AmeriCorps Boot Camp

Jennifer Cowart

AmeriCorps Advantage: California Volunteers 2017 Grantee Training Conference
Outcomes

• Locate key documents/resources to support compliance and foundation understanding of AmeriCorps
• Apply rules and regulations to program elements
• Conduct compliance focused audits on program files and documents
• Build a network of programs that facilitates cross sharing
• Refine and/or create new policies/procedures, and systems that support the various stages of program, site and member management
Agenda

• Welcome
• National Service and AmeriCorps
• Rules and Regulations
• Member Management
  – Enrollment/On-Boarding
  – Exit
  – Files and Key Documents
  – Member Activities
You need to know . . .

The information in this training is based on CNCS and Federal laws, rules, and regulations; CNCS grant terms and conditions; and generally accepted principles and practices.

CNCS and/or California Volunteers may impose additional or varied requirements.

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Program Hierarchy of Needs

- High Quality Principles
- Systems
- Policies and Procedures
- Compliance
Current Context

• Focus on Compliance

• Focus on Retention
  – Whether it is a requirement or because your partners and organization depend upon the ability to have someone for a minimum of one year
  – Emphasis on a high retention rate

• Focus on Recruitment
  – Member Service Years – 100% recruitment rate

• Increased Emphasis on Impact
  – Have to recruit the right members for the right positions so that you get the most impact for the dollars you receive

• Scrutinized Federal Dollars and Increased Competition
Around the Room

1. Biggest challenge/stressor
2. Biggest success/accomplishment
3. Hope to gain from this training
History of National Service
AMERICORPS

NOT

AMERI-CORPSE
AmeriCorps Focus Areas

- Education
- Healthy Futures
- Environmental Stewardship
- Disaster Services
- Veterans and Military Families
- Economic Opportunity

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Education

improve school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children; educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools; and the preparation for, and prospects of success, in post-secondary educational institutions.
Healthy Futures

provide support for health needs within communities including access to care, aging in place, and childhood obesity.
Environmental Stewardship

direct services that contribute to increased energy and water efficiency, renewable energy use, or improving at-risk ecosystems
Disaster Services

increase the preparedness of individuals, improve individuals’ readiness to respond, help individuals recover from disasters, and help individuals mitigate disasters.
Veterans and Military Families

positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength. Grant activities will increase the number of veterans and military service members and their families served by CNCS-supported programs and increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS-supported programs.
Economic Opportunity

help economically disadvantaged people to have improved access to services aimed at contributing to their enhanced financial literacy; transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable housing; and have improved employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.
AmeriCorps Guiding Principles

• Getting Things Done
• Strengthening Communities
• Participant Development
  – Expanding Opportunity
  – Encouraging Responsibility
Getting Things Done

• Direct Service
• Making a Demonstrated Impact
  – Outputs – Numbers Served
  – Outcomes – Impact and Change
  – National Performance Measures
  – Evidence
  – Evaluation

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Strengthening Communities

• Inclusion
• Diversity
• Volunteer Management
• Disaster Preparedness
• National Days of Service
• Cross-Stream Collaboration
Participant Development

• Encouraging Responsibility
  – Service Learning or Reflection
  – Civic Engagement
  – Esprit de Corps
  – Ethic of Service

• Expanding Opportunity
  – Education Award
  – Professional and Personal Development
  – Life After AmeriCorps

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### What AmeriCorps Is and Is Not

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What It IS</th>
<th>What It IS NOT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
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Compliance is always viewed as a scary word, but it is meant to help us establish systems to allow us to create strong programs.

We want to work together as a team to get compliance right first so that we can focus on Getting Things Done!

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Compliance Challenges

• Organizations face an increasingly large list of compliance requirements to which they must adhere.
• Compliance is not just a one-time exercise; rather compliance requires a continuous effort.
• The complexity and multi-layered requirements of funding sources require a team-based approach, utilizing staff and other resources from many work areas of an organization.
Legal Authorities

Congress
- Establish Statute

President OMB
- Establish Administrative Requirements
- Executive Orders

CNCS State Commissions
- Implement Administrative Requirements
- Establish Program Requirements
- Establish Policies
- Establish Grant Terms and Conditions

AmeriCorps Grantee
- Accept Grant Terms and Conditions
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- Published annually by CNCS and State Commissions
- Details the appropriate use of AmeriCorps grant funds
- Details the AmeriCorps funding application process
- Information on CNCS funding priorities
Notice of Grant Award (NOGA)

- CNCS to State Service Commission to Program
- Program is governed by this which is provided at the start of each grant and budget period
- Outlines grant and budget period along with CNCS and grantee budget amounts and member service years/slots
- Signed by State Service Commission and Authorized Program Signatory
Managing AmeriCorps Grants

AmeriCorps State and National

Rules, regulations, and provisions

Certain key provisions and rules including the single match are only represented in appropriations language.

- The National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended by the Serve America Act (PDF)
- AmeriCorps Regulations (XML)
- AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions FY 2014, FY 2015, and FY 2016
- AmeriCorps State and National Policy Frequently Asked Questions (updated 7/30/14) (PDF)
- Compiled Document for Search (PDF)
  Includes:
  The National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended by the Serve America Act (May 2009) [pages 1 – 181]
  AmeriCorps State and National Regulations (CFR Title 45, Subtitle B, Chapter XXV, Sections 2510, 2520, 2521 - 2523, 2525 – 2539, 2540, and 2555) current as
Code of Federal Regulations

- CNCS’s interpretation and application of the Statute – 262 pages of regulation
- Found in Title 45, Chapter 25. CNCS is 45 CFR §2520-2550
- Must go through Rulemaking process
- Categories: General Terms and Conditions, AmeriCorps members, National Service Trust, Education Awards, and much, much more!
Code of Federal Regulations

- General provisions
- Eligible AmeriCorps program applicants and types of grants available for award
- AmeriCorps participants, programs and applicants
- Agreements with other Federal agencies
- AmeriCorps technical assistance and other special grants
- National service trust
- Eligibility for an education award
- Determining the amount of an education award
- Using an education award
- Payment of accrued interest
- Transfer of education awards
- Solicitation and acceptance of donations
Poll

Can I pay members on an hourly basis?

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The Why?

• Rules and regulations can change so it is important to be able to verify the latest information
• Important to be able to provide the background on programmatic decisions to auditors.
• To not constantly rely on your State Commission staff.
• State commission and CNCS staff are also human and can make mistakes so it is important that you have a clear understanding of the regulations to be able to get the best answer for your question.
Can I pay members on an hourly basis?
Poll

I have read my current grant terms and conditions?
Terms and Conditions

- [https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnscs-grants](https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnscs-grants)
- Published annually and accompanies the Notice of Grant Award
- Includes additional grant requirements from State Service Commissions including grant performance reporting dates
Frequently Asked Questions

• These provide guidance but do not carry the force of law
• http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/upload/policy%20FAQs%207.31.14%20final.pdf
• Program area specific FAQ’s include: program evaluation, member healthcare, identity and citizenship verification process; and National Service Criminal History Check
• Updated throughout the grant year
**National and Community Service Act of 1990**

- Signed into law by President George H.W. Bush
- Created the Commission on National and Community Service
- The Commission was charged with supporting
  - Service-learning programs for school-aged youth
  - Higher education service programs
  - Youth Corps
  - National service demonstration models
Compiled Document for Search

- PDF compiled of multiple sources
  - National and Community Service Act of 1990
  - Terms and Conditions
  - AmeriCorps State and National Policy FAQs
- List of documents contained in PDF
- Does not always contain the most up-to-date documents
OMB Circulars

- Issued by the Office of Management and Budget
- Outline administrative requirements and cost principles for organizations using Federal funds
- New guidance issued last year in the form of Super Circular/Omni Circular
State Laws

- States vary in their rules and regulations
- Find out what your state laws are as they pertain to AmeriCorps members for:
  - Taxes
  - Worker’s compensation
  - Criminal History Checks
Certifications and Assurances

• Electronically agreed to in the grant application process
• Agreeing to follow basic Federal and AmeriCorps procedures including: non-discrimination, non-duplication and non-displacement, grievance procedures, drug-free workplace, lobbying, and more.
Applying Rules and Regulations

Activity

Time!!
Management Cycles

- Program
- Data
- Fiscal
- Site
- Member
Real World Implications

Huge Scandal Develops as Taxpayer-Funded Community Health Centers Facilitate Abortions

AmeriCorps Members Serve From Their Residence Without Proper Supervision
2015-07-20

The CNCS-OIG received a Hotline complaint from an anonymous source who claimed that a National Direct AmeriCorps grantee had AmeriCorps members serve from their residence while their supervisor was located in a different state.

The CNCS-OIG investigation disclosed evidence grantee officials violated the conditions of the AmeriCorps grant when it allowed seven members from grant years 2013 - 2015 to serve from their residence without proper supervision. The investigation also found that members’ timesheet/service hours were recorded and approved based on an honor system. CNCS management took immediate action and removed the current members serving from their residence. CNCS management reported that it would ensure future members would not serve from their residence.

Case ID: 2015-017

The Wall Street Journal
The Reality of Feel-Good Government
By James Bovard
13 June 2013

Consider the following recent activities:
-- In April, AmeriCorps recruits in Tuscumbia, Mo., released 70 blue balloons outside the county courthouse to draw attention to the plight of abused children.
-- In March, Providence, R.I., AmeriCorps members at the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence hosted a hip hop/poetry competition.
-- Members of a Nevada AmeriCorps program busy themselves these days by encouraging local residents to drink tap water and watch out for bears (“bear awareness”).
Member Management

How do we ensure with our varying responsibilities/roles that all of the AmeriCorps duties are completed correctly and in a timely fashion?
Member Management Systems

1. Enrollment/On-Boarding
2. Exit
3. Files and Key Documents
4. Member Activities
Enrollment/On-Boarding

• Member’s first introduction to your program
  - Needs to be organized and seamless
• Important to have system in place to ensure all start-up documents are signed and dated in appropriate time frame.
Enrollment/On-Boarding

1. Member Eligibility - NSCHC
2. Member Eligibility – Other Factors
3. Member Program Enrollment
4. Healthcare and Child Care Enrollment
Member Eligibility

- NSCHC
- Age
- Education Verification
- Citizenship
- Minimum Tutoring Qualifications (as applicable)
National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC)

- CFR §2540.200 – §2540.207
- NSCHC Conference Offerings
  - Tomorrow from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. or 1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.
## NSCHC Review

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<th>Term</th>
<th>Enrollment Date</th>
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<th>State of Service Initiated</th>
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<th>Application State</th>
<th>Out of State Initiated</th>
<th>Out of State Completed</th>
<th>FBI Check Initiated</th>
<th>FBI Check Completed</th>
<th>Initial NSCHC Email Sent</th>
<th>Final NSCHC Email Sent</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**System to track member and grant-funded staff (cash and in-kind)**

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## Member Eligibility

| Age | ✓ 17 years of age or older (If 17, need parental consent).  
   | ✓ No upper age limit |
| --- | --- |
| High School | ✓ High school graduate or GED recipient agree to obtain a high school diploma or GED before utilizing the education award. |
| Citizenship | ✓ U.S. Citizen or lawful permanent resident |
Member Eligibility - Citizenship

• U.S. birth certificate, U.S. passport or lawful permanent resident card
• CFR §2522.200 lists the document numbers along with the CaliforniaVolunteers member file review checklist.
• I-9 documentation does not meet the citizenship regulation in most cases
## Member Eligibility – Tutoring Requirements

<table>
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<th>If the tutor is:</th>
<th>Then the tutor must meet the following qualifications:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is considered to be an employee of the Local Education Agency or school, as</td>
<td>Paraprofessional qualifications under No Child Left Behind Act, as required in 34 CFR 200.58</td>
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<tr>
<td>determined by State law</td>
<td>(1) High School diploma or its equivalent, or a higher degree; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Successful completion of pre- and in-service specialized training, as required in §2522.940 of this subpart.</td>
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</table>
eGrants Enrollment

• Multi-part process through eGrants
  – Invite member,
  – member fills out enrollment form, and
  – program completes enrollment form

• Compliance
  – completed by all parties within 30 calendar days
  – matches member service agreement and timesheets

• Members must complete their portion per regulations
Member Healthcare

- Must be provided for full-time members. Can make available for less than full-time members serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period of time.

- Member healthcare options
  1. Staying on their spouse’s plan or if they are under 26, they can stay on their parent’s policy
  2. Enroll in the program provided healthcare
  3. Enroll in healthcare from the marketplace that is a bronze level minimum

- Program provided healthcare must meet minimum essential coverage and requirements of ACA.
Childcare

• Must be available for full-time members.

• Qualification Requirements
  1. Parent or legal guardian of, or is acting in loco parentis for, a child under 13 who resides with the member;
  2. Has a family income that does not exceed 75% of the State’s median income for a family of the same size;
  3. Time of acceptance into the program, is not currently receiving childcare assistance from another source, including a parent or guardian, which would continue to be provided while the member serves in the program; and
  4. Certifies that he/she needs childcare in order to serve in the program.
Enrollment/On-Boarding

Must take place prior to start of service or by first day of service:

- National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC) - prior to start of service
- Verify Member eligibility to serve – age, citizenship, social security authorization, high school diploma

Must take place within a set time period after start of service:

- E-grants enrollment within 30 calendar days – imperative since this notifies the trust of the number of members serving across the country.
- Healthcare enrollment – if member is full-time and chooses the AmeriCorps healthcare plan.
- Child Care enrollment – if member is full-time and meets eligibility

* Please note: new forms must be completed for every term a member serves.
Enrollment/On-Boarding

**Program Example #1**

- NSCHC initiated when member accepts position (NSOPW and state of service check)
- Two enrollment session options in week prior to start date
  - Essential documents signed and copied
  - FBI Fingerprinting
- Member service agreement signed during first day of pre-service training

**Program Example #2**

- Essential documents are copied during interview (i.e. SS card, BC/passport, and DL)
- Two enrollment session options (3 hours)
- Enrollment packets with all required paperwork and member service agreement
- NSOPW and State of Service check immediately after interview
- Out of State and Fingerprints initiated in advance to ensure member is cleared by start of service.
Exits – Member Evaluations (§2522.220)

• End of term evaluations required of all members
• Mid-term evaluations are required for half-time and full-time members
• End of Term Evaluations must include the following:
  1. Whether the member has completed the required number of hours as outlined in member service agreement;
  2. Whether the member has satisfactorily completed assignments, tasks or projects; and
  3. Whether the member has met any other performance criteria which had been clearly communicated both orally and in writing at the beginning of the term of service.
  4. Signatures and dates by the member and their supervisor/program leader.
eGrants Exit

• Compliance – must be completed within 30 calendar days

• Exit Form – program must unlock member exit form if serving less than 12 month term, member fills out exit form and program completes exit form

• Members must complete their portion per new regulations

• Must match member service agreement and member timesheets
Exits

Must take place **prior to exit of service or on exit date:**

• Member End of Term Performance Evaluation

Must take place **within a time period after exit from service:**

• E-Grants exit within 30 calendar days – imperative since this notifies the trust of the number of members serving across the country.

• Healthcare exit – if member is full-time and chose the AmeriCorps healthcare plan.

• Child Care exit as applicable

* Please note that new forms must be completed for every term a member serves.
Member Files – Required Docs

• Application
• Previous Term of Service (if applicable)
• Enrollment Form
• Eligibility Document Copies – age and citizenship/naturalization/resident alien)
• Emergency Notification Form (can be in MSA)
• CV NSCHC Verification Form / clearance letters from HR
• NSOPW.gov printed results
• Publicity Release Form (can be in MSA)

Please note that new forms must be completed for every term a member serves.
Member Files – Required Docs

- Member Service Agreement (MSA)
- Timesheets
- W-4 – unless Education Award Only member
- Healthcare Enrollment/Waiver Form (full-time only)
- Childcare Enrollment/Waiver Form (full-time only)
- Parental Consent Form (if applicable)
- Performance Evaluation(s) Mid-Term (full and half-time only) /End of Term (All, even if member leaves early)
- Exit Form
- Discipline Documentation (if applicable)
- Documentation of compelling personal circumstances (if applicable)

Please note that new forms must be completed for every term a member serves.
Member Files – Recommended Docs

- Interview Forms
- Written Reference Checks
- Phone Reference Check
- Enrollment Checklist
- Social Networking Policy Form
- Transportation Form (if transport clients)
- Letters/Correspondences
- Exit Checklist
- Completion/Termination Letter

Please note that new forms must be completed for every term a member serves.
## Member Files Management

### Member Files 2015-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Service Site</th>
<th>My AmC Invite</th>
<th>My AmC Enr.</th>
<th>App.</th>
<th>Ref. 1</th>
<th>Previous Term</th>
<th>NSCHC Consent</th>
<th>I-9</th>
<th>W-4</th>
<th>BC/P</th>
<th>SS Card</th>
<th>DL</th>
<th>Enroll Form</th>
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## Member Files Management

Spreadsheet Tracker with Required Member Service Documents

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Member Service Agreements

Contract between Member and Program

- Signed and dated by both member and program staff
- Service start and end dates
- Member qualifications
- Terms of service for successful program completion
- Member benefits and policies
- Code of Conduct
- Prohibited Activities
- Non-discrimination policy, harassment policy, grievance policy, non-duplication and non-displacement, and drug-free workplace
Member Service Agreements

OneStar Foundation Data Alignment Chart -
http://onestarfoundation.org/americorps/texas/grantee-resources/
Member File Audit Activity

• Review sample member file.
• Make note of any compliance issues on the provided worksheet.
Member Timesheets/Service Logs

• Federal document - any misrepresentation is Federal fraud

• Document member service hours

• Differentiate between service, training and fundraising hours
  – no more than 20% aggregate time for training (§2520.50)
  – no more than 10% of member’s time to fundraising – only with approved fundraising performance measure
Member Timesheets/Service Logs

Training Hours

• Full-time member
• 1,705 total hours
• 250 training hours
• 15% of individual training time

• Quarter-time member
• 460 total hours
• 100 training hours
• 22% of individual training time

AmeriCorps Advantage: CaliforniaVolunteers 2017 Grantee Training Conference
Member Timesheets/Service Logs

Training Hours

Total Corps Service Hours: 1,705 + 460 = 2,165
Total Corps Training Hours: 250 + 100 = 350
Aggregate Training Hours Percentage: 350/2,165 = 16.2%
Member Timesheets/Service Logs

- Member and supervisor signature and date
- Match enrollment and exit dates in eGrants along with member service agreement dates
- Match hours entered in eGrants when exiting member
- Accurate hours representing actual time served
Member Timesheets/Service Logs

• Descriptions of service must align with approved grant activities
  – No prohibited activities
  – No questionable/unallowable activities

• Align with member living allowance period
Sample Timesheet Work Flow

AmeriCorps member completes timesheet and electronically signs and dates certifying accuracy of hours.

If applicable, AmeriCorps member supervisor reviews and verifies timesheet hours and descriptions. Supervisor signs and dates certifying review and approval of hours.

Program Leader reviews and verifies timesheet hours and descriptions. Program Leader signs and dates certifying review and approval of hours.

After approval, Program Leaders prints timesheet and places in member file.
### AmeriCorps Timesheet Tracking Form #1

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<th>First Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>9/4 to 9/30</th>
<th>10/1 to 10/31</th>
<th>11/1 to 11/30</th>
<th>12/1 to 12/31</th>
<th>1/1 to 1/31</th>
<th>2/1 to 2/28</th>
<th>Hours ahead or behind as of 1/31/13</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
<th>Rem. Hours</th>
<th>Warn Letter</th>
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<th>Exit Date</th>
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<td>909.00</td>
<td>9/4/12</td>
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</table>

### AmeriCorps Timesheet Tracking Form #2

| No. | Last Name | First Name | Term | Week 1 Trg | Fund | Direct | Total | Week 2 Trg | Fund | Direct | Total | Trg Hours | Month Total | Prev. Hours | Total Hours | Hours Remain | Total Fund | Percent Fund |
|-----|-----------|------------|------|------------|------|--------|-------|------------|------|--------|-------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1   | Bueller   | Ferris     | EAO  | 3.00       | 0.00 | 20.00  | 23.00 | 0.00       | 0.00 | 25.00  | 25.00 | 3.00      | 48.00       | 225.00      | 273.00      | 177.00      | 0.00        | 0.00%        |
| 2   | Kent      | Clark      | FT   | 6.00       | 0.00 | 43.00  | 49.00 | 0.00       | 0.00 | 37.25  | 37.25 | 6.00      | 86.25       | 498.25      | 584.50      | 1,115.50    | 0.00        | 0.00%        |
| 3   | Parker    | Peter      | PT   | 3.00       | 0.00 | 22.00  | 25.00 | 0.00       | 0.00 | 26.00  | 26.00 | 3.00      | 51.00       | 634.00      | 685.00      | 215.00      | 0.00        | 0.00%        |

- **Total Training Hours**: 12.00
- **Total Hours**: 1,542.50
- **Percentage of Training Hours**: 0.78%
Member Activities

Allowable, Unallowable, and Prohibited
Implications

1. Costs are questioned
   - Money paid back

2. Time is questioned
   - Members may lose time that they served which means less hours towards that education award.

3. Perception is people’s reality
   - If people or groups perceive you to be doing wrong even though you were not trying to so, it could risk your program and AmeriCorps as a whole.
Member Activities

Prohibited Activities
AmeriCorps members may not engage directly in very specific activities or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities on the list that follows.
Prohibited Activities

a. Attempting to influence legislation;
b. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
c. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
d. Impairing existing contracts for services
Prohibited Activities

e. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;

f. 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;

g. 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;
Prohibited Activities

h. Providing a direct benefit to—
   i. A business organized for profit;
   ii. A labor union;
   iii. A partisan political organization;
   iv. 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 9 provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
   v. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph g, unless CNCS assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
Prohibited Activities

i. Conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive;

j. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and

k. Such other activities as CNCS may prohibit
Member Activities

Unallowable Activities
Activities that fall outside the scope of the approved grant, performance measures, and position description.
Unallowable Activities

- Member training that exceeds the 20 percent aggregate rule
- Federal and State Assistance that serves as the sole activity of a member — “for the sole purpose of referring individuals to Federal assistance programs or State assistance programs funded in part by the Federal Government.”
- Activities that would violate the non-duplication and non-displacement requirements
Unallowable Activities

a. Non-duplication

Corporation assistance **may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available** in the locality of a program. And, unless the requirements of paragraph (f) of this section are met, Corporation 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.
Unallowable Activities

b. Non-displacement
   i. 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 Corporation assistance.
   ii. An organization **may not displace a volunteer** by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
   iii. A service opportunity will **not** be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
Unallowable Activities

b. Non-displacement (continued)

iv. A participant in a program receiving Corporation 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.

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

b. Non-displacement (continued)

vi. 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—

1. Presently employed worker;
2. Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
3. Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
4. Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
5. Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.
Unallowable Activities

Using Team Leaders in a staff capacity i.e. supervising members, program development and coordination, signing member timesheets, evaluating member performance, disciplining AmeriCorps members, enrolling/dismissing AmeriCorps members, writing and/or signing program reports, managing the program’s payroll and budget, to name a few.
Unallowable Activities

• Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment;
• Write a grant application to the Corporation or to any other Federal agency.
• Spend more than 10% of term of service performing fundraising activities - focused ONLY on raising resources directly in support of program service activities (must have a fundraising performance measure)
• Such other activities as CNCS may determine unallowable
Member Activities

Allowable Activities

Activities that are consistent with the approved performance measurements, grant application, program documents, budget, and larger national priorities.
Allowable Activities

• Clearly outlined in approved member position descriptions and performance measures
• Reasonable
• Conforms to all the rules, regulations, and notice of funding requirements
• Adequately documented
Member Activities

Activity Time!!
Getting Off to a Strong Start
AmeriCorps Advantage: CaliforniaVolunteers 2017 Grantee Training Conference
Getting Off to a Strong Start

• Distribute 3 colored strips to each individual at your table.

• On each strip of paper, list one of your top program needs or member attributes needed for success in your program.

• If you need inspiration the small envelope has some examples.
Getting Off to a Strong Start

• Open the large envelope and match interviews questions to your attributes.

• Share your attributes and matched questions with your table.
Interview Questions

Traditional

- Open-ended questions
- Hypothetical and personality type questions

Behavioral

- Emphasize past performance
- Elicit detailed responses
Getting Off to a Strong Start

• It is important to match interview questions with identified member attributes and/or program needs.

• Don’t forget to update the questions each year.

• Remember that interviewing for members should be different than interviewing for staff.
Member Attributes & Interview Questions

Dedication:
1. Tell us about a situation that you had to break a commitment for and why.
2. What types of non-monetary rewards are most meaningful to you?

Maturity:
3. Tell us about a situation that you had to follow strict policies and procedures even if you disagreed with them.
4. How do you handle circumstances at work that make you feel temperamental or cynical?

Teamwork:
5. Tell us about the most difficult challenge you’ve faced in trying to work cooperatively with someone who did not share the same ideas as you.
6. What is the difficult part of being a member, not a leader, of a team?

Working with “at-risk” Youth:
7. Working with youth can be challenging. Tell us about some of the challenges you might encounter when working with youth in general.
8. How will you initiate a new relationship with a student?
Interview Rating Form

Please rate the applicant based on the following system. Please remember, do not discuss this with your interview partner. We need your response to the candidate.

1. **General/Motivation (Questions 1-3)**
   Ability to describe their personal reasons for joining AmeriCorps and what their strengths and weaknesses are:
   
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2. **Initiative (Question 4-5)**
   Ability to show initiative in previous workplace settings:

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3. **Dedication (Question 6-7)**
   Ability to show commitment to a project:

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4. **Maturity (Question 8-9)**
   Ability to show maturity in a workplace setting:

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5. **Teamwork (Questions 10-11)**
   Ability to show an understanding of teamwork skills:

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6. **Working with “at-risk” Youth (Questions 12-13)**
   Awareness of educational issues and ability to adapt leadership in different situations:

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7. **Problem Solving Skills (Questions 14-16)**
   Ability to problem solve and operate in various situations:

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Interview Process

Program Example #1
- My AmeriCorps application
- Screen applicants for basic requirements
- PowerPoint orientation sent to applicants and they must complete initial interview w/in 7 days via email or they are dropped
- Initial interviews are vetted by a 3-member committee (those that did not respond receive an e-mail survey)
- In-person or phone interview (45 minutes)
- Phone reference checks
- Review pool and make decisions

Program Example #2
- Program-developed AmeriCorps application
- Application Pre-Screen
- Orientation video prior to AmeriCorps staff interview
- AmeriCorps staff interview (1 hour)
- Match applicant to campus needs and applicant preferences
- Second interview with site supervisor
- Phone reference checks
- Review pool and make decisions
# AmeriCorps Service Calendar

## September 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016

### Mandatory Days of Service

- Make a Difference Day: Oct
- Austin AmeriCorps Awareness Day: April
- MLK Day: Jan
- Thanksgiving All Staff: Nov
- AmC Recognition Ceremony: June
- AmC Amazing Race: Mar
- United Way Day: Oct

### Program Year Calendar

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<th>Part-time</th>
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<th>Yr</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
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<td>910</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>178</td>
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</table>

### Legend

- **Enroll**
- **Exit**
- **Training**
- **Holiday**

In order to successfully complete an AmeriCorps term of service and to be eligible for the education award, members must complete a minimum of 1,700 hours (part-time) or 800 hours (full-time), attend three Mandatory Days of Service, and all resource days/trainings as mandated by the program.
Program Benefits
Program Benefits

BENEFITS OF FULL TIME SERVICE IN ACE

Yes, you are about to start on a year of service where you will be paid less per month than a typical job for a college graduate. However, we want to reframe this conversation and have listed here what we consider to be meaningful, once in a lifetime benefits of a year of service in ACE.

1. A full time, meaningful experience that allows you to learn new skills, take on more responsibility than a typical “first job”, and engage with your community in intensive and effective ways.

2. Health insurance.

3. Loan deferment and payment of interest accrued (as applicable).

4. Staff dedicated to YOU and your experience. This is not typical in most first time jobs.

5. Most people don’t save $6660 toward education loans or future tuition in their first job.

6. Another way to look at this is if you add the stipend ($12,100), education award ($5660), and benefits (health insurance, workers comp @ $1600), across the 1700 hours, the “per hour” benefits of service come to $11.26 /hour, not counting any interest accrual payment.

7. Networking opportunities during year of service, and potential excellent recommendations from staff for future employment, graduate school, Teach for America, Peace Corps, Fulbright, Mitchell, Marshall Scholarships, etc.

8. The opportunity to take part in a full year of service with pay—this is still a limited opportunity in America.

9. The nicest staff you will ever have the chance to work with and for!
Poll

Our program keeps in touch with applicants once they are accepted?
Getting the Right Team

Keeping Applicants Engaged

✓ Welcome packets and welcome letters
✓ Google group for all local AmeriCorps programs
✓ Facebook groups
✓ Postcards
✓ Current member calls or emails

AmeriCorps Advantage: CaliforniaVolunteers 2017 Grantee Training Conference
http://www.californiavolunteers.org/granteecentral/

Grantee Central

Welcome to Grantee Central!
This portion of our website is being constructed with you, the program staff, in mind. Its primary purpose is to help you successfully operate an AmeriCorps.
Whenever you have a question or concern related to the contents herein, please do not hesitate to contact your CaliforniaVolunteers Program Officer.

AMERICORPS IN CALIFORNIA
Contact Information for 2015-2016 California CV AmeriCorps Sub-Grantees.
View Full Portfolio »

ANNUAL AMERICORPS CONFERENCE
Each year CaliforniaVolunteers hosts the Annual AmeriCorps Conference for current California grantees.
View Most Recent »
View All Past Conferences »

Contracting Documents
All documents for contracting can be found in the link below. Complete the contract checklist and attach it as a cover page along with copies of required Hardcopy Documents. All Hardcopy Documents must be clearly labeled and placed in the order listed on the contract checklist.
Send hardcopy materials to:
ATTN: AmeriCorps Contracting
CaliforniaVolunteers
1400 10th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
View Contracting Documents »
Program Monitoring & Implementation Resources

AmeriCorps Program Readiness Resources

There are many systems that an AmeriCorps grantee would need to develop in order to manage a high quality program that is in compliance with grant requirements. The AmeriCorps Program Readiness Resources are provided for training purposes and are offered as supports as you design or update materials for your particular program.

View Program Readiness Resources

National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC) Resources

Under the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended by the Serve America Act (SAA), AmeriCorps grantees must conduct National Service Criminal History checks on all covered employees and AmeriCorps members who receive a salary, national service education award, living allowance, or stipend under CNCS grants, even if the activities don't involve service with vulnerable populations. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such CNCS funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder.

Grantees must have a written criminal background check policy and procedure that ensures the minimum CNCS and CV requirements are met as outlined in Exhibit H, "National Service Criminal History Checks Certification Form." Exhibit H describes CaliforniaVolunteers’ NSCHC policy, which include requirements that exceed the minimum federal requirements.

Below are resources to help your program meet National Service Criminal History Check requirements for AmeriCorps members and staff working on the grant. Follow the CV NSCHC Steps Checklist to ensure all required steps are completed. Use the Background Check Tracker to track checks for all AmeriCorps members and covered staff. The CV NSCHC Verification Form can be used as documentation that staff and member checks have been completed correctly. All other items are for reference. Contact your PO if you have questions.

Please note: CaliforniaVolunteers NSCHC requirements exceed the minimum federal requirements established by CNCS. CaliforniaVolunteers’ NSCHC policy is found on page 2 of the CaliforniaVolunteers National Service Criminal History Check Guide. Please keep this in mind when reviewing CNCS FAQs and NSCHC resources as not all information provided by CNCS applies to CV AmeriCorps State programs (e.g. accompaniment or timing of when State and FBI checks must be initiated and cleared, etc.).

- Demonstrating Compliance with Criminal History Check Requirements
- CV NSCHC Verification Form and Steps Checklist
- Background Check Tracker
- CV Criminal History Checks Guide
- NSCHC Frequently Asked Questions
  - NSCHC Vendors Guide
- Current Pre-Approved ASPs
- CV Supplemental Information on Staff Criminal History Checks

Monitoring Tools

Member & Covered Staff Background Check Tracker
This form is used to track and report compliance with criminal background check requirements. Member files must contain all background evidence available for review upon request. See Program Operational Calendar for due date.

Member File and Program Readiness Checklist
This checklist is used to ensure member files and program readiness documents contain the required items. A standalone Member File Checklist can be found here.
Core Elements of Effective Oversight

1. Annual Review of Key Documents
2. Strong Program Design and Aligned Measures
3. Extensive, Regular, and Impactful Site, Member and Staff Training
4. Detailed Member Position Descriptions, Member Service Agreements, and Site Agreements
5. Regular and Thorough Monitoring Procedures and Systems
6. Frequent Communication with staff, sites, members and State Commission
7. Buy in to the Big Picture and the Program
Thank you!

Jennifer Cowart
jeftsconsulting@gmail.com
956-827-5298