AmeriCorps Missouri Program Directors Manual

Effective July 15, 2025

SERVMO

AMERICORPS IN MISSOURI

AmeriCorps

Welcome from the Executive Director

AmeriCorps Program Directors,

Hello and welcome! We're proud to release this new Missouri-specific manual as part of the recent 30th anniversary of the national **AmeriCorps** program and the rebrand of the **Missouri Community Service Commission**!

If you're reading this, it's likely you're either a seasoned AmeriCorps Program director looking for clarity on recent policy changes or a new program director looking to get off to a strong start. Either way, we are **thankful for your partnership and dedication to service** as we prepare for the next thirty years of **getting things done**! Thank you for taking the time to review these policies and best practices to ensure that Missouri's AmeriCorps members have the strongest experience possible.

We intended to create a tool that is neither too long nor too short, including screenshots and relevant links. **Thank you to Abby Fleiss**, non-profit consultant, for leading this effort! **Thank you also to the Program Director Advisory Committee and ServMO team** for providing the valuable monthly feedback that led to the completion of this practical resource. We couldn't have done it without you!

- Carol Barsby, Laclede Literacy Council
- Emily Beers, ServMO Program Officer
- Ciara Cheatum, ServMO Program Director
- Abigail Farrow, ServMO Deputy Director
- Ann Hannan, AmeriCorps St. Louis
- Gabrielle Inyart, Mission: St. Louis Beyond School
- Michaela Moran, Jumpstart Missouri
- Beccah Rendall, Kansas City Public Library
- Tina Rowden, Waynesville AmeriCorps

It's worth noting that ServMO also exists within a network of 52 Commissions across the nation who are constantly cheering for one another; encouraging growth and innovation while sharing hard-earned lessons of AmeriCorps grants management. For that reason, we would like to specifically thank **UServeUtah** and the **One Star Foundation**, whose materials were heavily referenced throughout this process.

Perhaps most importantly - the exponential impact of AmeriCorps can be traced to the **grit and passion of the AmeriCorps Directors** who create the program, recruit the members and track the outcomes. We hope the pages of this manual convey ServMO's intent to support you in this important work. Together, we hope to problem-solve, navigate federal grants management, and remove the unknowns so you can focus on what you do best – **empowering the AmeriCorps members to strengthen Missouri communities.**

In the spirit of service,
Brittany Crabtree
ServMO Executive Director

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Purpose

The Missouri AmeriCorps Program Director Manual was designed by the Missouri Community Service Commission (doing business as ServMO) as a guide for those who administer AmeriCorps programs in Missouri. This manual will:

- Provide a roadmap for AmeriCorps grantee/site management
- Outline a typical administrator's general workload
- Illustrate legal requirements
- Show where there is both control and flexibility to shape each AmeriCorps program

Please note that the information contained in this manual does not include all the legal requirements of an AmeriCorps grant. It does not constitute AmeriCorps' official interpretation of factual or legal questions. Program directors or individuals with particular questions should consult the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.§ 12501 et seq.), the regulations issued under the Act (45 C.F.R. § 2500.1 et seq.), the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the AmeriCorps Subgrantee Agreement and Federal Terms and Conditions, and relevant state law and regulations. If there is a conflict between the content of this handbook and the AmeriCorps provisions, the provisions are the controlling authority.

Laws/Subgrantee Agreement

Below are links to some of the applicable laws and regulations listed above.

Laws
- [National and Community Service Act of 1990](#), as amended
  ◦ (42 U.S.C. § 12501, et seq.) – Chapter 129 (approx. 95 pages)
- [Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act](#)

Regulations
- [45 CFR Parts 2500 – 2504](#) Corporation for National and Community Service Chapter XXV.

Federal Terms and Conditions
For updated Terms and Conditions each program year, please visit
https://www.americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/state-subgrantees

Subgrantee Agreement
The following documents constitute the subgrant agreement between ServMO and individual programs:
- The AmeriCorps subgrantee agreement, issued by the Missouri Community Service Commission, includes all the special conditions applicable to operating your program;
- The AmeriCorps proposal (application) and modifications to it that may have been negotiated with you; and
- The budget for your program, which contains the maximum amount of funds the AmeriCorps agency has provided for your program as well as your obligations to raise matching funds and/or in-kind contributions.
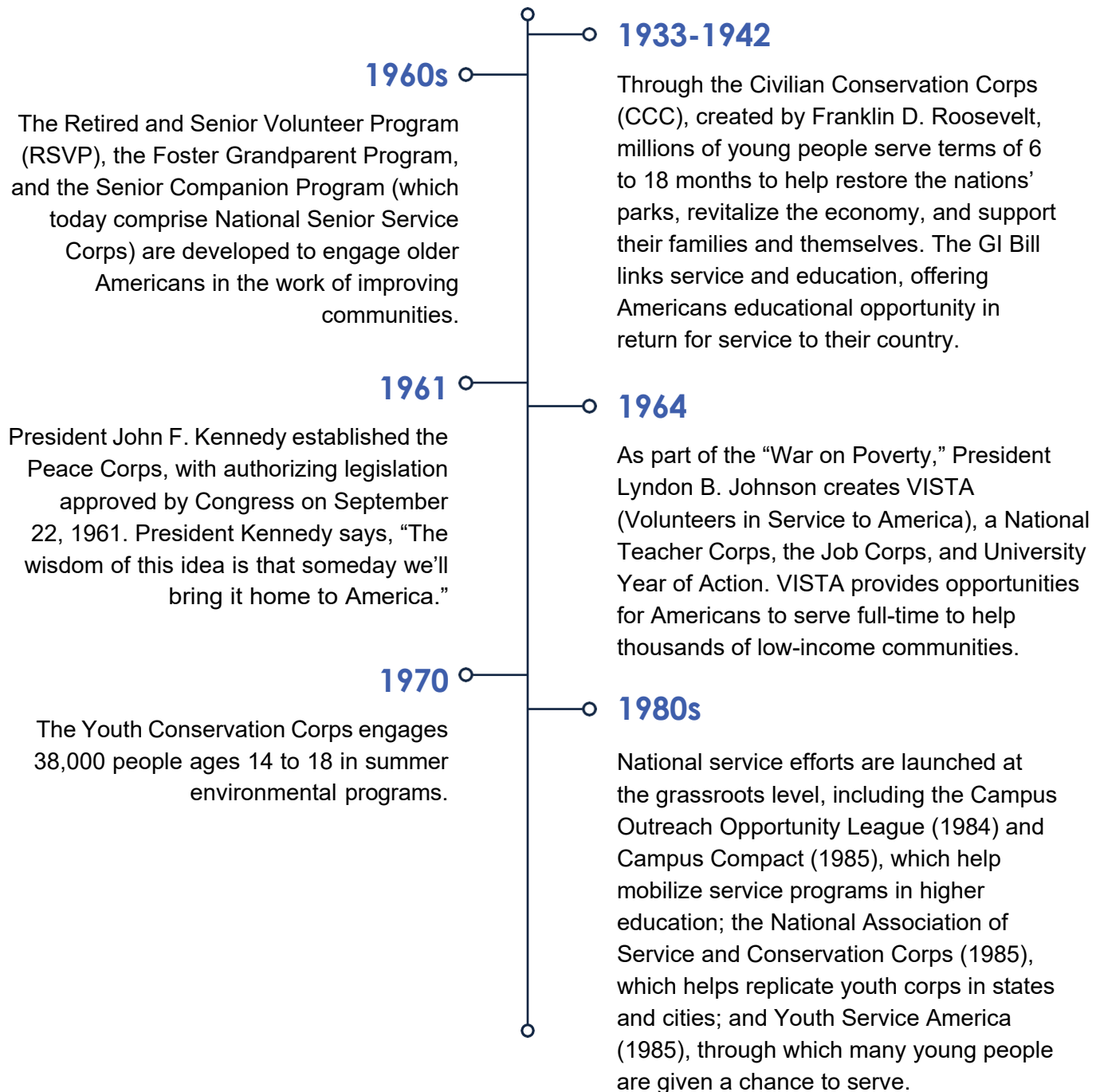
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Brief History of National Service

When faced with challenges, our nation has always relied on the dedication and action of its citizens. The AmeriCorps agency carries on a long tradition of citizen involvement by providing opportunities for Americans of all ages to improve their communities through service.

Historic Foundation of National Service

1933-1942

Through the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), created by Franklin D. Roosevelt, millions of young people serve terms of 6 to 18 months to help restore the nations' parks, revitalize the economy, and support their families and themselves. The GI Bill links service and education, offering Americans educational opportunity in return for service to their country.

1960s

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), the Foster Grandparent Program, and the Senior Companion Program (which today comprise National Senior Service Corps) are developed to engage older Americans in the work of improving communities.

1961

President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps, with authorizing legislation approved by Congress on September 22, 1961. President Kennedy says, "The wisdom of this idea is that someday we'll bring it home to America."

1964

As part of the "War on Poverty," President Lyndon B. Johnson creates VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), a National Teacher Corps, the Job Corps, and University Year of Action. VISTA provides opportunities for Americans to serve full-time to help thousands of low-income communities.

1970

The Youth Conservation Corps engages 38,000 people ages 14 to 18 in summer environmental programs.

1980s

National service efforts are launched at the grassroots level, including the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (1984) and Campus Compact (1985), which help mobilize service programs in higher education; the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (1985), which helps replicate youth corps in states and cities; and Youth Service America (1985), through which many young people are given a chance to serve.

Revival of Interest in National and Community Service

President George H. W. Bush helped spark a revival of interest in national service when he instituted the White House Office of National Service in 1989. In 1990 Congress passed the National and Community Service Act, which created a Commission on National and Community Service that sought to "renew the ethic of civic responsibility in the United States." Full implementation began in 1992, when the commission awarded $64 million in grants to support four broad types of state and local community service efforts. These initiatives were the Serve-America programs (formerly Learn and Serve) which involved school-aged youth in community service and service-learning through a variety of school and community-based activities; Higher Education Innovative Projects aimed at involving college students in community service and at promoting community service at educational institutions; American Conservation and Youth Service Corps, supporting summer and year-round youth corps initiatives that engage both in- and out-of-school youth in community service work; and the National and Community Service Demonstration Models, for programs that were potential models for large-scale national service.

National & Community Service Trust Act

President Bill Clinton sponsored the National and Community Service Trust Act, a revision of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, which was passed by a bipartisan coalition of Members of Congress and signed into law on September 21, 1993. The legislation created a new federal agency, the Corporation for National and Community Service (now known as the AmeriCorps agency), to administer federally funded national service programs. The law created AmeriCorps, which was designed to support local, state, and national organizations across the nation that involve Americans cans in results-driven community service. Individual AmeriCorps participants, known as members, typically serve for a year, during which they receive a living allowance. After service, members receive an education award, administered by the National Service Trust, and paid as a voucher redeemable for current education costs at colleges, universities, other post-secondary institutions, and approved school-to-work programs, or to pay back qualified student loans already incurred. The legislation drew on the principles of both the Civilian Conservation Corps and the GI Bill, encouraging Americans to serve and rewarding those who do. The new agency also took over the programs of two previous agencies, ACTION, which was responsible for running VISTA and the National Senior Service Corps programs, and the more recent Commission on National and Community Service, including the NCCC, forming a new network of national service programs under AmeriCorps.

National Service Today

On March 31, 2009, the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act was passed. This bill focused on significantly expanding and improving opportunities for utilizing National Service to meet specific national challenges. President Obama, reflecting on the passage of the new legislation said:

> *"Our work is not finished when I sign this bill into law – it has just begun. It is up to each of us to seize this opportunity, to do our part to lift up our fellow Americans, to realize our own true potential. I call on all Americans to stand up and do what they can to serve their communities, shape our history and enrich both their own lives and the lives of others across this country."*
>
> *-President Barack Obama*

National Service Programs

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 initiated the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). In September 2020, CNCS rebranded itself as AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps supports a range of national and community based service programs, providing opportunities for Americans to serve as full-time and part-time stipend participants or volunteers, and as individuals or as teams. AmeriCorps is an independent agency of the United States government that engages more than five million Americans in service through AmeriCorps VISTA, AmeriCorps NCCC, Ameri-Corps State and National, AmeriCorps Seniors, the Volunteer Generation Fund, and other national service initiatives.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is the national service program that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in results-driven service in six focus areas: Education, Healthy Futures, Economic Opportunity, Environmental Stewardship, Disaster Services, and Veterans & Military Families. AmeriCorps programs provide full and part-time opportunities for members to provide service to their communities through community organizations and agencies.

The AmeriCorps network of programs is comprised of AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps NCCC. While State and National, VISTA, and NCCC programs all fall under the AmeriCorps "family," each program has its own focus, organization, and structure.

AmeriCorps Seniors

AmeriCorps Seniors taps the skills, talents, and experience of more than 500,000 Americans age 55 and older to meet a wide range of community challenges through three programs: Foster Grand-parents, Senior Companions, and RSVP. These programs receive funding through annual appropriations and are selected by Ameri-Corps State Offices on a non-competitive basis. In addition, National Senior Service Corps programs may compete nationally for funding as Programs of National Significance.

Volunteer Generation Fund

The Volunteer Generation Fund is a program authorized by the Serve America Act to support voluntary organizations and state service commissions in boosting the impact of volunteers in addressing critical community needs. The fund will focus investments on volunteer management practices that increase both volunteer recruitment and retention.

AmeriCorps State and National

AmeriCorps State and National members participate in local service programs operated by community based nonprofit organizations, local and state government entities, Indian tribes, territories, institutions of higher education, local school and police districts, and partnerships among any of the above. Members serving in these programs help meet communities' critical education, health, economic, and social needs.

AmeriCorps State

Approximately three-quarters of AmeriCorps grant funding goes to state commissions, which in turn distribute and monitor grants to local organizations and agencies in response to local needs. These programs are called AmeriCorps State programs. They are funded either through a formula allotment granted to each state, or through a competitive process wherein programs compete for funding against other programs throughout the nation.

AmeriCorps National Direct

The other quarter of AmeriCorps funding is granted by the AmeriCorps agency through a competitive grants process to national nonprofit organizations operating programs in more than one state. These programs are called AmeriCorps National Direct. Program recruitment, selection, placement of members, and supervision are the responsibility of the grantees. Within AmeriCorps State and National, there are also Tribes and Territories programs, Education Awards programs, and other special initiatives.

AmeriCorps VISTA

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) members serve low-income communities and families across the country. Members of AmeriCorps VISTA work and live in the communities they serve, creating or expanding programs that continue after they complete their terms of service. AmeriCorps VISTA members are assigned to local project sponsors and focus on building community capacity, mobilizing community resources, and increasing
self-reliance. VISTA project host sites are selected by the Regional Offices of the AmeriCorps agency.

AmeriCorps NCCC

AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) is a full-time, team-based residential service program for 18- 26 year-olds. representing a wide variety of socioeconomic, cultural, geographic, and educational backgrounds. AmeriCorps members serving in the NCCC program are assigned to one of four regional campuses and then placed into teams ranging between 8-12 members. The teams complete a variety of service projects, which are generally 3 to 13 weeks in duration, and respond to local communities' needs throughout the United States and territories. Each team has a specially trained Team Leader who serves and resides with the team.

AmeriCorps Structure

The AmeriCorps Federal Agency

Office	AmeriCorps Support Functions
Program	Oversees programmatic aspects of grants and awards. Program officers serve as the primary liaisons with state service commissions and the National Program grantees.
Grants	Oversees financial aspects of grants and awards.
Office of Leadership Development and Training	Works with national technical assistance providers and with training and technical assistance coordinators in state service commissions.
Trust	Manages the education awards for AmeriCorps members.
Public Affairs	Oversees media relations, marketing and publications including the online recruitment website.
Public Liaison	Oversees national initiatives, national service days and all AmeriCorps awards.
General Counsel	Provides legal counsel for AmeriCorps and can answer legal questions related to AmeriCorps program management.
Office of the Inspector General	Detects and deters waste, fraud, abuse, and violations of law by AmeriCorps funded programs.

AmeriCorps Regional Offices

The AmeriCorps federal agency operates in a regional structure. These offices are responsible for administering AmeriCorps VISTA projects as well as the AmeriCorps Seniors programs. Missouri is located in the North Central Region. A staff member from the regional office serves as an ex-officio member of the State Service Commission. For a list of regional officers and contact information, please go to: https://americorps.gov/contact/region-offices

The Missouri Community Service Commission

The Missouri Community Service Commission (MCSC) was created by state statute in 1994 and consists of members representing local government; community based organizations and statewide networks as well as a small staff. As the state's central coordinating body for service and volunteerism, the Commission is responsible for developing, implementing, and sustaining a vision and culture of civic engagement and national and community service within the state.

MCSC was established in 1994 as a direct response to the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 through the Missouri Community Service Act – RSMo 620.580-592. MCSC operates under a board of Commissioners appointed by the Governor. Those Commissioners utilize the MCSC By-laws to operate.

ServMO

In 2023, the Missouri Commission finalized the 2023-2026 MCSC Strategic Plan, which included the goal of rebranding the Commission. In 2024, Commissioners voted to change the name to ServMO. Legally, the organization's name will continue to be the Missouri Community Service Commission, however, the organization will be "doing business as (DBA)" ServMO.

To learn more about ServMO, MCSC, and its Commissioners, visit https://serv.mo.gov/.

AmeriCorps Grantmaking

The following section provides an introduction to the AmeriCorps grantmaking process. Additional resources can be found in the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO) as well as the [Mandatory Supplemental Information](#).

Grant Funding Sources

National Direct (Multi-State): Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state or territory apply directly to AmeriCorps. Additionally, federally-recognized Indian Tribes and State and Territories without Commissions (South Dakota, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) apply directly to the AmeriCorps Agency.

Competitive (Single-State): Organizations that propose to operate in only one state must apply through the Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions. Each Commission administers its own selection process and submits to AmeriCorps the applicants it selects to compete for funding. Selected programs are still managed by the State Service Commission but receive funding from a competitive pool.

Formula (Single-State): During congressional appropriations, each state receives a pool of funds based on population size. Formula funding decisions are at the full discretion of State Service Commissions, following strict selection criteria and based on the individual state priorities outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Grant Award Types

Cost Reimbursement Grants: These grants fund a portion of program operating costs and AmeriCorps member living allowances, with flexibility to use all of the funds for allowable costs regardless of whether or not the program recruits and retains all AmeriCorps members. Cost reimbursement grants include a formal matching requirement and require the submission of a budget and financial reports.

Fixed Amount Grants: These grants provide a fixed amount of funding per Member Service Year (MSY) that is substantially lower than the amount required to operate the program. Organizations use their own or other resources to cover the remaining costs. Programs are not required to submit budgets or financial reports, there is no specific match requirement, and programs are not required to track and maintain documentation of match. Programs can access the funds, provided they recruit and retain the members supported under the grant based on the MSY level awarded. Professional Corps programs applying for operational funding through a Fixed Amount grant must submit a budget in support of their request for operational funds.

- **Full-cost Fixed Amount grants**: Fixed Amount grants are available for programs that enroll all types of member slots and use their own resources to cover all other costs. Professional Corps may only have full-time members. Programs can access funds under

the grant based on enrolling and retaining the full complement of members supported under the grant.

- **Education Award Grants (EAP) Fixed Amount grant:** Programs apply for a small, fixed amount per MSY, can enroll all types of member slots, and use their own resources to cover all other costs. Programs can access funds under the grant based on enrolling the full complement of members supported under the grant. As with full cost fixed amount grants, there are no specific match or financial reporting requirements for EAP fixed amount grants.

The chart below summarizes the grant types and their distinct characteristics:

| Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement	Fixed Amount			
Available Subtypes	Traditional	Full-Cost	Education Award Program (EAP)	Professional Corps	No Cost Slots
Maximum Cost per MSY*	Varies depending on annual NOFO	Varies depending on annual NOFO	$800 or $1,000	$1,000	$0
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	All slot types	All slot types	All Slot Types	FT Only	All slot types
Matching Funds Required	Yes	No			
Budget Submission Required	Yes	No			
Availability of Funds Linked to Enrollment and Retention of Awarded MSYs	No	Yes			No
Special Requirements	N/A	N/A	N/A	Member are qualified professionals and salaries and benefits must be paid entirely by organization	N/A
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes	No			
Available to New Applicants	Yes	No	Yes		

Grantmaking Cycle

Grantmaking decisions are made annually with most programs operating on a 3-year grant "cycle." Specific deadlines and other requirements are outlined in each Notice of Funding Opportunity.

New	A program is considered "new" only the FIRST time it applies for a grant award type NOTE: If a program moves from competitive to formula or vice versa, it will be considered a "New" program at the time of application.
Continuation	Before years 2 and 3, programs submit a modified application for continuation of funding. Limited changes in program design may be allowable and an updated budget is submitted.
Recompete	Prior to Year 4 (and each subsequent 3-year cycle), programs will submit a full recompete application. More substantial changes in program design and budget are considered at these times.
Continuation	Prior to year 5 and year 6
Recompete	Prior to year 7
Continuation	Prior to year 8 and year 9
Recompete	Prior to year 10
This cycle continues with a recompete application every 3rd year for the duration of the AmeriCorps program, assuming no changes in the requested funding source.	

National Days of Service

The AmeriCorps Agency recognizes many days of service and events throughout the year. Program and member participation is **encouraged** based on program design and feasibility.
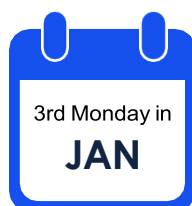
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

3rd Monday in JAN

"A day ON…not a day off" occurs annually on the third Monday in January (the day of observance of the federal holiday honors Dr. King's birthday). AmeriCorps is responsible for promoting this day as a day of service to honor the life and teachings of Martin Luther King, Jr. For more information, visit https://americorps.gov/newsroom/events/mlk-day

AmeriCorps Week

Mid MARCH

AmeriCorps Week occurs annually each March to recognize and celebrate AmeriCorps programs across the nation. Throughout this week, AmeriCorps program staff, members, and individuals from the community share stories and experiences, join together in service, and spread awareness of AmeriCorps. To learn more, visit: https://americorps.gov/newsroom/events/americorps-week

National Volunteer Week

3rd week of APRIL

National Volunteer Week began in 1974 when President Richard Nixon signed an executive order establishing the week as an annual celebration of volunteering. Every President since has signed a proclamation promoting National Volunteer Week. For more information, visit https://www.pointsoflight.org/nvw/

9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance*

9/11

9/11 Day of Service & Remembrance observed annually on September 11th provides a positive and forward-looking way for Americans and others to forever honor and remember those affected by 9/11 including the victims, survivors, first responders, recovery workers, volunteers, public safety officers and members of our military. For more information, visit https://americorps.gov/911-day

Volunteer Recognition

ServMO strives to recognize outstanding volunteer efforts in the state and encourages programs to participate in the following recognition opportunities:

The President's Volunteer Service Award

Recognizing and honoring volunteers sets a standard for service, encourages a sustained commitment to civic participation, and inspires others to make service a central part of their lives. The President's Volunteer Service Award recognizes individuals, families, and groups that have achieved a certain standard – measured by the number of hours of service during a 12-month period or cumulative hours earned over the course of a lifetime For more information please visit the President's Volunteer Service Award website at: https://presidentialserviceawards.gov/.

The Daily Point of Light Award

This award is given daily to individuals across America by the Points of Light Foundation. This foundation is working to create a society where it is easy for every individual to take action and accelerate change within their community and around the world. For more information, visit www.pointsoflight.org.

The Show Me Service Awards

The goal of the Show Me Service Awards is to highlight the service and volunteerism that Missourians provide to strengthen their communities and improve quality of life. The Show Me Service Awards are divided into seven categories and awarded across four regions: North/Central, St. Louis area, Kansas City area, and Southern. Categories include Youth, Adult, Senior, AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Seniors (Senior Corps), Business, and Community. A special award named after commissioner John R. Albright is also presented. For more information, visit https://serv.mo.gov/.

Chapter 3
Getting Started

- ❖ Subgrantee Agreements
- ❖ Member Recruitment
- ❖ Member Eligibility
- ❖ National Service Criminal History Checks
- ❖ Member Enrollment Process
- ❖ Federal Requirements
- ❖ Conflict of Interest Policy
- ❖ AmeriCorps Branding
- ❖ Member Benefits

Subgrantee Agreements

The purpose of the subgrantee agreement is to establish requirements for the funds awarded by ServMO to an external organization.

The subgrantee must return the signed subgrantee agreement within two weeks of receipt or the funds may be forfeited and reallocated by ServMO.

Prior to the program start date, continuation and recompete sub-grantees are required to submit the following documents to their program officer:

- Organization Chart (including the AmeriCorps grant authorized representative, program director, and fiscal point of contact*)
- Program Recruitment & Training Plan Summary (one page)
- Criminal History Check Policies & Procedures
- Living Allowance Distribution Policy
- Member Service Agreement Template

The ServMO staff will reference the above documents during the annual program risk assessment to determine a monitoring plan for each program.

*One individual can serve in two of these roles but not all 3. For example, the Executive Director may be the Authorized Representative and Fiscal Contact but another individual would need to be named as the Program Director. Having more than one individual who is knowledgeable and involved in decision-making allows for continuity and mitigates risk during staff transitions.

AmeriCorps authorized representative responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
- Reviewing and signing the subgrantee agreement
- Reviewing and submitting the program application in eGrants

AmeriCorps program director responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
- Recruiting, selecting, and enrolling members
- Supervising and training members
- Observing programmatic and fiscal responsibilities
- Facilitating members' end of service
- Exiting members in eGrants
- Reporting to ServMO and the AmeriCorps agency

AmeriCorps program fiscal point of contact responsibilities include but are not limited to:
- Attending state and federal financial management trainings
- Reviewing and submitting monthly program expense reports

OnCorps Registration: All programs must set up an account in OnCorps for grant management steps including timesheets, request submissions, reporting, and reimbursement.

Member Recruitment

Local Community Recruitment:
As an AmeriCorps program, you must actively seek to recruit program Members from the community in which the project is conducted. In no case may a program violate the non-discrimination and non-displacement rules governing participant selection.

National Recruitment:
All position descriptions (Opportunity Listings) MUST be posted in the eGrants system. You will access the recruitment system through the web-based system eGrants. Once an applicant applies through the portal, you will be able to see their application in eGrants. For additional information regarding this recruitment tool is available HERE.

ServMO recommends that programs utilize various recruitment methods (online, print, etc.) in addition to the My AmeriCorps Portal. If an applicant applies outside of the portal, program staff will need to invite them before enrollment can occur. See Enrollment section for more information, including instructions and screenshots.

Position Descriptions:
Service assignments must be meaningful to the AmeriCorps Member and the community in which the service is performed. The goals of each position must be achievable. Members must be connected with people in the local community so ownership of the experience will be shared.

Position descriptions should include all professional elements necessary to define the service assignment and the qualifications necessary to achieve it. These documents should be revisited regularly to encourage Member feedback, measure success, and find areas which need enhancement. They should be modified to reflect changing needs as they develop and are useful in evaluating Members' performance.

AmeriCorps Members **ARE NOT** employees. The position description should be able to distinguish between the Member's position and an employee position description at the organization to ensure displacement and duplication do not occur. See more about these rules HERE.

Position descriptions should note that the position is open to individuals of all backgrounds and abilities.

Screening and Interviewing:
ServMO expects all programs to follow standard HR policies and procedures for screening and interviewing candidates. During the interview, programs should ensure the candidate is aware of what AmeriCorps is and what their service requires. They need to understand that they are not interviewing to be an employee of the program.

Enrollment and Retention Expectations:

AmeriCorps has set standards for both Member enrollment and Member retention percentages. ServMO will review both regularly to ensure compliance.

Enrollment Rate: Programs should reach 80% enrollment/recruitment (total slots filled/total slots awarded) by the end of each grant year.

Retention Rate: Programs should meet at least an 85% retention rate (Total Members exiting with an Education Award/Total slots filled) by the end of each grant year.

Anything less will require further explanation in grant reporting. If a program consistently fails to meet either requirement, it may result in reduced funding or termination of the grant.

Program Directors are encouraged to access this information in the AmeriCorps portal on a regular basis to make corrections, as needed. To locate these reports, go to ASN Reports on the left side of the screen. Be sure to select the correct program year and you can access the Enrollment Rate Report and Member Download Report from the drop-down menu.

Staff Recruitment

Please note program staff do not apply through the AmeriCorps portal. Instead, organizations are expected to follow their standard hiring procedures. Additionally, grant-funded staff are required to have a National Service Criminal History background check on file, see the NSCHC section for more details.

Member Eligibility

To be eligible to enroll in AmeriCorps, the individual must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Be a United States citizen, U.S. national, or a lawful permanent resident alien of the United States;
- Be at least 17 years of age; and
- Have a high school diploma or GED or work towards obtaining one while in the program. It is a requirement to obtain a high school diploma or GED before one is eligible to use the Education Award.
- Must be clear of any record on the National Sex Offender Public Registry.
- Must have a criminal record* clear of any conviction(s) for murder.

Note: Programs should request and retain documentation as proof the member is a US citizen, US National or lawful permanent resident. This documentation may be required for submission if manual verification is needed during the enrollment process. See Member Enrollment section for more information about manual verification.

The Application Forms include:

- Member information such as name, address, date of birth, and name variations.
- Education requirement information--Members may self-certify that they have received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. Members who have not earned a high school diploma or equivalency certificate must initial that they agree to pursue a diploma during their term of service and obtain a diploma before using the education award and certify they have not dropped out of school to enroll as an AmeriCorps Member.

Note: Required Background check consent is gathered as part of the process for Truescreen.

The Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9) includes:

Age requirement information including documentation to verify age, such as a birth certificate and consent by parent or legal guardian, if necessary. If a member is under 18 years of age, parental consent is required to participate in AmeriCorps. A separate form created by the program that is signed by the parent, member, and program staff is acceptable.

National Service Criminal History Checks

National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC) is a baseline screening requirement established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service.

NSCHC is required under the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended by the Serve America Act (SAA). The statutory requirement at 42 U.S.C. § 12645g is supplemented by regulatory requirements at 45 CFR §2540.200 through §2540.207 as well as the terms and conditions of AmeriCorps grants.

Check the AmeriCorps website for the most up-to-date information and requirements on background checks: National Service Criminal History Checks.

Who is required to have background checks?

The following individuals, who serve or work under a grant subject to NSCHC requirements, must have the NSCHC checks listed above on page 26:

- AmeriCorps Members serving in State and National programs
- Individuals in positions in which they will receive a salary, directly or reflected as match, under a cost reimbursement grant - typically program staff. The following individuals are exempt from NSCHC:
  - Individuals who are under the age of 18 on the first day of work or service who serve on an NSCHC required grant.
  - Individuals whose activity is entirely included in the grant recipient's indirect cost rate (Section 3 of the budget) or cost allocation plan.

Who may not serve?

Any candidate who has been convicted of a homicide or sexual offense may not serve in AmeriCorps or be a staff person charged to the grant in Section 1 of the budget. Programs may add additional background situations that would make a candidate ineligible to serve, as long as the criteria is consistent with state and federal civil rights and nondiscrimination laws. Additionally, anyone who refuses to consent to a criminal history check or provides false information during the check process will not be eligible to serve.

Which checks are required?

Truescreen Policy (**Effective May 1, 2025**)

All of the following checks must be completed prior to the first day of service/employment. Effective May 1, all **NSCHCs must be conducted and adjudicated utilizing the approved vendor: Truescreen.**

- A nationwide check of the National Sex Offender Public website
- A fingerprint-based check of the FBI criminal history record database
- A name-based check of the candidate's state of residency if they are from a state other

than Missouri
- o Candidates who are full-time students at a Missouri college or university are considered residents of Missouri and do not require this check
- o Even if the candidate currently lives in Missouri, if their ID lists another state, it is recommended that you conduct a check via that state

NOTE: The state of Missouri participates in the National Fingerprint File program. A completed FBI fingerprint check (through Truescreen) eliminates the need for grantees to conduct a state criminal history record check in states that participate. A link to the complete list of participating NFF states can be found below.

Each program is responsible for setting up an account with Truescreen and having it "mapped" to ServMO for monitoring purposes. This process can take several weeks so programs should work diligently to ensure NSCHCs can be run on time and do not delay member start dates. Information for how to set up a Truescreen account as well as how to use the system are available below.

Truescreen Resources:
Using AmeriCorps Approved Vendor Truescreen Manual
Truescreen AmeriCorps Grantee Guide
NFF/Truescreen Waiver Table

Cost of Checks
The program is responsible for the cost of the checks. These costs may be included in the grant budget.

Gap in Service
If a Member or staff person leaves the program and then returns, they do not require new checks unless the gap in service/work was more than 180 days. Therefore, Members returning for a subsequent term will more than likely not require another round of checks.

Ensuring compliance with NSCHC policies and regulations
1. Develop and maintain your organization's NSCHC policies and procedures
2. Take the AmeriCorps NSCHC annual e-course training (and maintain documentation)
3. Create Truescreen account
4. Obtain and maintain a person's consent before conducting the state and FBI components of the National Service Criminal History Check (in Truescreen)
5. Initiate the appropriate checks in Truescreen
6. Receive the results
7. Ensure check is complete and resolve any findings
8. Adjudicate the results
9. Document and store adjudication results
10. Protect information

Please see the National Service Criminal History Check Steps document for more information.

Developing your NSCHC Policies and Procedures

Your policies and procedures should follow national and state guidelines for running background checks on AmeriCorps Members and AmeriCorps staff. It should include descriptions of which roles are in covered positions and need background checks, the process you will follow to run, adjudicate, and document the checks, as well as what criminal results will result in a member not being selected for service.
For more details, see the Recommendations for Effective NSCHC Policy & Procedures

Programs must comply with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to, the following law and regulations and all the subsequent amendments thereto:
- Missouri Human Rights Act (RSMo 123)
- The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000a-2000h-6) (as amended)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794)
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C 12101 et seq.)
- Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 (Equal Employment Opportunity)

NSCHC Annual Training

At least one AmeriCorps staff member (2 staff members recommended) from each organization is required to take the AmeriCorps NSCHC training course annually in Litmos, AmeriCorps' Learning Management System. Certificates of completion from the course will be requested as part of a program's pre-contract process. The course can be found at americorpsonlinecourses.litmos.com/self-signup (Code: CNCS-Litmos)

For technical support, to request a new account, or assistance accessing these pages using assistive technology email OITHD@americorps.gov

Conducting the Checks

All sub-grantees are responsible for maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of NSCHC documentation and must present it to ServMO upon request.

(a) Verify the individual's identity by examining the individual's government-issued photo identification card, such as a driver's license. Government-issued photo identification cards include, but are not limited to, State drivers' licenses, non-driver photo IDs issued by a State's Department of Motor Vehicles and Federally issued photo IDs, including official passports; and an unexpired Native American Tribal ID from a federally recognized tribal government. **Retain a photocopy of the identification for the program's record, do not upload this into NSCHC documentation (for personal privacy).**

(b) **Order the appropriate checks in Truescreen:**
- . **NSOPW**
- . **State of Residence**, if applicable
- . **FBI Fingerprint**

NOTE: The state of Missouri participates in the National Fingerprint File program. A completed FBI fingerprint check (through Truescreen) eliminates the need for grantees to conduct a state criminal history record check in states that participate. A complete list of participating NFF states can be found HERE, under the NSCHC Guidance section.

Adjudicating NSCHC results

Programs must review all results prior to adjudication. Adjudication is the process by which the program deems an individual eligible or ineligible for work or service.

Under the regulation and statute, an individual is ineligible to serve or work on an AmeriCorps grant if they:
- Are registered, or required to be registered, on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; or
- have been convicted of murder, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 1111.

Your program may determine other areas of ineligibility. If so, this must be included in your program's NSCHC policies and procedures.

Once adjudication is determined, the program will note this in Truescreen by clicking "Adjudicate this Case." Next to "New Pass/Review Status" select the correct status. Then under "New Case Note," enter a simple note such as "Program Staff has reviewed the results and determined the individual is eligible to serve." Any adjudication notes will be accompanied by a name (the individual performing the adjudication) and timestamp under the Adjudication History section.

Adjudicated Pass/Review

Please select from the following options:

Current Pass/Review Status   ◇ Review

New Pass/Review Status *   Select one   ^

Pass
Review
Provisionally Cleared
Pre-adverse
Applicant Withdrawn

Current Case Note

New Case Note *

Adjudication History   🖨

Action Date	Performed By	Adjudicated Status	Note
07/22/2021 2:31 AM	Truescreen, Inc.	Review	Case Completed

Documenting Results and Adjudication

Programs are required to provide documentation of the background check adjudication in their respective NSCHC secure files. Results must be adjudicated prior to a member's starting date.

The following NSCHC documentation must be retained for all members and required staff:

- Truescreen case summary page with a green check mark and PASS beside Current Pass/Review Status. (Truescreen Summary Page Sample)
- Adjudication History page (using the "Adjudicate this Case" link). The date the program adjudicated the checks listed under Action Date will be considered the date of completion. Truescreen Adjudication Page Sample

National Service Criminal History Check Enforcement and Disallowances

ServMO will strictly follow the rules outlined in the AmeriCorps NSCHC Manual for issues identified with NSCHC checks. This may include significant cost disallowance and expansion of scope (if required) as outlined in the manual.

If a program fails to complete the required checks for a Member or staff person, it may result in a disallowance of hours served, disallowance of grant dollars, and/or the termination of the AmeriCorps grant.

For any staff or Members found to be ineligible for work/service, ServMO shall disallow any reimbursements or costs under the grant associated with the individual. The program and host organization may also be restricted or denied eligibility for

future grants and are solely responsible for reimbursing the AmeriCorps agency for all education awards, accrued interest awards, salaries and other benefits allocated to participants and grantee staff deemed ineligible due to criminal background check requirements. The rule is codified at 45 C.F.R. §§ 2540

Member Enrollment Process

All the following steps must be fully completed BEFORE Members can serve hours.

eGrants Process Overview
- Member applies to program in eGrants or is invited by program in eGrants
- Member completes application (if applicable)
- Citizenship and SSN verification completed by the AmeriCorps Federal Agency. If it is not automatically verified in eGrants, you will receive a request for manual verification. See manual verification instructions below for more details.
- Program enters NSCHC Certification Date
- Program completes enrollment in eGrants

Member Invitation or Selection
- Members must create a My AmeriCorps Portal account in order to complete their application and be invited to join a program.
- The process of enrolling new Members in My AmeriCorps begins with inviting a Member to join the Program. This invitation is initiated by the program through eGrants. This will begin the onboarding process and the citizenship verification.
- The Member must be invited to the program prior to the start date. The verification process can take several days to a few weeks, and the Member MAY NOT begin service until the social security and citizenship verification is completed.
- You will be able to see if the verification is completed by going to the Member's information screen in eGrants.

Instructions and screenshots for selecting or inviting applicants can be found on the next 2 pages.

How to select applicants who apply **through** My AmeriCorps

1. After logging in to eGrants and navigating to **Portal Home,** click on **Recruitment Workbasket** (left side of screen).

2. Go to **Pending Applications** (top left tab).

3. After selecting the individual and reviewing their application, navigate to the **Selection** tab (far right at top).

4. Indicate the applicant is selected (radio button).

5. Certify that all eligibility verification and National Service Criminal History Checks will be completed prior to enrollment.

6. Click **Submit**.

| Basic Information | Motivational Statement | Skills & Experience | Education | Community Service | Criminal History Questionnaire | Demographic Information | References | Selection |

To extend an offer to an applicant, you must complete all required fields on this form. An asterisk (*) denotes a required field. To reject an applicant, you may just click "reject."

* Overall recommendation
○ The above-listed applicant is selected for service with this AmeriCorps program.
○ The above-listed applicant is rejected for service with this AmeriCorps program.

Click the relevant radio button to select the applicant.

Check the box to complete the certification.

☐ I certify that before this individual is enrolled to serve as an AmeriCorps member with our organization, eligibility documentation for this applicant will have been reviewed against the grant requirements and the above listed applicant will be eligible to serve as an AmeriCorps member. When the applicant accepts the service position, the applicant's information provided in this application is automatically sent to the Social Security Administration for verification. If there is an issue with the applicant's information, your organization will receive an email from the Corporation for National and Community Service within three business days of the individual's acceptance requesting additional information. It is your organization's responsibility to follow up with the individual, review this information (documentation for this issue is to be made available in the member's file), and have this information provided to the Corporation before this individual is enrolled.

submit

Click *submit* to choose the selection. The applicant will be notified via email.

How to select applicants who apply **outside of** My AmeriCorps

1. Collect required information/documentation including name, date of birth, social security number, phone number, email, and address.
   Note: if feasible, review and/or collect citizenship verification documents as well.

2. After logging in to eGrants and navigating to **Portal Home**, click on **Invite Members**.

3. Enter all required information and DOUBLE CHECK that the social security number and date of birth are correct.

4. Ensure you have selected the correct program year and title.

5. Click **Save** or **Add Another** to send the applicant invitation.

Enter applicant's data and select the *Program Year, Program Title*, and *Service Location* from the drop-down lists. ***Important: make sure this information is entered correctly and matches the member's ID and SSN card.***

Click *add another* to send the current invitation and enter another.

Click *save* and then *send* to complete the invitation. The applicant will be notified via email.

Manual Verification Process

In most cases, the applicant's social security number and citizenship will be automatically verified by the Social Security Administration. However, if an applicant's citizenship or social security number cannot be automatically verified, manual verification will be required. In this case the status of one or both items will show as "Returned" in eGrants, as shown below:

Example of a verified applicant

SSN Status: Verified - 07/20/2017
Citizenship Status: Verified - 07/20/2017

Example of an applicant who will have to be manually verified

SSN Status: Verified - 02/05/2019
Citizenship Status: Returned

Please reach out to your ServMO Program Officer immediately. A secure link will need to be requested, and appropriate documentation (typically social security card and proof of citizenship) will need to be uploaded. Once reviewed by the Agency, if approved, the status will change to "manually verified."

NOTE: Program staff can run a Social Security and Citizenship verification report in eGrants to ensure all cases pending manual verification have been addressed. Select "SSN Verification Report" on the lefthand side.

SSN and Citizenship Status

Please select a report type and appropriate criteria below. Then click 'submit' to generate the selected report. Depending on the type of report and the criteria selected, your report may take a few minutes to generate. **Please be patient and do not reload the page.**

Please note the following errors:
* **There are no records matching your criteria.**

* Select Report: [SSN and Citizenship Status Report ∨]
Program Code: [23ACEMO0010011 ∨]
Program Year: [2024 ∨]
* Report Format: [PDF ∨]

[submit]

National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC) Certification

Once ALL NSCHC results have been reviewed and adjudicated by the program, a staff representative will enter the NSCHC certification date in eGrants. Navigate to the correct member under Pending Enrollments and enter the date in the NSCHC Certification section. The certification date can be the date checks were actually adjudicated or the date entered in eGrants but must be AFTER all checks were adjudicated and AT LEAST ONE DAY prior to the member's start date

NSCHC Certification: 04/06/2021

By entering a date into this field, I certify that I or my organization conducted, reviewed, and adjudicated the results of a nationwide NSOPW.gov check (with all jurisdictions on NSOPW.gov reporting), the state of service and state of residence (if different) check(s) required for this individual, and the FBI check required for this individual on or before the date I have entered. This certification is not required for individuals who are under 18 years of age as of the start date recorded in the Portal (i.e., the NSCHC Certification date field may be left blank).
- 04/06/2021

For more information on running and adjudicating checks, see the NSCHC section above.

Member Enrollment

- All Member enrollment forms must be completed in My AmeriCorps/eGrants by the Member's first day of service. The enrollment cannot be approved unless all background checks are completed and certified in eGrants, and citizenship and social security verification is confirmed. An enrollment is considered late if it is not completed within eight days after the start of service.
- Failure to enroll the Member in a timely manner may result in the Members' hours being disallowed and funding being disallowed.
- *Do not risk your Member's service! Enroll them on time.*
- After October 31 of the program year, programs must receive Program Officer approval prior to enrolling full-time Members in order to ensure that the Member will successfully complete their term of service. Programs may enroll less-than-full-time Members throughout the program year without permission from ServMO as long as the Members can complete their hours within twelve months or by the end of the program budget year, whichever comes first.

In addition to the above items, every AmeriCorps Member must review and sign their **Member Service Agreement** ON or BEFORE the first day of service**.** Member Service Agreements must be retained in Member files and are subject to monitoring.

Additional Considerations for Returning Members and/or Members who have served prior AmeriCorps Terms:

Member Exit and Enrollment: A member can only be enrolled in one term at a time. If a member recently completed a service term at another organization, they must be exited from that term before they can be enrolled in a new program. For members returning for a second term, they must first withdraw the application for their current term before they can apply to the next term.

Partial Education Award Acknowledgement: A member can only receive the equivalent of TWO full time education awards. If a member is serving a third or subsequent term and the term's education award will push them above this threshold, they will need to acknowledge that they will not be eligible for the full award in eGrants. Ensure members are aware of this step, if applicable, to avoid delays in enrollment.

Federal Requirements

All programs must comply with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to, the following law and regulations and all the subsequent amendments thereto:

- The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000a-2000h-6) (as amended)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794)
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C 12101 et seq.)
- Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 (Equal Employment Opportunity)

For details on AmeriCorps Guidelines regarding non-harassment, civil rights, and workforce diversity, please visit the following:

- https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2021_03_18_Grant_Program_Civil_Rights_and_Non-Harassment_March_2021_508.pdf
- https://americorps.gov/about/agency-overview/no-fear-act
- https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2018CivilRightsandWorkforceDiversity_508.pdf

The recipient must include information on civil rights requirements, complaint procedures and the rights of beneficiaries in Member or volunteer service agreements, handbooks, manuals, pamphlets, and post in prominent locations, as appropriate. The recipient must also notify the public in recruitment material and application forms that it operates its program or activity subject to the nondiscrimination requirements. Sample language can be found below. Where a significant portion of the population eligible to be served needs services or information in a language other than English, the recipient shall take reasonable steps to provide written material of the type ordinarily available to the public in appropriate languages.

Sample Language:
This program is available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, political affiliation, or, in most instances, religion. It is also unlawful to retaliate against any person who, or organization that, files a complaint about such discrimination. In addition to filing a complaint with local and state agencies that are responsible for resolving discrimination complaints, you may bring a complaint to the attention of the Corporation for National and Community Service. If you believe that you or others have been discriminated against, or if you want more information, contact:

Office of Civil Right and Inclusiveness
The AmeriCorps Agency
250 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20525

202-606-7503 (TTY and reasonable accommodation line)
(202) 565-3465 (FAX)
eo@americorps.gov (email)

Service Members, volunteers, employees, and applicants for Federal employment who wish to file a discrimination complaint may do so by sending an email message to eo@americorps.gov or by leaving a voice message on the Civil Rights Hotline at 1-202-606-3461. Calls to the hotline will be returned within 24 hours.

For more information regarding the discrimination complaint process, employees, service members, and volunteers may contact eo@americorps.gov.

Conflict of Interest Policy

The following excerpt from the Code of Federal Regulations 2 CFR 200.318(c)(1) applies to all AmeriCorps Missouri grantees:

Conflicts of interest.

(1) The recipient or subrecipient must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts. No employee, officer, agent, or board member with a real or apparent conflict of interest may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by the Federal award. A conflict of interest includes when the employee, officer, agent, or board member, any member of their immediate family, their partner, or an organization that employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from an entity considered for a contract. An employee, officer, agent, and board member of the recipient or subrecipient may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors. However, the recipient or subrecipient may set standards for situations where the financial interest is not substantial or a gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value. The recipient's or subrecipient's standards of conduct must also provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations by its employees, officers, agents, or board members.

(2) If the recipient or subrecipient has a parent, affiliate, or subsidiary organization that is not a State, local government, or Indian Tribe, the recipient or subrecipient must also maintain written standards of conduct covering organizational conflicts of interest. Organizational conflicts of interest mean that because of relationships with a parent company, affiliate, or subsidiary organization, the recipient or subrecipient is unable or appears to be unable to be impartial in conducting a procurement action involving a related organization.

AmeriCorps Branding

Branding Guidelines

In order to use the AmeriCorps logo, you must follow CNCS's AmeriCorps Brand Guidelines. Logo files and the guidelines can be found at https://americorps.gov/newsroom/communication-resources.

For co-branding instructions for using the ServMO, AmeriCorps logo, and your logo, click here.

Service Gear

All AmeriCorps Members MUST wear service gear that includes the AmeriCorps logo during all times they are logging hours. Grant funds may be used to pay for Service Gear (AmeriCorps T-shirt, sweatshirt, hat, pin, lanyards, and buttons) for Members. Service Gear may be purchased through private vendors or through the AmeriCorps recommended distributor Industries for the Blind, Inc.:
https://www.nationalservicegear.org/

AmeriCorps Members should be referred to as AmeriCorps Members regardless of the program they serve in. They may have additional titles such as "coaches," but they should be referred to first as AmeriCorps Members. AmeriCorps Members are not employees.

Members should be reminded that service gear should not be worn on personal time when it may appear they are conducting prohibited activities. This would include, but not be limited to adult establishments, political rallies, or protests.

Service Site Signage

All locations where Members serve should note that service with signage. This could include banners, window clings, lawn signs, etc. ServMO recognizes that some service sites may not allow signage, but every effort should be made to note that AmeriCorps Members are serving at the location.

Website Branding

The program's forward-facing websites and social media platforms must include both the ServMO and AmeriCorps logos, and the program must note that it is funded in part by ServMO and AmeriCorps. Inclusion on the homepage, footer, or suitable prominent placement are accepted.

Media Releases and Marketing Materials

Any media releases or marketing materials should note that the program is funded in part by ServMO and AmeriCorps, and should include, if possible, the ServMO and AmeriCorps logos. Messaging should follow official requirements as outlined in the AmeriCorps brand guide. Materials may be sent to your Program Officer for their records and to assist ServMO in amplifying your marketing messages.

Marketing Material Requests

Grant funds may be used to purchase informational material (brochures, application packets, posters, publications, etc.). On occasion, select items are free of charge.

Items can be ordered online at:
https://americorps.nationalservicegear.org/
https://promote.americorps.gov/
http://gooddeed.org/americorps.aspx

Disposal of AmeriCorps-branded Items and/or Service Gear

As outlined under 2 CFR 200, if unused (*never worn or otherwise utiliz*ed) supplies with an aggregate value of $5,000 remain at the end of an individual subaward, the subrecipient must either:

1. sell the supplies and compensate the federal government, taking into account the percentage of original federal share participation in the purchase;
2. use them for another federal award; or
3. if they wish to retain the supplies, compensate the government the fair market value of supplies, with consideration of the percentage of original federal share participation in the purchase price.

However, the fair market value noted in the third option above must acknowledge the obsolescence that occurs in the event of a logo change or end of a program. Accordingly, AmeriCorps member gear with an obsolete logo should not receive a fair market value concurrent with the price originally paid; rather the valuation should be based on what the item would sell for at the time of disposal. For example, a t-shirt with an obsolete logo, while still new, would not sell at the former retail price. Rather fair market value may be more reasonably set at a value closer to thrift store prices.

Given the CFR noted above, ServMO recommends the following solutions for programs:

- Programs should be cautious when ordering branded items in bulk. Rarely, if ever, should an organization order over $5,000 in branded items without a plan for use/distribution.
- The above restrictions do not apply if the combined value of the items is under $5,000. If the value of the items is below $5,000, organizations may use, donate, or destroy the excess supplies in the legal manner they see fit.
- If you are considering disposal, ServMO recommends that subgrantees first consider how the items might be redistributed to AmeriCorps alumni, fellow Missouri AmeriCorps programs, and/or key partners before disposing of the items altogether.

- As a reminder, any materials or gear procured with funds awarded by AmeriCorps in FY 2021 or later should reflect the new AmeriCorps brand guidelines as required in the award Terms & Conditions and outlined in AmeriCorps' brand guidelines.

Member Benefits

Living Allowance

Generally, programs must provide a living allowance to all full-time Members (unless participating in an Education Award Only or Professional Corps program). Minimum and maximum required amounts are subject to change each year and are posted for each year in the corresponding Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

A living allowance is not required for three-quarter time, half-time, reduced half-time, quarter-time, minimum-time, and abbreviated-time Members. If you choose to provide less than full-time members with a living allowance, there is a maximum limit that can be paid per year.

Please see the living allowance section for additional rules governing living allowances and to avoid common mistakes.

Bonuses and Incentives

The AmeriCorps federal agency strongly discourages the use of gift cards and/or cash. Using monetary incentives as a recruitment strategy may seem reasonable and necessary to meet outcomes, however the burden of proof is on the grantee or sub-grantee to make that case.

In addition, a grantee or sub-grantee **cannot** use AmeriCorps grant funds for any incentives or bonuses and **cannot** claim any such expenses as match.

If a program decides to offer any bonus or incentive, a very clear policy must be in writing and on file that clearly describes when an incentive/bonus would be used to ensure that there is no possible perception of favoritism toward any Member.

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

Amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

The amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award depends on the length of a Member's term of service. The award amount typically matches Federal Pell grant amounts. The amount varies each year and is listed in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The education award that Members receive pertains to the program year in which they were enrolled.

Programs should ensure that the amount of education award listed in the Member Service Agreement matches the NOFO (year and amount) for which the slot was approved. Please note that if the Member is not fully enrolled in eGrants, an education award will not be available to them. Learn more here.

Award Eligibility

Members who complete a term of service within a 12-month period, in one of the following programs, are eligible to earn an education award.
- AmeriCorps NCCC

• AmeriCorps State and National
• AmeriCorps VISTA*

Before the Member uses the AmeriCorps Education Award, they must have received a high school diploma, or the equivalent of such diploma.

Award Limitations
The number of terms an individual may serve in an AmeriCorps State and National program is not limited. However, an individual may attain only the aggregate value of two full-time education awards. AmeriCorps will fund the benefits described in §§ 2522.240 through 2522.250 only for the number of terms needed to attain the aggregate value of two full-time education awards or for four terms, whichever is longer. Grantees may choose to fund benefits for any additional terms. For more information visit: https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-45/subtitle-B/chapter-XXV/part-2522/subpart-B/section-2522.235

The Trust does not make payments to anyone other than qualified schools and loan holders. It will not make payments directly to the Member. Members should see their financial aid counselor for information on how they handle disbursements and reimbursements.

If the Member withdraws from the school at which they have used the education award, the school may be required to refund the Trust. If any refund is owed, it is credited to the Member's education award "account," and is subject to the award's original expiration date (seven years from the date the award was earned). For general information on how withdrawing from school may affect a Member's student financial aid, the Member should contact their financial aid counselor or refer to the U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Handbook.

Under certain circumstances, the Member can use the education award to study outside the U.S. Contact the National Service Hotline at 1-800-942-2677 for further information.
The Member has seven (7) years to use the education award from the date of their completion of service. They can divide up their award and use portions of it at different times, as long as it is for authorized expenditures within the specified time period. The Member could, for example, apply a portion of it to existing qualified student loans, and save the remainder to pay for authorized college costs a few years down the road.

Transfer of the Education Award
The Serve America Act of 2009 allows for the transfer of education awards under certain conditions. To transfer their award, the Member must be at least 55 years old at the start of service and the award must go to their child, stepchild, grandchild, step-grandchild, or foster child. Awards may not be divided to transfer to more than one person.

Taxes
The IRS and the Missouri Department of Revenue has determined that payments made from an education award are considered to be included in a Member's taxable income in the year the payment is made to the school or loan holder. Interest payments are also considered taxable. This increase in a Member's income could affect their tax liability for that year. Members should be made aware of this.

Schools of National Service

Many colleges and universities match the AmeriCorps Education Award for their students. The complete list may be found by visiting https://www.americorps.gov/partner/partnerships/schools-national-service-search

Child Care

Programs must make childcare available to any full-time member who is eligible for and needs such assistance in order to participate in the program. Member eligibility for childcare is based on need. The Corporation pays 100% of the allowance as defined by payment rates of Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

Programs must have sufficient policies and procedures in place to ensure childcare providers are notified, in a timely manner, when Members have a change in status that affects benefit eligibility.

Member Eligibility:

Members are eligible for childcare if they meet any of the following conditions:

- Their needs are consistent with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990.
- Their total household income must not exceed 75% of the state's median income for a family of the same size; this limit is different for each state and may change annually. The total household income is used to determine your income eligibility excluding your AmeriCorps State & National living allowance.
- The Member must be a parent or legal guardian of a child under the age of 13 that resides with them.
- They are a full-time Member (1700 hours in 12 months) or 900 hours in a six-month period (only with prior approval of the AmeriCorps federal agency).
- They need childcare in order to participate in the AmeriCorps Program.
- They are not receiving childcare from another source at the time of acceptance into the program.
- The Member must not currently receive a childcare subsidy from another source at the time of acceptance into the program (including a parent or guardian) which would continue to be provided while the Member serves in the program.

To qualify for payment through AmeriCorps Child Care Benefits Program, a childcare provider must qualify as a legal provider under the CCDBG state plan. GAP Solutions, Inc. (GAPSI) administers the AmeriCorps Child Care Benefits Program for CNCS. Members must apply directly to GAPSI for the benefit. To get information on childcare for a Member go to http://www.americorpschildcare.com or contact AmeriCorps Child Care Benefits Program at 1-855-886-0687.

Childcare benefits are paid to qualified childcare providers for all, or a part of the Member's childcare costs during their active time of service with AmeriCorps. These

payments are paid directly to childcare providers and are not paid to the Member. Childcare providers must meet eligibility requirements as regulated under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990.

If the Member exits early, the program MUST notify the AmeriCorps Child Care Benefit Program immediately in order to stop reimbursements to the Member's childcare provider. Failure to do so may make the Member and program liable for any payments made after the Member's was exited.

Health Insurance

Programs must provide healthcare coverage to full-time members who do not have health care that provides the minimum benefits established by the AmeriCorps federal agency at the time he or she is accepted into the program. In addition, programs must provide health care coverage if a full-time member loses coverage during the term of service through no deliberate act of his or her own. AmeriCorps will not cover health care costs for dependent coverage.

Less-than-full-time Members who are serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period of time (e.g., a full-time summer project) are eligible for health care benefits. 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 their 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 their agreed term of service will result in a full-time Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.

If the program already carries minimum benefits at a reasonable cost, they may use existing policies to cover Members. The program may also choose to have Members use the national Health Care Marketplace for health care coverage and provide payroll reimbursement to a member for these costs.

Programs are required to maintain verification for each full-time Member showing that the program has provided coverage or that the Member has opted out due to access to other adequate health care coverage.

Programs must also have sufficient policies and procedures in place to determine and document eligibility and ensure providers are notified when Members have a change in status that affects benefit eligibility within the time limits required by the provider.

Any of the following health insurance options will satisfy the requirement for health insurance for full-time AmeriCorps members (or less than full-time Members serving in a full-time capacity):

- Staying on parents' or spouse plan
- Insurance obtained through the Federal Health Insurance Marketplace of at least

the Bronze level plan
- Insurance obtained through private insurance broker
- Medicaid, Medicare, or military benefits

AmeriCorps programs purchasing their own health insurance for Members must ensure plans are minimum essential coverage (MEC) and meet the requirements of the Afford-able Care Act.

If coverage is being provided via the Healthcare Marketplace, and thus third-party payment is not an option, programs must develop a process to reimburse members for monthly premiums. Reimbursements for health insurance premiums are considered taxable income for the member, and programs must have a way to document such reimbursements.

As a ServMO program, grantees also have membership in The Corps Network, which offers an AmeriCorps specific health care plan. Use of this plan is not required.

Special Enrollment:
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) offers a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for members in AmeriCorps State and National programs, who are not provided health insurance options or who are provided short-term limited duration coverage or self-funded coverage not considered MEC. Members in the AmeriCorps State and National programs and their dependents in the Federally facilitated Market-place (FFM) are eligible to enroll in Marketplace coverage when they experience the following triggering events:

- On the date they begin their service terms; and
- On the date they lose any coverage offered through their program after their service term ends. (Source: 45 CFR § 155.420(d)(9)).

Members have 60 days from the triggering event to select a plan. Coverage effective date is prospective based on the date of plan selection. More information can be found at the link below:
https://www.healthcare.gov/coverage-outside-open-enrollment/special-enrollment-period/

A copy of the HHS Notice, which provides instructions on how to activate the special enrollment period is available at https://www.healthcare.gov/screener/

Member Assistance Program (MAP)

ServMO has purchased basic membership for all current Members and program staff (listed in Section 1 of the budget) in the Member Assistance Program provided by America's Service Commissions.

MAP provides 24/7 telephonic mental health services with a trained and certified counselor along with several other virtual and referral services. The program should ensure all Members

are aware of this benefit. More information can be found at
https://www.statecommissions.org/americorps-member-assistance-program.

The program should receive enrollment information from America's Service
Commissions/AllOne Health at the beginning of the program year.

Loan Forbearance

AmeriCorps Members who are earning an AmeriCorps Education Award are uniquely
eligible for one type of postponement of the repayment of their **qualified** student
loan called forbearance. During the forbearance period, interest on the principal
amount of the loan continues to accrue. If a Member successfully completes their term
of service and earns an Education Award, the National Service Trust will pay all or a
portion of the interest that has accrued on the qualified student loans during this
period. This accrued interest paid by the Trust, like the Segal AmeriCorps Education
Award itself, is subject to income taxes.

AmeriCorps Members enrolled in an AmeriCorps project are eligible for forbearance
for most federally backed student loans. For other types of student loans, Members
must ask their loan holder if their AmeriCorps service qualifies for a deferment or
forbearance.

This postponement of the student loan payment (forbearance) is **not automatic**.
Members must request it from their loan holders by completing the National Service
Forbearance Request Form. Members may complete the Forbearance Request Form
by accessing their My AmeriCorps Portal. Programs should ensure all Members are
notified during orientation of this requirement.

The National Service Trust does not grant forbearances. Loan holders do. The Trust
merely verifies membership in AmeriCorps and forwards the documents to the loan
companies. The Trust is able to verify membership only when it has proof that the
individual is an AmeriCorps member from a program (the Member is accurately enrolled
in eGrants).

Interest Accrual Payments

AmeriCorps Members who have earned a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award are
eligible to have the Trust pay up to 100% of the interest that accrued on their qualified
student loan during their service. To have the Trust pay all or a portion of the interest
accrued on qualified student loans, the Trust must receive verification from the Program
indicating the Member has completed their service and is eligible for an award.

A Member and their lender also must complete the Interest Accrual Form, which
indicates the amount of interest accrued during your service period. The loan holder
sends this completed form to the Trust for payment.

For further information regarding Forbearance and Interest Accrual Payments, visit:
https://my.americorps.gov/trust/help/member_portal/forbearance_overview.htm

Defaulted Loans

Most student loans that are in default are not eligible for forbearance. To learn more, click here.

Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)

Members serving in AmeriCorps may be eligible to have their service term count toward Public Service Loan Forgiveness. For more information visit the following :
State of Missouri: https://blogs.missouristate.edu/human/2025/05/23/public-service-loan-forgiveness-pslf-2/
Federal: https://studentaid.gov/pslf/ or https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service

Unemployment Benefits

In 1995, the Department of Labor ruled that AmeriCorps Members were **NOT** entitled to unemployment compensation under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, as there was no employer-employee relationship between AmeriCorps grantees and Members. The Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations has ruled that Members are not qualified to receive unemployment compensation since a living allowance is not a wage but is a stipend, and Members are not considered employees.

Chapter 4
Member Orientation and Training

- ❖ Member Activities
- ❖ Member Service Agreements
- ❖ Member Orientation
- ❖ Grievance Procedure
- ❖ Drug Free Workplace
- ❖ Reasonable Accommodation
- ❖ Member Training & Development

Member Activities

Prohibited Activities

AmeriCorps acknowledges that religious and political activities play a positive role in healthy communities, that religion and politics are defining characteristics of many community organizations (faith-based and secular), and that religious and political belief and action are central to many AmeriCorps members' lives.

However, it is important that AmeriCorps programs and their members do not appear to be religiously or politically affiliated. Consequently, a number of limitations must be imposed on the activities that AmeriCorps programs can support and in which members can engage while earning service hours, or when otherwise, representing AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps members are free to pursue these activities on their own initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-AmeriCorps funds. The AmeriCorps logo should not be worn by members when participating in prohibited activities.

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or AmeriCorps, staff and Members may not engage in the following activities (see 45 CFR § 2520.65):

1. Attempting to influence legislation;
2. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
3. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
4. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
5. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
6. 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;
7. 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, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
8. Providing a direct benefit to—
   . A business organized for profit;
   . A labor union;
   . A partisan political organization;
   . A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
   . An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph 7

above, unless AmeriCorps assistance is not used to support those religious activities;

9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using AmeriCorps funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
11. Such other activities as AmeriCorps may prohibit.

In addition to the above activities, the below activities are prohibited:

- *Census Activities:* AmeriCorps Members and volunteers associated with AmeriCorps grants may not engage in census activities during service hours. Being a census taker during service hours is categorically prohibited. Census-related activities (e.g., promotion of the Census, education about the importance of the Census) do not align with AmeriCorps State and National objectives. What Members and volunteers do on their own time is up to them, consistent with program policies about outside employment and activities.
- *Election and Polling Activities:* AmeriCorps Member may not provide services for election or polling locations or in support of such activities.

AmeriCorps Members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non- AmeriCorps funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while engaging in any of the above activities on their personal time.

A list of prohibited activities should be accessible to Members and staff at site service locations.

Allowable Activities

Members may perform direct service hours, training hours, or fundraising hours in order to complete their terms of service.

Additional information about each of the categories is below:

Direct Service

Direct service is work that addresses human need, the environment, public safety, and/ or education in one form or another. It is working directly with people to make change or doing work that is involved in making that direct change. It can be outreach, case management, training, teaching, tutoring, mediating, cleaning, counseling, recruiting volunteers, catching up on paperwork related to clients, preparing for class, coaching, listening, cooking, serving, providing health care, food, clothing, etc.

As a general rule, **direct service hours should constitute 80% or more** of an AmeriCorps member's total hours served.

Training

Education and/or training hours are only applicable when they reflect the AmeriCorps service that the member credits to the education award he or she will receive. Any on-the-job training that refers to direct service would be part of this category. All

orientations, including the AmeriCorps orientation, would be included, as well as any state or regional trainings, seminars, or workshops pertaining to issues related to direct service. Examples would be conflict resolution seminars, teacher development days, team building exercises, or a class on training techniques. As a general rule, no more than 20% of a member's credited service hours should be dedicated to education and training.

NOTE: The aggregate training hours for an entire program's cohort **cannot exceed 20%** unless a training wavier has been submitted and approved.

Fundraising

As part of their service, members may raise funds directly in support of service activities that meet local, environmental, educational, public safety, homeland security, or other human needs. A member may spend **no more than 10% of their term of service performing fundraising activities**.

Examples of fundraising activities that members may perform include, but are not limited to the following:

- Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals, for the AmeriCorps members to use, in their efforts tutoring children;
- Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals as part of their AmeriCorps program;
- Seeking donations from alumni of their AmeriCorps program for specific service projects being performed by current members.

Members may NOT engage in the following fundraising activities:

- Raising funds for living allowances or an organization's general (as opposed to project/program) operating expenses or endowment.
- Writing grant applications for any Federal agency including AmeriCorps.

If the program intends to have members involved in fundraising activities, please reach out to your ServMO Program Officer for additional guidance.

Unallowable Activities

Unallowable activities are those which are not prohibited but fall outside the scope of the approved grant, performance measures, and position description. In order for members to engage in activities that fall outside of the grant scope, the grant must be amended.

Duplication, Supplantation, and Displacement

Programs must ensure that their AmeriCorps position and/or member service hours do not constitute duplication, supplantation, or displacement based on federal regulation 2540.100.

<u>Non-Duplication</u>

ServMO/AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless non-displacement requirements are met, ServMO/AmeriCorps assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.

<u>Non-Displacement</u>

An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving ServMO/AmeriCorps assistance.

An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving ServMO/AmeriCorps assistance.

A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.

A participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.

A participant in any program receiving assistance under may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that –
- Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
- Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.

A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any –
- Presently employed worker;
- Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
- Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
- Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
- Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

Tutoring Requirements:
Some programs may fall under additional federal requirements based on their use of Members as tutors.

A tutor is defined as someone whose primary goal is to increase academic achievement in reading or other core subjects through planned, consistent, one-to-one, or small-group sessions and activities that build on the academic strengths of students in kindergarten through 12th grade and target their academic needs. A tutor does not include someone engaged in other academic support activities, such as mentoring and after-school program support, whose primary goal is something other than increasing academic achievement. For example, providing a safe place for children is not tutoring, even if some of the program activities focus on homework help.

This tutoring requirement does not include Members who are performing K-12 student tutoring in a school or after school program as part of a structured school-managed cross-grade tutoring program.

A program in which Members engage in tutoring of children must as defined above:
- Articulate appropriate criteria for selecting and qualifying tutors
- Identify the strategies or tools it will use to assess student progress and measure student outcomes
- Certify that the tutoring curriculum and pre-service and in-service training content are high quality and research based, consistent with the instructional program of the local educational agency or with Missouri academic content standards
- Include appropriate Member supervision by individuals with expertise in tutoring
- Provide specialized high-quality and research-based, Member pre-service and in-service training consistent with the activities the Member will perform
- Curriculum must be consistent with both Missouri academic standards and the instruction program of the local educational agency
- Certify that Members serving as tutors possess a minimum of a high school diploma.

Member Service Agreements

As described in the AmeriCorps State and Federal Terms and Conditions, programs are required to have members sign a member service agreement, that, at a minimum, stipulates the following:

1. Member position description;
2. The minimum number of service hours (as required by statute) and other requirements (as developed by the grantee) necessary to successfully complete the term of service and to be eligible for the education award;
3. The amount of the education award being offered for successful completion of the terms of service in which the individual is enrolling;
4. Standards of conduct, as developed by the grantee or subgrantee.
5. List of prohibited activities, including those specified in the regulations at 45 CFR 2520.65.
6. Requirements under the Drug-Free Workplace Act (41 U.S.C. 701 et seq.);
7. Civil rights requirements, complaint procedures, and rights of beneficiaries;
8. Suspension and termination rules;
9. The specific circumstances under which a member may be released for cause;
10. Grievance procedures; and
11. Other requirements as established by the grantee.

Each Member is required to have a completed, signed, and dated Member Service Agreement **ON or BEFORE** the start of their service so that members are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities. The Member Service Agreement template will be provided to the program by ServMO prior to the start of each year. This template must be used.

The program may add addendums to the agreement, but they must be approved by your ServMO Program Officer prior to their inclusion in the Member Service Agreement.

Any changes to the Members' service during their term must be noted on the Member Service Agreement through amendment. If the agreement is amended after original signing, the program and the Member must note they have agreed to the amendment with their signatures/initials and the date.

NOTE: "Pre-service" orientation and/or training is allowable under certain circumstances and the member must be made aware if this is part of the program's design. If a member engages in training or orientation activities **prior to the start date recorded in eGrants**, hours will **NOT** count toward the total service/education award requirement.

Member Orientation

Ensure that all required background and National Sex Offender Public Registry checks are completed and adjudicated before the Member serves ANY hours including orientation.

Members should clearly understand their roles and responsibilities, as well as have an understanding of national service and AmeriCorps. A good Member orientation lays the foundation for providing information that will be used by the Member throughout the year.

Member orientation should prepare Members for their year of service. Orientation can help them acquire the skills and knowledge they need to "get the job done." A strong orientation will pay off in program outcomes, with Members who know the purpose of their service and have the skills to accomplish program objectives.

ServMO **requires** programs to include the following information during orientation of members:

- Member rights and responsibilities
- Roles and responsibilities of host sites and supervisors
- Specific skills and knowledge to perform service
- Program's code of conduct
- Prohibited Activities
- Drug-Free Workplace
- Suspension and Termination Rules
- Grievance Procedures
- Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action
- Sexual Harassment/Respectful Treatment Awareness Education
- Program specific Safety Procedures
- Sensitivity to the Community

- Introduction to National Service and AmeriCorps
- The AmeriCorps Pledge
- Timesheet Orientation
- My AmeriCorps Portal
- Role of State Service Commission (ServMO)
- Member Benefits
- Enroll eligible members in Health Care/Childcare
- Living Allowance
- Loan Forbearance (Federal Student Loans only)
- Inclusion and reasonable accommodation requests

Programs may include additional topics at Member Orientation at their discretion

NOTE: Many of these topics are addressed in the Member Service Agreement and reviewed during orientation. All member must sign the MSA on or before the first day of service.

NOTE: Many topics are also available on On3Learn
Link: Member Courses | On3learns
Password: MOSUB21

Grievance Procedure

All programs must follow AmeriCorps' established grievance procedure for members who believe that they have been unfairly released from the program and for other grievances filed by members or other interested parties. This grievance procedure is included as an attachment in the AmeriCorps Member Service Agreement. The procedure must include an opportunity for a hearing and binding arbitration within statutory deadlines.

If your organization has an established procedure that varies from these requirements, please reach out to your ServMO Program Officer. Programs must ensure the procedure is in accordance with Federal regulation [45 CFR 2540.230](#)i.

NOTE: *Programs are required to contact ServMO if a member starts a grievance procedure process. The written grievance should be sent to ServMO and any correspondence with the member should also be included.*

Other Important Information
If the grievance is regarding a proposed participant placement, the placement is not to be made unless it is consistent with the resolution of the grievance.

If the grievance alleges fraud or criminal activity, it must immediately be brought to the attention of ServMO and AmeriCorps' Office of Inspector General. Visit [americorpsoig.gov](#) or call the OIG hotline at (800) 452-8210.

Parties involved in a grievance are encouraged to work closely with ServMO staff in an effort to achieve the best outcome for all involved.

Drug Free Workplace

Drug-free Workplace Requirements

In accordance with the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the program is committed to maintaining a drug and alcohol-free environment. Members are therefore notified that:

- The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and places of service;
- Actions, including termination from the program, will be taken against any member for violations of such prohibitions;
- As a condition of service as an AmeriCorps Member:
- Members will abide by the terms of drug-free workplace policy; and
- Notify the program director in writing if he or she is convicted of a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace and must do so no more than five calendar days after the conviction.
- In joining AmeriCorps, the member agrees to remain drug-free for the remainder of the year.
- As part of an ongoing member orientation and training, the program will inform members about:
- The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace and service area;
- The program's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
- Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
- The penalties that you may impose upon members for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace or service area.

Individuals

If a member is arrested for or convicted of a drug offense, he or she must notify the Program Director in writing within five (5) days. Appropriate action must be taken including suspension and referral to a drug rehabilitation program, or release for cause consistent with the AmeriCorps federal agency's rule on termination and suspension of service.

*The conviction **must be reported to the Commission (ServMO), in writing, within ten (10) days.** ServMO will then notify AmeriCorps in writing.*

Reasonable Accommodation

AmeriCorps encourages individuals with disabilities to participate as national service providers through the AmeriCorps programs. AmeriCorps prohibits any form of discrimination against persons with disabilities in recruitment, as well as in service. Programs that receive federal funds must comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

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 of an individual with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association. 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, and working.

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. Reasonable accommodations may include modifying rules, policies, or practices; the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

The program shall make reasonable accommodations in policies, practices, or procedures when the accommodations are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the program can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity, and/or impose an "undue hardship." A reasonable accommodation may include making facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities; job restructuring; part-time or modified schedules; acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, training materials, or policies; etc.

Confidentiality: Information provided regarding her/his disability by a potential member or a member shall be kept confidential, except that appropriate supervisors, managers, and safety and health personnel may be informed regarding any restrictions on service duties or necessary accommodations. Government personnel may be provided information in compliance with various laws and regulations.

Self-Identification: A potential member or a member with a disability is not required to disclose information about any physical or mental limitations, whether or not you believe it will interfere with your capability to perform the essential functions of the position sought or held. If you would like, however, for the program, to consider any special arrangements to accommodate a physical or mental impairment, you may identify that impairment, describe the functional limitations that result from that impairment, and suggest the type of

accommodation that you believe would be appropriate. Medical verification of the condition may be requested for the member to be protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Grievances: An individual whose request for an accommodation was denied may use the grievance procedure outlined in the Member Service Agreement to appeal the decision and/or file a complaint with AmeriCorps' Equal Opportunity Office within forty-five days of the decision or forty-five days from when the member becomes aware of the decision.

Member Training & Development

A key component of managing a successful AmeriCorps program is ensuring that members have a positive experience and develop important skills throughout their term of service.

The strategies and methods to reach these end goals can be determined by program directors and staff, depending on what they feel would most benefit their members. Program staff should communicate frequently with members, in group meetings, one on one conversations, and/or surveys, to identify which topics and skills are needed and most valuable to members.

ServMO requires the following trainings for all Members within the first quarter of the Member's service term:

- CPR training/certification (Full-time members only)
- First aid training/certification (Full-time members only)
- Sexual harassment, non-discrimination, and anti-bullying training
- Citizenship training that includes, but may not be limited to:
  - Fostering positive attitudes towards lifelong citizenship and service
  - Enhancing the ability of Members to discuss and explore their community and people, processes, and institutions with the goal of improving conditions
  - Planning and implementing effective service projects
  - Developing social, cultural, and analytical skills necessary to effectively participate in American democracy.
- On3Learn
  - AmeriCorps 101 for Members
  - Prohibited, Unallowable and Allowable Activities
- Disaster response training such as one of the following:
  - ICS-100 - Introduction to the Incident Command System (recommended)
  - FEMA Donations Management Training
  - IS-315.A – CERT and the Incident Command System (ICS)
  - IS-244.B - Developing and Managing Volunteers
  - Psychological safety course
  - Program-applicable course of choice

*Completion of FEMA/disaster response training is only required once. If a Member previously completed a course, they do not have to complete it again.

Life After AmeriCorps Training

ServMO also requires Life After AmeriCorps training. This can be one or a series of trainings that work to prepare the Member for what comes after their service. These trainings can include, but are not limited to:

- Reflection activities that assist Members in understanding their individual strengths and weaknesses
- Reflection activities that assist Members in understanding the transferable skills developed during their service experience (i.e., leadership, time management, project management, etc.)
- Training on how to use the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award
- Training on preparing for the job search (i.e., résumé writing; how to talk about the AmeriCorps experience in an interview, etc.)
- Participating in AmeriCorps Alums
- Finding ways to volunteer in the future

Member professional development will be a topic of discussion and review during Commission monitoring activities such as program assessments and programmatic site visits.

Programs should incorporate member development into their annual training plans. Doing so ensures that resources, tools, and training are both intentionally curated and implemented to support members and their unique personal and professional goals.

Member Training Resource:

ServMO provides unlimited access to any of the courses available in On3Learn - for yourself, other staff, members, and site supervisors. To begin the process of registering and taking the course(s), visit the following website: https://on3learn.digitalchalk.com/. When registering for a course, you must use the following code when checking out: MOSUB21. This code allows you to watch the trainings at no cost.

Chapter 5
Member Management

- ❖ Member Slots
- ❖ Member Exits
- ❖ Member File Documentation
- ❖ Member Timekeeping
- ❖ Member Living Allowance
- ❖ Public Assistance

Member Slots

A Member Service Year (MSY) is equivalent to one full-time (1700 hour) term. The allowable slot types that Members may serve, and associated Member Service Years (MSY) are listed in the table below.

Term of Service	Service Hours	MSY
Full-Time	1700	1.000
Reduced Full-Time	1200	0.700
Half-Time	900	0.500
Reduced Half-Time	675	0.381
Quarter-Time	450	0.265
Minimum-Time	300	0.212
Abbreviated-Time	100	0.071

Slot Conversion for Unfilled Slots

Any unfilled slot may be converted into smaller slot types based on the MSY calculation. Unfilled slots may also be combined in order to make fewer larger slots based on the MSY calculation. The use of slot conversions is a tool for programs and should be used rarely. Programs may change the type of slots awarded to their program in eGrants if all the following are true:

1. The change does not increase the total MSYs authorized in the Notice of Grant Award (i.e., one half-time position cannot be changed to one full-time).
2. The change does not increase the value of the education award.
3. The change occurs with a reasonable amount of service term remaining

Conversions to a larger or smaller slot type are subject to approval on a case-by-case basis and must remain at or below the awarded MSY. In order to conduct a slot conversion, the program must first submit a Slot Conversion Request Form to their ServMO Program Officer. Once approved, the Program Officer will conduct the conversion in eGrants, and programs should submit a corresponding budget modification in OnCorps.

Slot Conversion for Refill Slots

A program that has fully enrolled their awarded Member slots is allowed to replace any Member who exits early under certain conditions:

- Slots must have been vacated by a member with less than 30% of their hours
- Slots must have been vacated by a member that did not receive an education award
- Refill slots do not appear until all awarded slots of the specific type have been filled

A Member who is put into a refill slot must complete all hours as if the slot were new regardless of how many hours the previous Member served. They will receive a normal stipend and education award amount. Therefore, the program must ensure they have the funds available to provide the refill Member with the full stipend and benefits.

When enrolling new Members, programs should use unused slots before they use refill slots.

A program may not refill the same slot more than once.

Slot conversions on refilled slots follow the same procedures as unfilled slots. All slot conversion requests are subject to availability of funding from both AmeriCorps and the National Service Trust. Therefore, the program must submit a slot conversion request form, and it must be approved by the assigned Program Officer.

Programs may want to reference this this flow chart to determine if/when a slot conversion is possible.

Member Status Changes

Changing an Enrolled Member's Term of Service

The Commission is responsible for authorizing any changes to the term of service for a currently enrolled Member on a case-by-case basis. Programs must request and receive approval prior to making changes to a term of service for a currently enrolled Member. **This should be a rare occurrence.** Impact on program quality will be factored into the decision. There must be an unfilled slot available in eGrants before a transfer can be requested. The total number of MSYs and education award amounts in the grant may not increase as a result of the requested change. When submitting a request, programs should consider the following policy:

A slot conversion may not violate any of the following:
    A. Member changes from less-than-full-time to full-time are strongly discouraged and will only be considered if the member is within the first 30 days of their service;
    B. A Member change in service to a lesser-term slot will not be approved if the Member would otherwise be released for cause;
    C. When the Member has not completed the hours required by their original term, a Member change in slot type at the end of a member's term of service simply to provide a lesser-slot education award will not be approved;
    D. Changing the term of service for a less-than-full-time Member to a slot requiring more hours may not be approved unless the grant budget can support the change;

Procedure
To request a change of the term of a currently enrolled member, programs must submit the [Request to Change Term of Service Form](#). If the request is approved, the program must complete the steps below:

- Complete an addendum outlining the approved changes
- The Member and program must sign the addendum and maintain it in the Member file
- The addendum must include:
  - Member name
  - Member service site
  - Service term dates
  - Change effective date
  - The original:
    - Slot type
    - Hour requirement
    - Total living allowance amount
    - Total living allowance dispersed up to effective date
  - The new:
    - Slot type
    - Hour requirement
    - Updated total living allowance amount
    - New distribution amount for remaining pay periods
    NOTE: The new distribution amount should be the new total living allowance, minus the total living allowance dispersed up to the effective date, divided by the remaining number of pay periods.
- Change the term of service in eGrants (must have a slot available)

Member Service Suspension

If a Member will be unable to serve for a period of time that will affect their ability to successfully complete their service hours, within the limit of their year of service, the program should place the Member on a suspension of service. This typically includes any time that a Member is unable to serve for longer than the duration of one pay period. A suspension is not necessarily punitive and can be a tool for programs to handle unexpected circumstances. Programs must complete and submit the Change of Status form and receive prior approval before suspending a Member. The program is required to notify the National Trust of the suspension within 30 days by indicating the suspension in eGrants. Suspensions, and questions surrounding them, should be communicated to your assigned AmeriCorps Program Officer.

Member Exits

Service Term Completion

The recipient must ensure that each Member has sufficient opportunity to complete the required number of service hours to qualify for the education award. A maximum of twelve months is allowed for any Member unless their service has been suspended. If a Member's agreed upon term of service is for less than twelve months, the program may extend the Member's term by drafting an addendum to their Member service agreement. The extension cannot allow the Member more than twelve months total to complete service and must be documented. In addition, the extension to the MSA cannot extend beyond the program's contracted end date. In rare circumstances a program may request a contract extension. This would need to be approved by ServMO before offering a Member an extension beyond the program end date. See the contract extensions section for more information.

All Members will be exited under one of 3 circumstances:
1. Successful Completion
2. For Cause
3. Compelling Personal Circumstances

Release for Cause

Members exiting the program for cause will cease to receive the living stipend, the health care benefits and the childcare benefits and will receive no portion of their education award. The program will release the Member for cause for the following reasons:

- The Member has dropped out of the program without obtaining a release for compelling personal circumstances from the appropriate program official.
- During the term of service, the Member has been convicted of a violent felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance.
- The host site requests that the Member be terminated from service at the site.
- The Member has committed any of the offenses listed below:
   - Engaging in any activity that may physically or emotionally damage other Members of the program or people in the community.
   - Unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of any controlled substance or illegal drugs during the term of service.
   - Consuming alcoholic beverages during the performance of service activities.
   - Being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs during the performance of service activities.
- Any other serious breach that in the judgement of the Program staff or host site would undermine the effectiveness of the program.

Release for Compelling Personal Circumstances

Members exiting the program because of compelling personal reasons will cease to receive the living stipend, the health care benefits and the childcare benefits. In

circumstances that meet the AmeriCorps definition of personal and compelling circumstances (https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-45/subtitle-B/chapter-XXV/part-2522/subpart-B/section-2522.230 Sec § 2522.230), if the Member has completed at least 15% of the service hour requirement, the Member may receive a prorated education award. The program must properly document the personal compelling circumstance. The Program may release the Member from the term of service for compelling personal circumstances if the Member demonstrates that:

- The Member has a disability or serious illness that makes completing the term impossible.
- There is a serious injury, illness, or death of a family member, which makes completing the term unreasonably difficult or impossible for the Member.
- The Member has military service obligations.
- The Member has accepted an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work; or
- Some other unforeseeable circumstance beyond the Member's control makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for the Member to complete the term of service, such as a natural disaster, relocation of a spouse, or the non-renewal or premature closing of the Program.

A Member who wishes to be released from service for compelling personal circumstances is required to do the following before the final living allowance check can be received:
- Discuss the terms of the release with the Program Director;
- Provide a written letter outlining the reason the Member wishes to be released from the program; and
- Complete an exit form.

NOTE: A slot cannot be refilled if a prorated education award is given, or the Member has served over 30% of their hours.

Procedures for Exiting Members

1. **Unlock Member Exit form in eGrants**
   All AmeriCorps members should complete the exit form in My AmeriCorps prior to exiting service. In order to do so, programs will need to unlock the Exit Form for each individual member in eGrants.

   How to unlock the Member Exit Form

   1. After logging in to eGrants and navigating to *Portal Home*, click on *Manage Members* (top left hand side).

   2. Enter the first and last name of the member to search for the individual.

   3. Click on the member's name to get to the member profile.

   4. Under "Service Information" at the bottom of the screen, click *View*.

   5. Under the *State and National Service Term History* section, the current status should be listed as *In-service* and program staff can click the link to *unlock exit form*.

   Once the exit form is unlocked, the member will have access to a link on the home page in My AmeriCorps to complete their portion of the exit form.

Please Note: if a member fails to complete the Exit Form, the program can indicate this when exiting the member and will be asked to maintain documentation of communication attempts.

2. **Complete End of Term Evaluation**
   All Members are required to have an End of Term Evaluation regardless of their enrolled slot type or term completion. End of Term evaluations must be completed and signed by Member and supervisor and include the following (at a minimum):
   o Whether the Member completed the required hours
   o Whether the Member completed all tasks satisfactorily

3. **Ensure all timesheets are completed and approved by Member and supervisor**
   Timesheets are grant records and must be maintained as back-up documentation for in-service (living allowance) and post-service (education award) benefits. The total hours reported on the eGrants exit form must exactly match the number of hours recorded on member timesheets in OnCorps.

4. **Collect additional documentation for Compelling Personal Circumstance or other early exit**
   If a Member is excited for CPC, additional documentation including email communication or medical documentation may be required.

5. **Exit the Member in eGrants and OnCorps**
   All Members must be exited within 30 days of the end of service. To exit a Member in eGrants, complete the following steps:

How to exit a member in eGrants

1. After logging in to eGrants and navigating to *Portal Home,* click on *Manage Members* (top left hand side).
2. Go to the *Pending Exits* tab (top right hand side)
3. Under *Service Information,* enter the total number of hours served and the completion date (last day of service).
4. Under *Education Award Status,* indicate whether the member is eligible for a full or partial award and whether the member performed satisfactorily
   Note: Select **No** *ONLY if the member performed so unsatisfactorily that they should not be eligible to serve a subsequent AmeriCorps term.*
5. Under *Certification of Service,* click all three certification boxes
6. Click *approve*

Screenshots for steps 3-5 are shown below.

eGrants Screenshot: Step 3

Service Information

Program Name:	Imagine Art AmeriCorps Program
Service Location:	Imagine Art
Hours of Service:	0
Service Start Date:	Sep 3, 2019
Expected End Date:	Sep 2, 2020
Completion Date:	
Type of Enrollment:	Full Time

Education Award Status

Indicate whether or not the Member is eligible for an education award. Please be sure to follow the Corporation's regulations in making this selection. If the Member is going to serve another term under the National Service Trust, a new National Service Enrollment Form must be completed.

Select ⌄

Did the member perform satisfactorily (complete all assignments, tasks, and projects)?

◯ Yes ◯ No

Certification of Service

☐ To the best of my knowledge and belief, the time the above-listed member reported as AmeriCorps service hours did not include any service activities prohibited by law, regulation, or grant provision.

☐ I certify that the Hours of Service Performed indicated on this form for this AmeriCorps member are true and accurate.

☐ I understand that a knowing and willful false statement on this form can be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both under Section 1001of Title 18, U.S.C.

cancel   approve

eGrants Screenshot: Step 4

Indicate whether or not the Member is eligible for an education award. Please be sure to follow the Corporation's regulations in making this selection. If the Member is going to serve another term under the National Service Trust, a new National Service Enrollment Form must be completed.

Select ⌄

Select
Eligible for entire education award (member successfully completed service)
Eligible for partial education award (member did not fully complete service for compelling personal reasons)
Not eligible for ed award (member did not complete service requirements)
Not eligible for education award (member chose alternative benefit)
Not eligible for education award (member dismissed for misconduct)

☐ To the best of my knowledge and belief, the time the above-listed member reported as AmeriCorps service hours did not include any service activities prohibited by law, regulation, or grant provision.

☐ I certify that the Hours of Service Performed indicated on this form for this AmeriCorps member are true and accurate.

☐ I understand that a knowing and willful false statement on this form can be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both under Section 1001of Title 18, U.S.C.

cancel   approve

eGrants Screenshot: Step 5

Type of Enrollment: Full Time

Education Award Status

Indicate whether or not the Member is eligible for an education award. Please be sure to follow the Corporation's regulations in making this selection. If the Member is going to serve another term under the National Service Trust, a new National Service Enrollment Form must be completed.

Select   ⌄

Did the member perform satisfactorily (complete all assignments, tasks, and projects)?

○ Yes ○ No

Certification of Service

☐ To the best of my knowledge and belief, the time the above-listed member reported as AmeriCorps service hours did not include any service activities prohibited by law, regulation, or grant provision.

☐ I certify that the Hours of Service Performed indicated on this form for this AmeriCorps member are true and accurate.

☐ I understand that a knowing and willful false statement on this form can be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both under Section 1001of Title 18, U.S.C.

[cancel] [approve]

Best Practices for Exiting Members

- Conduct Member file audits two months prior to exit dates to ensure you have all appropriate documentation.
- Set up a meeting with Members and/or supervisors to ensure that all exit documentation is collected before the Member's last day of service.
- Mark the calendar for 25 days from the Members' last day of service to ensure the Member is exited within 30 calendar days from the last day of service.
- Create Member exit email templates with detailed, written instructions and screenshots of eGrants to guide members through the exit process.
- Run a Member Roster Report in eGrants to confirm all of your Members are exited.

Member File Documentation

The program must maintain all grant records in accordance with the Record Retention Policy found in Chapter 6. Required documents for member files include those listed in the Member File Checklist:

A program may store Member files electronically and use electronic signatures if the program can ensure the validity and integrity of the record and signature is maintained. The program's electronic storage procedures and system must provide for the safekeeping and security of the records, including:

1. Sufficient prevention of unauthorized alterations or erasures of records;
2. Effective security measures to ensure only authorized persons have access to records;
3. Adequate measures designed to prevent physical damage to records; and
4. A system providing for back-up and recovery of records; and

The electronic storage procedures and system provide for the easy retrieval of records in a timely fashion, including:

1. Storage of the records in a physically accessible location;
2. Clear and accurate labeling of all records; and
3. Storage of the records in a usable, readable format.

Whenever possible, the files should be sorted in the same order as listed in ServMO Monitoring Tool in order to streamline any desk-based or on-site monitoring. AmeriCorps, Office of Inspector General (OIG), and ServMO staff must be allowed access to all Member documentation, including background checks, when requested.

Member Timekeeping

Members must keep track of their daily/weekly hours and submit them for approval at least monthly. Timesheets are grant records used to justify in-service (living allowance) and post-service (education award) benefits.

Only actual time served may be put on the Member's time sheet. The time should be rounded to the nearest quarter hour.

All timesheets should be made readily available to ServMO upon request. Failure to maintain accurate timesheets may result in disallowed costs, disallowed hours, and legal liability.

ServMO requires programs to use their web-based electronic timekeeping system (OnCorps); unless the Program is approved to use their own web-based timekeeping system due to reasons that would make it challenging for a program to use both systems. Requests not to use OnCorps must be submitted in writing to your assigned Program Officer.

All Member timesheets must include:
- Member's original (or digital) signature and date
- Program designee original (or digital) signature and date (this should be someone who has direct knowledge of the Members service such as a host site supervisor)
- Member service activities listed in line with the approved objectives and are not prohibited activities
- Total number of hours served per day
- Tracks/segregates hours separately for direct service hours, training hours, and fundraising hours
- Timesheets should be free of edits unless those edits are signed/initialed and dated by both a program designee and the Member

Member timesheet submission will be reviewed when PERs are submitted. If timesheets are missing or incomplete, reimbursement may be denied or postponed.

Member Living Allowance

Full-time Members, unless in an Education Award only Program (EAP) or Professional Corps program, must receive a living allowance/stipend at the minimum amount for the current grant year. A living allowance is not required for less than full-time Members. If the program chooses to provide less than full-time Members with a living allowance, it must abide by the maximum amounts outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity each year.

Living Allowance Amounts

The living allowance/stipend should be paid out in equal amounts each pay period and **cannot be tied to hourly service**. Members within a program with the same duties and slot type must receive equal living allowance disbursements per pay period. The only exception being proration due to a partial pay period at the beginning or end of service. This includes situations where members sign on to the program late or for a shortened term. Although these members may have to serve more hours per pay period, they must receive a living allowance disbursement equal to other members serving in the same position. Lump sum payments to "catch up" a member are not allowed. As a best practice, programs should advertise their living allowance for positions by the rate per pay period. It is also important for members to note that their living allowance is taxed.

Once the living allowance/stipend is exhausted, the Member may continue to serve (up to the 12-month maximum) without payment in order to complete hours if the Member did not complete the hours in the prearranged time period.

An organization may design their program to contain multiple types of member positions. Positions that have an increased scope of responsibilities and/or required skills can be established with higher living allowance disbursements. A distinct position description must be created for each position type and the program must be consistent with all members within each position.

Example 1: Distinct position descriptions for full-time crew members and full-time crew leaders.

Example 2: Distinct position descriptions for full time first year members and returning members who mentor other members as part of their duties.
*Remember members cannot supervise other members, however they can function as leads or mentors.

Programs must adhere to minimum and maximum living allowance requirements as defined each year in the [AmeriCorps Notice of Funding Opportunity](#).

Proration of Living Allowances

Each program should have a written policy in place for prorating a member living allowance for members that start service late and/or exit service early.

Example: If a member comes on board within the first two weeks of the month, you might set a policy that gives them the entire living allowance. If they start service later than that, you could prorate the amount based on the number of days in the month they will serve. The same would hold true for the end of service. If they leave within the first two weeks of the month, their living allowance could be based on the number of days in the month they served. If they serve over the 2-week cut-off, they could get the full living allowance. You can establish different cut-off points as long as they are reasonable, documented in policy, and followed consistently.

Programs must have policies and procedures in place to ensure living allowances cease when a member ends their service. Any living allowance issued to a member after they exit and for a pay period in which they did not serve any hours will be unallowable for reimbursement or match. If a program fails to adhere to their proration policy a disallowance may also occur.

Distribution of Member Living Allowance

The living allowance is designed to help members meet the necessary living expenses incurred while participating in the AmeriCorps Program. Programs must not pay a living allowance on an hourly basis. It is not a wage and should not fluctuate based on the number of hours members serve in a given time period. Programs should pay the living allowance in increments, such as weekly or bi-weekly.

Wage Garnishments

AmeriCorps has concluded that the federal portion of the living allowance is not subject to involuntary garnishment because it is protected under the doctrine of sovereign immunity. The term, "sovereign immunity," means that the United States, as the sovereign, has to consent before any federal funds can be garnished. It has not done so in the case of the federal portion of a member's living allowance. In addition, the federal portion of programs' staff salaries may not be subject to involuntary garnishment.

The non-federal portion/program match of living allowances and staff salaries may be garnished, in accordance with state law.

Public Assistance

All members may be eligible for public assistance. Programs may need to provide an [Income Disregard](#) letter to prove eligibility.

SNAP Benefits

AmeriCorps members may be eligible to receive federal financial assistance (e.g., Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits) that can help cover food expenses and other essentials. Eligibility and monthly amounts vary based on individual circumstances. Each individual will need to submit an application and follow the required protocol.

If an individual is already receiving food stamp benefits, they should not be affected receiving the AmeriCorps living allowance. This means that a member's benefits should not be decreased, increased, or terminated because he or she receives the living allowance. This is a federal rule and is the same in all states.

Not all case workers are knowledgeable of AmeriCorps benefits. It is the responsibility of the program to advocate for their Members as needed. If the program or Member experiences difficulty applying for a benefit, contact your ServMO program officer.

MEDICAID/MO Healthnet

Medicaid coverage may satisfy the full-time healthcare requirement. Each Member's situation is different, so the program should work to ensure the Member has minimum essential coverage as outlined in the AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions.

Members may apply for Medicaid/MO Healthnet at https://mydss.mo.gov/healthcare.

Public Housing

AmeriCorps members' benefits do not affect an individual's eligibility for federal, need-based housing assistance, such as Section 8 housing and other federally subsidized housing. This means that the living stipend cannot be taken into consideration when a member applies for or if a member's eligibility for public housing is being re-examined. This is a federal rule and is the same in all states.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

A Member's TANF benefits ARE affected by the AmeriCorps living allowance. Each Member's eligibility will be different. The Member may apply for TANF at https://mydss.mo.gov/temporary-assistance.

Supplemental Security Income

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a Federal program that provides a monthly cash benefit to low-income individuals who are aged, blind, or who have a disability. In the past, receiving an AmeriCorps living allowance could disqualify an individual from eligibility. Under the Heroes Earnings and Relief Tax Act of 2008, the Social Security Administration will ignore an individual's receipt of AmeriCorps benefits for purposes of SSI eligibility. The Heart Act excludes "any benefit (whether cash or in-kind)" which covers the living allowance, health insurance, childcare, and the education award (and related interest payments).

Additionally, SSI recipients who serve in an AmeriCorps State Program automatically qualify for the Student Child Earned Income Exclusion if they meet applicable age and marital status requirements.

SSI recipients who are (1) under the age of 22 and (2) neither married nor the head of a household are eligible for the student earned income exclusion, which excludes from countable earned income. This exclusion may be combined with existing SSI work incentives and other income disregard rules, which should encourage more young people with disabilities to participate in AmeriCorps State Programs.

Any portion of an education award used by an SSI recipient to pay for tuition, fees, and other necessary education expenses (not including room and board or repaying student loans) will not count as income. Any portion of the education award that is not used for tuition, fees, or other necessary educational expenses counts as income in the month that it is used. For general questions about SSI or the terms used in this answer, go to http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/index.htm

Social Security Disability Insurance

Because Social Security Disability Insurance SSDI is an insurance program, SSDI benefits will not be lost on the basis of earned income. However, it is possible that participation in AmeriCorps could result in the Social Security Administration reviewing the determination that a disability exists. Members may be able to take advantage of SSA's Work Incentive options to keep SSDI eligibility intact while participating in AmeriCorps.

Chapter 6
Program Administration

- ❖ Program Management and Monitoring Expectations
- ❖ Match
- ❖ Budget
- ❖ Fiscal Reporting
- ❖ Program Progress Reporting
- ❖ Evaluation
- ❖ Grant Closeout
- ❖ Record Retention
- ❖ Subgrant Award Extensions

Program Management and Monitoring Expectations

Definitions:

Operating Site/Grantee: The organization formally recognized as the grant recipient that manages the AmeriCorps program. AmeriCorps members may be placed at the operating site, or an operating site may place AmeriCorps members at multiple member service locations.

Service Site/Service Location: A group or organization that is responsible for the actual physical location where program activities are performed. This entity may provide task-specific training, technical assistance, and member supervision, but is typically not involved in additional administrative functions. Some programs may utilize an MOU or other formal agreement, though it is not required.

Host Site/Sub-site/Intermediary: A host-site has an established formal relationship and requires a Memorandum of Understanding to delineate roles and responsibilities regarding member supervision and grant compliance activities. Primary member supervision is performed by staff outside of the operating site/grantee organization. Host/Sub-sites may also be involved with payroll/benefits or other administrative functions.

Note: depending on program design, programs may be serving in the role of both operating site and host site simultaneously.

Host Site Considerations:

ServMO has the following requirements for host-site management and monitoring:
- All host-sites and service locations should be identified as sites of AmeriCorps service (i.e., sign posted at building entry)
- Service locations must be accessible to members with disabilities
- Before members begin service, an MOU should be signed with the host-site (including information related to prohibited activities)
- Programs should provide orientation, training, and technical assistance to staff at host-sites and service locations
- Programs should provide policies, procedures, and tools to monitor host-sites
- Programs should provide feedback and evaluation tools to host-sites

Match

Programs should meet the proposed match, established in the program's application each grant year. Programs that are not meeting proposed levels of match at mid-year GPR submission may be asked to submit an explanation addressing the following:

1. An explanation as to why match was not met, and
2. Plans to meet match by the end of the program year.

AmeriCorps funds may be reduced by ServMO for failure to meet the proposed or minimum match requirements.

Programs must provide and account for the matching funds as agreed upon in the approved application. It is recommended that application budgets match the required match schedule below as closely as possible. Beginning September 1, 2025, if a program does not meet the match outlined in their application but DOES meet the minimum statutory match requirement, no action will be taken.

Overall Cost Match

Subject to the requirements of § 2521.45, a program's overall share of program costs will increase as of the fourth consecutive year that they receive a grant, according to the following timetable. (This is not applicable to Fixed Award grant programs.)

Minimum grantee share, by program year, outlined below:

YR 1	YR 2	YR 3	YR 4	YR 5	YR 6	YR 7	YR 8	YR 9	YR 10
24%	24%	24%	26%	26%	26%	28%	28%	28%	30%

In-Kind Match

The burden of guaranteeing fair market value of an in-kind resource lies with the program. Whenever possible in-kind contributions should show in the program's general ledger as both income and an expenditure. If this is not possible there should be a written policy explaining why and how this is tracked.

In-Kind Contribution Form

In-Kind Contribution Verification

Forms documenting in-kind contributions must include:
- Date of contribution
- Printed name of the donor
- Signature of the donor certifying value

- Description and value of the contribution
- Method of valuation
- Donor verification that funds are not from other federal sources
- Statement that donor intends the contribution to benefit the AmeriCorps project

Match Waiver

The alternative match waiver previously available to programs will no longer be an option beginning in FY2025. However, the Match Waiver process is still available upon request.

This match waiver request is a process to have your organization identify and document the specific circumstances your organization faced or is facing in meeting its match requirement at any point in your organization's grant.

AmeriCorps State subgrantees should submit their waiver requests to their State Service Commission for review and approval. If the Commission approves the sub grantee(s) waiver request for submission, the Commission will submit the request(s) on behalf of the sub grantee(s).

AmeriCorps' Office of Grant Administration (OGA) will review and evaluate all justifications provided on this form for sufficiency with the respective regulatory provisions using a prudent person standard. OGA will respond within 30 calendar days of receiving the initial request with a decision or request for additional information.

More information about the match waiver request can be found HERE, under "Individual Match Waiver."

Budget

When creating the budget for your application, please see specific instructions included in each year's Notice of Funding Opportunity. The following section is intended to support currently funded programs.

Pre-Award Costs

Pre-award costs are specific to cost-reimbursement grants and pertain to the period between the tentative award letter and the official start date of the program because NO costs are otherwise allowed during this time frame. This is allowable for both new, recompete, and continuation programs. However, new and recompete programs must request pre-award cost authorization from their assigned Program Officer in writing. Reasonable pre-award costs may include staff time, member recruitment, and National Service Criminal History Checks. Pre-cost authorizations do not apply to fixed cost grants.

According to 2 CFR § 200.458, pre-award costs are subject to the following limitations:
- *Costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award* (can't buy things not in the approved budget)
- *Require written approval of the Federal awarding agency* (Commission must request approval from portfolio manager AFTER notice of award is issued and, obviously, before the start of the grant)
- *Costs must be charged to the initial budget period of the award* (only an option prior to the start of year 1)

Additionally, AmeriCorps is notified of pre-award costs and limits requests to less than 20% of total funds.

Programs should note that while pre-award costs are allowable, they are still subject to availability of funds.

Budget Modifications

ServMO understands that AmeriCorps programs must sometimes modify their budget during the program year.

A program may expend more funds in a given line item as long as the difference between the actual expenditure and the budget will be less than 5% of the total grant budget (grant share + match share).

If a program will expend more funds on a given line item, and the difference between actual expenditure and the budget will be greater than 5% of the total grant budget (grant share + match share), the program must seek prior approval via email from their ServMO program officer.

Any line item expenditures that are 10% or more over the total grant budget (grant share + match share) will require a grant amendment approved by both ServMO and AmeriCorps. Programs should seek prior approval via email and to request to initiate an amendment in both eGrants and OnCorps. These requests should be submitted as early in the program year as possible to reduce enrollment challenges. Requests will not be considered within thirty days of the program year end date.

The Cost per MSY remains subject to the maximum outlined in the program year's Notice of Funding Opportunity. Any budget modifications that potentially alter the Cost per MSY must comply with this maximum amount.

Budget Change Request	Approval Required
Budget Change <5% total budget	No approval required
Budget change 5-9% total budget	ServMO approval required
Budget change >10% total budget	ServMO and AmeriCorps approval required

Equipment

Unless specified in the approved budget or application, programs may not purchase equipment costing more than $5,000 with grant funds without prior approval from the Commission and AmeriCorps. All purchases of equipment and supplies should be handled in accordance with 45 CFR 2541 – "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments" or with 45 CFR 2543 – "Grants and Agreements with institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and other Non-Profit Organizations." For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps regulation, terms and conditions.

Fiscal Reporting

Periodic Expense Reports (PERs)

AmeriCorps programs must submit PERs on a monthly basis through ServMO's online reporting system (OnCorps Reports). It is due no later than the 15th day of each month, following the month in which expenses were incurred (i.e., September expenses are due by October 15th). Alternative reimbursement schedules must be approved by the program's ServMO Program Officer.

Payment Process Policy

ServMO is committed to the accurate and timely processing of payments to programs and grantees. ServMO utilizes OnCorps Reports to interface with cost reimbursement programs during the payment process.

AmeriCorps Missouri programs use this reporting system to submit requests for reimbursement to the Commission. ServMO uses this system to communicate approval and/or need for revisions with the programs.

ServMO will make all reasonable efforts and establishes adequate procedures:
1. To monitor grant expenditures for allowability
2. To obtain substantive financial reports from the subgrantee
3. To provide ongoing reports to the AmeriCorps agency

Payment Process Procedure

To be considered for reimbursement, PERs are due no later than the 15th day of each month for the prior month's expenses. ServMO is committed to providing reimbursements within thirty days of receiving a complete PER. Please see sections below for a list of the components of a complete PER.

If the request is not approved, the submitting program will receive notice through OnCorps. Staff will use the comments section to detail what is incorrect on the report and what needs to be fixed in order for reimbursement to be approved. The programs will continue to resubmit the PER until approval is granted by staff.

In the event that a monthly PER is submitted after the 15th day of the month, reimbursement will not occur until the following month. This may result in two or more monthly PERs being processed and reimbursed in one month.

Alternatively, due to possible funding limitations, the Commission may limit how many PERs will be reimbursed for a program within a thirty-day period. Due to the unpredictable timing of grant awards due to federal shutdowns and other unforeseen events, ServMO recommends that programs have 2-3 months of funding available in the event of an emergency and reimbursements cannot be processed.

Risk-based Sampling
ServMO will sample subgrantee reimbursement reports throughout the year using a risk-based system. Each high-risk subgrantee will have two expense reports checked during the grant year. Low risk subgrantees will have one expense report checked each grant year.

A complete cost-reimbursement PER includes:
• No errors/inaccuracies when compared against the awarded grant budget
• Reimbursement Packet and any additional documentation, if applicable

Components of a Cost-Reimbursement Program Expense Report (PER)
The following items must be included as an attachment with each submission in OnCorps:
- **General Ledger**
  - Must cover the exact date range of request
  - Must include staff and member payroll and fringe benefits
  - Must include revenue and expenses
- **Member Timesheets**
  - Must cover the exact date range of request
  - OnCorps Timesheets/Member Hours Reports should be exported and attached to the PER itself.
  - *Multi-state grantees may request the use of an alternate timesheet system and submission method, to be approved on a case-by-case basis by their AmeriCorps Program Officer*
- **Ongoing Roster**
  - Throughout the year, maintain and resubmit a member and staff roster that includes all staff and members who have been connected to the grant at any point in the program year. The roster must include:
    - Full names, term start dates, status (active / completed / exited) and exit date if exited + suspension date to/from if suspended.
    - Each member's living allowance amount and frequency of payment
    - All staff connected to grant (CNCS and grantee share)
    - NSCHC Verification dates
    - *Attach to reimbursement request in excel file format*

Components of a Fixed Program Expense Report (PER)
Fixed award recipients should enter the total amount they are requesting for member living allowance (for full fixed award grantees) or indirect costs (for EAPs and Professional Corps) in OnCorps.

A complete fixed PER includes:
- No errors/inaccuracies when compared against the awarded grant budget
- Ongoing Roster: Throughout the year, maintain and resubmit an ongoing or running roster that includes all members who have been connected to the grant at any point in the program year. The roster must include:
  - Full names, term start dates, status (active / completed / exited) and exit date if exited + suspension date to/from if suspended.
  - Must also include NSCHC Verification dates
  - attach to reimbursement request in excel file format

Program Progress Reporting

Grant Progress Reporting (GPR)

AmeriCorps programs are required to submit progress reports at least twice annually to ServMO. Please review your sub-grantee agreement for specific requirements and deadlines.

Progress reports monitor a program's progress toward meeting its annual program objectives, assess program strengths and challenges, highlight unique program achievements, and identify opportunities for training and technical assistance.

ServMO requires programs to provide regular reports on their programmatic progress. These reports will include progress to meeting each performance measure as well as additional data as requested by ServMO.

ServMO provides GPR Instructions annually.

ServMO expects that all progress reports are thoughtfully constructed in such a way that they provide an accurate reflection of the program's accomplishments and challenges for the reporting period. At a minimum, programs must ensure that:

- All questions are answered with new and detailed responses each quarter. Please do not copy and paste old responses.
- Program impact should be clearly stated.
- Challenges and successes should be clearly outlined.
- Measures to address challenges, improve the program, and/or comply with federal laws and regulations are clearly identified.
- Special care should be taken to explain any performance measures that have not been or are not on track to being met. Explain what is being done to improve performance and if or how the program expects to reach the goal by the end of the grant year.
- Programs must also explain any performance goal in which the actuals achieved exceed 400% of the expected target. Programs should regularly evaluate their forecasting to ensure each new grant application has progressive and realistic targets for their outputs and outcomes.
- Programs must ensure that all data is reported but not duplicated.
- Data from all programs within a prime grant is compiled using spreadsheets which aggregate demographic information and then reported to AmeriCorps.
- Commission staff will review data for evidence of duplication or any other indicators of inaccurate reporting.
- Any issue identified with the report will be addressed, as needed
- Source documentation will be reviewed by ServMO staff during programmatic site visits to verify validity.

Programs should ensure OnCorps reporting matches the performance measures and targets indicated in the eGrants application.

ServMO reserves the right to request additional reports outside of these due dates in order to provide program impact data to stakeholders.

Failure to provide prompt and accurate progress reports may result in the suspension of reimbursements and/or the termination of the grant.

Performance Measurement

Performance measurement is the process of regularly measuring the outputs and outcomes produced by a program. Performance measurement allows the ability to track both the amount of work done by a program and the impact of this work on a program's beneficiaries.

Performance measurement is a useful tool for managing your program. It allows you to track the progress of your program towards larger goals and to identify program strengths and possible areas for improvement. Ultimately, performance measure information will ensure program accountability, and will help improve services and beneficiary outcomes.

The AmeriCorps federal agency requires programs to submit at least one aligned performance measure as part of their application.

For more information on performance measures, go to:
https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/FY%202024%20ASN%20Performance%20Measures%20FINAL.508.pdf

Evaluation

During the first three-year grant cycle (whether formula or competitive), no evaluation is required. However, programs should build strong data collection systems and begin the evaluation planning process.

Formula Funded Evaluation Requirements
At this time, formula-funded grantees are not required to submit evaluation plans for commission approval. However, programs should be prepared to research and submit an evaluation plan if/when submitting for competitive funding.

Competitive Funded Evaluation Requirements
For all competitive-funded grantees, evaluation requirements for grantees can be found in the AmeriCorps regulations: 45 CFR §§2522.500-.540 and .700-.740.

Grants less than $500,000: Cost Reimbursement and Full-Cost Fixed Grants whose AmeriCorps funding is less than $500,000 must complete an internal or external evaluation. All Education Award and No Cost Slots Grants are also required to complete internal evaluations.

Grants equal to or greater than $500,000: Cost Reimbursement and Full-Cost Fixed Grants whose AmeriCorps funding is equal to or more than $500,000 are required to arrange for an independent (external) impact evaluation.

Second 3-Year Grant Cycle

When a program recompetes for a second three-year grant cycle of competitive funding, an evaluation plan must be submitted with the application. This plan must be approved by the AmeriCorps agency. Evaluations must be completed during each 3-year grant cycle.

Whether internal or external, evaluations should be rigorous, comprehensive, and include notes for programmatic improvement. Simply reviewing performance measures and discussing the results is not an adequate evaluation of the program. Programs must abide by the following evaluation requirements:
- Must evaluate significant service activities
- Must cover at least one year of AmeriCorps-funded activity for the same project
- Must include site(s) supported under the grant
- Must align with the approved evaluation plan
- Must produce a report that adequately describes the evaluation conducted

<u>Third 3-Year Grant Cycle</u>

After the first two grant cycles (six years), programs are required to conduct a program evaluation once each 3-year grant cycle. The concluded evaluation must be submitted with the next recompete application.

Below is a timeline for evaluation planning:

Program Grant Cycle Application	Evaluation Requirement
Initial Application	Data collection plan
Years 1 – 3	Create/submit Evaluation plan (year 3 recompete application)
Years 4 – 6	Completed Evaluation (external or internal) New Evaluation Plan (year 6 recompete application)
Years 7 – 9 and subsequent cycles	Completed Evaluation (external or internal) New Evaluation Plan

If you are unsure what cycle your program is in, please contact your ServMO program officer.

Grant Closeout

Federal Financial Report (FFR)

ServMO aggregates the Federal Financial Report (FFR) for all Missouri programs. Program PERs are used to complete this form. At the end of the grant year, a program will submit a PER that is marked as final. When marking final, the sub-grantee is indicating all previous reimbursements have been received. No additional AFRs or FFRs are required.

Programmatic Closeout

Closeouts are **an annual** requirement for all grants awarded by ServMO and AmeriCorps. Closeout is the process by which the grantee completes all necessary financial, program, and administrative actions required under the grant. The provisions of CFR § 200.344 govern the closeout of federal grant awards.

No later than ninety (90) days after the end of the grant year, or ninety (90) days after the termination of a grant, the program is responsible for the submission of applicable closeout reports and the reconciliation of the award.

ServMO and AmeriCorps will not issue any new funds to grantees that have outstanding closeout issues or unsubmitted documents.

Programs must submit the following documents to their ServMO program officer:
1. Equipment Inventory. This form catalogues items of equipment with a current fair market value of $5,000 or more and purchased with federal grant funds or provides a statement that there are no such items.
2. Inventory of Unused or Residual Supplies. This form catalogues items purchased with federal grant funds that, in aggregate, exceed $5,000 or provides a statement that such supplies (if any) do not exceed $5,000.
3. Subgrantee Certification. This form is used to certify the closeout of grant.

Record Retention

All financial records, supporting documentation, statistical records, evaluation and performance data, member information, and personnel records must be retained for three (3) years after the close of the **Commission's AmeriCorps Grant**. If programs are unsure about when to destroy or delete records, they can request clarification from ServMO staff.

Type of Documentation	Examples
Grant Agreements and Contracts	- AmeriCorps approvals of awards - Grants and contracts between State Commissions and grantees - Grants and contracts between National Programs and sites
Program Documents	- Reports - Correspondence - Policy statements
Monitoring Notes	- Monitoring reports - Site visit tools - Reports on site visits to grantees/sites
Official Correspondence	Letters on related matters

If any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit, or other action involving the records has been started before the expiration of the 3-year period, the records must be retained until completion of the action and resolution of all issues which arise from it, or until the end of the regular 3-year period, whichever is later.

Sub-Grant Award Extensions

No Cost Extension Policy

ServMO may approve a no-cost extension for programs to complete grant activities and/or for members to complete service past a program's original end date.

Based on increased clarity to 2 CFR § 200.308 in the recent update to the Uniform Guidance, as published on April 22, 2024, the "parameters for no-cost extensions are at the discretion of the agency."

AmeriCorps has set an 18-month limit for the no-cost extension period to extend flexibility without increasing risk and burden. The following parameters remain:

1. Member enrollment periods for National Direct and Native Nations grants and State Commission subgrants cannot exceed 12 months.
2. No additional funds can be awarded during a no-cost extension period.

In the event that a program determines they need a no-cost extension, a written request must be made to the commission. The following apply to requesting a no cost extension:

a. Unless continuous recruitment is part of the program design, programs should consider all options before requesting an extension. Programs are encouraged to contact their Program Officer at the Commission to discuss all options and steps associated with extensions, slot conversions, and offering shorter term positions that could be completed by the original end date.
b. Programs must send their request in writing to ServMO staff.
c. Programs should request an extension within 45 calendar days of the end of their contract year. Requests submitted after this period will be considered but may be denied based on feasibility
d. When an extension is granted, an addendum to the sub-grant agreement will be created, which will require original signatures from the program's authorized representative and the Director of ServMO.
e. Costs and financial documentation for each grant year must be kept separate and separate reimbursement requests must be submitted for each grant year.
f. Data must be tracked, maintained, and reported in separate quarterly reports for each grant year during an extension period. This includes providing a separate progress report for each active grant year.
g. In the event that any members' service end date is expected to go beyond the grant award end date, an extension should be requested.

For more information, visit: AmeriCorps' No-Cost Extension Guidance

Chapter 7
Program Monitoring

❖ Program Monitoring
❖ Monitoring Checklists

Program Monitoring

Purpose of Monitoring

As stewards of public funding, ServMO must ensure that the programs and sites they fund are aware of their contractual requirements and are in compliance with all rules, regulations, and provisions governing AmeriCorps funds. To accomplish this, ServMO must create adequate systems for monitoring programs and sites that are fully implemented and available in writing.

Monitoring allows staff and commission members to learn more about a program's service activities and community partnerships and hear success stories about AmeriCorps programs. It also plays a critical role in our program management and helps stay abreast of compliance concerns, the need for technical assistance, and any potential for such abuse as fraud, waste, or mismanagement. However, monitoring is also viewed as a meaningful opportunity to help programs run as efficiently as possible.

Monitoring is not a one-time event, but rather an ongoing process that occurs throughout the award period, consisting of training, implementation, communication, and follow-through.

AmeriCorps and/or OIG may require additional monitoring not discussed in this manual. It is the requirement of ServMO and the program to comply with any such monitoring requests.

ServMO Monitoring Strategy

The ServMO monitoring strategy includes the following components:
- Annual Program Risk Assessment
- Desk Reviews
  - [Member File Review Checks](#)
  - Reimbursement Request Reviews
  - Periodic Expense Report Risk-based Sampling
- On-Site Monitoring
  - Programmatic Review
  - Fiscal Review
- One-on-one Technical Assistance

Program Risk Assessment

ServMO uses a risk-based assessment strategy for monitoring programs. At least annually, and as new projects are funded, Commission staff will assess the risk associated with each sub-grantee using ServMO Annual Program Risk Assessment tool.

The risk assessment utilized by ServMO looks at a variety of factors including experience with federal grant management, existing financial management policies and procedures, past performance, and program sustainability to classify each program as low or high-risk. Based on this determination, ServMO will implement an individualized monitoring plan for each program. Please note that all new awardees will automatically be classified as high-risk. Other high-risk factors may include, but are not limited to:

- Being a first-year program
- Having a first-year program director
- Documented complaints made by Members or other stakeholders
- Previous disallowances and/or suspensions of operations in the last two program years
- Poor past performance (reporting, communication, or past monitoring)
- Poor performance with reporting deadlines
- Poor attendance at required events and trainings

Overview of Monitoring by Risk Type

	Low-Risk Programs	High-Risk Programs
Desk-based Member File Checks	Each program is subject to routine Member File Checks based upon ServMO's sampling methodology as described below.	
Desk-based Periodic Expense Report Sampling	At least one annually.	At least two annually.
On-site Monitoring Visits	At least once every three-year grant cycle. Content of the visit will be determined by the program officer.	At least one annually. All monitoring tool modules will be used.

Periodic Expense Report Sampling

Sampling is a way to review less than 100% of the total items within a budget by selecting a segment for review in order to determine general accuracy. It is a technique that provides supporting evidence that allows ServMO to determine if policy is being followed appropriately without reviewing every budget item and transaction.

Based on a subgrantee's risk assessment score, ServMO conducts desk reviews of previously submitted reimbursement requests. In the event of a desk review, ServMO program staff will request all relevant source documentation to verify the Section I and II costs that have been submitted for reimbursement. Subgrantees are expected to provide all requested source documentation by the deadline set in the request through a secure link provided by the ServMO Program Officer.

Examples of the source documentation that may be requested include:
- Documentation of match (both cash and in-kind)
- Staff timesheets and payroll registers
- Mileage documentation and travel vouchers
- Member payroll list and healthcare roster (if applicable)
- Copies of canceled checks
- All paid invoices, receipts, agendas, etc.

ServMO reviews submitted documentation to ensure that costs are:
- Reasonable, allocable, and allowable
- Spent according to contractual limitations
- Treated consistently based on internal policy
- Determined in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the applicable OMB cost principles (2 CFR 200 Subpart E)

Findings may result in additional training, corrective action, or loss of funds.

Member File Desk Review

A desk review of AmeriCorps member files will be completed prior to an onsite monitoring visit to ensure the onsite visit can be focused on member and program staff engagement.

Member file reviews ensure compliance with National Service Criminal History Check requirements, enrollment and exit guidelines, accuracy of member files and other regulations.

Member File Sampling Methodology
A random sample of 10% of member files or ten member files, whichever is greater, will be reviewed. If a program has less than ten member slots, all current member files will be reviewed.

Member files will be reviewed as outlined on the [Member File Checklist](#).

Examples of documentation that may be requested include:
- Enrollment and Eligibility Forms
- Enrollment in eGrants
- Member Service Agreements
- Member Position Descriptions
- National Service Criminal History Checks
- Member mid-term and final evaluations
- Timesheets
- Member Exit Forms

Any findings identified during the desk review will be included with the fundings summary sent to programs following the onsite monitoring visit.

On-Site Monitoring Visits

ServMO will conduct an on-site monitoring visit for every program at least once during the three-year grant cycle, or more often as appropriate.

The primary purpose of an on-site monitoring visit is to assess the program's compliance with grant requirements and federal regulations and to help the program improve systems to pass a potential audit. Additional reasons for monitoring are outlined below. Member files, program policies, and fiscal records may be reviewed during the visit. The ServMO Monitoring Tool will be used to assess program compliance.

On-Site visits by program staff can have many purposes, some of the most important are summarized in the table below:

Learning	Finding out about service activities and community partnerships and to gather best practices that can be shared with other programs.
Publicity	Gathering success stories.
Compliance	Assuring that all federal, state, and local regulations, policies, and laws are being followed.
Monitoring Progress	Comparing actual outputs and outcomes to the performance measures outlined in the grant agreement.
Technical Assistance	To improve overall quality of the program.

Programs may request assistance or additional site visits to focus on specific program issues at any time. Staff will accommodate these requests as much as possible, as capacity allows.

Notice and Preparation

All programs will be notified at least 30 days in advance and in coordination with program staff. Notifications will be sent to program directors who have the responsibility to notify the appropriate individuals in their organization. At least one week prior to the site visit, a tentative agenda, and a copy of the instruments to be used will be sent to the program's contact person.

ServMO monitoring tools are reviewed and updated annually. Please be sure to review these tools for the current year when planning for on-site visits or collecting documentation for desk-based monitoring.

To prepare properly for a site visit, program staff should:
- Review the Monitoring Tool provided by the ServMO Program Officer and be prepared to present any pertinent or requested documentation.
- Determine which programmatic and fiscal staff members need to be present during the visit, in addition to any AmeriCorps members requested to be interviewed.

Exit Conference and Follow-Up Monitoring Letter

Potential findings and recommendations identified during the visit will be reviewed with program staff at the end of the day.

A copy of the completed monitoring tool and recommendations/corrective action letter will be e-mailed to the program contact person/program director within thirty days of the conclusion of the visit. The program director must address or dispute any corrective action requests and provide a written response to ServMO by the deadline indicated in the findings' summary. The ServMO Staff will review the response and provide any additional guidance required.