

Program Civil Rights and Non-Harassment Policy

AmeriCorps is committed to advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, and equal opportunity. AmeriCorps affirms these government-wide principles while committing to treating all persons who participate in our programs with dignity and respect. AmeriCorps maintains zero tolerance for unlawful harassment or discrimination against any individual or groups engaged in national service and maintains diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible service environments for all participants.

AmeriCorps expects the same commitment from all Recipients of its financial or service member/volunteer assistance, including associated individuals, organizations, programs, and projects. This policy is incorporated by reference into the terms and conditions for receiving AmeriCorps financial and service member/volunteer assistance, inclusive of sub-grantees. Recipients are expected to notify service members and volunteers of their rights under this policy.

In accordance with applicable laws and regulations, AmeriCorps prohibits all forms of discrimination and harassment based on the protected categories of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability (mental or physical), gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or parental status, pregnancy, genetic information (including family medical history), military service, or their submission of a complaint.

Retaliation is defined as the adverse actions taken against recipients for exercising their rights under federal law. Retaliation is prohibited against either an individual or a program. All programs administered by, or receiving, federal financial or service member/volunteer assistance from AmeriCorps must be free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. Harassment is defined as any unwelcome conduct that is based on any of the protected categories or done in reprisal for opposing discrimination or participating in the discrimination complaint process, when such behavior has the purpose or effect of interfering with service performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive service environment.

Harassment may include slurs and other verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual's gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected category. Examples of harassing conduct include but are not limited to: explicit or implicit demands for sexual favors; pressure to engage in a romantic relationship or for dates; deliberate touching of another person without consent, leaning over, or cornering a person; repeated offensive teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions; unwanted letters, text messages, emails, or phone calls; distribution or display of offensive materials, including on social media; offensive looks or gestures; gender, racial, ethnic, or religious baiting. Harassment can also include physical assault or other threatening behavior; and demeaning, debasing, or abusive comments or actions that intimidate.

AmeriCorps does not tolerate discrimination and harassment from anyone, including Recipients, AmeriCorps employees or supervisors, project or site employees and supervisors, project or site non-employees (e.g., contractors or clients of a project or site), or national service participants. Harassment is unacceptable in AmeriCorps' offices or campuses, and in other service-related settings such as convenings, training sessions, service sites, and at



service-related social events (whether in person or online). Any discrimination or harassment, when substantiated, will result in corrective action up to and including removal or termination of any individual engaging in such misconduct.

AmeriCorps Recipients permitting discrimination or harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to a finding of non-compliance, which may result in termination of federal financial assistance.

Recipients are expected to take prompt action to effectively address service member and volunteer complaints. Recipients must immediately investigate complaints of discrimination or harassment and take appropriate measures to remedy the situation. Supervisors and managers of AmeriCorps programs and projects, when made aware of alleged discrimination or harassment by employees, service members and volunteers, or any other associated individuals, must report the matter to the personnel in the Recipient's organization who are responsible for investigating such claims or to AmeriCorps' Civil Rights and Employment Branch. This branch conducts service member and volunteer discrimination and harassment inquiries.

AmeriCorps prohibits any retaliatory action against a person who raises discrimination or harassment concerns.

Service members and volunteers who believe they were subjected to treatment in violation of any civil rights laws, regulations, or this policy, or have been subject to retaliation for opposing discrimination or participating in discrimination complaint proceedings (e.g., filing a complainant or acting as a witness) in any AmeriCorps program or project, may contact AmeriCorps' Civil Rights and Employment Branch at (202) 606-3461 or eo@americorps.gov. Service members and volunteers must contact AmeriCorps' Civil Rights and Employment Branch within 45 calendar days of an occurrence of discrimination or harassing conduct to initiate an inquiry.

Service members and volunteers are not required to use a program, project, or sponsor dispute resolution process before contacting AmeriCorps' Civil Rights and Employment Branch. While Recipients are expected to take prompt action to effectively address service member and volunteer complaints, Recipients cannot institute policies requiring any such matters be handled "in house." If a service member or volunteer chooses to pursue another dispute resolution or complaint procedure, it does not suspend the 45 calendar-day time limit for contacting AmeriCorps' Civil Rights and Employment Branch. Discrimination and harassment claims must be brought to the attention of CRE within 45 calendar days of the occurrence or the knowledge and discovery of the occurrence giving rise to the claim. Claims pursued after this timeframe may not be accepted for investigation of a formal complaint of discrimination. Service members, volunteers, and Recipients may contact AmeriCorps' Civil Rights and Employment Branch at eo@americorps.gov for information or assistance.

November 7, 2023

Date

Michael D. Smith
Chief Executive Officer
AmeriCorps