



# 2016-2018 District of Columbia State Service Plan

## Introduction and Overview

Serve DC – The Mayor’s Office on Volunteerism is the District of Columbia Commission for National and Community Service. As a commission, we are tasked with developing and implementing a three-year strategic plan that outlines goals and objectives for addressing Washington, DC’s most pressing challenges through service. The State Service Plan, created with local stakeholder input, serves as a collective vision and blueprint to guide activities and multi-sector cross-collaboration around programmatic priorities.

Building on previous successes, Serve DC aims to match volunteers and community partners to the areas of greatest local needs, in accordance with the priorities established by community input and Mayor Muriel Bowser.

## About Serve DC – The Mayor’s Office on Volunteerism

Serve DC is the DC Government agency dedicated to promoting service as an innovative and sustainable solution to the challenges we face as a community and a nation. The agency engages District communities and stakeholders through volunteerism and disaster/emergency preparedness. As the commission for national and community service, Serve DC provides and promotes meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Serve DC supports communities across the District through grant funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and intra-District Memorandums of Understanding. Serve DC promotes the District’s spirit of service by engaging residents in meaningful service activities.

## Priorities

1. Connect District residents to meaningful volunteer opportunities.
2. Strengthen National Service in the District through engagement, program development, and growth in organizational capacity.
3. Develop safer, stronger communities through emergency and disaster preparedness.

## **Process for Input and Feedback**

Beginning in the fall of 2015, Serve DC developed the 2016-2018 District of Columbia State Service Plan through a collaborative process of engaging community partners and stakeholders. This process identified local priority areas, the role of volunteer service in addressing these needs, and feedback for ways in which Serve DC can be a leader in this work. Serve DC collected community partner feedback through formal and informal meetings, focus groups, and an online survey.

## **Priority 1: Connect District Residents and Stakeholders to Meaningful Volunteer and Service Opportunities.**

Serve DC mobilizes and galvanizes volunteers by matching them with fulfilling and impactful episodic and sustainable service opportunities that best utilize their skills, abilities, and interests.

- **Seasons of Service Days:** Serve DC will promote a spirit of service in the District by planning and implementing six (6) days of service. Seasons of Service include the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, Global Youth Service Day, Nelson Mandela Day of Service, DC School Beautification Day, 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance, and World AIDS Day.
- **Digital Engagement:** In October 2016, Serve DC launched [volunteer.dc.gov](http://volunteer.dc.gov) to function as a repository of internal and external volunteer opportunities. Replacing NeighborGood, this platform has been adopted by over 100 District-based organizations. [serve.dc.gov](http://serve.dc.gov) will serve as the official website for information purposes. Serve DC will leverage e-mail marketing and social media engagement to promote volunteer opportunities. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Constant Contact, and SurveyMonkey have proven to be an invaluable and low-cost resource for promoting local volunteer and national service opportunities. Serve DC will utilize innovative ways to engage residents through digital media.
- **Community Outreach:** Direct and in-person engagement continue to be Serve DC's most impactful tool for promoting volunteer and service opportunities. Serve DC will have a robust presence at community fairs, exhibitions, information sessions, and similar events, while utilizing print materials. Paid media will be used when available and cost-effective.
- **High School Students:** All students must complete at least 100 hours of community service to obtain a high school diploma from District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). Completing at least 25 hours per year allows DCPS students to stay on track for graduation. Serve DC will work with high schools counselors to connect students to

meaningful service opportunities that help fulfill community service requirements.

- **Seniors (55+) and Residents with Access and Functional Needs:** A member of the Age-Friendly DC Task Force, Serve DC maintains robust partnerships with the DC Office on Aging (DCOA), AARP, and other senior service providers. Through ongoing collaboration, we will expand our engagement with the District’s senior citizens to increase involvement in volunteerism and disaster/emergency preparedness initiatives. In addition, Serve DC will coordinate the DC Volunteer Snow Team to assist in the aftermath of a snow event.
- **Groups/Organizations:** 48.6% of District residents participate in groups and/or organizations, according to CNCS’ 2015 report “Volunteering and Civic Life in America.” Serve DC will actively engage groups/organizations (e.g., education/youth service groups, faith-based institutions, social/community service clubs, civic professional associations, etc.). Groups/organizations provide a built-in network of volunteers seeking service opportunities.
- **District Stakeholders:** As the nation’s capital, Washington, DC functions as a major intersection for the public and private sectors. Serve DC will engage businesses, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), educational institutions, and other District-based stakeholders in volunteer opportunities that align with their service goals.

## **Priority Area 2: Strengthening National Service in the District through Engagement and Program Development**

As a convener for National Service in the District, Serve DC works toward creating a community of learning and sharing with all CNCS programs through targeted outreach and partnership development.

### **Priority Area 2.1: Deepen our relationship with National Service stakeholders**

- **DC National Service Partnership (DCNSP):** This partnership will be an ongoing and sustainable committee that will work to plan and implement activities and pool training, marketing, outreach, and education resources. The DCNSP will have definitive tasks that will serve as the building blocks for thoughtful cross-stream collaboration such as the planning the All Corps Member Conference and the All Corps Service Day.
- **DC AmeriCorps Leadership Council (DCALC):** Serve DC will support the DCALC, a group of active members acting in leadership roles to promote a citywide National Service community. Activities include professional development, networking, and social events.

- **AmeriCorps National Directs:** As part of the AmeriCorps National Direct consultation process with State Commissions, Serve DC will utilize a standard form and follow-up phone calls to collect information about proposed programming in DC. Serve DC will collaborate with AmeriCorps National Direct programs operating in DC through professional development activities and service days.

## **Priority Area 2.2: Develop the District’s AmeriCorps State programs**

- **Monitoring Site Visits:** Annually, Serve DC will conduct monitoring site visits to all AmeriCorps State programs in DC to ensure compliance and to focus on continuous improvement.
- **AmeriCorps Member Feedback:** Serve DC will collect member feedback from AmeriCorps State programs during member interviews at monitoring site visits (annual), random surveying of members depending on program risk level, and online surveys.
- **Training and Technical Assistance:** Serve DC will provide tools, training and information to help current and potential sub-grantees develop their knowledge, skills and abilities in administering AmeriCorps Programs.
- **Evaluation Training and Technical Assistance:** Serve DC will work with formula sub-grantees to create an evaluation plan. These sub-grantees will be selected from Serve DC’s formula portfolio and have the capacity to work with and outside evaluator, have a proven track record of successful data collection and performance reporting. By the end of the technical assistance these organizations will provide a comprehensive evaluation plan.
- **Outreach:** Serve DC will expand our portfolio of AmeriCorps Programs to include underserved, unserved, or “first time” organizations outside of the education focus area.

## **Priority Area 2.3: Capacity Building**

- **Volunteer Generation Fund:** Serve DC, in partnership with a capacity building organization, will work with a cohort of sub-grantees to strengthen their volunteer recruitment and management strategies. Sub-grantees that work with boys and young men of color will be selected for volunteer management training, leadership development, and assistance with identifying resources to support their volunteer programs.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Partnering with entities such as the National Park Service, Martha’s Table, and the Capital Area Food Bank have increased our capacity to accommodate the request of local, national, and international demand for tailored volunteer opportunities. Serve DC recognizes its unique position in the nation’s capital and will integrate these requests as we expand collaboration.

- **Mentorship:** Serve DC will work closely with the My Brother's Keeper-DC initiative and District-based mentoring organizations to connect prospective mentors, tutors, and coaches with youth. In partnership with the My Brother's Keeper-DC initiative, Serve DC will host workshops and panels that engage individual mentors and groups. Recognizing that District-based mentorship programs continue to evolve in the way mentors and mentees connect, Serve DC will identify organizations that provide individual, virtual and group mentoring.

### **Priority Area 3: Develop Safer and Stronger Communities through Emergency Preparedness**

As the District's lead agency for volunteer and donations management, Serve DC provides critical emergency support to the District's Response Plan (DRP) most effective in the first 72 hours of a declared emergency. Serve DC recruits and trains District residents to serve during a steady-state through varied non-emergency activities, ensuring residents play a major role in making their communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond after a number of different threats or hazards to our community.

#### **Priority Area 3.1: Expanding our emergency preparedness initiatives**

- **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training:** DC CERT prepares residents to respond to emergencies in their communities. When emergencies occur, CERT members provide critical support to first responders, immediate assistance to victims, and volunteer reception at disaster sites. CERT members also assist with non-emergency projects to promote community resilience. Serve DC will increase the annual number of individuals trained in full CERT and awareness classes such as Active Shooter Response and Disaster Psychology. The agency will accomplish this through organizing trained volunteers into National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant teams.
- **DC Be Ready Campaign (CPR, First Aid, and AED Training):** The *DC Be Ready* campaign goal is to provide free training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), First Aid, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to District residents and stakeholders. Serve DC will aggressively market this training to volunteer organizations, non-profits, faith-based institutions, and individuals likely to be positioned to assist in the event of an emergency.
- **Hands on Heart CPR Awareness Training:** In partnership with the DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS), Serve DC will offer this CPR awareness training to thousands of District residents and stakeholders at community events, fairs, and exhibitions. This program will be used as a tool to engage stakeholders for recruitment in more comprehensive emergency preparedness activities.

- **Commander Ready-Youth Emergency Preparedness:** Commander Ready, Serve DC's youth preparedness program, is a specialized emergency preparedness initiative designed to educate and engage youth ages 5-13. The program will use fun, interactive games and activities to introduce youth to emergency preparedness in a nonthreatening and safe manner. Topics such as making a family emergency plan and building a survival kit will be taught.
- **Summer Youth Employment Preparedness Academy (SYEPA):** In partnership with the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES), young adult participants will be trained on a full range of emergency preparedness competencies. SYEPA participants will also learn how to facilitate Commander Ready training for youth ages 5-13 in recreation centers across the District's 8 wards.