Conduct

Members are expected not to participate in the specified prohibited activities but are encouraged to abide by the program's rules of conduct, which may include:

- Demonstrating mutual respect toward others;

- Following supervisor directions and working on assignments in a reliable and conscientious manner;
- Keeping accurate and precise time records that are checked and signed by the site supervisor and forwarded to the local service site at the agreed upon time;
- Not engaging in any activity that involves proselytizing or assisting religious activities, influencing legislation or an election, aiding a partisan political organization, helping or hindering union activity, or aiding a for-profit business;
- Not engaging in verbal or physical conduct which harasses, disrupts or interferes with another's performance or which creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile environment;
- Not engaging in conduct which sexually harasses others.

The AmeriCorps State program must establish their own rules of conduct for all AmeriCorps Members to follow.

Disciplinary Action

While we hope that well-established objectives, ongoing supervision and periodic feedback will result in sound relationships between AmeriCorps Members and program managers, there may be times when more direct and documented feedback is required regarding conduct or performance. If a program manager feels that he/she is experiencing an issue of conflict with a Member, the program managers should follow the Corporation-established grievance procedures listed in their Member agreement and/or the suggested steps below:

- Speak to the Member about the issue and update the program director of the incident. They may intervene to help resolve the issue. Document the incident in the Member's file.
- Give a verbal warning to the Member, clearly describing the problem and the steps that are necessary for improvement. Document the conversation by creating a memo to the Member's file.
- If the problem persists, give a written warning describing the problem with performance and the steps that are necessary for improvement. If the steps are not taken, the program manager may take the necessary disciplinary actions found in the member contract or the organization's policies. Document in the Member file.
- If there is still no improvement, the Member may be released from their term of service for cause after the supervisor has contacted the AmeriCorps Program Officer and they agree that release is appropriate.

Release from Service

Members may be released for two reasons: "cause" or "compelling personal circumstances." "Cause" is defined as violating the rules of conduct and or participating in the prohibited activities, dropping out of the program without obtaining a release, being charged with a violent felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance, or any other serious breach that in the judgment of the program manager, would undermine the effectiveness of the program. Participants must disclose their release for cause on any subsequent applications to AmeriCorps programs.

"Compelling personal circumstances" include:

- Those that are beyond the participant's control, such as, but not limited to:
    - A participant's disability or serious illness;
    - Disability, serious illness, or death of a participant's family member if this makes completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible; or
    - 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, or the nonrenewal or premature closing of a project or program, that make completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible;
- Those that the Corporation, has for public policy reasons, determined as such, including:
    - Military service obligations;

- Acceptance by a participant of an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work; or
- 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.

A participant who is released for compelling personal circumstances and who completes at least 15 percent of the required term of service is eligible for a pro-rated Education Award. The amount of the Award is calculated based on the percentage of successful hours completed. The Member has the primary responsibility for demonstrating that compelling personal circumstances prevent the participant from completing the term of service. The program must document the basis for any determination that compelling personal circumstances prevent a participant from completing a term of service.[14] If an AmeriCorps Member is to be released from service for either of the above reasons, the program must complete all required paperwork (Exit Form and End-of-Term Performance Evaluation) and place them in the member's file.

Retention

Serve DC understands that programs may find it difficult to retain Members over the course of the program year. Retention refers to the number of AmeriCorps members that exit the program successfully with either a full Education Award or a partial/pro-rated Education Award. Serve DC and the Corporation expect programs to maintain a 100% retention rate. Those who meet less than an 85% retention rate will be assessed more closely and may be required to provide a Corrective Action Plan.

Serve DC will take any written and documented retention difficulties into consideration when reviewing an application and monitoring a program. Recruitment and retention percentages may be used to determine a program's risk designation and may be taken into consideration when determining funding decisions that could result in the loss of funding. Retention percentages will be assessed prior to a formal site visit, when the Grantee Progress Report is due in December, and at the end of the year.

Grievance Procedures

AmeriCorps State programs must develop and distribute the Corporation-approved grievance procedures to all AmeriCorps Members and staff supported by the AmeriCorps State grant award. It is imperative that programs be able to demonstrate that they have grievance procedures that resolve disputes concerning Member's suspension, dismissal, service evaluation or proposed service assignments, and that, as a participant of the program, he/she may file a grievance in accordance with the program's approved grievance policy.

Grievance Procedures should include (at a minimum):

- Grievance must be filed within one calendar year of the alleged occurrence (except in cases of fraud or criminal activity).
- Within 30 days of the filing of a grievance, a hearing must be held.
- Within 60 days of the filing of a grievance, a decision must be made.
- If no decision is made within 60 days of the grievance filing, or if the decision is adverse to the aggrieved party, the aggrieved party may request binding arbitration. Binding arbitration must be held within 45 days of request.
- If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator within 15 calendar days after receiving a request from one of the grievance parties, the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer will appoint an arbitrator from a list of qualified arbitrators.
- An arbitration proceeding must be held no later than 45 calendar days after the request for arbitration, or, if the arbitrator is appointed by the Chief Executive Officer, the proceeding must occur no later than 30 calendar days after the arbitrator's appointment.

[15] Sec. 2522.230 of 45 CFR.

Performance Evaluation

Supervisors play a crucial role in fostering a Member's professional and personal development. As a manager and mentor, you have the ability to observe his/her performance and give feedback regarding what he/she does extremely well, skills he/she may want to develop further and what he/she might plan to do in the future.

Given this critical role, Serve DC has the following expectations regarding appraisal of a Member's performance:

- Evaluate the member mid-term and at the end of his or her agreed upon term of service.
    - Use your own organization's appraisal form if it more accurately reflects the feedback process you have established with the member.
    - A copy of both the mid-term and the end of term evaluations must be placed in the Member's file. Both evaluations must be signed and dated by the Member and the supervisor.
- The evaluation should provide a summary of the feedback given to the member over time and a summary of the member's service hours at the time of the evaluation.

End-of-Term Evaluations must include the following:[15]

- Whether the member completed the required number of hours making them eligible for an Education Award
- Whether the member was released with compelling and personal circumstances making them eligible for an Education Award
- Whether the member was released for cause making them ineligible for an Education Award
- A discussion on the member's ability to satisfactorily complete assignments
- A discussion on the member's ability to meet other performance criteria outlined in the member contract

As noted previously:

- Both a Mid-Term and an End-of-Term Performance Evaluation is required for all Full-Time and Half-Time members
- Only an End-of-Term Performance Evaluation is required for less than Half-Time members
- Mid-Term Performance Evaluations are not required for members who exit before the mid-point of their service term, but an End-of-Term Performance Evaluation is required for all members

Member Training and Development

Member Orientation

Members who begin their year of service well oriented to their placement site – and the community that the organization serves – have the greatest potential for increased productivity and personal growth. Therefore, at the beginning of the member's term of service, supervisors should:

- Review the history and background of the organization with the members – its mission, goals, structure, and current programs;
- Provide appropriate equipment, materials and a workspace to the member to ensure an adequate and safe working environment;
- Provide the member with a handbook and any written materials about your organization and neighborhood and engage the member in a discussion about those materials;

[16] AmeriCorps Provision 2011 IV.D.5; AmeriCorps Rulemaking published in the Federal Register Vol. 73, No. 181

- Enable the member to spend time with other program staff, board members and community residents in order to get a broader picture of the organization and the community; some organizational norms and rules are explicitly stated, others are not. Although AmeriCorps members are technically neither staff nor volunteers, they should be treated as first year employees with regard to policies and procedures;
- Formally introduce the Member to the service placement site staff and partners and discuss goals and expectations.

Supervisors/Directors should set aside time to formally meet with the member to provide an opportunity for clarifying organizational expectations regarding:

- AmeriCorps Member Agreement*
- Organizational Policies and Procedures
    - Sick leave, vacation, personal leave and holiday policies (Staff contact to report absences)*
    - Grievance Procedures*
    - Work schedule and lunch breaks*
    - Time and Attendance Reporting*
    - Reimbursement policies for any local, service-related expenses, i.e., parking/mileage
    - Dress Code and/or Uniform
    - Reasonable Accommodation*
- AmeriCorps Member benefits* (if applicable to their term of service, most benefits are only available to Full-Time members)
    - Living Allowance
    - Health Insurance
    - Child Care
    - Loan Forbearance
- Telephone protocol and etiquette
- Participation in meetings and trainings
- Computer etiquette
- Access to organizational information
- Formality and language (addressing others by last or first name, titles)
- Rules of confidentiality (customer/client information, organizational information)
- Representation (including who may speak to the press)
- Fundraising
- Professionalism

*These items must be reviewed by all AmeriCorps members serving with your organization.

It is required that all AmeriCorps State programs document that each member has received an orientation. Documentation includes a copy of the orientation agenda(s). This information can be kept with program administration files.

Member Training

Training should be an ongoing part of your program, including:

- Training for assigned service activities including skills training (such as conducting organizational assessments, volunteer recruitment, volunteer project management and development), working with volunteers, cross-cultural sensitivity, and team building.

- Training to develop members which may include communication, conflict resolution, CPR/First Aid, "Life after AmeriCorps," and other training topics.

For more information on Member Training:
http://encorps.nationalserviceresources.org/designing_effective_training.php
http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/volunteer-member-staff-management/training

Life After AmeriCorps Member Training:
http://encorps.nationalserviceresources.org/whatsnext/index.shtml

http://edaward.org/

http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/americorps-next-steps-life-after-americorps

http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/americorps-next-steps-life-after-americorps-workshop-materials

Member Development Plan

Each site must use service experiences to help members achieve the skills and education needed for productive, active citizenship, including the provision, if appropriate, of structured opportunities for members to reflect on their service experience. Specifically, supervisors work with members to create an "Individual Development Plan" which outlines personal development goals to be achieved during the term of service, and how the AmeriCorps Supervisor will support attaining these goals. For great samples, check out http://encorps.nationalserviceresources.org/index.php.

DC AmeriCorps Leadership Council

Serve DC organizes and manages the Washington, DC AmeriCorps Leadership Council (DCALC). The DCALC is an AmeriCorps member driven group that seeks to provide support to members in the DC area through networking, training, outreach and resource sharing. By having your program represented in the DCALC, you will have an ongoing link to the rest of the national service community in the District. It serves as another way to pool resources and ideas with other AmeriCorps programs and stay connected. Members who serve on the DCALC will gain leadership opportunities and build skills. They will bring information back to the entire corps, create partnerships with other AmeriCorps teams, and help build your team's spirit of service.

Goals:

- Create a network of AmeriCorps Members in the Washington, DC Area
- Provide Members with opportunities for service
- Provide Members with professional development opportunities
- Provide Members with social/networking options and events
- Inform Members of things happening in Washington, DC related to AmeriCorps (subgrantee events, meetings, etc.)
- Create opportunities for collaboration, understanding and resource sharing between members, programs and between streams of service
- Make the DCALC valuable and sustainable

Serve DC will keep programs updated on DCALC timelines and program requirements for membership.

Member Time and Attendance

AmeriCorps program directors are responsible for verifying the accuracy of and signing the member service log (See Appendix 1.3 for an example).

The service logs:

- Help keep track of the member's time and ensures that they will complete the required number of hours to qualify for an Education Award;
- Distinguish between the member's hours (training, direct service, fundraising) to comply with all federal regulations;
- Document where the member's service is completed.

Do all members have to complete service logs?

Yes, all Members are required to complete service logs on at least a monthly basis to the program in which they serve. Serve DC will review Member hours submitted on OnCorps on a monthly basis when a program submits a request for reimbursement. (For programs designated as high risk, samples of members updated service logs may be requested by Serve DC when the program requests reimbursement).

Who completes the service log?

Members are responsible for completing their own service logs and submitting them to the site supervisor for review and verification.

Who signs the service log?

Members must sign their completed service logs. Qualified supervisors are responsible for verifying the accuracy of and signing the service logs. Supervisors cannot sign and date a timesheet before members have signed and dated their service log.

Is my program allowed to use an Electronic Timekeeping System?

An AmeriCorps Program *can* utilize an Electronic Timekeeping System if the Program meets the following minimum requirements:[16]

- The Program has established written policies establishing the use of electronic timekeeping systems as their system of record and this policy is submitted to Serve DC for approval.
- The Program has a secure, verifiable electronic signature system that a) identifies and authenticates a particular person as the source of the electronic signature, b) indicates such person's approval of the information contained in the electronic message.
- Once appropriate electronic signatures have been applied, no changes may be made unless there is a clear, auditable record of the revision.

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

What constitutes a COMPLETED service log?

A service log is considered complete when it has all of the following components:

- Indicates clearly which days are being reported--either the 1st through the 15th or the 16th through the end of the month.
- Includes as "Direct Service," only those hours members spend working and **NOT** lunch, training, vacation, holiday, sick days or other time off.
- Has all "Training" hours listed separately but included in the total hours of service.

[17] AmeriCorps FAQ C.7.

- Has all “Fundraising” hours listed separately but included in the total hours of service.
- Lists all holiday, sick, vacation and other time off in the "Other" column and **DOES NOT** include these hours toward total service hours.
- Uses the "Reason" column to briefly explain any "Other" hours.
- Sums the numbers at the bottom of each column and adds “Direct Service,” “Training,” and “Fundraising” hours together as the “Total” hours for the period. Is checked for accuracy and is signed by the site supervisor and the member.

Please note that programs can use OnCorps as their only time tracking system. Members and supervisors must sign off on time electronically to qualify as a compliant time tracking system.

Member Benefits

Living Allowance

AmeriCorps Programs must provide a modest living allowance to all Full-Time AmeriCorps Members; programs have the option of providing living allowances to less than Full-Time members (900, 675, 450, or 300 hours). Pay periods are determined by the various programs; however, each member must receive their living allowance in equal amounts over their term of service regardless of absences.[17] Deductions should be made for federal and state income taxes (where applicable) and FICA. Members must submit service logs for each service period to the program. Members should not be recording zero hours during a pay period, but if they do, they should still be paid their living allowance.[18] If a member is not completing service for a long period of time, they should be suspended. A program is not required to provide the member’s living allowance to the member while they are suspended. **Remember:** Service logs do not determine the rate of pay or frequency.

Paid Absences

Vacation, holiday, and sick time will vary with each program. Members must follow policies and procedures indicated in their member contract for requesting paid time off. Paid absences are not counted as service.

Health Insurance Coverage

All Full-Time Members are eligible to receive health care benefits unless they are already covered through an alternate source. If members elect not to accept coverage, they must have a signed wavier on file with the program. The Program must also place a copy of proof of the Member’s health insurance in their file, even if they have waived out of the program’s insurance. Plans vary according to programs, but members should be made aware of the possible insurance options (See Appendix 1.6 for a sample form). Each Member file should have a copy of the insurance in their file.

Less than Full-Time Members are NOT eligible for health or childcare benefits. An AmeriCorps program can decide, at their discretion, if they want to provide these benefits to less than Full-Time Members who are serving in a Full-Time capacity. These Members must be serving in that capacity for at least six weeks to be considered for these benefits.

Child Care

The program must ensure that childcare is made available to those 1700-hour Members who need such assistance in order to participate. Members are not eligible to receive childcare from AmeriCorps while they are receiving childcare subsidies from another source for the same period of AmeriCorps service.

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[18] AmeriCorps Provision 2011 IV.G.1.
[19] AmeriCorps FAQ C.25

A childcare subsidy is provided to eligible members through GAP Solutions, Inc. (for contract effective Wednesday, November 2, 2011. The provider prior was First Financial Associates).

Mailing address:
AmeriCorps Child Care
GAP Solutions, Inc.
12054 North Shore Drive
Reston, VA 20190

The criteria for childcare approval have not changed. For household income, provider credentials and other qualifying requirements, the Corporation uses the rules determined by the state in which the care is provided. All applications will continue to be reviewed and applicants will be notified of their approval or denial. All invoices will be reviewed and all that are complete will be paid. Please see www.nationalservice.gov for additional information.

Eli Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

Members will be eligible to receive an Education Award upon successful completion of all program requirements. The award amount will be based on the number of service hours completed. The Education Award can be used to pay for attendance at an institution for higher education and to repay qualified student loans for a period of up to seven years after the completion of service. The award is considered taxable income in the year(s) that it is used. Please see www.nationalservice.gov for additional information.

Term of Service	Minimum Number of Service Hours	Segal Education Award Amount
Full-Time	1,700	$5,550.00
Half-Time	900	$2,775.00
Reduced Half-Time	675	$2,114.00
Quarter-Time	450	$1,468.00
Minimum-Time	300	$1,175.00

Education Award Transfer

On April 21, 2009, the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act was signed into law by President Obama. This law authorizes individuals to transfer the Segal Education Award with limitations on who can transfer an award and who can receive a transferred award. The Segal Education Award can be transferred to an individual's child, grandchild, or foster child.

To transfer an education award, an AmeriCorps member must:

- have earned the award in an AmeriCorps State or National
- have been aged 55 or older on the date you began the approved term of service
- have begun that term of service on or after October 1, 2009

The Member may transfer all or a portion of their unused education award. Once transferred, it is still possible to revoke any unused amount prior to the expiration of the award. However, please note that a transfer for each eligible award can only take place once. The recipient to whom the award is transferred can use the award to pay the cost of attendance at qualified institutions of higher learning or to pay qualified student loans. The recipient can receive

transfers from multiple education awards but only up to the current value of two full-time education awards. If a member wishes to transfer their education award, they can do so by logging in to their My.AmeriCorps.gov.

Loan Forgiveness, Forbearance and Interest Accrual Payments

AmeriCorps Members enrolled in an AmeriCorps project are eligible for forbearance and interest accrual payment for most federally-backed student loans. Member files must document that the member is aware of this benefit. For other types of student loans, the member should ask their loan holder if your AmeriCorps service qualifies you for a deferment or forbearance. To access the forms for forbearance or interest accrual payment, the member must be registered at www.my.americorps.gov to complete these forms. Once a Member successfully completes a term of service, they can request that the Corporation pay for the interest accrued on their loans while they had been in forbearance.

***Note:** The interest accrual payment is considered taxable income during the year that the Corporation provides it to the member.

College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007

The College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 (CCRAA) established a public service loan forgiveness program. This program discharges any remaining debt after 10 years of full-time employment in public service. The borrower must have made 120 payments as part of the Direct Loan program in order to obtain this benefit. Only payments made on or after October 1, 2007 count toward the required 120 monthly payments. AmeriCorps Members must consolidate their loans into Federal Direct loans to be eligible for this program.

Eligibility

The public service loan forgiveness program has several restrictions:

1. **Term**: The forgiveness occurs after 120 monthly payments made on or after October 1, 2007 on an eligible Federal Direct Loan. Periods of deferment and forbearance are not counted toward the 120 payments. Payments made before October 1, 2007 do not count. Likewise, only payments on a Federal Direct Loan are counted.

2. **What is forgiven?** The remaining interest and principal are forgiven.

3. **Employment**: The borrower must be employed full-time in a public service job for each of the 120 monthly payments. Public service jobs include, among other positions, government, military service, public safety and law enforcement (police and fire), public health, public education, public early childhood education, public child care, social work in a public child or family service agency, public services for individuals with disabilities or the elderly, public interest legal services (including prosecutors, public defenders and legal advocacy in low-income communities), public librarians, school librarians and other school-based services, and employees of tax exempt 501(c)(3) organizations. Full-time faculty at tribal colleges and universities, as well as faculty teaching in high-need areas, also qualify.

4. **Eligible Loans**: Eligible loans include Federal Direct Stafford Loans (Subsidized and Unsubsidized), Federal Direct PLUS Loans, and Federal Direct Consolidation Loans. Borrowers in the Direct Loan program do not need to consolidate in order to qualify for loan forgiveness. Borrowers in the FFEL program will need to consolidate into Direct Loans.

Additionally, the CCRAA established the Income-Based Repayment plan (IBR) which allows for individuals to make payments on their education loans based on their salaries. The plan does this by capping the monthly payments at a

percentage of the borrower's discretionary income, which is based on the borrower's income and family size, not the total amount borrowed. The monthly payment amount is adjusted annually, based on changes in annual income and family size. Most borrowers will have a monthly payment under income-based repayment that is less than 10% of gross income. This includes single borrowers with less than $50,000 in income and married borrowers with two children who have less than $100,000 in income.

Income-based repayment is only available for federal student loans, such as the Stafford, Grad PLUS and consolidation loans. It is not available for Parent PLUS loans or for consolidation loans that include Parent PLUS loans. (IBR is not available for Perkins loans, but it is available for consolidation loans that include Perkins loans.) It is also not available for private student loans.

Income-based repayment is similar to income-contingent repayment. Both cap the monthly payments at a percentage of your discretionary income, albeit with different percentages and different definitions of discretionary income. Income-based repayment caps monthly payments at 15% of your monthly discretionary income, where discretionary income is the difference between adjusted gross income (AGI) and 150% of the federal poverty line that corresponds to your family size and the state in which you reside. There is no minimum monthly payment. Unlike income-contingent repayment, which is available only in the Direct Loan program, income-based repayment is available in both the Direct Loan program and the federally-guaranteed student loan program, and loan consolidation is not required.

SSI, TANF & Food Stamps

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

The HEART (Hero Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax) Act of 2008 specifies that any cash or in-kind benefit paid to a participant in the AmeriCorps program is excluded from the SSI income calculation. This means that SSI recipients can freely serve as AmeriCorps members without the fear of losing their SSI.

Food Stamps

An AmeriCorps member with less than $2,000 in assets (checking and savings accounts) may qualify for food stamp assistance. Food stamp assistance now comes in the form of an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card, which works much like an ATM card. Food stamp benefits can be used to purchase food and seeds, but they cannot be used for alcoholic beverages, tobacco, hot foods, pet foods, soap and paper items, or other non-food items.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture funds the food stamp program, but each state administers the program. The food stamp programs in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia have slightly different procedures for obtaining food stamps. However, in general, they all require that you provide the following supporting materials when you submit your application or interview with a case manager:

- State issued picture ID
- Social security card
- Pay stubs
- Income disregard letter from AmeriCorps; this letter can be found at www.americorps.gov/pdf/USDA_ltr.doc.
- Checking/savings account statements
- Copies of utility bills
- Copy of rental lease or rental payment receipts

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

AmeriCorps members who otherwise qualify for aid programs may be affected by the living allowance and education award. Eligibility or amount of assistance may be affected in State or local public assistance programs. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) is one of the programs that may be affected by the living allowance. If your AmeriCorps member is already receiving TANF, please have them contact their case manager to report your status as an AmeriCorps member.

Term of Service

Members should have a schedule that allows for sufficient accumulation of hours to satisfy the requirements to successfully complete service. The member and program may change the term of service, in writing, due to compelling personal circumstances. Regardless of changes in dates, members must complete the required hours -- not including vacation, holiday or sick days -- to qualify for an Education Award. A maximum of 20% of the hours served may be spent on training, education, or other similar approved activities. A maximum of 10% of the hours served may be spent on fundraising on approved activities.

Please note that travel time to and from activities does not count towards service, fundraising, or training hours. However, if travel is needed during the service day to fulfill the essential functions of the job, those hours can be counted as service hours. Additionally, each Full-Time member (and any other type of member working in a Full-Time capacity) must include a lunch break on their timesheets. Lunch breaks are not allowed to be counted toward service hours.

Abbreviated Terms of Service

Compelling Personal Circumstances

The program may release a member immediately from his or her term of service, due to compelling personal circumstances:

- Those that are beyond the participant's control, such as, but not limited to:
    - A participant's disability or serious illness
    - Disability, serious illness, or death of a participant's family member if this makes completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible
    - 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, or the nonrenewal or premature closing of a project or program, that make completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible
- Those that the Corporation, has for public policy reasons, determined as such, including:
    - Military service obligations
    - Acceptance by a participant of an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work
    - 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

Acceptance to a college or university or the acceptance of an employment offer DOES NOT constitute a compelling personal circumstance.

If the member discontinues his/her term of service due to compelling personal circumstances, he/she will cease to receive benefits under the program. Also, if the member has completed at least 15% of the required service hours, the member may receive a pro-rated portion of the education award, loan forbearance or interest payments.

Extended Terms of Service

Compelling Personal Circumstances

The program may place a Member on suspension and extend the member's term of service beyond one calendar year due to the same compelling personal circumstances listed above. Please consult with the AmeriCorps Program Officer for approval and appropriate procedure as this may require approval from the Corporation.

If the Member is placed on suspension due to compelling personal circumstances as described above, the member will cease to receive benefits including the stipend under the program. The member's new end-of-term date will be extended by the number of days the member was on leave. Once the member is reinstated, the Member must begin receiving their stipend until completion of service.

Second Term Eligibility

A second year of service should not be considered as a Member right or entitlement. To be eligible for a second year of service with AmeriCorps:

1. Members **must** receive satisfactory end of year performance reviews and demonstrated an expanded scope of responsibilities at their site;
2. Funds must be made available through the Corporation for National and Community Service and Serve DC – The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism.

Program Management

As an AmeriCorps Program Manager, your responsibilities include, but are not limited to, recruiting and selecting members, supervising and training members, observing programmatic and fiscal responsibilities, enrolling and exiting members, and reporting to Serve DC and the Corporation as appropriate.

You will find the requirements for AmeriCorps programs in the following documents:

- Your AmeriCorps grant agreement issued by Serve DC, which includes all the special conditions applicable to operating your program
- AmeriCorps Regulations*
- AmeriCorps Provisions*
- Applicable OMB circulars* (referenced in your AmeriCorps State Site Grant Award Agreement)
- The National and Community Service Act of 1990*, as amended (by reference)
- Your AmeriCorps proposal (application) and modifications to it that may have been negotiated with you
- The budget for your programs, which contains the maximum amount of funds the Corporation has provided for your program as well as your obligations to raise matching funds and/or in-kind contributions.

** For the most updated versions of the documents above, please see www.nationalservice.gov*

AmeriCorps State Site Grant Award Agreement

All programs will receive an AmeriCorps State Grant Award Agreement that outlines all responsibilities of the grant. The agreement will outline terms and conditions for the grant as related to local and Federal requirements. The full award agreement package must be kept on file by the program and available for review by Serve DC staff.

Program Amendments

It is required that a program reports staff turnover in management or supervisory positions, changes in partner/sponsor relationships, changes in board membership, significant participation attrition, service sites and other significant changes. You are required to notify the Serve DC AmeriCorps Program Officer **within 10 days** of the change regardless of whether you will include the information in your next progress report. An e-mailed letter to the AmeriCorps Program Officer is acceptable.

Slot Conversions and Corrections

Slot Conversion

As of November 13, 2006, the Corporation revised the slot conversion policy to allow programs to convert one full-time position to up to three quarter-time positions. A slot conversion is necessary when a program wants to convert an unfilled slot into less time slots. All conversions will be Trust neutral, are subject to availability of funds in the Trust, and will comply with all assumptions on which Trust prudence and continued solvency are predicated. This policy allows AmeriCorps slots to be converted in accordance with the grant award (AmeriCorps General Provision, Section 8, Terms of Service) but without regard to the limitation therein on increasing the number of slots in the program. Thus, when converting a slot to one requiring fewer hours, the grantee is not limited to a one-for-one slot conversion, and may increase the number of members correspondingly.

However, 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 and a $5,550 education award) may be converted into 2 half-time slots (2 x .5 members = 1 MSY) and a total education award amount of $5,550 (2 x $2,775).
- 1 full-time member position **may not** be converted into 4 quarter-time positions as the education awards would total $5,872 (4 x $1,468); in this example, the maximum number of allowable quarter-time positions would be 3.

Sub-grantees 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.

From **0-90 Days** after the program start, programs are permitted to request slot conversions based on the 2006 slot conversion policy and the chart below. All slots starting out less than 1700 hours will be converted one to one (i.e. one 900-hour slot can be converted to one 675-hour slot). All other requests will be dealt with on a case by case basis and does not guarantee approval by the AmeriCorps Program Officer. Once approved, the request will be sent to the grants officer at the Corporation.

***Although the new My AmeriCorps Portal allows for sub-grantees to make their own slot conversions, all Serve DC sub-grantees **must** follow the above procedure to request slot conversions. If a program plans to makes their own slot conversion, approval must be obtained from the Serve DC AmeriCorps Program Officer to ensure the change is compliant.*

The following is the automatic slot conversions that Serve DC will perform without a formal request from grantees.

	After 90 Days	After 180 Days	After 225 Days
Full-Time (1700-hour)	Converts to Half-Time	Converts to Quarter-Time	Cannot be filled
Half-Time (900-hour)	Converts to Quarter-Time	No change	Cannot be filled
Reduced Half-Time (675-hour)	Converts to Quarter Time	Cannot be filled	Cannot be filled
Quarter-Time (450-hour)	Converts to Minimum Time	No change	Cannot be filled
Minimum-Time (300-hour)	No change	No change	Cannot be filled

Slot Correction

A slot correction is necessary when a program needs to increase or decrease the number of slots awarded in the grant. The number of MSYs specified in the grant contract will be altered by this request. A slot correction can only be processed by the Serve DC AmeriCorps Program Officer. Once approved, the request will be sent to the grants officer at the Corporation. The program needs to contact the AmeriCorps Program Officer if such a correction needs to be made.

Performance Measures

Serve DC requires that all AmeriCorps State sub-grantees track their progress toward programmatic performance measures as indicated in their project plan through ongoing data collection. In an effort to streamline and codify all data of AmeriCorps State grantees, Serve DC has developed two performance measures that are in the issue areas of participant development and strengthening communities. The results of the data collected through periodic progress reports will establish concrete results of national service in District of Columbia communities.

The following evaluation protocols have been designed to yield reliable, valid and useful results. There is flexibility in developing tools, and utilizing existing organizational systems for maximum effectiveness in periodic progress report preparation. However, all additional tools should be reviewed with the Serve DC AmeriCorps Program Officer prior to use to ensure accuracy of data reported.

Periodic progress reports are an integral part of program evaluation. For the 2012-2013 program year, all sites will be required to submit four quarterly reports for the year. The Contract Addendum #1 details submission dates. A Performance Measure Worksheet example can be found in Appendix 2.1.

Performance Measures Modification

AmeriCorps State programs are able to modify performance measures. Modification requests must be made in writing and sent to the Serve DC AmeriCorps Program Officer and approved before reporting on the modified objectives in a Progress Report. Before you go through the process of modifying your performance measures, please consult with the Serve DC AmeriCorps Program Officer. Refer to the AmeriCorps grant agreement and exhibits for additional information. Please note that the request must be sent before the end of the 3rd quarter of the program year. An e-mailed letter is acceptable.

Volunteer Generation Performance Measure

AmeriCorps State Members will recruit and train volunteers for one-time and ongoing service projects in their communities as documented by organization project attendance records, project evaluation materials, and project registration materials. In an effort to report uniformly and codify our state results, Serve DC- has developed a performance measure to track volunteer generation. All programs **must** submit Volunteer Generation Reports using the

OnCorps Reporting System. AmeriCorps State Programs can use the example form in Appendix 2.2 as a guide for gathering information.

Member Development Performance Measure

Developing members is a key component of any AmeriCorps program. As such, Serve DC has developed the Member Development Performance Measure to capture the number of training hours for AmeriCorps State members as well as the types of training members receive to successfully complete their service and prepare for "Life after AmeriCorps."

Serve DC has designed a tracking form, the Member Development Report (see Appendix 2.3). This report data must be submitted with each quarterly report. AmeriCorps State Programs are allowed to use their own training surveys; Serve DC is providing an example to help track the change in member knowledge and skills (see Appendix 2.4).

Reporting

Sub-grantees are expected to meet all reporting deadlines established by Serve DC. Due dates for all reports are listed in Contract Addendum #1 of the AmeriCorps grant agreement. Reports completed by the due dates (or by approved extension deadline) are considered on time. Reports received after the due date and without an approved extension may delay the subgrantee's next funding reimbursement. A subgrantee must request an extension at least 24-hours before the report is due. A subgrantee's ability to meet due dates is evaluated by program staff as a part of the monitoring process.

Quarterly Progress Reports

Programs submit quarterly reports which address accomplishments and outcomes as they occur. Reports are due every three months (e.g. a report for April, May, and June is to be submitted in July). Due dates are specified in each sub-grantee's Contract Addendum #1.

Periodic Expense Report (PER)

PERs are submitted on a monthly basis with the sub-grantee's Request for Reimbursement. PERs and the sub-grantee's Requests are due the last day of the month following the report month.

Federal Financial Report (FFR)

FFRs are financial expense reports created in OnCorps that are a six month aggregate of the periodic expense reports.

Record Retention

All records related to any programs funded by Serve DC must be retained by the program for at least three years from the date of the termination of the grant or the date the final Federal Financial Report (FFR) is submitted to Serve DC, whichever is later.

Disposal of Records

Programs must make responsible efforts to protect the confidentiality of disposed program records in such a way as to protect the identity and privacy of program participants.

Service Host Site Management

In order to ensure a positive experience for members at the service site, it is critical to establish a clear understanding of expectations for their role and responsibilities with your community partners. Serve DC will monitoring subgrantees to ensure that proper host site management is taking place by evaluating the following:

- Established Memorandum of Understanding/Partnership Agreements between subgrantees and service host sites

- Verification that subcontractors/Service Host Sites follow AmeriCorps and other federal policies. (Subgrantee should be able to provide policies and procedures of service sites)
- Established protocol for subgrantees to monitor service sites (schedule, tool, feedback form, follow up, etc.) and verification that monitoring is taking place at the service sites

Resources for Working with Host Sites: http://encorps.nationalserviceresources.org/working_with_host_sites.php

Monitoring & Evaluation

A monitoring site visit is an on-site assessment by Serve DC staff to determine if the program is in compliance with the Grant Award Agreement, AmeriCorps Grant Provisions, and Federal Regulations. Serve DC's goal in monitoring is to support programs to achieve its goals.

The monitoring visit will cover all areas of program operation. Source documentation to be reviewed may include: data collection sheets, member files, financial documents, and any other documents that will substantiate data reported in progress reports and/or Federal Financial Reports (FFR). Achievement of program objectives will be verified by examining source data on several separate objectives.

Monitoring Site Visit

Annually, Serve DC staff prepares a site visit schedule as a part of the risk-based monitoring policy.

1 month prior to the visit

The program will be contacted via email or letter to arrange a mutually convenient date for the visit. Both program and financial staff should be consulted in arranging the date for the visit.

2-3 weeks prior to the visit

Written confirmation of the site visit date and requirements will be emailed to the program director and the financial staff contact. Confirmation will include a reminder of the length of time the visit is expected to take and what items need to be present during the visit.

1-5 days prior to the site visit

Serve DC staff will**:**

- Send a brief agenda for the visit indicating a lunch break and a specific time period to be spent with financial staff. The final agenda item will be a brief 'exit interview' to disclose any and all concerns noted during the visit.
- Review OnCorps and eGrants reports, rosters, member forms, etc.
- Identify most recent audit report and management letter on file and note any material findings or questioned costs related to the program.
- Identify all recent site visit reports and associated follow-up for the program and note any identified findings/concerns and the associated continuous improvement/corrective action measures.
- Survey all Serve DC staff to determine if there are any outstanding issues other than those identified above.
- Based on previously discovered issues, reports and any risk factors or specific monitoring plans identified in individual project risk assessments, identify all criteria within the following table to be monitored.

On the day of the visit

Serve DC staff will**:**

- Arrive promptly at the agreed upon time.
- Follow the agenda and make every attempt to stay on schedule.

- Document the review process – keep all notes and copies, identify which files were reviewed, etc. For any findings, document by provision number the discussion, testing or other event leading to the finding AND document that the finding was discussed with appropriate staff both at the time it was noted and during the exit interview.
- Obtain copies of all relevant items requested.

Following the visit

- Within 2-4 weeks (or when all immediate follow-up requested items have been received), Serve DC will complete the formal written site visit report.
- The site visit report will be sent to the program director. The report will note any concerns or findings identified at the site visit. The program's Executive Director must return the Site Visit Summary Acknowledgement which acknowledges they received the formal site visit report.

Follow-up

- If written response is not received 30 days from the date of the report (and an extension has not been granted), the AmeriCorps Program Officer will assume that the program accepts all findings in the formal site visit report.
- The program will receive a verification letter when all follow up and clarification items have been received.
- The AmeriCorps Program Officer will then close-out the site visit.

Audits

Programs may be audited by Serve DC, the Corporation or an independent agency to determine whether:

- Financial operations are properly conducted;
- Financial reports are fairly represented;
- The program has complied with all applicable laws, regulations, and administrative requirements that affect the expenditure of program funds.

Audit Requirements

All A-133 audits shall be performed annually for organizations that receive over $500,000 in total federal dollars. Each AmeriCorps State program must submit a copy of the audit to the AmeriCorps Program Officer within 30 days of its completion.

Evaluation

Independent vs. Internal Evaluation

All AmeriCorps State sub-grantees that receive an average annual CNCS 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 grantee or of the program to be evaluated. AmeriCorps funds can be used for an independent evaluator if it was approved as part of the grant.

All other AmeriCorps State grantees 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.

Please note that the $500,000 threshold represents Corporation funding, not total budget with match. The $500,000 threshold is calculated by averaging your Corporation grant over the last three years you have received Corporation funding, at the time you re-compete. For these sub-grantees, participation in national or state-wide evaluation studies also satisfies the requirement.

All evaluations must cover at least one year of Corporation-funded service activity.

See the chart below for more detail on Commission- or Corporation-sponsored statewide and national evaluation requirements:

If you are a:	***You will submit an:***
State formula grantee with an average annual CNCS grant under $500,000	Internal Evaluation
State competitive grantee with an average annual CNCS grant under $500,000	Internal Evaluation
State formula grantee with an average annual CNCS grant of $500,000 or more	Independent Evaluation
State competitive grantee with an average annual CNCS grant of $500,000 or more	Independent Evaluation

AmeriCorps State programs must submit results of the internal or independent evaluation within thirty days from completion to the AmeriCorps Program Officer.

Training & Technical Assistance

Each fall, Serve DC performs a training and technical assistance assessment to gauge the performance level of its current AmeriCorps program directors. Each program manager must submit a complete Training and Technical Assistance Needs Assessment Survey. Results from the assessment are used to create Serve DC's yearly training and technical assistance calendar.

As an AmeriCorps program funded by Serve DC, the program manager or his/her designee must attend program manager meetings, orientations, training events and statewide special events, as stated in the AmeriCorps State Site Grant Award Agreement
Serve DC offers individualized training and technical assistance to its AmeriCorps sub-grantees if the requested training is **not** listed on the yearly training calendar. An AmeriCorps subgrantee must submit a request in writing to the AmeriCorps Program Officer for additional training and technical assistance.

Training & Technical Assistance Resources

Serve DC Newsletter

Serve DC transmits the Serve DC Newsletter to *all* national service sites operating in the District of Columbia. It provides most up-to-date information about upcoming trainings, meetings and events coordinated by Serve DC and community partners. Each AmeriCorps program manager is automatically added to the distribution list for this newsletter. If other AmeriCorps organization staff would like to be added to the distribution list, please visit the Serve DC website at www.serve.dc.gov .

Websites

The Serve DC website, www.serve.dc.gov, includes information related to the Commission's initiatives, events, and professional development opportunities as related to National Service, Emergency Preparedness, and Communications and Special Initiatives. From the Serve DC website you can also link to agency updates and social media.

The National Service Resource Center website, www.nationalserviceresources.org, is a one-stop site for national service resources including National service effective practices database (post your own effective practices); Conference and Training Calendar for national service events nationwide; sample forms collection; lending library; links to all training and technical assistance providers; and service-related links. Tutorials for AmeriCorps State sub-grantees:
http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/myamericorps-support-americorps-state-commission-and-sub-grantees

The National Service Learning Clearinghouse website, www.servicelearning.org, is a one-stop shop for service learning models, techniques, and methodologies that includes online publications; effective practices database; funding sources and resources; and service-learning resources.

Listservs

A listserv is an electronic discussion group that meets over e-mail. Listservs provide a place to ask questions, post information, and share ideas and resources with peers via e-mail. Once subscribed to a list, messages can be sent through the listserv to all the other subscribers.

The following are listings of listservs that are beneficial to national service sites. Additional listservs can be found at: http://nationalserviceresources.org/email-lists.

AmeriCorps Listserv

The AmeriCorps list is a forum for AmeriCorps programs, state commissions, T/TA providers, staff of the Corporation for National and Community Service, and anyone else interested in AmeriCorps. Discussions focus on training, technical assistance, and programmatic issues.

You can join the AmeriCorps Listserv by sending an email message to join-aclist@lists.etr.org.

DisabilityList Listserv

The DisabilityList listserv is a forum for the national service community in the area of disability inclusion. Discussion focuses on training, technical assistance, and programmatic issues related to creating an inclusive environment for national service participants and members.

You can join the DisabilityList listserv by sending an email to join-disabilitylist@lists.etr.org.

K12-SL Listserv

The K12-SL Listserv provides a forum for the discussion of issues concerning the k-12 service learning community. Some of the past discussions have involved project ideas, information requests and current service learning news.

You may subscribe to the listserv and manage your membership online at:
http://lists.etr.org/read/all_forums/subscribe?name=k-12-sl or send an email to join-k12-sl@lists.etr.org

HE-SL Listserv

The HE-SL Listserv provides a discussion forum for issues concerning the higher education service learning community. HE-SL Listserv discussions have evolved around curriculum requests, class assignments and the institutionalization of service learning.

You may subscribe to the listserv and manager your membership online at:
http://lists.etr.org/read/all_forums/subscribe?name=he-sl or send an email to join-he-sl@lists.etr.org.

DC Resource Library

Serve DC has coordinated the DC Resource Library for its programs and other national service sites to use. The DC Resource Library is intended to provide you with materials without having to invest the time, money or space to collect them yourselves. Materials in the resource library include topics such as service-learning, program management, national service, leadership, community building, tutoring, literacy, volunteer management, training, fundraising, grant writing, sustainability, and risk management.

Serve DC maintains the DC Resource Library for use by subgrantees and community partners. It is located at the Serve DC office. Each program may borrow the material(s) for one month. For example, if the program checks out a material on March 7th, it is due to Serve DC on April 7th. **The program must return the resource(s) to the Serve DC office by the due date.** If a program requires the material(s) for more than one month, they must contact the AmeriCorps Program Officer at to request an extension. If there is **not** a waiting list for the borrowed resource(s), the extension will be granted for an additional month. **The limit for borrowing is two (2) months.** The resource(s) must be returned by the new extension due date.

Disability Inclusion Initiative

Serve DC encourages individuals with physical or mental disabilities to participate as AmeriCorps members through AmeriCorps programs operating in the District of Columbia. We encourage a diverse membership that includes people with disabilities to participate as national and community service members through our many programs. **Subgrantees must ensure that AmeriCorps Members are aware of disability inclusion policies and procedures to include reasonable accommodations.** All information related to the Serve DC Disability Inclusion policies and procedures can be found on the Serve DC website at www.serve.dc.gov. Please also note that Serve DC manages a Disability Inclusion Advisory Committee to support capacity-building of National Service programs in Washington, DC.

According to the ADA, the term "disability" means, with respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the individual's major life activities, a record of having such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment. "Major life activities" means functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, etc. Additionally, a "qualified individual with a disability" is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable accommodations, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the program.

Policy

Under Federal law, any program which receives federal funds is required to comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In compliance with the Federal law, all AmeriCorps programs prohibit any form of discrimination against persons with disabilities in recruitment, as well as in service. No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the program, services, or activities of the program, or be subjected to discrimination by the program. Nor shall the program exclude or otherwise deny equal services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability.

Disability Inclusion Guide Plan

AmeriCorps State grantees are required to submit a Disability Inclusion Guide Plan at the beginning of each program year. AmeriCorps State grantees will use the Guide Plan to develop steps towards a more inclusive service environment. This will be emailed to you at the beginning of each program year by the Learning and Disability Inclusion Program Officer.

Reasonable Accommodation

A reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment to a program site that will enable a qualified applicant or AmeriCorps member with a disability to participate in the application process or to perform essential service functions. Reasonable accommodation also includes adjustments to assure that a qualified individual with a disability has rights and privileges in service equal to those of individuals without disabilities.

All AmeriCorps programs shall make reasonable accommodations in practices and/or procedures when the accommodations are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability. Accommodations are "reasonable" when they are practical or feasible. The program does not have to provide reasonable accommodations that would impose undue hardship on the operation of the program. According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC):

It is not necessary to provide a reasonable accommodation if doing so would cause an undue hardship. Undue hardship means that an accommodation would be unduly costly, extensive, substantial or disruptive, or would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the business. Among the factors to be considered in determining whether an accommodation is an undue hardship are the cost of the accommodation, the employer's size, financial resources and the nature and structure of its operation.

Reasonable Accommodations may include:

- Making existing facilities accessible to and usable by an individual with a disability
- Restructuring the job
- Modifying the work schedule
- Modifying existing equipment or devices
- Installing new equipment or devices
- Providing qualified readers and interpreters
- Appropriate modification of the application and examination procedures and training materials

Reasonable Accommodations do not include:

- Eliminating a primary job responsibility
- Lowering production standards that are applied to all employees
- Providing personal use items, such as prosthetic limbs, wheelchairs, eyeglasses or hearing aids

Procedure for Requesting Reasonable Accommodation Funds

Based on funding availability, Serve DC – The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism offers reasonable accommodation funds to assist National Service program sites operating in the District of Columbia. The following is the procedure for requesting reasonable accommodation funds. Please see the Serve DC website at www.serve.dc.gov for additional information and forms.

* Unless otherwise indicated in Serve DC sponsored-event registration instructions, when requesting reasonable accommodations for a Serve DC-sponsored event where a National Service member is serving in the capacity of his or her service program, Serve DC asks that the program site submits their request to Serve DC at least ten business days prior to the event. Any requests for a non-Serve DC sponsored event must include submission of the reasonable accommodation application per the outlined guidelines. If the request is submitted past this date, Serve DC cannot guarantee completion of the request. All requests for reasonable accommodation must be submitted by the National Service program on behalf of a National Service member acting in that capacity.

1. Program Directors of National Service programs must complete the Serve DC Application for Reasonable Accommodation Funds. In addition, the applicant must provide two cost estimates from two different vendors. To get a copy of the Serve DC Application for Reasonable Accommodation Funds, please contact the Serve DC National Service Team (202) 727-7925.

2. ***AmeriCorps State Subgrantees Only***
   AmeriCorps State grantees (sites that receive AmeriCorps funding directly from Serve DC) must also submit a plan to retain the member. The plan will include the following:
   a. A copy of the member service position description
   b. Retention plan

3. Submit a complete application and two cost estimates to:
   Serve DC – The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism
   Frank D. Reeves Center
   2000 14th Street NW, Suite 101
   Washington, DC 20009
   Fax (202) 727-9942

Review Process for Reasonable Accommodation Funds Request

1. Serve DC staff will confidentially receive all applications.

2. Serve DC staff will review all applications for completeness and accuracy.

3. Serve DC staff will review the request for funding. Serve DC will also consult the Disability Inclusion Advisory Committee when necessary during the review period of an application for reasonable accommodation. A decision will be rendered within five working days. The following factors will be considered:
   a. Will the reasonable accommodation enable the individual to perform the essential functions of the job?
   b. Is the accommodation an undue hardship to Serve DC?
      i. type and cost of the accommodation needed
      ii. impact of the accommodation funds request upon the disability inclusion funds at Serve DC
      iii. overall size of the program requesting funds, with respect to the number of AmeriCorps members, and the number, type and location of its facilities
   c. Is the cost for the reasonable accommodation reasonable?
   d. Will the accommodation benefit other AmeriCorps members?
   e. Will the accommodation fundamentally alter the program design?

4. Programs must ensure that proper accommodations are made for the member while the reasonable accommodation is being processed, purchased and developed. Serve DC will follow up with the program and the member to ensure proper temporary accommodations are made within ten (10) working days of the reasonable accommodation request approval.

5. If Serve DC approves the funds for reasonable accommodation, the program must submit receipts directly to Serve DC. All reimbursements will be paid within approximately 45 days from receipt. Serve DC will follow up with the program to ensure member satisfaction with the reasonable accommodation.

6. If Serve DC denies the funds for reasonable accommodation, the National Service member or program can file a grievance within 45 business days of the denial of funds to have Serve DC's decision evaluated by Serve DC's Review Committee for final determination.

Grievance Procedure

Serve DC has adopted an internal grievance procedure for prompt and expeditious resolution of complaints for the denial of a reasonable accommodation. Requests for reasonable accommodation funds that have been denied by Serve

DC may appeal the decision by filing a grievance with Serve DC within forty five (45) days of the denial of the request. The following outlines the grievance procedure.

1. Complainant will complete the Serve DC Reasonable Accommodation Grievance Form. The form can be accessed by email from the National Service Team or on the Serve DC website at www.serve.dc.gov.
    a. Complainant may also request to have an informal confidential presentation of their grievance prior to the final decision. This may be done in person or through a telephone conference.

2. Serve DC's National Service Team receives the grievance form and forwards it to Serve DC's Executive Director.

3. A review of the initial decision shall be conducted within ten (10) working days after the grievance is filed.

4. The Executive Director will review the complainant's initial request for reasonable accommodation funds, the initial decision rendered by Serve DC, the complainant's grievance form and, if requested, the informal confidential presentation by the complainant.

5. After full consideration of the grievance, the Executive Director will issue a written decision explaining the reasoning behind the decision. A copy of this decision will be forwarded to the complainant.

6. Serve DC staff shall maintain the confidentiality of all files and records relating to the grievance filed, unless disclosure is authorized or required by law.

7. The decision of the Serve DC's Executive Director can be further appealed directly to the Corporation for National and Community Service through Serve DC.

Any retaliation, coercion, intimidation, threat, interference, or harassment for the filing of a grievance, or used to restrain a complainant from filing, is prohibited and should be reported immediately to Serve DC.

Drug-Free Workplace Certification

Through the enactment of Senate Bill 1120 (Chapter 1170, Statutes of 1990), the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1990 ("the Act") was established, which requires grantees to assure Serve DC that they will comply with the requirements of Government code Sections 8350-8357:

- ***Drug-free workplace*** means a site for the performance of work done in connection with a specific grant or contract (described in Government Code Section 8355) of an entity at which employees of the entity are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance in accordance with the requirement of this chapter.

- ***Employee*** means the employee of a grantee or contractor directly engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the grant contract described in Government Code Section 8355.

- ***Controlled substance*** means a substance defined in accordance in Schedules 1 through 5 of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.D. Section 812).

- ***Grantee*** means the department, division, or other unit of a person or organization responsible for the performance under the grant.

- ***Contractor*** means the department, division, or other unit of an organization responsible for the performance under the contract.

Requirement for Certification

Every person or organization awarded a contract or a grant for the procurement of any property or services shall certify that it will provide a drug-free workplace by doing all of the following:

- Publish a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the person's or organization's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of the prohibition.

- Establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about all the following:
    - The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace
    - The person's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace
    - Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, employees assistance programs
    - The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations

- Require that each employee engaged in the performance of the contract or grant is given a copy of the statement required by subdivision (a) and that, as a condition of employment on the contract or grant, the employee agrees to abide by terms of the statement.

- Ensure that each employee signs a written agreement that she/he received a copy of the statement and that she/he will abide by it. The grantee/contractor then must maintain the documentation (signed agreement) file.

Certification of Compliance

Serve DC is required by law to obtain written certification of compliance. The Drug-free Workplace Certification must be signed by the designated individuals authorized to sign the grant award and will become part of Serve DC grant agreement.

Financial Management

To build good financial management systems, programs must use the generally accepted accounting practices (GAAP) with general ledgers and similar books of record, supported by source documentation that establishes a clear audit trail. The financial reports must refer to the ledgers and documents clearly. Since the program director is responsible for the overall administration of the program, he or she should take an active role in understanding and monitoring the financial systems.

Sub grantees should have a clear segregation of duties with regards to financial responsibilities within the office (i.e., one individual should be responsible for the execution of checks and another for reconciliation of financial information). The organization must track all property purchased with federal funding and maintain in inventory of said property.

PLEASE NOTE: Subgrantees must document the staff hours through time and attendance records. There must be individual time and attendance records for all staff who will be attributed to the grant (in whole or partial) that allow you to identify time allocated towards the grant versus other unrelated projects. (See Appendix 3.2).

Grant Award Conditions

The notification of sub grant award and its provisions contain many of the details and specifics governing the management of your grant. Your organization's financial officer and accountant should be familiar with the more detailed financial and management requirements contained within the Corporation's regulations, the grant and/or application, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars.

In order to effectively manage and implement your program, program directors need to be familiar with the principal requirements applicable to the AmeriCorps program, such as member recruitment, training, prohibitions on lobbying, terms of service, minimum hours, etc. In addition, you should be familiar with the special limitations on the use of funds that apply to AmeriCorps, such as the 5% limitation on federal funding utilized for administrative costs and the prohibition on using budgeted member allowances and benefit funds for other unrelated program activities and expenses. All of these requirements have been recently revised and are detailed in the AmeriCorps provisions within your grant.

Serve DC may withhold grant funds and/or disallow expenditures when a program fails to comply with any terms or conditions of the grant award and/or federal regulations. This may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Failure to submit the required reimbursement claims in a timely manner;
- Failure to submit the required progress reports in a timely manner;
- Failure to resolve interim or final audit exception on past or current grants in a timely manner;
- Inadequate maintenance of accounting records;
- Failure to submit proof of liability coverage in a timely manner;
- Failure to cooperate with or admit Serve DC staff or representatives (e.g., audit team) to review programmatic and fiscal records.

Serve DC reserves the right to reduce or terminate grant funds for reasons that may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Failure by the program to comply with any of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement;
- Reduction or elimination of Federal funds appropriated for the purposes of the grant award by the United States Government during the term of the grant agreement.

Grant Continuation

Programs that have been previously funded by Serve DC will be reviewed for compliance, including financial management, progress and annual reports, monitoring results, audit reports, and any other relevant documentation or information. Failure to comply with terms or conditions of the grant agreement may result in the denial of future funding.

Termination of Grant

A determination of non-compliance will jeopardize eligibility for continued grant funding. Each grant award may be subject to suspension of payment or termination of the grant or both, and the grantee may be subject to debarment, in accordance with the requirements of Section 8356 of the National and Community Service Act, if Serve DC determines that any of the following has occurred:

- The subgrantee has made a false certification under Section 8355.

- The subgrantee violates the certification by failing to carry out requirements of subdivisions (a) to (c), inclusive, of Section 8355.

The DC Office of Contracting and Procurement shall establish and maintain a list of individuals and organizations whose contracts or grants have been canceled due to failure to comply with these provisions. Serve DC shall immediately notify the DC Office of Contracting and Procurement of any individual or organization that has an award canceled on the basis of violation of these provisions.

Supplanting & Supplementing

Funding awarded by Serve DC must be utilized to supplement existing funds for programmatic activities and not to replace those funds which have been appropriated for the same purpose. **Supplanting is strictly prohibited.**

The grant and/or awarded contract entered into with Serve DC is subject to any applicable restrictions, limitations, or conditions enacted by the District of Columbia Government and/or the United States Government subsequent to execution of the grant award.

Debarment/ Suspension

It is the policy of Serve DC to conduct business only with responsible parties. Applications must certify that they will adhere to the guidelines and standards included in Federal Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension. By signing the Certification of Assurance of Compliance Form, the applicant certifies to that effect.

Budget

The following are the guidelines provided by the Corporation for National Community Service AmeriCorps Provisions regarding budget changes.

Budget Terminology

Line Item: A budget item within a section and/or category in an approved budget.

Calculation: The breakdown of each line item cost. It outlines the steps you took to arrive at the line item amount. Calculations should be presented in an equation format, identifying the number of persons/units involved, per person/unit cost, etc.

Modification

A budget modification is a shift of funding from one budget category to another, a shift of funds from one section to another or a reduction of the Grantee Share (match) commitments. As with an approved budget, a budget modification must provide a full explanation (budget narrative) of associated costs including their purpose, justification and the basis of the calculations. All budget modification requests must include calculations where appropriate.

What the Subgrantee can modify without Corporation or Serve DC approval

A program is allowed to modify its budget without Serve DC approval if the AmeriCorps Program Officer is notified of the budget modification in writing and if the budget modification meets the following criteria:

- Does not change the total federal (CNCS) Share or Grantee Share;
- Modifies the Federal (CNCS) Share and/or Grantee Share by less than 10% cumulate.

The subgrantee must ensure in its letter of request to the AmeriCorps Program Officer that the level of service provided by the subgrantee will not be reduced or compromised by the budget modification. Please see AmeriCorps grant agreement for more information.

What the subgrantee can modify barring Serve DC approval

The subgrantee is allowed to modify its budget with Serve DC approval if a written request is submitted to Serve DC AmeriCorps Program Officer and if the budget modification:

- Does not change the total federal (CNCS) Share or Grantee Share
- Modifies the Federal (CNCS) Share or Grantee Share by more than 10%

What the grantee can modify barring Serve DC and CNCS approval

- Changes the total federal (CNCS) Share or Grantee Share
- Modifies the Federal (CNCS) Share or Grantee Share by more than 10%
- Purchases of equipment over $5,000 using Grant funds, unless specified in the approved application budget

The subgrantee must ensure in their letter of request to Serve DC that the level of service provided will not be reduced or compromised by the budget modification. Detailed information must also be reflected in the OnCorps budget modification. The subgrantee will then receive a letter or email from the AmeriCorps Program Officer indicating that the budget modification was approved or rejected. All modifications will be approved or rejected by Serve DC.

The sub grantee must also submit a written request through the AmeriCorps Program Officer for approval of reductions in the Federal (CNCS) or Grantee Shares of the Grantee's budget. Per Provision 15(c), "The (CNCS) Grants Officer will execute written amendments or changes to the Grant, and Grantees should not assume approvals have been granted unless documentation from the Grants Office has been received."

Costs

Administrative /Indirect Cost

Administrative costs are the general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization (that offer a wide benefit to an organization and are not attributed to an individual department) that receives CNCS funds.

Examples of Administrative Costs include:

- General Liability Insurance
- Accounting and Audit Services
- Internet, landline and mobile telephone services
- Salaries of employees that are not involved in the production of goods or supply of services
- Disbursing Services
- Rent/leasing
- Utilities

The 1993 National and Community Service Act imposed a cap on all administrative costs equal to 5.26% of all funds **expended** under the subgrant. Serve DC withholds 1.05% of the allowed 5.26% leaving programs 4.21% of administrative expenses. Your agreement provides more information on the 1.05% Commission administrative fee.

In order to charge the fixed administrative rate of 4.21% the subgrantee match for administrative costs may not be in excess of 10% of all direct cost expenditures. These rates may be used without supporting documentation and are in lieu of an indirect cost rate. The 4.21% administrative is approved on a case-by-case basis by the CNCS.

If a subgrantee wants to claim that it paid administrative costs in excess of 10%, the subgrantee must have an approved negotiated indirect cost rate. The sub grantee must have an approved federally negotiated indirect rate cost agreement. Where appropriate, CNCS will establish an indirect cost rate that may be used for this and other Federal awards.

If grantees have an approved indirect cost rate, that rate will constitute documentation of the grantee's administrative costs including the 5.26% maximum payable by the CNCS and the grantee match of administrative costs. To be allowable under an award, costs must be consistent with policies and procedures that apply uniformly to federally financed and other programmatic activities of the organization. Furthermore, the costs must be afforded consistent treatment in both federally financed and other activities as well as between activities supported by different sources of federal funds.

Program/Direct Cost

Program or direct costs are those costs that are directly related to operating the program, such as:

- Member living allowance and support costs
- Uniforms (only clothing with the AmeriCorps logo can be purchased using CNCS funds)
- Training
- Supplies
- Travel
- Staff costs for those staff who directly support the program or project; coordinate and facilitate program and project activities and staff who review, disseminate and implement CNCS policies relating to a program
- Staff costs for those staff who recruit, train, or supervise volunteers
- Space and facility, and communications costs that primarily support programs, excluding costs that are already covered by an organization's indirect cost rate
- Independent evaluations related specifically to creative methods of quality improvement

Allowable Costs

In general, a cost is allowable if it meets the following criteria:

- It is reasonable and necessary for the performance of the grant award.
- It conforms to the limitations and exclusions within the award as to types or amounts of costs items.
- It is consistent with the fiscal regulations of Serve DC and the DC Government.
- It is documented adequately.

Unallowable Costs

Unallowable costs are defined as those disallowed allocations that do not comply with the grant provisions and OMB requirements; costs that have been charged or matched to the grant can be questioned or disallowed following an audit. If a program's financial management system is seriously inadequate, Serve DC can suspend funds, terminate the grant, recover funds, or take other legal steps.

Some of most common problems are:

- Inadequate accounting practices
- Poor internal controls
- Inadequate documentation and record-keeping
- Inaccurate financial status reporting
- Undocumented matching contributions, particularly in-kind

Expressly Unallowable Costs

The following is a partial list of some of the most common prohibited expenses; this list is not intended to be all inclusive. Consult with the AmeriCorps Program Officer for the exact requirements and restrictions and any exceptions that may apply.

- Advertising (except for member recruitment) and Public Relations
- Bad Debts
- Contributions and Donations
- Defense of Fraud Proceedings
- Entertainment Costs
- Fines and Penalties
- Food and Beverages with the exception of grant-sponsored conferences, meetings or office functions that are a full-day and directly related to the subgrant program
- Fundraising
- Interest and Other Financial Costs
- Losses on Other Contracts
- Real Estate Property and Improvements

Lobbying

Serve DC funds shall not be used for the purposes of lobbying, as required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, and implemented as 28 CFR, Part 69. This prohibition will be applied to all Federal, District, and Locally-funded grants. Any expenditure or use of funds, grant property, or grant-funded positions for any lobbying activities is unallowable and costs associated with these activities will be disallowed. Using funds for lobbying activities may result in the termination said sub grant award.

Matching Requirements

Programs are responsible for meeting the matching amounts in your negotiated grant award and approved budget. The amounts are based on your proposal and the number of years that your organization has received AmeriCorps funds. The amount of match that your organization proposes may exceed the minimum match required. All programs are required to raise funds from other sources—e.g., non-federal and the private sector.

For programs funded from the Corporation's 2009 budget, there are no longer separate match requirements for member support and program operating costs. Instead, grantees must meet an overall increasing match requirement, up to 50% by year ten according to the following table:

AmeriCorps Funding Year	1, 2, 3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Grantee Share Requirements	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

The matching contributions for member support costs (excluding health care) must be in non-federal funds.
Per §2541.240 for Matching or cost sharing. (b) *Qualifications and exceptions* -- (1) *Costs borne by other Federal grant agreements.* Except as provided by Federal statute, a cost sharing or matching requirement may not be met by costs

borne by another Federal grant. This prohibition does not apply to income earned by a grantee or sub grantee from a contract awarded under another Federal grant. Unless there is a Federal statute stating that federal funds from another federal agency can be utilized it is prohibited.

Valid documentation of match includes:

- Grants award documents from other entities
- Timesheets and in-kind vouchers for services (See Appendix 3.1 and 3.2)
- Equipment and furnishing receipts for donated items
- Leases and other sources documenting the value of donated space
- Copies of receipts given to donors of goods and services

Fundraising

While there are a wide range of activities you may undertake to create a sustainable future for your program, you should keep in mind that certain activities cannot be paid for with federal grant funds. Before making plans, you should review the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circular applicable to your organization which outlines costs that can be charged to your grant. For example, under the OMB circulars, you cannot charge to your grant the cost of "organized fundraising" or expenses incurred "solely to raise capital or obtain contributions." Staff supported by AmeriCorps grant funds must comply with the OMB limitations while on AmeriCorps time or not charge the time spent on these activities to the AmeriCorps grant. You are also required to keep accurate records regarding the time spent on these and other activities to clearly convey the nature of the activities undertaken.

In general, AmeriCorps members cannot assist their organizations with major fundraising efforts. However, CNCS policy permits some limited activities related to fundraising by AmeriCorps members as long that they do not exceed 10% of their agreed upon hours.

Program Income

Some grant programs include activities that generate income; conference fees are a common example. Program Income is the amount of income remaining after deducting costs associated with a particular activity or the grant as a whole. Program income must be used to fund the Grantee Share of the match. See the Sub Grant Award Agreement for information regarding the amount of match required by your program. Programs must include program income generated on FFRs submitted to Serve DC.

Audits & Monitoring

Programs may be audited by Serve DC, CNCS or an independent agency at any time to determine whether:

- Financial operations are properly conducted
- Financial reports are fairly presented
- The program has complied with all applicable laws, regulations, and administrative requirements that affect the expenditure of program funds

Audit Requirements

OMB Circular A-133 applies to all grantees of Federal Funds. Some of the more significant points contained in the revised A-133, which is effective for fiscal years ending after December 31, 2003, are:

- An increase in the audit threshold from $300,000 to $500,000. Only non-profits organizations and state and local governments that expend federal of $500,000 or more in a year must be audited. Organizations or sub-recipients

whose expenditures range between $300,000 and $500,000 are required to have an A-133 audit performed for all fiscal years which began before January 1, 2002.

- Technical changes to facilitate the determination of cognizant agency for audit and provide for Federal agency reassignment of oversight agency for audit.

Audit Reports

All Grantees of federally funded programs must submit the most recent audit reports to Serve DC within 30 days of completion. Programs must follow up and correct identified weaknesses and findings. Programs that sub-contract with other agencies to administer programs and provide $500,000 or more in Federal funds must have an A-133 audit and submittal of an audit report from the sub-contractor.

Serve DC will issue a management decision and initiate a corrective action on audit findings within 30 days after the receipt of the subgrantee's audit report and ensure that the sub grantee's audit report takes appropriate and timely corrective action (See Appendix 3.3). The management decision shall clearly state whether or not the audit finding is sustained, the reasons for the decision, and the expected action to repay disallowed costs, make financial adjustments, or take other action.

If the subgrantee has not completed the corrective action, a timetable for follow-up will be given by Serve DC. Prior to issuing the management decision, Serve DC may request additional information or documentation from the grantee, including a request for auditor assurance related to the documentation, as a way of mitigating disallowed costs. The management decision will describe any appeal process available to the grantee.

Monitoring

A monitoring site visit is an on-site assessment by Serve DC staff to determine if the program is in compliance with the Sub Grant Award Agreement, Grant Provisions and the Federal Regulations. The Commission's goal in monitoring is to support programs and help achieve their goals.

Scope of Monitoring

The monitoring visits will cover all areas of program operations. Documentation to be reviewed may include, but is not limited to: data collection sheets, policies and procedures, financial information, and any other source documents that will substantiate data reported in progress and fiscal reports. A site visit document checklist of program objectives will be verified by examining source data on several separate objectives.

Liability Coverage

Programs must have sufficient liability insurance to protect the organization, employees and participants. Participants who are engaged in both on- and off-site program activities must be covered. Programs decide how much liability coverage is sufficient, given the specific risk factors the program presents. General liability insurance is an administrative cost which can be charged against the grant (subject to the grant's administrative cost limit) or include in the program's match. If the cost of the member liability insurance is included in the approved budget, it may be charged as a direct program cost.

For additional information on insurance issues, refer to ***"Insurance Basics for Community Service Program,"*** a publication by the Nonprofit Risk Management Center, (202) 785-3891. Serve DC has several publications from the Nonprofit Risk Management Center in the DC Resource library including ***"Benefits & Labor Issues Under the National and Community Service Act"*** and ***Special Legal Issues for AmeriCorps USA***.

Taxes

Most programs are required to pay FICA. Under federal law, the FICA payment rate is 15.3 % of the living allowance. Half (7.65%) is paid by the program and half is deducted from the member living allowance FICA payments to cover Social Security and Medicare benefits.

Withholding Income Taxes

Under federal taxes, ordinary income tax rules apply to member benefits. A living allowance is taxable as "compensation for services" and generally is subject to federal withholding. Room and board also may count as income subject to withholding, even though the members do not receive cash. Low-income members may be able to claim an exception from withholding if (1) they had no tax liability in the previous year, and (2) they expect to have no tax liability in the current year. State income tax withholding laws also apply.

Like all personal income taxes, taxes on the living allowance are the responsibility of the individual member. Members receiving a stipend must complete a W-4 form at the start of the term of service. At end of the tax year, programs must provide members with a W-2 form.

Reimbursements Process

Two Easy Steps to Reimbursements

1. Complete the monthly Periodic Expense Report (PER) in the OnCorps Reporting System. PERs in OnCorps should be for a one month period only, beginning with the 1st day of the month and ending on the last day of the month. Reimbursement requests will not be processed without the appropriate documentation. Required documentation includes copies of general ledger print outs and receipts/invoices to substantiate reimbursements.
2. Complete, sign and submit the Grantee Request for Funds (GRF) form via US mail or hand delivery (use the form created in MS Excel provided after the receipt of a completed grant agreement). Mailed copies must be postmarked by the due date (the last day of the month following the expenditures). For example, May reimbursements are submitted on or before June 30th.

Each request will be checked and approved based upon the completion of the Periodic Report located in OnCorps.

The PER and reimbursement request form will be reviewed for the following:

- Grantee request for funds line 1 (program expenditures to date) does not exceed the CNCS share of year-to-date expenditures reported in OnCorps.
- No lines are below zero (0) in expense report or in OnCorps.
- No negative amounts have been entered in either the CNCS or Grantee share.
- Required match is being met.
- Reporting dates in OnCorps correspond to one month period, starting with the month and ending with the last day of the month.

Please note: the District of Columbia Government standard practice is to issue a check within 30 days of receipt of the reimbursement request.