AmeriCorps State and National Academy Course Transcript

This document contains all audio and written content from all six AmeriCorps State and National (ASN) Academy online courses:

- ASN 101: Introduction to AmeriCorps State and National
- ASN 201: ASN Grants
- ASN 301: Restrictions, Requirements, and Regulations
- ASN 401: AmeriCorps Members
- ASN 501: State Service Commissions
- ASN 601: Applying for an ASN Grant

Use the table of contents on the following page to navigate to each course.

Contents

ASN 101: Introduction to AmeriCorps State and National

Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to ASN 101, an introduction to AmeriCorps State and National. This course includes audio with transcript. Would you like help navigating this course?

- Yes, show me around.
- No, let's dive in.

Navigation

At the top left of your screen, you can view the course menu to see your progress, and you can view the transcript for each slide. You can also collapse the menu. On the bottom of the screen, there are buttons that let you play or pause a slide, replay a slide, adjust the volume, turn on closed captioning, and move to the next or previous slide. Lastly, The Resource tab in the upper right-hand corner of the screen contains links and additional materials and is accessible throughout the training. If you need to take a break and come back to this course, don't worry. Your progress will be saved. Click the Replay button to play this navigation again or hit the Next button to begin.

Course Outline

In this course, you'll learn about AmeriCorps the federal agency, AmeriCorps State and National, one of AmeriCorps programs, and you'll explore examples of AmeriCorps state and National Programs, before ending with an overview of our governing authorities. This is a foundational introduction. You can deep dive into the topics you'll be introduced to in this course in later courses.

Question for You

On a scale from 1-5, how familiar are you with AmeriCorps? Select a number.

1. Welcome! By the end of this course, you won't feel new. You'll have a clear picture of who AmeriCorps is and how AmeriCorps works. Click NEXT to dive in.
2. So you're still pretty new to AmeriCorps. At the end of this course, you'll have a clear picture of who AmeriCorps is and how AmeriCorps works. Click NEXT to dive in.
3. Alright, right in the middle. This course will reinforce the foundation of what you already know about AmeriCorps. You might pick up something new! Click NEXT to dive in.
4. If AmeriCorps were a university, you'd be in your senior year. This course will reenforce the foundation of what you already know about AmeriCorps. You might pick up something new! Click NEXT to dive in.
5. Alright, savant! This course can give you a refresh of the basics about AmeriCorps. Take a look at the other courses about AmeriCorps for more advanced topics. Click NEXT to dive in.

AmeriCorps

Mission and Purpose

AmeriCorps is the federal agency for national service and volunteerism. Our mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Our purpose: to bring out the best of America. Each year, the agency places more than 200,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in intensive service roles; and empowers millions more to serve as long-term, short-term, or one-time volunteers.

What is AmeriCorps?

Watch the video [What is AmeriCorps?](#)

Four Pillars

Uniting America Through Service. We invite individuals to serve alongside each other for the betterment of every community. Click on each column to reveal AmeriCorps' 4 pillars.

1. **Unite** - We bridge divides by bringing people together, connecting individuals and organizations to help communities tackle their toughest challenges.
2. **Strengthen** - We provide resources and people power to organizations dedicated to the improvement of communities.
3. **Impact** - We enrich the lives of those we serve and those who serve.
4. **Lead** - We are the only federal agency for community service and volunteerism. We empower an entire ecosystem committed to the betterment of communities across America.

By the Numbers

Click the images to see some of AmeriCorps' annual statistics.

- 800 million – Amount of grant funds awarded every year.
- 35 thousand – Locations served across the country.
- 1.8 billion – Hours served.
- 200 thousand - Members and volunteers serving.

Focus Areas

For decades, we have worked to make service to others an indispensable part of the American experience. Through our nation's most trying times, AmeriCorps has come together to help those in need.

Click on the 6 photo circles above to read more.

1. **Disaster Services -** When disaster strikes, we repair homes, assist survivors, and help restore communities when it matters most. We have deployed thousands of members and volunteers to areas affected by hurricanes, wildfires, floods, and tornadoes.
2. **Economic Opportunity** - Our programs serve as a pathway to employment opportunities and help develop vital work skills. We build and rehabilitate affordable housing, provide financial literacy training, and connect people to jobs.
3. **Education** - More than 35,000 members and volunteers support students in nearly 9,500 public, private, and charter schools across the country. Through our work we

improve attendance and engagement, increase high-school graduation rates, and expand college enrollment.

4. **Environmental Stewardship** - We serve on projects that cover thousands of acres of public lands across America – including many with the National Park Service. We help conserve natural habitats, protect clean air and water, and reduce utility bills by improving home energy efficiency.

5. **Healthy Futures** - We provide independent living services to 310,000 elderly Americans. We also build the capacity of food banks, combat the opioid crisis, tackle homelessness, and address food insecurity.

6. **Veterans and Military Families** - We provide assistance to nearly 245,000 veterans and military families by connecting them to education opportunities, jobs, and the benefits they have earned. Many veterans also volunteer with us so they can continue to serve their country.

AmeriCorps Programs

Click each program to hear how the different AmeriCorps programs partner with organizations to best serve their communities' needs.

- **AMERICORPS STATE AND NATIONAL** - AmeriCorps State and National, our largest program, provides grants to organizations, Native Nations, and local and state agencies so they can develop projects and deliver services with AmeriCorps members.

- **VISTA** - VISTA, or Volunteers in Service to America is an anti-poverty program that provides opportunities for Americans 18 years or older to dedicate a year of full-time service with an organization to create or expand programs designed to empower individuals and communities in overcoming poverty.

- **NCCC** - NCCC, or National Civilian Community Corps, is a full-time, team-based service program for 18-26 year-olds. Members are assigned to a region of the country, live on a regional campus with their team, and complete short-term projects in their region of the country. If you ever see an AmeriCorps passenger van, rest assured knowing a team of NCCC members is heading out to live in the communities they serve and make a difference.

- **AMERICORPS SENIORS** - Our AmeriCorps Seniors programs engage Americans ages 55 and older to serve their communities. The Foster Grandparent program gives one-on-one support to children with special needs to improve their academic, social, or emotional development. RSVP, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, gives volunteer service to organizations that fall under our impact areas. The Senior Companion volunteers help older adults with special needs maintain their dignity and independence.

- **VOLUNTEER GENERATION FUND** - The Volunteer Generation Fund helps nonprofit organizations to recruit and retain volunteers to meet critical community needs.

- **DAYS OF SERVICE** - AmeriCorps offers funding for two days of service: September 11th Day of Service and Remembrance and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. The purpose of the September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance grant funding is to mobilize more Americans to engage in service activities that meet vital

community needs and honor the sacrifice of those who lost their lives or family members on September 11, 2001, or who rose in service as a result of that tragedy. The purpose of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service grant funding is to mobilize more Americans to observe the Martin Luther King Jr. federal holiday as a day of service in communities, to encourage those who serve on this holiday to make a long-term commitment to community service, and to bring people together to focus on service to others.

- **RESEARCH GRANTS** - Partners can also apply for research grants through our Office of Research and Evaluation.

Knowledge Check

Which AmeriCorps program provides grants to organizations, Native Nations, and local and state agencies so they can develop projects and deliver services with AmeriCorps members?

- **AmeriCorps State and National (Correct)**
- VISTA
- NCCC
- AmeriCorps Seniors

AmeriCorps State and National

How AmeriCorps State and National Works

AmeriCorps State and National is a federal grant maker. We give money to organizations, Indian tribes, and local governments who know what their communities need and know how to help. Grantees identify their community need, then design an AmeriCorps program that leverage people power as a solution. These people are AmeriCorps members. Grantees recruit, train and manage AmeriCorps members to implement their programs in their communities.

Members

Members, or volunteers, may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. After their service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award that they can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply for qualified student loans. Since 1994, more than 1 million individuals have provided service as AmeriCorps members.

Service Types

With a State and National grant, you can build a unique program that addresses your community's needs. Programs can deliver direct services that support existing programs, and programs can focus on capacity building services, reaching previously underserved communities. Click on the images above to see examples of these two types of services:

Direct services can look like:

- Tutor children in reading as a literacy coach.
- Engage in community clean-up projects.
- Provide relief services to a community affected by disaster.

Capacity building programs can look like:

- Strengthen volunteer management and recruitment.
- Help build the infrastructure of the sponsoring organization.
- Develop collaborative relationships with other organizations working to achieve similar goals in the community.

Important Notes

Important to note: AmeriCorps programs don't take the place of resources that already exist. Our funds can't be used to duplicate or replace resources that already exist. AmeriCorps is here to help you meet unmet needs and expand your abilities.

What's in a Name?

So why are we called AmeriCorps State and National? Where does the State and National part come from? It has to do with who receives funding and how we distribute funds. Click Next.

Ways to Apply

There are 2 ways two apply for an AmeriCorps State and National grant:

Option 1. If your program addresses community needs in at least 2 states, you apply directly to AmeriCorps. We call these applicants National Directs. National Direct Applicants include:

- Multi-state programs,
- States and Territories without State Service Commissions – like South Dakota, American Samoa, and the US Virgin Islands.
- And Federally recognized Indian Tribes.

Option 2. If your program addresses a need in only 1 state, you apply through your state or territory's State Service Commission. The State Service Commission receives funding from AmeriCorps, and then the State Service Commission awards funds to Single State Applicants.

Let's visualize this with a map. Click "Show me a map."

Map

Click on the two tabs above to visualize the application options on the map.

Option 1: National Direct. National Direct - AmeriCorps State and National gives funding directly from the agency to grantees across the country that serve communities in more than one state or territory. So a nonprofit based in Nevada may have an ASN program in Nevada and other states and territories.

Option 2: State Service Commissions. If a grantee is only operating in one state or territory, they get their ASN funding from their State Service Commissions. State Service Commissions are boards appointed by a state's governor to oversee the community service and volunteer initiatives in their state or US territory. ASN awards our funds to the Commissions, who then award those funds to programs in their state or territory. Not all states and territories have a Commission, so check the resource tab for a list of Commissions.

ASN's Name

Now we know where the name "State and National" comes from!" Let's explore the ASN grant types. Click Next.

ASN Grants

Here's a summary of ASN grant types. You'll learn more in the next course, ASN 201: ASN Grants.

- **Operational Grants** - To support the operation of AmeriCorps service programs that engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions/practices to strengthen communities.
- **Planning Grants** - To help a grantee plan and develop and AmeriCorps program. These do not have AmeriCorps members. It's used to see if an AmeriCorps grant is a good fit for their community.
- **Administrative Grants** - To support State Service Commission's duties, staffing, operations, capacity building and training. There are two types: Commission Support Grants (CSG) and Commission Investment Fund (CIF).
- **Native Nations Grants** - To support Tribal Nations in the operation of AmeriCorps service programs. These grants can be operational or planning.
- **Other Grants** - Other award types include Educational Award programs, Professional Corps programs and No Cost Slot awards.

Knowledge Check

If an AmeriCorps program is going to operate only in one state, does the organization apply for AmeriCorps funding directly to the Agency or through their State Service Commission?

- **They apply directly to AmeriCorps (Correct)**
- They apply through their State Service Commission.

ASN Program Examples

Explore the Programs

Click each character to learn about their programs.

Elizabeth - Elizabeth is a member of an Indian Tribe in California. Her Tribe is a federally recognized Tribal Government dedicated to protecting and promoting the interests of Indians and cooperating and collaborating with Federal, State, and local Governments. Elizabeth is also the director of an AmeriCorps program at the Hoopa Valley Tribe. Her program uses an AmeriCorps programmatic grant and 16 AmeriCorps members to serve and support over 100 seniors in the Hoopa Valley Tribe. AmeriCorps members give social support to seniors, improve their capacity for independent living and help prevent opioid and drug abuse. Elizabeth's AmeriCorps program aligns with the AmeriCorps focus areas of Healthy Futures and Economic Opportunity. Her program only operates in the state of California at the Hoopa Valley Reservation, but she didn't have to apply for an AmeriCorps grant through the California State Service Commission like other single-state programs. All federally recognized Indian Tribes can apply directly to AmeriCorps for grants.

Tim - Tim is a Program Director at Giving Heart in Knoxville, TN. Giving Heart is a nonprofit focused on alleviating hunger and increasing food security. Tim oversees over 200 AmeriCorps members who increase food supplies for over 6,000 people rural, distressed and other under-resourced communities in 26 states. Tim's AmeriCorps program is an example of our Healthy Futures focus area. Because their program serves people in more than one state, Giving Heart applied directly to AmeriCorps for their grant and are called a "National Direct" grantee.

Raven - Raven is the director of the Community Development Fellows program at the College of Southern Idaho. College of Southern Idaho is a public four-year college in Twin Falls, ID. Their Community Development Fellows program allows AmeriCorps alumni to pursue a graduate degree focused on rural community development. College of Southern Idaho's AmeriCorps program has 18 AmeriCorps members that create disaster response plans and help rural communities increase disaster response readiness. Raven's program has a direct impact on the AmeriCorps Disaster Services focus area. And since their program only serves people in the state of Idaho, Raven applied to the Idaho State Service Commission, Serve Idaho, to compete for their AmeriCorps grant.

Shalissa - Shalissa is a Program Officer at Serve Connecticut. Serve Connecticut is the State Service Commission for Connecticut. Established by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, Serve Connecticut administers service programs and is dedicated to service, volunteerism, and civic engagement in Connecticut. Serve Connecticut receives a Commission Support Grant (CSG) every year from AmeriCorps to help with the operations and duties of the Commission. This year, Shalissa plans to use the funds to implement a few key projects on their State Service Plan, including expanding their technical assistance support for community stakeholders. Serve Connecticut's Commission Support Grant (CSG) doesn't fall into our typical 6 focus areas. It's an administrative grant dedicated to operational support for the Commission. All Commissions are eligible for CSG grants every year. AmeriCorps awards the CSG funds to commissions based on their state populations, so there's no competition for funds.

Ben - Ben is the Director of the City of Pittsburgh's Department of Youth Programs. The Department of Youth Programs coordinates programs and activities for youth and children in the City of Pittsburgh. One of their programs, Pittsburgh Minds, sees AmeriCorps members work directly with over 500 high school juniors and seniors in low-income neighborhoods. AmeriCorps members help with tutoring, SAT and college prep, counseling, and more! The City of Pittsburgh's Pittsburgh Minds program has a huge impact on the Education focus area. As a municipality whose program only operates in Pennsylvania, the City of Pittsburgh applied for their AmeriCorps grant through their State Service Commission, PennSERVE.

Governing Authorities
Governing Authorities
Governing Authorities are the legally binding documents that detail all AmeriCorps policies, rules, and regulations, for the agency and our grantees. This interactive notebook gives you an overview of our governing authorities, and you can deep dive into these in another course.

AmeriCorps

Order Matters

The governing authorities have an order of precedence. From the left to the right, the tabs are in the order of precedence, starting with the Federal Statutes and ending with the approved application.

Federal Statutes – Federal statutes, or acts, are laws passed by Congress, usually with the approval of the President. The National and Community Service Act (NCSA) of 1990 is the public law that authorizes AmeriCorps and outlines the expectations and requirements for the services we provide.

Code of Federal Regulations – The Code of Federal Regulations, also called the CFR, is the codification of the rules published in the Federal Register by the U.S. Federal Government departments and agencies. The CFR includes a lot of titles, but the two titles you may find most useful are:

- Title 2 - Grants and Agreements, which applies to grantmaking at all federal agencies
- Title 45 - Public Welfare, which details AmeriCorps and it's programs

The best part of the CFR is it's all online!

Notice of Grant Award – When you are awarded an AmeriCorps grant, you receive an official Notice of Grant Award. That notice is like a binding contract between you and AmeriCorps and includes the details of your award.

ASN Terms and Conditions – Terms and conditions, also called T&C, are the legal agreements between AmeriCorps and grantees. We have two sets of Terms and Conditions. The first are the AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions. These are specific to the State and National program and grantees.

AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions – The second set of Terms and Conditions are the general AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions. These are applied to all AmeriCorps programs and grantees.

Notice of Funding Opportunity – A Notice of funding Opportunity outlines a specific grant opportunity. It's also called the Notice. It's a crucial document that tells you everything you need to know about who can apply for that grant, what the criteria is, and what the funding priorities are for the grant. Notice of Funding Opportunities can be found under each open grant on the AmeriCorps Funding Opportunities website.

Application Instructions – Along with the Notice are the Application Instructions. These are the detailed instructions for applying for a grant. Read and follow them carefully!

Approved Application - And finally, your Approved Application. You're approved application is the last piece of official governing authorities and falls at the end of the order of precedence. All the documents that have come before this tab take precedence.

How to Use the Governing Authorities

The Federal Statutes and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) take precedence over the Terms and Conditions and the Notice. When using the Terms and Conditions and the Notice, refer back to the CFR and Statutes for the principles guiding these documents. Click Next.

More Guidance

AmeriCorps provides a collection of guidance documents on AmeriCorps.gov that give helpful, additional explanations of information already outlined in the Governing Authorities. These guidance documents, unlike the Governing Authorities, do not have the effect of law. So you should always reference the original governing authorities, not just the guidance resources.

Conclusion

Quiz Instructions

Let's recap with a twist! You'll read a summary of an AmeriCorps program and then answer 4 questions based on everything you learned about AmeriCorps State and National.

Question 1

Jenny is a Program Director at a nonprofit in Boise, ID, called Idaho Conservancy. They raise awareness for urgent climate issues in underserved communities and aims to lower energy use and energy costs for low-income households. As a Program Director, Jenny runs an AmeriCorps program that partners AmeriCorps members with colleges and community organizations in Idaho to increase energy efficiency and improve at-risk ecosystems for underserved households and communities. The AmeriCorps members that Jenny supervises host environmental education events, conduct home energy assessments, and implement low-tech home energy interventions. The Idaho Conservancy AmeriCorps program advances public knowledge and increase motivation to conserve energy and reduce carbon emissions in the state.

Jenny's grant is probably what type of AmeriCorps State and National grant?

- **Programmatic Grant (Correct)**
- Professional Corps Grant
- Commission Support Grant
- Commission Investment Fund Grant

Question 2

Which focus area does the Idaho Conservancy AmeriCorps program impact most?

- Disaster Services
- Education
- Healthy Futures
- Veterans and Military Families
- **Environmental Stewardship (Correct)**
- Economic Opportunity

Question 3

Jenny's got a question about managing her AmeriCorps members. She refers to the governing authorities to see if she can find an answer. Which of these three documents would take precedence?

- AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions
- **The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) (Correct)**
- The Notice of Grant Award

Question 4

Last question: when Jenny applied for the grant, did she apply directly to AmeriCorps or through a State Service Commission? In other words, is Idaho Conservancy a National Direct applicant or a Single State applicant?

- National Direct
- **Single State (Correct)**

Conclusion

That's a wrap on ASN 101, an Introduction to AmeriCorps State and National.

Now you have a basic understanding of the agency, the State and National program, what we do as a grant maker, and the impact grantees have on communities across the country.

Click Next.

Exit Course

Thank you for completing this module. Select CLOSE to exit.

Important: After this browser window closes, select NEXT MODULE to mark this module as complete.

ASN 201: AmeriCorps State and National Grants

Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to ASN 201: AmeriCorps State and National Grants. This course includes audio. Would you like help navigating this course?

- Yes, show me around.
- No, let's dive in!

Navigation

Select each marker to learn more about the navigation elements of the player. To exit this course at any time, close this browser window. Select NEXT to continue.

Course Outline

This course gives you an overview of AmeriCorps State and National applicants, grantees and grants. When you complete this course, you'll be able to answer the questions:

- Who's eligible to apply for ASN grants?
- What types of grantees are there?
- What kind of grants does ASN make?
- What's the grant lifecycle?

Click NEXT.

Referencing the CFR

Throughout the course, we'll reference the Code of Federal Regulations, or CFR. Anytime the CFR is referenced, you can click on RESOURCES to find a quick link to the reference or to that section of the CFR for more details. Click NEXT to dive in.

Applicants and Grantees

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Each year for each grant, ASN releases:

- Notice of Funding Opportunity with the grant details
- Application Instructions for completing an application
- Mandatory Supplemental Information to help complete the application.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity, or Notice, has all the details an applicant needs to know, including deadlines, selection criteria, and grant requirements. You can view current and closed funding opportunities at the Funding Opportunities page of AmeriCorps.gov, linked under the course RESOURCES at the top right of your screen.

Eligibility

The following are eligible to apply for an AmeriCorps grant.

- Indian Tribes
- Institutions of higher education
- Local governments, including school districts

- Nonprofit organizations
- State Service Commissions
- States and US Territories

See 45 CFR 2521.10 linked under the resources tab for more.

Applicant and Grantee Types

You learned in ASN 101 that organizations can apply for AmeriCorps State and National funds either directly to AmeriCorps or through a State Service Commission. Based on how they are funded, who they are, and where they operate, programs can be organized into three categories.

Click on each category to learn more.

Multi-State Programs: Multi-state programs are directly funded by AmeriCorps, the agency. We call these National Direct Grantees.

Single State Programs: Single-state programs are funded through State Service Commissions. Because AmeriCorps awards these funds to the Commissions to then award to single-state programs, we consider the State Service Commission as the grantee, and the single-state program as the subgrantee.

Native Nations Programs: Native Nations programs can run single or multi-state projects and can be funded by their State Service Commission or by AmeriCorps, the agency. Native Nations are a category of their own.

National Direct Grantees Part 1

National Direct grantees are organizations that operate projects that address community needs in at least two states. National Direct Grantees also include organizations in a state or territory that do not have a State Service Commission, including South Dakota, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

National Direct Grantees Part 2

National Directs establish formal relationships with entities in different states to operate their local programs. These entities are known as operating sites.

National Direct Grantees Part 3

National Direct organizations can propose to use AmeriCorps members to address one or several focus areas and decide to centralize management at an HQ level or decentralize their operations to the local programs. Regardless of whether a grantee chooses to centralize or decentralize management of the program, they are responsible for ensuring that their headquarters, as well as all operating sites, service sites, and members, are following all rules and regulations.

National Direct Grantees Part 4

National Directs consult with State Commissions in each of the states where they operate to discuss their plans for future or current programming. This helps ensure that organizations are not bringing a project to an area that already has other projects addressing the same need.

State Service Commissions Part 1
State Service Commissions are responsible for developing, administering, and monitoring national and community service programs in their state or territory.

State Service Commissions Part 2
Each State Service Commission runs their own grant competition for their state. Single state applicants submit their grant applications to the State Commission, and the State Commission runs their own selection process to determine which applicants to submit to the AmeriCorps grant competition for funding. State Commissions also run their own competition for formula funded single state applicants.

State Service Commissions Part 3
Organizations applying via State Commissions are called sub-applicants, and once funded they are referred to as subgrantees.

State Service Commissions Part 4
Each State Commission must work within the parameters established by ASN's legal framework, as well as its own state laws and grantmaking processes.

A Commission can create additional policies, procedures, and requirements for their sub-applicants and subgrantees if those are also compliant with federal and AmeriCorps rules and regulations.

State Service Commissions Part 5
Some U.S. states and territories do not have a State Commission, including South Dakota, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands. Single-state programs operating in these specific regions are National Direct grantees of AmeriCorps, since there is not a State Commission to manage subgrantees.

Native Nations Grantees Part 1
AmeriCorps State and National sets aside one percent of funding to support programs that are developed and administered through federally recognized Indian tribes (See 45 CFR 2521.30).

Native Nations Grantees Part 2
Federally recognized Indian tribes include any tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Native village, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation as defined under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, that the United States Government determines is eligible for special programs and services provided under federal law to Indians because of their status as Indians (2 CFR 200.1).

Native Nations Grantees Part 3
The definition also includes tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by one of these entities.

Native Nations Grantees Part 4
ASN releases an annual Notice of Funding Opportunity specifically for Native Nations, which allows them to apply for the one percent set-aside funding. Native Nations can also apply to the annual competitive AmeriCorps Notice.

Subgrantees Part 1

Subgrantees are programs operating in a single-state which implement the grant activities on the local level on behalf of a State Commission or National Direct. Subgrantees submit their own application and program design to the Prime grantee (National Direct, State Commission).

Subgrantees Part 2

Subgrantees are sometimes called AmeriCorps State and National operating sites. An operating site is the organization that manages the AmeriCorps program and places members into service locations.

Subgrantees Part 3

National Directs, State Service Commissions, and Native Nations are referred to as Prime grantees. These Prime grantees are responsible for delivering communications from AmeriCorps, as well as training and technical assistance, to their subgrantees.

Knowledge Check

Which one of these is NOT eligible to apply for an AmeriCorps grant?

- A federally recognized Indian Tribe in Connecticut
- A university in California
- The city of Tulsa, Oklahoma
- A nonprofit in Alabama
- **A private, for-profit company in Montana (Answer)**
- The State Service Commission of Illinois
- The American Samoa

Knowledge Check

Liz is an Executive Director at a nonprofit based in New Orleans, LA. Her organization has food pantries operating across the greater New Orleans area. This year, they are expanding down the coast to serve communities in Mississippi and Alabama. To expand their services, Liz and her team are applying for an AmeriCorps State and National grant. If their application is successful, what kind of grantee would they be?

- State Service Commission
- Subgrantee
- **National Direct Grantee (Answer)**
- Native Nations Grantee

ASN Award Types

Intro to Award Types

So far, we've answered the questions:

- Who's eligible to apply for ASN grants?
- What types of grantees are there?

Let's move onto the question: "What kinds of grants does AmeriCorps make?"

ASN Award Types

In this section, we'll break down 3 categories:

1. The two funding processes: Competitive and Formula Funding
2. Three types of grants: Operational, Administrative and Planning Grants
3. The two budget types: Cost Reimbursement and Fixed Amount

Click the Next button to dive in.

Funding Processes

ASN awards grants with competitive funds or formula funds. There are separate processes for competitive and formula grantmaking. Click NEXT to continue.

Competitive Funding

All organizations that submit applications to ASN competitive Notices compete against each other for funding. That means that all State Commission competitive sub-applications and all National Direct applications compete against each other for the same pool of funding. All applications are reviewed against criteria published in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Formula Funding

Formula funds are allocated to State Commissions according to an established formula. Only State Commissions are eligible for formula funds. AmeriCorps staff do not review or have any part in deciding on funding of the sub-grantee applications received by the State Commissions. State Commissions submit their formula packages to AmeriCorps for approval.

Learn More

For more details, see 45 CFR 2521.30 titled: "How will AmeriCorps subtitle C program grants be awarded?"

Grant Types

Now let's look at three grant types:

1. Operational Grants
2. Administrative Grants
3. Planning grants

Operational Grants

Operational grants support the operation of AmeriCorps State and National programs. Grantees design service activities for AmeriCorps members that demonstrate an evidence-based or evidence-informed approach to strengthening communities and solving community problems.

Operational Grants: Evidence

Evidence-based means programs that have been rigorously evaluated and have demonstrated positive results for at least one key desired outcome.

Evidence-informed means programs use the best available knowledge, research, and evaluation to guide program design and implementation, but do not have scientific research or rigorous evaluation of the intervention described in the application.

Operational Grants: Match
Operational grants provide partial funding to support AmeriCorps programs, while programs contribute match funding to support the project. See 45 CFR Part 2521, linked under RESOURCES, for details about match requirements.

Operational Grants: Members
Operational grants typically include an allotment of AmeriCorps member positions. The funds awarded by AmeriCorps are directly tied to the specific number of members awarded and funds are used solely for program expenses and cannot be used for general organizational operating expenses.

Operational Grant Funding
Operational grants are offered through both competitive and formula funding.

For the AmeriCorps Competitive grants, direct applicants and State Commission sub-applicants compete against each other for the funding. Before the ASN grant competition, State Commissions run their own process to select the sub-applicants they then send to AmeriCorps for competitive consideration.

For Formula-funded grants, State Service Commissions receive a formula-based allocation of AmeriCorps funds. The Commissions are solely responsible for selecting the sub-applications to which they will subgrant these funds.

Administrative Grants
Administrative grants help State Service Commissions implement their duties as required by statute and regulations and as outlined in their Commission's state service plans. All Commissions receive these funds if they meet compliance requirements, and the amount they receive is based on a formula. Only Commissions are eligible for Administrative Grants, and there are no AmeriCorps member positions associated with these grants.

Administrative Grants: CIF and CSG
There are two administrative grants:

1. Commission Support Grants (CSG) to support Commissions in implementing their duties. CSG can be used to support Commission staffing and operations.
2. Commission Investment Fund (or CIF) to expand the capacity of State Commissions. CIF can be used to support Commission staffing and staff development, training events, and collaborative activities.

Planning Grants
Planning grants support an organization's development of a new AmeriCorps program.

Planning grants are for one year only and do not include AmeriCorps members. During the planning period, the applicant designs an AmeriCorps program which addresses a need in their community or communities.

Planning grants may be offered by State Commissions for their states or by AmeriCorps for multi-state or Native Nation programs. However, they are not offered every year. The Notice will specify whether planning grants are available for each year's competition.

Planning Grants Part 2

Planning grants help an organization determine if an operational grant with AmeriCorps is the right fit for them and their community.

A planning grant allows for an organization to build out the foundation of an AmeriCorps program based on a community need prior to submitting an operational grant for funding.

Grant Types Recap

Operational grants support the operation of AmeriCorps State and National programs.

Administrative grants help State Service Commissions implement their duties as required by statute and regulations and as outlined in their Commission's state service plans.

Planning grants support an organization's development of a new AmeriCorps program.

Budget Types

Applicants can select between two types of budgets: Cost Reimbursement, or Fixed Amount.

Click on each of the questions to the right to see the differences between cost reimbursement and fixed amount budgets.

Who can use this budget type?

Cost reimbursement grants are available to all applicants regardless of whether they have previously received AmeriCorps funding.

Fixed Amount grants are available to returning applicants as well as new applicants depending on the sub-type of the fixed amount grant. Only returning applicants can apply for the full-cost subtype, and both returning and new applicants can apply for the other three subtypes: Education Award Program, Professional Corps, and No Cost Slots.

Do I need to submit a detailed budget to apply?

For cost reimbursement grants, Applicants must submit a detailed line-item budget with their application.

For Fixed amount grants, Applicants submit a minimal budget that only lists the number and type of member positions and amount of AmeriCorps funds requested.

Do I need to submit financial reports?

For cost reimbursement grants, grantees must submit two annual financial reports.

For fixed amount grants, no financial reports are required.

Is matching required?

Cost reimbursement grants fund only a portion of program operating costs and member living allowances. Programs are required to raise additional funds needed to run the program, called match funds.

Fixed Amount grants fund only a portion of program operating costs and member living allowances. Organizations are responsible for raising the additional funds needed to run the program, but a formal match is not required.

Can I use all the funds awarded to me?

For cost reimbursement grants, Grantees have the flexibility to use all the funds for allowable costs regardless of whether the program recruits and retains all AmeriCorps members.

For fixed amount grants, Access to all funds is dependent on member enrollment and retention. If they do not enroll, and retain, all of their expected members, they are not eligible for the full amount of awarded funding.

Learn More About Budget Types
For details about these budget types and their subtypes, read through a Notice of Funding Opportunity. The Notice includes a lot of details about each award and budget type, the match requirements, and how much money can be requested.

You can view current and closed funding opportunities at the Funding Opportunities page of AmeriCorps.gov, linked under the course resources.

Program Matching Requirements
Applicants and grantees are required to provide matching funds, meaning programs operate on AmeriCorps awarded funds and funding from other sources. The match funds can be non-AmeriCorps cash and/or in-kind contributions.

A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every grant period to 30 percent.

See 45 CFR 2521.35-95 for more about Program Matching Requirements, linked under Resources.

ASN Award Types Recap
In this section, we covered 3 categories:

- The two funding processes: Competitive and Formula Funding
- Three types of grants: Operational, Administrative and Planning Grants
- The two budget types: Cost Reimbursement and Fixed Amount

Click the Next button for a quick knowledge check.

Knowledge Check
There are two funding processes: competitive and formula funding.

True or False: National Directs AND State Service Commissions are eligible for formula funds.

- True
- **False (Answer)**

Knowledge Check

Michael is the Executive Director of a youth development nonprofit in Baltimore. He heard from his friend Amy, an Executive Director of a similar organization based in St Louis, that her organization is using an AmeriCorps grant to run a new youth outreach program. After hearing about Amy's AmeriCorps grant, and doing some research online, Michael is interested in seeing if an AmeriCorps award would be a good fit for his organization, it's staff, and most important, the community.

Which ASN grant might be the best option for Michael to apply for?

- An Operating Grant
- An Administrative Grant
- **A Planning Grant (Answer)**

Knowledge Check

Which budget type can a grantee use all the awarded funds, regardless of whether the program recruits and retains all AmeriCorps members?

- **Cost Reimbursement (Answer)**
- Fixed Amount

ASN Grant Lifecycle

Intro to the Grant Lifecycle

We've answered the questions:

- Who's eligible to apply for ASN grants?
- What categories of grantees are there?
- What kind of grants does ASN make?

Let's answer the final question: "What's the grant lifecycle?" Click NEXT to continue.

Three-Year Grant Lifecycle

The majority of ASN grants are typically three-year commitments, with the grant funds and associated member positions being awarded on an annual basis. AmeriCorps refers to each year of a grant cycle by their sequential number: Year One, Year Two, and Year Three.

Year 1

Year One, a new application.

To get started, an applicant submits a new application for review. The application includes a full narrative, performance measures, logic model, and budget. The budget includes the number and type of AmeriCorps members and amount of AmeriCorps funds being requested. The budget and performance measures both cover a one-year period.

Year 2

Year two, a continuation application.

A grantee submits a continuation application for review. The application includes a significantly reduced amount of narrative information, an updated budget, and performance measures. The budget includes the number and type of AmeriCorps members and amount of AmeriCorps funds being requested to support Year Two of the program. Funding amounts and member slots are typically level with the prior year amounts but can be increased or decreased in some cases. ASN has the authority to determine whether grantees can ask for increases in funding or slots in a continuation application.

Year 3
Year Three.

The same, as Year Two, a grantee or subgrantee submits a continuation application to support Year Three of the program.

Beyond Year 3
Beyond Year Three, the Recompete Application.

If a grantee wants to continue its program beyond Year Three, it must submit a recompete application, which is like a new application, with the note that this applicant is a previous grantee. A recompete application includes another full application for review, including a new narrative, performance measures, logic model, and budget. Recompeting applicants must meet the match requirements and evaluation requirements specified in the Regulations. Recompeting applicants are not guaranteed funding: their applications are reviewed along with other new applications, and their past performance is taken into consideration.

Project, Budget, and Member Enrollment Periods
Project, Budget, and Member Enrollment Periods.

Each ASN program has a project period, a budget period, and a member enrollment period. Click on each info marker to read about each one.

Project Period: The project period is the three-year period of the grant. This period stays the same throughout the lifecycle of the award, unless there is an amendment that changes the dates.

Budget Period: In Year One, the budget period is a three-year period which matches the project period. In Year Two, the budget period shortens to a two-year period. In Year Three, the budget period is the remaining one-year period. The budget period must always be equal to, or less than, the project period. The budget periods for Year One, Year Two, and Year Three all fall within the three-year project period.

Member Enrollment Period: The member enrollment period specifies the period during which a grantee can enroll members. Typically, it is one year long, although grantees can set shorter periods of time based on their program model. The member enrollment period is no longer than one year and cannot be amended.

The member enrollment period is not the period during which members can serve. Programs can enroll a member on the last day of their member enrollment period if desired. In that

situation, a member would serve until they completed the number of service hours and length of time specified in their member contract.

Knowledge Check

How long does a typical ASN grant last?

- 1 Year
- 2 Years
- **3 Years (Answer)**
- 5 Years
- 7 Years

Knowledge Check

True or False: Grantees have to submit continuation applications for years 2 and 3 of their grants.

- True (Answer)
- False

Conclusion

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have reached the end of ASN 201: Grants. You've learned about:

- Who's eligible to apply for ASN grants;
- The categories of grantees and applicants;
- The kinds of grants ASN awards; and
- the grant lifecycle.

In the next course, you'll dive deeper into the requirements, restrictions, and regulations of operating an AmeriCorps grant. Click Next.

Exit Course

Thank you for completing this module. Select CLOSE to exit.

Important: After this browser window closes, select NEXT MODULE to mark this course as complete.

ASN 301: Restrictions, Requirements, and Regulations

Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to ASN 301: Restrictions, Requirements, and Regulations. This course includes audio. Would you like help navigating this course?

- Yes, show me around.
- No, let's dive in!

Navigation

Select each marker to learn more about the navigation elements of the player. To exit this course at any time, close this browser window. Select NEXT to continue.

Course Outline

In this course, you'll learn about key restrictions, requirements, and regulations in four categories:

- Allowable and Prohibited Activities.
- Evaluation Requirements.
- Ethical Regulations.
- And Logistical Regulations

Click NEXT.

Governing Authorities

Throughout the course, we'll reference governing authorities like the Code of Federal Regulations, or CFR, and the AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions, all of which you can access online.

Referencing the CFR

Anytime the CFR is referenced, you can head to the resources tab at the top right corner of this screen to find a quick link to the four main parts on eCFR.gov we'll be referring to:

- 45 CFR Part 2520
- 45 CFR Part 2521
- 45 CFR Part 2522
- 45 CFR Part 2540

Searching the CFR

To drill down to a specific section, for example "45 CFR 2521.30," go to eCFR.gov and search for "45 CFR 2521.30," and it will take you to that section.

As we read from the CFR, you'll hear AmeriCorps referred to as the "Corporation," because AmeriCorps was previously called the Corporation for National and Community Service.

In the CFR, AmeriCorps is referred to as the "Corporation."

Referencing Terms and Conditions

You can also find links to the Terms and Conditions we'll refer to under the Resources tab.

Important: Terms and Conditions are published each year. In this course, we will be referencing the 2023 Terms and Conditions. Make sure you reference the Terms and Conditions that apply to your grant.

Get Started
Let's get started with Allowable and Prohibited Activities. Click NEXT to dive in.

Allowable and Prohibited Activities

Allowable and Prohibited Activities
This section covers:

- Allowable service activities;
- The types of programs that are eligible for AmeriCorps funding;
- Requirements for any AmeriCorps program;
- Prohibited Activities; and
- Funding Restrictions.

Click NEXT to continue.

Purpose of AmeriCorps Programs (45 CFR 2520.10)
The purpose of the AmeriCorps subtitle C program is to provide financial assistance under subtitle C of the National and Community Service Act to support AmeriCorps programs that address educational, public safety, human, or environmental needs through national and community service, and to provide AmeriCorps education awards to participants in such programs.

What is Subtitle C?

Subtitle C refers to the section of our federal statute that discusses AmeriCorps programs. A Subtitle C program is an AmeriCorps program. A Subtitle C Award is an AmeriCorps grant.

Purpose of AmeriCorps Programs Part 2
ASN fulfills our purpose by awarding grants to organizations that design programs to meet pressing community needs. Programs recruit and support AmeriCorps members to engage in service activities to address these needs.

Allowable Service Activities (45 CFR 2520.20)
Your grant must initiate, improve, or expand the ability of an organization and community to provide services to address local unmet environmental, educational, public safety (including disaster preparedness and response), or other human needs. You may use your grant to support AmeriCorps members performing,

Direct service activities that meet local needs.

Capacity-building activities that improve the organizational and financial capability of nonprofit organizations and communities to meet local needs by achieving greater organizational efficiency and effectiveness, greater impact and quality of impact, stronger likelihood of successful replicability, or expanded scale.

Let's take a closer look at the difference between direct services and capacity-building services.

Direct Service Activities (45 CFR 25020.25)
AmeriCorps members may perform direct service activities that will advance the goals of your program, that will result in a specific identifiable service or improvement that otherwise would not be provided, and that are included in, or consistent with, your AmeriCorps-approved grant application.

"Direct service activities" generally refer to activities that provide a direct, measurable benefit to an individual, a group, or a community.

Your members' direct service activities must address local environmental, educational, public safety (including disaster preparedness and response), or other human needs.

Direct Service Examples
Examples of the types of direct service activities AmeriCorps members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Tutoring children in reading;
- Helping to run an after-school program;
- Engaging in community clean-up projects;
- Providing health information to a vulnerable population;
- Providing relief services to a community affected by a disaster; and
- Conducting a neighborhood watch program as part of a public safety effort.

Capacity-Building Service Activities (45 CFR 2520.30)
Capacity-building activities that AmeriCorps members perform should enhance the mission, strategy, skills, and culture, as well as systems, infrastructure, and human resources of an organization that is meeting unmet community needs. Capacity-building activities help an organization gain greater independence and sustainability.

The AmeriCorps members you support under your grant may perform capacity-building activities that advance your program's goals and that are included in, or consistent with, your AmeriCorps-approved grant application.

Capacity Building Examples
Examples of capacity-building activities your members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Strengthening volunteer management and recruitment;
- Conducting outreach and securing resources in support of service activities that meet specific needs in the community;
- Helping build the infrastructure of the sponsoring organization; and
- Developing collaborative relationships with other organizations working to achieve similar goals in the community.

For more details and examples of capacity-building activities, go to 45 CFR 2520.30.

Eligible Programs (45 CFR 2522.110)

These are the types of programs that are eligible for AmeriCorps funding. A few examples are listed here, but the CFR gives more details and examples at 45 CFR 2522.110. Click on each program type for an example.

- **Specialized Skills Program Example** - A program that is targeted to address specific educational, public safety, human, or environmental needs and that recruits individuals with special skills or provides specialized pre-service training to enable participants to meet those needs.
- **Specialized Service Program Example** - A community service program designed to address the development needs of rural communities and to combat rural poverty, including health care, education, and job training.
- **Community-Development Program Example** - A community corps program that meets educational, public safety, human, or environmental needs and promotes greater community unity through the use of organized teams of participants of varied social and economic backgrounds, skill levels, physical and developmental capabilities, ages, ethnic backgrounds, or genders.
- **Programs that Expand Service Program Capacity Example** - A program that provides specialized training to individuals in service-learning and places the individuals after such training in positions, including positions as service-learning coordinators, to facilitate service-learning in programs eligible for funding under Serve-America.
- **Campus-Based Program Example -** A campus-based program that is designed to provide substantial service in a community during the school term and during summer or other vacation periods through the use of students who are attending an institution of higher education.

Eligible Programs Continued (45 CFR 2522.110)

These are the types of programs that are eligible for AmeriCorps funding. A few examples are listed here, but the CFR gives more details and examples at 45 CFR 2522.110. Click on each program type for an example:

- **Intergenerational Program Example** - An intergenerational program that combines students, out-of-school youths, and older adults as participants to provide needed community services, including an intergenerational component for other AmeriCorps programs.
- **Youth Development Program Example** - A full-time, year-round program or full-time summer program that includes youths and young adults and undertakes meaningful service projects with visible public benefits, including natural resource, urban renovation, or human services projects.
- **Individualized Placement Program Example** - An individualized placement program that includes regular group activities, such as leadership training and special service projects.
- **Other Programs** - Such other AmeriCorps programs addressing educational, public safety, human, or environmental needs as AmeriCorps may designate in the application.

Program Requirements (45 CFR 2522.100)

All AmeriCorps programs must meet a set of 19 minimum program requirements. These requirements apply regardless of whether a program is supported directly by AmeriCorps or through a subgrant. We'll read each of the 19 program requirements and, along the way, illustrate a few of the requirements with an example program. For the full text of these requirements, read 45 CFR 2522.100.

Program Requirements 1-5 (45 CFR 2522.100)

All AmeriCorps programs must:

- Address educational, public safety, human, or environmental needs, and provide a direct and demonstrable benefit that is valued by the community in which the service is performed;
- Perform projects that are designed, implemented, and evaluated with extensive and broad-based local input;
- Obtain, in the case of a program that also proposes to serve as the project sponsor, the written concurrence of any local labor organization representing employees of the project sponsor who are engaged in the same or substantially similar work as that proposed to be carried out by the AmeriCorps participant;
- Establish and provide outcome objectives, including a strategy for achieving these objectives, upon which self-assessment and AmeriCorps-assessment of progress can rest;
- Strengthen communities and encourage mutual respect and cooperation among citizens of different races, ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, educational levels, both men and women and individuals with disabilities;

Example Program

Team Healthy is a national nonprofit focused on educating young people about healthy eating and supporting community members in learning how to grow their own food.

Team Healthy is based in five cities across the U.S. that were identified due to their high rates of childhood obesity as well as their lack of access to fresh and healthy food (food deserts). Team Healthy deploys teams of AmeriCorps members in these communities to teach a nutrition curriculum in schools, which includes healthy eating, growing food, and building raised bed gardens.

The members also utilize this curriculum on the weekends to educate adults at local community centers. A five-year study of the curriculum shows proven results of improvement in health outcomes for young people in the community.

Program Requirements 6-10 (45 CFR 2522.100)

All AmeriCorps programs must:

- Agree to seek actively to include participants and staff from the communities in which projects are conducted and agree to seek program staff and participants of different races and ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, educational levels, and genders as

well as individuals with disabilities unless a program design requires emphasizing the recruitment of staff and participants who share a specific characteristic or background;

- Determine the projects in which participants will serve and establish minimum qualifications that individuals must meet to be eligible to participate in the program;
- Comply with any pre-service orientation or training period requirements established by AmeriCorps to assist in the selection of motivated participants;
- Provide reasonable accommodation based on the individualized need of a participant who is a qualified individual with a disability;
- Use service experiences to help participants achieve the skills and education needed for productive, active citizenship;

Example Program

Team Healthy has a community advisory board in each operating city including neighbors, local business owners, representatives from schools and universities, and youth representatives. These boards inform program activities to ensure Team Healthy is best meeting community needs.

They also play a role in the design and implementation of Team Healthy's recruitment plan to ensure the right relationships are being built to recruit a diverse group of AmeriCorps members from the local communities.

Program Requirements 11-14 (45 CFR 2522.100)

All AmeriCorps programs must:

- Provide participants in the program with the training, skills, and knowledge necessary to perform the tasks required in their respective projects;
- Provide support services to participants who are completing a term of service and making the transition to other educational and career opportunities; and to those participants who are school dropouts in order to assist them in earning the equivalent of a high school diploma;
- Ensure that participants serving in approved AmeriCorps positions receive the living allowance and other benefits described in 45 CFR 2522.240 - 45 CFR 2522.250;
- Describe the manner in which the AmeriCorps educational awards will be apportioned among individuals serving in the program. If a program proposes to provide such benefits to less than 100 percent of the participants in the program, the program must provide a compelling rationale for determining which participants will receive the benefits and which participants will not.

Example Program

Team Healthy AmeriCorps members participate in a two-week orientation where they learn about the organization, the community they will be serving, AmeriCorps rules and regulations, and the skills necessary to conduct their service activities. They also engage in community building as a group.

Team Healthy AmeriCorps members gather every Friday for a 4-hour training facilitated by the Team Healthy program staff. Training topics are focused on environmental justice, public health, nutrition, and other specific skills required to conduct the service activities. Each Team

Healthy member is mentored by a member of the program staff, meeting monthly for career coaching.

Program Requirements 15-19 (45 CFR 2522.100)

All AmeriCorps programs must:

- Agree to identify the program, through the use of logos, common application materials, and other means (to be specified by AmeriCorps), as part of a larger national effort and to participate in other activities such as common opening ceremonies (including the administration of a national oath or affirmation), service days, and conferences designed to promote a national identity for all AmeriCorps programs and participants;
- Agree to begin terms of service at such times as AmeriCorps may reasonably require and to comply with any restrictions AmeriCorps may establish as to when the program may take to fill an approved AmeriCorps position left vacant due to attrition;
- Comply with all evaluation procedures specified by AmeriCorps, as explained in 45 CFR 2522.500 - 45 CFR 2522.560.
- In the case of a program receiving funding directly from AmeriCorps, meet and consult with the State Commission for the State in which the program operates, if possible, and submit a copy of the program application to the State Commission; and
- Address any other requirements as specified by AmeriCorps.

Example Program

Team Healthy AmeriCorps hosts an opening ceremony during member orientation to celebrate the swearing in of members with the community. At the close of the year, they also host a graduation ceremony. Both of these activities promote AmeriCorps and national service. Team Healthy has a designated staff member who is responsible for tracking all program performance measure related data and other program outcomes. Team Healthy has established relationships with each of the state service commissions in the states in which they operate. They connect regularly with the state commissions on activities and resource sharing.

Program Requirements Conclusion (45 CFR 2522.100)

These 19 requirements outline what programs must do. Read more at 45 CFR 2522.100. Let's shift gears and look at what activities are prohibited.

Prohibited Activities (45 CFR 2520.65)

There are 11 Prohibited Activities outlined in our statute, regulations, and terms and conditions. These apply to AmeriCorps members, program staff, or volunteers associated with an AmeriCorps program. Grantees should review these prohibited activities with their subgrantees and members. For the full text of this regulation, see 45 CFR 2520.65.

Prohibited Activities Part 1 (45 CFR 2520.65)

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:

- Attempting to influence legislation;
- Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;

Prohibited Activities Part 2 (45 CFR 2520.65)
Staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

- 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 Part 3 (45 CFR 2520.65)
Staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

- 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 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative;
  - An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless AmeriCorps assistance is not used to support those religious activities; and

Prohibited Activities Part 4 (45 CFR 2520.65)
Staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

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

Non-AmeriCorps Time (45 CFR 2520.65)
Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the prohibited activities listed on the previous sections on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-AmeriCorps funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

Funding Restrictions (45 CFR 2540.100)

There are 6 restrictions for how AmeriCorps funding, or assistance, can be used. Read these restrictions and their details fully at 45 CFR 2540.100. Click each of the 6 restrictions to below.

- **Supplantation**. Corporation assistance may not be used to replace State and local public funds that had been used to support programs of the type eligible to receive Corporation support. For any given program, this condition will be satisfied if the aggregate non-Federal public expenditure for that program in the fiscal year that support is to be provided is not less than the previous fiscal year.
- **Religious use.** assistance may not be used to provide religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in any form of proselytization.
- **Political activity.** Corporation assistance may not be used by program participants or staff to assist, promote, or deter union organizing; or finance, directly or indirectly, any activity designed to influence the outcome of a Federal, State or local election to public office.
- **Contracts or collective bargaining agreements**. Corporation assistance may not be used to impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
- **Nonduplication.** 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 nondisplacement 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.
- **Nondisplacement**. 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.

Volunteer Recruitment and Support (45 CFR 2520.35)

Are ASN grantees required to recruit or support volunteers?

Yes! Recruiting and supporting AmeriCorps members is a key piece of all AmeriCorps Programs.

Unless AmeriCorps or the State Commission approves otherwise, some component of your program that is supported through the grant awarded by AmeriCorps must involve recruiting or supporting volunteers.

If you demonstrate that requiring your program to recruit or support volunteers would constitute a fundamental alteration to your program structure, AmeriCorps (or the State commission for formula programs) may waive the requirement in response to your written request for such a waiver in the grant application.

Let's look at just a few Member Regulations.

Allowed Fundraising (45 CFR 2520.40)

AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of your program's service activities. Examples of fundraising activities AmeriCorps members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read;
- Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers;
- Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals;
- Securing financial resources from the community to assist in launching or expanding a program that provides social services to the members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the members of a community-based organization;
- Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current members.

Fundraising Restrictions (45 CFR 2520.45 and 45 CFR 2520.4)

AmeriCorps members may not:

- Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment;
- Write a grant application to AmeriCorps or to any other Federal agency.
- Spend more than ten percent of their originally agreed-upon term of service performing fundraising activities.

Supervision (45 CFR 2520.50)

Grantees must provide members with adequate supervision by qualified supervisors.

Grantees must conduct an orientation for members, including training on what activities are prohibited during AmeriCorps service hours, and comply with any pre-service orientation or training required by AmeriCorps.

Education and Training (45 CFR 2520.50)

No more than 20 percent of the aggregate of all AmeriCorps member service hours in your program may be spent in education and training activities.

Capacity-building activities and direct service activities do not count towards the 20 percent cap on education and training activities.

AmeriCorps may waive the 20 percent limit to allow up to 50 percent of the aggregate of all AmeriCorps member service hours in a program to be spent in education and training activities if your program:

- Is a Registered Apprenticeship program;
- Is a job training or job readiness program;

- Includes activities to support member attainment of a GED or high school diploma or occupational, technical, or safety credentials; or
- Primarily enrolls economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members and employs a program design that also includes soft skills or life skills development.

Knowledge Check

Direct Service vs Capacity Building:

Which of these is a capacity-building service activity?

- Tutoring children in reading
- Engaging in community clean-up projects
- **Strengthening volunteer management and recruitment (Answer)**
- Providing health information to a vulnerable population.

Knowledge Check

Which of these is NOT a prohibited activity?

- Attempting to influence legislation.
- **Securing resources in support of service activities that meet specific needs in the community. (Answer)**
- Engaging in partisan political activities
- Providing a direct benefit to a for-profit business.

Knowledge Check

Which of these funding restrictions means that AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to replace State and local public funds that had been used to support programs of the type eligible to receive AmeriCorps support?

- Nonduplication
- Nondisplacement
- **Supplantation (Answer)**

Knowledge Check

Which of these is an ALLOWABLE fundraising activity?

- Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment.
- Write a grant application to AmeriCorps or to any other Federal agency.
- Spend more than ten percent of their originally agreed-upon term of service performing fundraising activities.
- **Solicit in-kind donations from a local bookstore to provide books for the member-led literacy program. (Answer)**

Section Conclusion

You have completed the section on Allowable and Prohibited Activities. In the next section, we'll look at Evaluation Requirements.

AmeriCorps

Evaluation Requirements

Introduction

This section gives an overview of how you are required to measure your program's performance. We'll look at what is required, and what the difference is between "performance measures" and "evaluation."

Performance measures and evaluations are designed to strengthen your AmeriCorps program and foster continuous improvement and help identify best practices and models that merit replication, as well as programmatic weaknesses that need attention.

Let's start with Performance Measures.

Performance Measures (45 CFR 2522.560)

Performance measurement is the process of regularly measuring the services provided by your program and the effect your program has in communities or in the lives of members or community beneficiaries.

The main purpose of performance measurement is to strengthen your AmeriCorps program and foster continuous improvement and to identify best practices and models that merit replication. Performance measurement will also help identify programmatic weaknesses that need attention.

Performance measures are measurable indicators of a program's performance as it relates to member service activities.

When administering or applying to receive an AmeriCorps grant, there are performance measure requirements that you must follow.

Performance Measure Requirements 45 CFR 2522.550

All grantees must establish, track, and assess performance measures for their programs. As a grantee, you must ensure that any program under your oversight fulfills performance measure and evaluation requirements. In addition, you must:

- Establish ambitious performance measures in consultation with AmeriCorps, or the State commission, as appropriate, following 45 CFR 2422.560 through 45 CFR 2422.660;
- Ensure that any program under your oversight collects and organizes performance data on an ongoing basis, at least annually;
- Ensure that any program under your oversight tracks progress toward meeting your performance measures;
- Ensure that any program under your oversight corrects performance deficiencies promptly; and
- Accurately and fairly present the results in reports to the AmeriCorps.

Performance Measure Submission Requirements (45 CFR 2522.580)

When applying for funds, you must submit, at a minimum, one set of aligned performance measures that corresponds to the program's primary intervention. One set of aligned performance measures includes one output and one outcome.

For example, a tutoring program might use the following aligned performance measures:

- Output: number of individuals served
- Outcome: number of students with improved academic performance.

Applicants should use the national performance measures if they apply to their program's theory of change.

For more information and FAQs about Performance Measures, read 45 CFR Part 2522 Subpart E. Performance Measure Instructions are also available on AmeriCorps.gov under Resources, and they can be found on the Notice of Funding Opportunity page.

Exceeding the Minimum Requirements

AmeriCorps encourages you to exceed the minimum requirements expressed in this section and encourages, in second and subsequent grant cycles, that you will more fully develop your performance measures, including establishing multiple performance indicators, and improving and refining those you used in the past.

For more information and FAQs about Performance Measures, read 45 CFR Part 2522 Subpart E. Performance Measure Instructions are also available on AmeriCorps.gov under Resources, and they can be found on the Notice of Funding Opportunity page.

Now let's look at Evaluation.

Performance Measurement vs Evaluation (45 CFR 2522.700)

How does Evaluation differ from Performance Measurement?

Click each tab to read about the differences.

Performance measurement is the process of systematically and regularly collecting and monitoring data related to the direction of observed changes in communities, participants (members), or end beneficiaries receiving your program's services. It is intended to provide an indication of your program's operations and performance. In contrast to evaluation, it is not intended to establish a causal relationship between your program and a desired (or undesired) program outcome. For example, a performance measure for a literacy program may include the percentage of students receiving services from your program who increase their reading ability from "below grade level" to "at or above grade level". This measure indicates something good is happening to your program's service beneficiaries, but it does not indicate that the change can be wholly attributed to your program's services.

Evaluation is a more in-depth, rigorous effort to measure the impact of programs. While performance measurement and evaluation both include systematic data collection and measurement of progress, evaluation uses scientifically based research methods to assess the effectiveness of programs by comparing the observed program outcomes with what would have happened in the absence of the program. Unlike performance measures, evaluations estimate the impacts of programs by comparing the outcomes for individuals receiving a service or participating in a program to the outcomes for similar individuals not receiving a service or not participating in a program. For example, an evaluation of a literacy

program may compare the reading ability of students in a program over time to a similar group of students not participating in a program.

Evaluation Requirements (45 CFR 2522.710 and .730)

Formula Grantees

AmeriCorps state formula grantees are required to follow the evaluation requirements established by their respective state service commission. Applicants for state formula grants should contact their state commission for their grant evaluation requirements.

Competitive Grantees

If an ASN state competitive, national direct, or native nation grantee has received at least three years of competitive funding for a project, they are required to submit an evaluation plan when they recompete for competitive AmeriCorps funding for the same project.

If an ASN state competitive, national direct, or native nation grantee has received at least six years of competitive funding for a project, they are required to submit an evaluation plan and evaluation report when they recompete for competitive AmeriCorps funding for the same project.

Evaluation Types (45 CFR 2522.710)

The type of required evaluation depends on the size and type of competitive grant awarded.

AmeriCorps state competitive, national direct, and native nation grantees (with the exception of Education Award Programs) that receive an average annual AmeriCorps grant of $500,000 or more as documented in the federal share of the grant budget, must conduct an independent impact evaluation.

AmeriCorps state competitive, national direct grantees, and native nation grantees that receive an average annual AmeriCorps grant of less than $500,000 as documented in the federal share of the grant budget, as well as all AmeriCorps Education Award Program and No Cost Slot grantees, are required to conduct either an internal or an independent evaluation, which does not need to be an impact evaluation.

Click to view a flowchart describing these evaluation requirements.

Evaluation Period (45 CFR 2522.720)

Evaluations must cover at least one year of AmeriCorps-funded service activity for the same project. In this context, "one year" refers to activities that take place during one program year. Depending on the program design, these activities may or may not span a full 12 months.

The AmeriCorps-funded service activity covered by the evaluation can be from any time period. For example, a grantee may choose to evaluate data collected during a previous competitive grant cycle for the same project. However, the evaluation report must be completed or published during the current grant cycle in order to meet the grantee's evaluation requirements for that cycle.

For More Evaluation Info

The evaluation requirements for AmeriCorps State and National grantees can be found in AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR § 2522.500-.540 and .700-.740.

AmeriCorps also has an Evaluations FAQ located on AmeriCorps.gov that explains everything you need to know about what is required for your evaluations. The FAQs cover evaluation topics such as:

- Large Grantee Evaluation Requirements
- Small Grantee Evaluation Requirements
- Timing of Evaluations
- Alternative Evaluation Approaches
- How to Submit Evaluation Plans and Evaluation Reports
- And more!

Knowledge Check

What is the process of systematically and regularly collecting and monitoring data related to the direction of observed changes in communities, participants (members), or end beneficiaries receiving your program's services?

- Evaluation
- **Performance Measurement (Answer)**

Section Conclusion

That concludes the section on Evaluation Requirements.

Let's move on to Ethical Regulations.

Ethical Regulations

Ethical Regulations

This section covers the following ethical regulations related to ASN grants:

- Reporting, Fraud, Waste and Abuse
- Whistleblower Protection
- Civil Rights for Employees, Members, & Volunteers
- Grant Program Non-Harassment & Civil Rights Policy
- Non-Discrimination Public Notice
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Access
- Records and Compliance Information
- Preventing Discrimination
- Grievance Procedures
- Trafficking in Persons
- Conflict of Interest

Click NEXT to continue.

Reporting Criminal Activity (General Terms and Conditions)

Recipients must contact the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and their Portfolio Manager without delay when they first suspect any criminal activity or violations of law has occurred, such as:

- Fraud, theft, conversion, misappropriation, embezzlement, or misuse of funds or property by any person, including AmeriCorps personnel, grantees, or contractors— even if no federal funds or property was involved;
- Submission of a false claim or a false statement by any person in connection with any AmeriCorps program, activity, grant or operations;
- Concealment, forgery, falsification, or unauthorized destruction of government or program records;
- Corruption, bribery, kickbacks, acceptance of illegal gratuities, extortion, or conflicts of interest in connection with operations, programs, activities, contracts, or grants;
- Other misconduct in connection with operations, programs, activities, contracts, or grants; or
- Mismanagement, abuse of authority, or other misconduct by AmeriCorps personnel.

Reporting Fraud, Waste, and Abuse (General Terms and Conditions)

Recipients must also contact the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and their Portfolio Manager without delay when they first suspect fraud, waste, or abuse.

Fraud occurs when someone is intentionally dishonest or uses intentional misrepresentation or misleading omission to receive something of value or to deprive someone, including the government, of something of value.

Waste occurs when taxpayers do not receive reasonable value for their money in connection with a government-funded activity due to an inappropriate act or omission by people with control over or access to government resources.

Abuse is behavior that is deficient, objectively unreasonable, or improper under the circumstances. Abuse also includes the misuse of authority or position for personal financial gain or the gain of an immediate or close family member or business associate.

OIG Hotline (General Terms and Conditions)

The OIG maintains a hotline to receive this information, which can be reached via a web-based hotline portal or by telephone at (800) 452-8210.

Upon request, OIG will take appropriate measures to protect the identity of any individual who reports misconduct, as authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended. Reports to OIG may also be made anonymously.

The recipient should take no further steps to investigate suspected misconduct, except as directed by the OIG or to prevent the destruction of evidence or information.

Whistleblower Protection (General Terms and Conditions)

AmeriCorps awards and employees working on AmeriCorps awards are subject to the whistleblower rights and protections.

An employee of a grant recipient may not be discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against as a reprisal for disclosing information that the employee reasonably believes is evidence of gross mismanagement of a Federal contract or award, a gross waste of Federal funds, an abuse of authority relating to a Federal contract or award, a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or a violation of law, rule, or regulation related to a Federal contract or award.

For more details about whistleblower rights and protections, visit the Office of Inspector General's Whistleblower Rights and Protections website linked under RESOURCES.

Civil Rights for Employees, Service Members, and Volunteers

AmeriCorps is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to its employees and upholding the anti-discrimination laws which are applicable to the workforce and volunteers. AmeriCorps strives for work and service environments which are free from discrimination and harassment for employees, service members and volunteers.

Grant Program Non-Harassment and Civil Rights Policy

AmeriCorps has zero tolerance for unlawful harassment of any individual or group of individuals engaged in national service. AmeriCorps is committed to treating all persons with dignity and respect.

Our agency prohibits all forms of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability (mental or physical), gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or parental status, pregnancy, reprisal, genetic information (including family medical history), or military service.

All programs administered by or receiving federal financial assistance from AmeriCorps must be free from all forms of discrimination and harassment.

To Read the full policy statement, click on the Grant Program Non-Harassment and Civil Rights Policy under RESOURCES.

Non-Discrimination Public Notice (General Terms and Conditions)

Grant recipients must notify members, community beneficiaries, applicants, program staff, and the public, including those with impaired vision or hearing, that it operates its program or activity subject to the non-discrimination requirements applicable to their program.

The notice must summarize the requirements, note the availability of compliance information from the recipient and AmeriCorps, and briefly explain procedures for filing discrimination complaints with AmeriCorps.

Non-Discrimination Public Notice – Part 2 (General Terms and Conditions)

Recipients and subrecipients must also prominently post and make program participants aware of AmeriCorps' Program Civil Rights and Non-Harassment Policy which is reissued annually and available at AmeriCorps.gov.

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.

English Language Proficiency (LEP) Access (General Terms and Conditions)

Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, requires grant recipients to provide meaningful access to their programs and activities by Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons.

Records and Compliance Information (General Terms and Conditions)

Grantees must keep records and make available to AmeriCorps timely, complete, and accurate compliance information to allow AmeriCorps to determine if the recipient is complying with the civil rights statutes and implementing regulations.

Obligation to Cooperate (General Terms and Conditions)

Grantees must cooperate with AmeriCorps so that AmeriCorps can ensure compliance with the civil rights statutes and implementing regulations.

Grantees shall permit access by AmeriCorps during normal business hours to its books, records, accounts, staff, members or volunteers, facilities, and other sources of information as may be needed to determine compliance.

Grantees and subgrantees must cooperate when contacted regarding investigations into allegations of discrimination including, but not limited, to providing requested documentation and making relevant officials available to provide information and/or statements.

Preventing Discrimination (45 CFR 2540.210)

The following provisions exist to ensure that AmeriCorps-supported programs do not discriminate in the selection of participants and staff:

1. An individual with responsibility for the operation of a project that receives AmeriCorps assistance must not discriminate against a participant in, or member of the staff of, such project on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or political affiliation of such participant or member, or on the basis of disability, if the participant or member is a qualified individual with a disability.
2. Any AmeriCorps assistance constitutes Federal financial assistance for purposes of title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and constitutes Federal financial assistance to an education program or activity for purposes of the Education Amendments of 1972.
3. An individual with responsibility for the operation of a project that receives Corporation assistance may not discriminate on the basis of religion against a participant in such project or a member of the staff of such project who is paid with AmeriCorps funds.
4. Grantees must notify all program participants, staff, applicants, and beneficiaries of:
    a. Their rights under applicable federal nondiscrimination laws, including relevant provisions of the national service legislation and implementing regulations; and

    b. The procedure for filing a discrimination complaint with the Corporation's Office of Civil Rights and Inclusiveness.

Reporting Discrimination (45 CFR 2540.215)

A program participant, staff member, or beneficiary who believes that he or she has been subject to illegal discrimination should contact the Corporation's Office of Civil Rights and Inclusiveness, which offers an impartial discrimination complaint resolution process.

Participation in a discrimination complaint resolution process is protected activity; a grantee is prohibited from retaliating against an individual for making a complaint or participating in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing.

Visit the Civil Rights for Employees, Service Members, and Volunteers page on AmeriCorps.gov under RESOURCES.

Grievance Procedures (45 CFR 2540.230)

State and local applicants that receive assistance from the Corporation must establish and maintain a procedure for the filing and adjudication of grievances from participants, labor organizations, and other interested individuals concerning programs that receive assistance from the Corporation.

A grievance procedure may include dispute resolution programs such as mediation, facilitation, assisted negotiation and neutral evaluation. If the grievance alleges fraud or criminal activity, it must immediately be brought to the attention of the Corporation's inspector general.

Trafficking in Persons (General Terms and Conditions)

You as the recipient, your employees, subrecipients under the award, and subrecipients' employees may not:

- Engage in severe forms of trafficking in persons during the period of time that the award is in effect;
- Procure a commercial sex act during the period of time that the award is in effect; or
- Use forced labor in the performance of the award or subawards under the award.

You must inform us immediately of any information you receive from any source alleging a violation of these prohibitions.

Conflict of Interest (General Terms and Conditions)

You must disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to your AmeriCorps Portfolio Manager, or to the pass-through entity if you are a subrecipient or contractor. This disclosure must take place immediately. The AmeriCorps conflict of interest policies apply to subawards as well as contracts, and are as follows:

As a non-Federal entity, you must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the performance of your employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of subawards and contracts.

None of your employees may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a subaward or contract supported by a Federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which 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 organization considered for a subaward or contract. The officers, employees, and agents of the non-Federal entity must neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from subrecipients or contractors or parties to subawards or contracts.

If you have a parent, affiliate, or subsidiary organization that is not a State, local government, or Indian tribe, you 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, you are unable or appear to be unable to be impartial in conducting a subaward or procurement action involving a related organization.

Knowledge Check
Which of these occurs when taxpayers do not receive reasonable value for their money in connection with a government-funded activity due to an inappropriate act or omission by people with control over or access to government resources?

- Fraud
- **Waste (Answer)**
- Abuse

Knowledge Check
True or False: While AmeriCorps staff are covered by nondiscrimination policies, grantee staff and AmeriCorps Members are not protected by nondiscrimination policies.

- True
- **False (Answer)**

Section Conclusion
That concludes the section on Ethical Regulations. Let's move on to the last section: Logistical Regulations.

Logistical Regulations

Section Introduction
This section covers the following logistical regulations related to ASN grants:

- National Service Criminal History Checks
- Restrictions on the Use of National Service Insignia
- Office of Inspector General
- Suspension of a Grant
- Termination of a Grant

Click NEXT to continue.

National Service Criminal History Check

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. Regulation requires grant recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on specific individuals.

The NSCHC must be conducted, reviewed, and an eligibility determination made by the grant recipient based on the results of the NSCHC no later than the day before a person begins to work or serve on an NSCHC-required grant.

An individual is ineligible to work or serve in a position specified in 45 CFR 2540.201(a) if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder.

The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award.

For more details, visit the National Service Criminal History Checks page under RESOURCES.

Restrictions on the Use of National Service Insignia (45 CFR 2540 Subpart E)

"National Service Insignia" means the former and current seal, logos, names, or symbols of AmeriCorps' programs, products, or services.

The national service insignia are owned by AmeriCorps and only may be used as authorized. The national service insignia may not be used by non-federal entities for fundraising purposes or in a manner that suggests AmeriCorps endorsement. All uses of the national service insignia require the written approval of AmeriCorps.

Any person who uses the national service insignia without authorization may be subject to legal action for trademark infringement, enjoined from continued use, and, for certain types of unauthorized uses, other civil or criminal penalties may apply.

See 45 CFR 2540 Subpart E for more details.

Office of Inspector General (General Terms and Conditions)

AmeriCorps' Office of Inspector General conducts and supervises independent audits, evaluations, and investigations of AmeriCorps' programs and operations.

Based on the results of these audits, reviews, and investigations, the OIG recommends disallowing costs and recommends amending or adding policies to promote economy and efficiency and to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse in AmeriCorps' programs and operations.

The OIG conducts and supervises audits of AmeriCorps recipients, as well as legally required audits and reviews. The legally required audits include evaluating AmeriCorps' compliance with the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019, which may result in grantees being requested to produce responsive documentation. The OIG uses a risk-based approach, along with input received from AmeriCorps management, to select recipients and awards for audit. The OIG hires independent audit firms to conduct some of its audits.

Recipients must cooperate fully with AmeriCorps requests for documentation and OIG inquiries by timely disclosing complete and accurate information pertaining to matters under

investigation, audit or review, and by not concealing information or obstructing audits, inspections, investigations, or other official inquiries.

OIG Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission - To protect the integrity of national and community service by providing independent oversight, identifying and mitigating risks and vulnerabilities, and promoting accountability and integrity in AmeriCorps' management, programs and operations.

Vision - To be a catalyst for continuous improvement through objective, innovative and trusted oversight.

Values - Integrity, Collaboration, Accountability, Respect, Excellence

How Does AmeriCorps OIG Contribute to Good Government?

AmeriCorps OIG takes the following actions to improve program operations and ensure strong stewardship of AmeriCorps programs:

- Offers analysis and advice on critical government-wide initiatives, such as computer security, program performance, workforce planning, and financial management.
- Looks independently at problems and recommend solutions.
- Issues factual reports based on professional auditing, investigative, and evaluation standards.
- Investigates fraud, misuse of funds, conflicts of interest, and other violations of laws and regulations.
- Provides technical and consultative advice as the agency develops new plans.
- Engages in outreach to AmeriCorps and the grantee community on the proper stewardship of federal funds.
- Maintains a hotline for reporting confidential information on fraud and abuse.

Suspension of a Grant or Contract (45 CFR 2540.400)
In emergency situations, AmeriCorps may suspend a grant or contract for no more than 30 calendar days.

Examples of such situations may include, but are not limited to:

- Serious risk to persons or property;
- Violations of Federal, State or local criminal statutes; and
- Material violation(s) of the grant or contract that are sufficiently serious that they outweigh the general policy in favor of advance notice and opportunity to show cause.

Termination of a Grant or Contract (45 CFR 2540.400)
AmeriCorps may terminate or revoke assistance for failure to comply with applicable terms and conditions. However, AmeriCorps must provide the recipient reasonable notice and opportunity for a full and fair hearing, subject to the following conditions:

The Corporation will notify a recipient of assistance by letter or telegram that the Corporation intends to terminate or revoke assistance, either in whole or in part, unless the recipient

shows good cause why such assistance should not be terminated or revoked. In this communication, the grounds and the effective date for the proposed termination or revocation will be described. The recipient will be given at least 7 calendar days to submit written material in opposition to the proposed action.

The recipient may request a hearing on a proposed termination or revocation. Providing five days' notice to the recipient, the Corporation may authorize the conduct of a hearing or other meetings at a location convenient to the recipient to consider the proposed suspension or termination. A transcript or recording must be made of a hearing conducted under this section and be available for inspection by any individual.

Knowledge Check

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service.

The NSCHC must be conducted, reviewed, and an eligibility determination made by the grant recipient based on the results of the NSCHC no later than _____ before a person begins to work or serve on an NSCHC-required grant.

- **1 day (Answer)**
- 3 days
- 1 week
- 1 month

Conclusion

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have reached the end of ASN 301: Restrictions, Requirements and Regulations You've learned about:

- Allowable and Prohibited Activities
- Evaluation Requirements
- Ethical Regulations
- Logistical Regulations

Click Next to Continue.

Exit Course

Thank you for completing this module. Select CLOSE to exit.

Important: After this browser window closes, select NEXT MODULE to mark this course as complete.

ASN 401: AmeriCorps Members

Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to ASN 401: AmeriCorps Members. This course includes audio. Would you like help navigating this course?

- Yes, show me around.
- No, let's dive in!

Navigation

Select each marker to learn more about the navigation elements of the player. To exit this course at any time, close this browser window. Select NEXT to continue.

Course Outline

In this course, we'll cover the basics of AmeriCorps members, including:

- Member Eligibility,
- Recruitment and Selection,
- Terms of Service,
- AmeriCorps Education Awards,
- Living Allowances,
- and Member Regulations.

Click NEXT.

Governing Authorities

Throughout the course, we'll reference governing authorities like the Code of Federal Regulations, or CFR, and the AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions, all of which you can access online.

Referencing the CFR

Anytime the CFR is referenced, you can head to the resources tab at the top right corner of this screen to find a quick link to the four main parts on eCFR.gov we'll be referring to:

- 45 CFR Part 2520
- 45 CFR Part 2521
- 45 CFR Part 2522
- 45 CFR Part 2540

Searching the CFR

To drill down to a specific section, like "45 CFR 2521.30," go to eCFR.gov and search for "45 CFR 2521.30," and it will take you right to that section.

As we read from the CFR, you'll hear AmeriCorps referred to as the "Corporation," because AmeriCorps was previously called the Corporation for National and Community Service.

In the CFR, AmeriCorps is referred to as the "Corporation."

Referencing Terms and Conditions

You can also find links to the Terms and Conditions we'll refer to under the Resources tab.

Important: Terms and Conditions are published each year. In this course, we will be referencing the 2023 Terms and Conditions. Make sure you reference the Terms and Conditions that apply to your grant.

Get Started

Let's get started with the AmeriCorps member pledge. Click NEXT to dive in.

AmeriCorps members are integral to our mission. They get things done out in the community! Click play to listen to the AmeriCorps Pledge to Get Things Done.

AmeriCorps Member Pledge

I will get things done for America – to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier.

I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities.

Faced with apathy, I will take action.

Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity, I will persevere.

I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.

I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.

Member Eligibility

Member Eligibility

There are 4 components of member eligibility. Click on each tab to read the member eligibility requirements.

Age - An AmeriCorps participant must:

- Be at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service; or
- Be an out-of-school youth 16 years of age at the commencement of service participating in a program described in § 2522.110(b)(3) or (g);

Education - An AmeriCorps participant must:

- Have a high school diploma or its equivalent; or
- Not have dropped out of elementary or secondary school to enroll as an AmeriCorps participant and must agree to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent prior to using the education award; or
- Obtain a waiver from AmeriCorps of the requirements above based on an independent evaluation secured by the program demonstrating that the individual is not capable of obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent; or

- Be enrolled in an institution of higher education on an ability to benefit basis and be considered eligible for funds under section 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1091);

Citizenship - An AmeriCorps participant must:

- Be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States;

National Service Criminal History Check - An AmeriCorps participant must:

- Satisfy the National Service Criminal History Check eligibility criteria pursuant to 45 CFR 2540.202.

National Service Criminal History Check

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service.

Grantees must apply eligibility criteria relating to criminal history to individuals specified in 45 CFR 2540.201. To determine an individual's eligibility to serve in a covered position, you must follow the procedures in part 2540. See 45 CFR 2522.205 and 45 CFR 2522.207 for details.

The NSCHC must be conducted, reviewed, and an eligibility determination made by the grant recipient based on the results of the NSCHC no later than the day before a person begins to work or serve on an NSCHC-required grant.

For more details, see 45 CFR 2540.200 through 45 CRR 2540.207 and visit the National Service Criminal History Checks page under RESOURCES.

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and Selection

Click Next to begin this section.

Volunteer Recruitment and Support (45 CFR 2520.35)

Do you have to recruit or support volunteers?

Yes! Recruiting and supporting AmeriCorps members is a key piece of all AmeriCorps Programs.

Unless AmeriCorps or the State Commission approves otherwise, some component of your program that is supported through the grant awarded by AmeriCorps must involve recruiting or supporting volunteers.

If you demonstrate that requiring your program to recruit or support volunteers would constitute a fundamental alteration to your program structure, AmeriCorps (or the State Commission for formula programs) may waive the requirement in response to your written request for such a waiver in the grant application.

Recruitment and Selection

AmeriCorps members are recruited and selected in two ways:

1. Local Recruitment and Selection
2. National and State Recruitment and Selection

In the next few sections, we'll give an overview of these two ways. Read the full details at 45 CFR 2522.210.

Local Recruitment

In general, AmeriCorps participants will be selected locally by an approved AmeriCorps program, and the selection criteria will vary widely among the different programs. Nevertheless, AmeriCorps programs must select their participants in a fair and non-discriminatory manner which complies with 45 CFR 2540. In selecting participants, programs must also comply with the recruitment and selection requirements specified in 45 CFR 2522.

Click on Charley, a program manager at Team Healthy, to read how they recruit and select members.

At Team Healthy, we established program eligibility criteria that is documented and universally applied across screening for each of our program sites. We have a systemized application process and a consistent screening and interview plan to ensure fair and equitable selection. The screening plan includes a rubric for reviewing resumes, a two round interview process, and reference checks.

National and State Recruitment

AmeriCorps and each State Commission have a system to recruit individuals who desire to perform national service and to assist the placement of these individuals in approved AmeriCorps positions.

AmeriCorps and State Commissions disseminate information regarding available approved AmeriCorps positions through cooperation with secondary schools, institutions of higher education, employment service offices, community-based organizations, State vocational rehabilitation agencies and other State agencies that primarily serve qualified individuals with disabilities, and other appropriate entities, particularly those organizations that provide outreach to disadvantaged youths and youths who are qualified individuals with disabilities.

Click on Charley for an example.

At Team Healthy, we utilize our community advisory board partners and state commissions to support the advertising of our open opportunities.

Join AmeriCorps!

Learn more about serving with AmeriCorps at the "Join AmeriCorps" website linked under RESOURCES.

Preventing Discrimination (45 CFR 2540.210)

The following provisions exist to ensure that AmeriCorps-supported programs do not discriminate in the selection of participants and staff:

1. An individual with responsibility for the operation of a project that receives AmeriCorps assistance must not discriminate against a participant in, or member of

the staff of, such project on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or political affiliation of such participant or member, or on the basis of disability, if the participant or member is a qualified individual with a disability.
2. Any AmeriCorps assistance constitutes Federal financial assistance for purposes of title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and constitutes Federal financial assistance to an education program or activity for purposes of the Education Amendments of 1972.
3. An individual with responsibility for the operation of a project that receives Corporation assistance may not discriminate on the basis of religion against a participant in such project or a member of the staff of such project who is paid with AmeriCorps funds.
4. Grantees must notify all program participants, staff, applicants, and beneficiaries of:
   a. Their rights under applicable federal nondiscrimination laws, including relevant provisions of the national service legislation and implementing regulations; and
   b. The procedure for filing a discrimination complaint with the Corporation's Office of Civil Rights and Inclusiveness.

Knowledge Check
True or False: Grantees are not required to recruit members.

- True
- **False (Answer)**

Terms of Service
Introduction
This section covers:

- The types of service terms;
- Member evaluation;
- Release from term;
- Suspension from term; and
- Limits on terms.

Click NEXT to continue.

Terms of Service (45 CFR 2522.220)
Terms of Service are categories used to define the hours that members serve in a year. A term of service may be:

1. **Full-time service.** 1,700 hours of service during a period of not more than one year.
2. **Part-time service.** 900 hours of service during a period of not more than two years.
3. **Reduced part-time term of service.** AmeriCorps may reduce the number of hours required to be served in order to receive an educational award for certain part-time participants serving in approved AmeriCorps positions. In such cases, the educational award will be reduced in direct proportion to the reduction in required hours of

service. These reductions may be made for summer programs, for categories of participants in certain approved AmeriCorps programs and on a case-by-case, individual basis as determined by the AmeriCorps.

4. **Summer programs.** A summer program, in which less than 1700 hours of service are performed, are part-time programs.

Click next to see all of the service term options that fall under these categories.

Service Terms Chart

In practice, we currently have these seven types of service terms, also known as slot types:

- Full-Time for 1700 hours;
- Three Quarter-Time for 1200 hours;
- Half-Time for 900 hours;
- Reduced Half-Time for 675 hours;
- Quarter-time for 450 hours;
- Minimum-Time for 300 hours; and
- Abbreviated time for 100 hours.

Programs can request or be awarded either all of one slot type or a combination of slots based on their program needs and design. Each service term has a required minimum number of hours which must be reached for the AmeriCorps member to receive the full education award allotted to that service term. All of these terms of service require completion of the hours within one year of the start of service.

The service terms, number of hours, amount of the education award, and minimum and maximum living allowance are outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity each year.

Eligibility for Subsequent Term

A participant will only be eligible to serve a subsequent term of service if that individual has received a satisfactory performance review for any previous term of service in an approved AmeriCorps position, in accordance with the requirements of 45 CFR 2522.220 and 45 CFR 2526.15.

Eligibility for a second or further term of service in no way guarantees a participant selection or placement.

Participant Evaluation (45 CFR 2522.220(c))

For the purposes of determining a participant's eligibility for an educational award and eligibility to serve a second or additional term of service, each AmeriCorps grantee is responsible for conducting a mid-term and end-of-term evaluation.

A mid-term evaluation is not required for a participant who is released early from a term of service or in other circumstances as approved by AmeriCorps.

See 45 CFR 2522.220c for details about member evaluation.

Click on Charley to read an example.

Team Healthy conducts mid and end of term evaluations with our full-time members.

The end-of-term evaluation consists of a determination of whether the participant successfully completed the required term of service. It also includes a participant performance and conduct review to determine whether the participant's service was satisfactory, which assesses whether the participant satisfactorily completed assignments, tasks, or projects.

We also make time for peer feedback!

Evaluation Grievance Procedure (45 CFR 2540)

Any AmeriCorps participant wishing to contest a program's ruling of unsatisfactory performance may file a grievance according to the procedures set forth in 45 CFR 2540.

If that grievance procedure or subsequent binding arbitration procedure finds that the participant did in fact satisfactorily complete a term of service, then that individual will be eligible to receive an educational award and/or be eligible to serve a second term of service.

Extension of Term for Disaster Purposes

If approved by AmeriCorps, a program may permit an AmeriCorps participant performing service directly related to disaster relief efforts to continue in a term of service for a period of up to 90 days beyond the period otherwise specified.

Release from Term of Service (45 CFR 2522.230)

An AmeriCorps program may release a participant from completing a term of service for compelling personal circumstances, as determined by the program, or for cause.

In the next sections, we'll cover the different ways and reasons a member may be released from a service term, including:

1. Release for Compelling Personal Circumstances;
2. Release for Cause;
3. Suspended Service;
4. Reinstatement; and
5. Release prior to serving 15% of a term of service.

Release for Compelling Personal Circumstances

An AmeriCorps program may release a participant upon a determination by the program that the participant is unable to complete the term of service because of compelling personal circumstances, if the participant has otherwise performed satisfactorily and has completed at least fifteen percent of the agreed term of service.

A participant who is released for compelling personal circumstances and who completes at least 15 percent of the required term of service is eligible for a pro-rated education award.

The program must document the basis for any determination that compelling personal circumstances prevent a participant from completing a term of service.

Click on Charley for a quick tip.

Team Healthy includes these terms in our Member Service Agreement and Host Site Agreement to ensure that both the members and sites are clear on the policies related to releasing a member.

Compelling Personal Circumstances Include

Compelling personal circumstances include those that are beyond the participant's control, such as, but not limited to:

- A participant's disability or serious illness;
- Disability, serious illness, or death of a participant's family member if this makes completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible; or
- Conditions attributable to the program or otherwise unforeseeable and beyond the participant's control, such as a natural disaster, a strike, relocation of a spouse, or the nonrenewal or premature closing of a project or program, that make completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible;

Compelling personal circumstances also include those that AmeriCorps, has for public policy reasons, determined as such, including:

- Military service obligations;
- Acceptance by a participant of an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work; or
- Acceptance of an employment opportunity by a participant serving in a program that includes in its approved objectives the promotion of employment among its participants.

Circumstances Do NOT Include

Compelling personal circumstances do not include leaving a program:

- To enroll in school;
- To obtain employment, other than in moving from welfare to work or in leaving a program that includes in its approved objectives the promotion of employment among its participants; or
- Because of dissatisfaction with the program.

Alternative to Release

As an alternative to releasing a participant, an AmeriCorps State and National program may, after determining that compelling personal circumstances exist, suspend the participant's term of service for up to two years (or longer if approved by AmeriCorps based on extenuating circumstances) to allow the participant to complete service with the same or similar AmeriCorps program at a later time.

Release for Cause (45 CFR 2522.230(b))

A release for cause encompasses any circumstances other than compelling personal circumstances that warrant an individual's release from completing a term of service. This could include but not be limited to a release from service due to the violation of a program code of conduct or performance issues. AmeriCorps programs must release for cause any participant who is convicted of a felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance during a term of service.

A member released for cause may contest the program's decision by filing a grievance. Pending the resolution of a grievance procedure filed by an individual to contest a

determination by a program to release the individual for cause, the individual's service is considered to be suspended. For this type of grievance, a program may not—while the grievance is pending or as part of its resolution—provide a participant with federally-funded benefits (including payments from the National Service Trust) beyond those attributable to service actually performed, without the program receiving written approval from AmeriCorps.

An individual's eligibility for a subsequent term of service in AmeriCorps will not be affected by release for cause from a prior term of service so long as the individual received a satisfactory end-of-term performance review for the period served in the prior term.

For more details about release for cause, see 45 CFR 2522.230(b).

Suspended Service

Suspension of service is defined as an extended period during which the member is not serving, nor accumulating service hours or receiving AmeriCorps benefits.

A program may consider suspending a member if they require a leave of absence from the program.

A program must suspend the service of an individual who faces an official charge of a violent felony (e.g., rape, homicide) or sale or distribution of a controlled substance.

A program must suspend the service of an individual who is convicted of possession of a controlled substance.

Reinstatement

A program may reinstate an individual whose service was suspended if the individual is found not guilty or if the charge is dismissed.

A program may reinstate an individual whose service was suspended only if the individual demonstrates the following:

- For an individual who has been convicted of a first offense of the possession of a controlled substance, the individual must have enrolled in a drug rehabilitation program;
- For an individual who has been convicted for more than one offense of the possession of a controlled substance, the individual must have successfully completed a drug rehabilitation program.

If a suspension is utilized for a member leave of absence, a program may reinstate them once they are able to return to their service activities.

Release before Serving 15% of Term

In order to receive an Education Award benefit, a member must serve at least 15% of their hours if released for reasons other than misconduct.

Limit on Terms (45 CFR 2522.235)

Is there a limit on the number of terms an individual may serve in an AmeriCorps State and National program?

The number of terms an individual may serve in an AmeriCorps State and National program are not limited, but an individual may attain only the aggregate value of two full-time education awards and AmeriCorps will fund the benefits described in 45 CFR 2522.240 through 45 CFR 2522.250 only for the number of terms needed to attain the aggregate value of two full-time education awards. Grantees may choose to fund benefits for any additional terms.

Knowledge Check

The service term, or slot, with the most service hours in a year is a Full-Time service term. What is the minimum number of hours a member must serve to be considered Full Time?

- 2,200
- 2,000
- **1,700 (Answer)**
- 900
- 675

Knowledge Check

Which of these is NOT considered a compelling personal circumstance for which a member may be released?

- A participant's disability or serious illness
- Disability, serious illness, or death of a participant's family member
- **Member is no longer satisfied with their service experience (Answer)**
- Military service obligations

Section Conclusion

Let's turn from Terms of Service to the Living Allowance.

Living Allowance

Financial Benefits

The two primary financial benefits offered to AmeriCorps members are a Living Allowance, and an Education Award. For complete details on these benefits, see 45 CFR 2522.240. In the upcoming sections we will cover a few highlights.

Living Allowance (45 CFR 2522.240)

What is a living allowance?

The agency, an applicant, or a grantee can define the AmeriCorps State and National AmeriCorps member living allowance, as the living allowance that a program is paying a member. No other member benefits are required to be included in a program's calculation to determine the living allowance amount, or whether the program is compliant with the maximum living allowance amount.

Living Allowance Amount (45 CFR 2522.240)

According to 45 CFR 2522.240, any individual who participates on a full-time basis in an AmeriCorps program carried out using assistance provided pursuant to § 2521.30 of this chapter, including an AmeriCorps program that receives educational awards only pursuant to

§ 2521.30(c) of this chapter, will receive a living allowance in an amount equal to or greater than the average annual subsistence allowance provided to VISTA volunteers under § 105 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4955).

Maximum Living Allowance

The AmeriCorps living allowances may not exceed 200 percent of the average annual subsistence allowance provided to VISTA volunteers under section 105 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4955).

A professional corps AmeriCorps program may provide a stipend in excess of the maximum, subject to the following conditions:

AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to pay for any portion of the allowance; and

The program must be operated directly by the applicant, selected on a competitive basis by submitting an application to AmeriCorps, and may not be included in a State's application for AmeriCorps program funds distributed by formula under 45 CFR 2521.30(a)(2).

Living Allowance for Part-Time Participants

Programs may, but are not required to, provide living allowances to individuals participating on a part-time basis or a reduced term of part-time service. Such living allowances should be prorated to the living allowance authorized in 45 CFR 2522.240(b)(1) and will comply with such restrictions therein.

Living allowance information is included in each Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Waivers or Reductions

AmeriCorps may waive or reduce the living allowance requirements if a program can demonstrate that such requirements are inconsistent with the objectives of the program, and that participants will be able to meet the necessary and reasonable costs of living (including food, housing, and transportation) in the area in which the program is located.

A participant may waive all or part of the receipt of a living allowance.

The participant may revoke this waiver at any time during the participant's term of service. If the participant revokes the living allowance waiver, the participant may begin receiving his or her living allowance prospective from the date of the revocation; a participant may not receive any portion of the living allowance that may have accrued during the waiver period.

Living Allowance Disbursement

A living allowance is not a wage, and programs may not pay living allowances on an hourly basis.

Programs must distribute the living allowance at regular intervals and in regular increments and may increase living allowance payments only on the basis of increased living expenses such as food, housing, or transportation.

Living allowance payments may only be made to a participant during the participant's term of service and must cease when the participant concludes the term of service. Programs may

not provide a lump sum payment to a participant who completes the originally agreed-upon term of service in a shorter period of time.

Section Conclusion
Now let's look at the Education Award.

AmeriCorps Education Award

AmeriCorps Education Award

AmeriCorps members may receive an education award from the National Service Trust upon successful completion of their term of service.

An education award may be used to pay educational expenses and/or to repay qualified student loans, as defined in 45 CFR 2525.2.

An education award is available for the member to use until seven years from the date when they successfully completed the term of service for which the award was earned.

For more details about the Education Award and the National Service Trust, see 45 CFR Part 2522 Subpart B.

Use Your Education Award
Click on each button to explore how members can use their education award.

Pay Educational Expenses

You can use your education award to pay current educational expenses at eligible schools and at certain GI Bill-approved educational programs for veterans.

Eligible schools are higher educational institutions, both domestic and foreign, that currently participate in the Department of Education's Title IV student aid programs. They are referred to as "Title IV schools." This category includes most post-secondary colleges, universities, and technical schools.

GI Education Bill Programs: The award can also be used for educational expenses associated with enrollment in programs of education, apprenticeships, or job trainings approved for educational benefits under the Montgomery G.I. Bill and the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill. Regarding the education award, such programs are referred to as "GI Bill approved programs."

Repay Qualified Student Loans

The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award can only be used to repay the qualified student loans:

- Loans backed by the federal government under Title IV of the Higher Education Ac (except PLUS Loans to parents of students) - Examples include: Stafford Loans, Perkins Loans, Wm. D. Ford Federal Direct Loans, Federal Consolidated Loans, Supplement Loans to Students, & Guaranteed Student Loans.
- Loans under Titles VII or VIII of the Public Service Health Act - Examples include: HEAL, HPSL, Nursing Student Loans, Primary Care Loans, & Loans for Disadvantaged Students.

- Loans made by a state agency, including state institutions of higher education.

Forbearance and Accrued Interest Payment

Individuals who serve in an approved program may be eligible to have the repayment of their qualified student loans postponed while serving. This postponement is called forbearance. You may be eligible for loan forbearance based on your national service. While interest may continue to accrue during your service, if you successfully complete the term of service the National Service Trust will pay all or a portion of the qualified loan's interest that accrued during your service.

Section Conclusion

Read more about the Education Award on the "Segal AmeriCorps Education Award" website under RESOURCES. Now let's look at other member benefits.

Other Benefits

Childcare (45 CFR 2522.250)

Grantees must provide childcare through an eligible provider, or a childcare allowance in an amount determined by AmeriCorps to those full-time participants who need childcare in order to participate.

Click on each button below to read more.

Childcare Need

A participant is considered to need childcare to participate in the program if he or she:

- Is the parent or legal guardian of, or is acting in loco parentis for, a child under 13 who resides with the participant;
- Has a family income that does not exceed 75 percent of the State's median income for a family of the same size;
- At the 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 participant serves in the program; and
- Certifies that he or she needs child care to participate in the program.

Provider Eligibility

Eligible childcare providers are those who are eligible childcare providers as defined in the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990. See 42 U.S.C. 9858n(5).

Childcare Allowance

The amount of the child-care allowance may not exceed the applicable payment rate to an eligible provider established by the State for childcare funded under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990. See 42 U.S.C. 9858c(4)(A).

AmeriCorps will pay 100 percent of the childcare allowance, or, if the program provides childcare through an eligible provider, the actual cost of the care or the amount of the allowance, whichever is less.

Health Care (45 CFR 2522.250)

Grantees must provide to all eligible participants health care coverage that—

- Provides the minimum benefits determined by AmeriCorps;
- Provides the alternative minimum benefits determined by AmeriCorps; or
- Does not provide all of either the minimum or the alternative minimum benefits but that has a fair market value equal to or greater than the fair market value of a policy that provides the minimum benefits.

AmeriCorps' share of the cost of health coverage may not exceed 85 percent. AmeriCorps will pay no share of the cost of a policy that does not provide the minimum or alternative minimum benefits.

Health Care Eligibility (45 CFR 2522.250)

A full-time participant is eligible for health care benefits if they are not otherwise covered by a health benefits package providing minimum benefits established by AmeriCorps at the time they are accepted into a program.

If, as a result of participation, or if, during the term of service, a participant demonstrates loss of coverage through no deliberate act of their own, such as parental or spousal job loss or disqualification from Medicaid, the participant will be eligible for health care benefits.

Knowledge Check

The AmeriCorps living allowances may not exceed _____ percent of the average annual subsistence allowance provided to VISTA volunteers under section 105 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4955).

- 150
- **200 (Answer)**
- 250
- 300

Knowledge Check

True or False: An Education Award CAN be used to repay qualified student loans.

- **True (Answer)**
- False

Section Conclusion

That concludes the sections on member benefits. Let's move on to the last section of this course: Member Regulations.

Member Regulations

Introduction

Let's look at a few regulations related to AmeriCorps members:

- Prohibited Activities
- Allowed Fundraising
- Fundraising Restrictions

- Member Service Agreements
- Supervision and Training
- Family and Medical Leave
- False or Misleading Statements

Prohibited Activities (45 CFR 2520.65)

There are 11 Prohibited Activities outlined in our statute, regulations, and terms and conditions. These apply to AmeriCorps members, program staff, or volunteers associated with an AmeriCorps program. Grantees should review these prohibited activities with their subgrantees and members. For the full text of this regulation, see 45 CFR 2520.65.

Prohibited Activities Part 1 (45 CFR 2520.65)

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:

- Attempting to influence legislation;
- Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;

Prohibited Activities Part 2 (45 CFR 2520.65)

Staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

- 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 Part 3 (45 CFR 2520.65)

Staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

- 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 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative;

o   An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (7) of this section, unless AmeriCorps assistance is not used to support those religious activities;

Prohibited Activities Part 4 (45 CFR 2520.65)

Staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

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

Non-AmeriCorps Time (45 CFR 2520.65)

Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the prohibited activities listed on the previous sections on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non- AmeriCorps funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

Knowledge Check

A Team Healthy AmeriCorps member is an active volunteer on the campaign of a community member running for city council. The campaign has a strong focus on creating new green initiatives in the city. The member is planning to take the youth from their program to a rally for the candidate so the young people can learn more about the green initiatives.

Is this a Prohibited Activity?

- **Yes (Answer)**
- No

Knowledge Check

A Team Healthy AmeriCorps member is leading a nutrition program at a community center located on site at a church.

Is this a Prohibited Activity?

- Yes
- **No (Answer)**

Allowable Fundraising (45 CFR 2520.40)

AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of your program's service activities. Examples of fundraising activities AmeriCorps members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read;
- Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers;
- Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals;

- Securing financial resources from the community to assist in launching or expanding a program that provides social services to the members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the members of a community-based organization;
- Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current members.

Fundraising Restrictions (45 CFR 2520.40 and 45 CFR 2520.45)
AmeriCorps members may not:

- Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment.
- Write a grant application to AmeriCorps or to any other Federal agency.
- Spend more than ten percent of their originally agreed-upon term of service performing fundraising activities.

Member Service Agreements
An AmeriCorps Member Service Agreement thoroughly describes the relationship between an AmeriCorps member and the AmeriCorps program. Grantees are required to create the Member Service Agreement, and ensure the members receive, read, and agree to all elements of the service agreement before they begin service.

Resources for Member Service Agreements
Just a few examples of what is required in a Member Service Agreement include:

- Member position description;
- The minimum number of service hours and other requirements
- The amount of the education award being offered
- Standards of conduct, as developed by the grantee
- Prohibited activities
- Civil rights requirements, complaint procedures, and rights of beneficiaries;
- Suspension and termination rules;
- Grievance procedures;
- And more!

AmeriCorps has tools to help you make your Member Service Agreement and make sure all of the required components are included, including a Member Service Agreement Outline.

Supervision and Training (45 CFR 2520.50)
Grantees must provide members with adequate supervision by qualified supervisors.

Grantees must conduct an orientation for members, including training on what activities are prohibited during AmeriCorps service hours, and comply with any pre-service orientation or training required by AmeriCorps.

Click on Charley to see how Team Healthy supervises and trains members:

At Team Healthy, we provide an extensive orientation to member supervisors at the start of the program year, including compliance requirements and best practices for managing an

AmeriCorps member. The supervisors connect with each other and program staff via an email list throughout the year to provide each other with support and share success stories.

Our AmeriCorps members participate in a two-week orientation where they learn about the organization, the community they will be serving, AmeriCorps rules and regulations, and the skills necessary to conduct their service activities. They also engage in community building as a group.

Team Healthy AmeriCorps members gather every Friday for a 4-hour training facilitated by our program staff. Training topics are focused on environmental justice, public health, nutrition, and other specific skills required to conduct the service activities. Each member is mentored by a member of the program staff, meeting monthly for career coaching.

Education and Training (45 CFR 2520.50)
No more than 20 percent of the aggregate of all AmeriCorps member service hours in your program may be spent in education and training activities.

Capacity-building activities and direct service activities do not count towards the 20 percent cap on education and training activities.

Click the button below to learn about the waiver to this rule:

AmeriCorps may waive the 20 percent limit to allow up to 50 percent of the aggregate of all AmeriCorps member service hours in a program to be spent in education and training activities if your program:

- Is a Registered Apprenticeship program;
- Is a job training or job readiness program;
- Includes activities to support member attainment of a GED or high school diploma or occupational, technical, or safety credentials; or
- Primarily enrolls economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members and employs a program design that also includes soft skills or life skills development.

Limitations (45 CFR 2522.220(d))
AmeriCorps may set a minimum or maximum percentage of hours of a full-time, part-time, or reduced term of service that a participant may engage in training, education, or other similar approved activities.

Family and Medical Leave (45 CFR 2540.220)
Under what circumstances and subject to what conditions are participants in AmeriCorps-assisted programs eligible for family and medical leave?

The CFR answers this question at 45 CFR 2540.220. Read that section for full details on member family and medical leave.

False or Misleading Statements (45 CFR Part 2540 Subpart F)
If it is determined that a member made a false or misleading statement in connection with their eligibility for a benefit from, or qualification to participate in, an AmeriCorps-funded program, it may result in the revocation of the qualification or forfeiture of the benefit.

Revocation and forfeiture under 45 CFR 2540 Subpart F are in addition to any other remedy available to the Federal Government under the law against persons who make false or misleading statements in connection with a Federally funded program.

Knowledge Check
Who creates the Member Service Agreement?

- The Member
- **The Grantee (Answer)**
- AmeriCorps

Knowledge Check
Which of these is NOT an allowable fundraising activity that members can perform?

- Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers.
- **Raising funds for an organization's general operating expenses (Answer)**
- Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current members.
- Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read.

Section Conclusion
You have completed the section on Member Regulations. Let's wrap up!

Conclusion

Conclusion
Congratulations! You have reached the end of ASN 401: AmeriCorps Members.

You've learned about

- Member Eligibility,
- Recruitment and Selection,
- Terms of Service,
- AmeriCorps Education Awards,
- Living Allowances,
- and Member Regulations.

Great job! Click Next.

Exit Course
Thank you for completing this module. Select CLOSE to exit.

Important: After this browser window closes, select NEXT MODULE to mark this course as complete.

ASN 501: State Service Commissions

Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to ASN 501: State Service Commissions. This course includes audio. Would you like help navigating this course?

- Yes, show me around.
- No, let's dive in!

Navigation

Select each marker to learn more about the navigation elements of the player. To exit this course at any time, close this browser window. Select NEXT to continue.

Course Outline

If you are a part of a State Service Commission, or if you or your organization works with a State Service Commission, this course is for you! In this course, we'll cover the basics of State Service Commissions, including:

- An overview and purpose of State Commissions;
- Their composition requirements;
- Their duties and restrictions; and
- Commission funding.

Click NEXT.

Code of Federal Regulations

Throughout the course, we'll reference governing authorities like the Code of Federal Regulations, or CFR.

Referencing the CFR

Anytime the CFR is referenced, you can head to the resources tab at the top right corner of this screen to find a quick link to the main part on eCFR.gov we'll be referring to: 45 CFR 2550.

Searching the CFR

To drill down to a specific section, like "45 CFR 2550.10," go to eCFR.gov and search for "45 CFR 2550.10," and it will take you right to that section.

As we read from the CFR, you'll hear AmeriCorps referred to as the "Corporation," because AmeriCorps was previously called the Corporation for National and Community Service. In the CFR, AmeriCorps is referred to as the "Corporation."

Click NEXT to dive in.

State Commission Overview

State Commission Overview

This section answers the questions:

- What is a State Commission?
- Where are State Commissions located?
- How are State Commissions governed?

Click NEXT.

Purpose of State Service Commissions (45 CFR 2550.10)

AmeriCorps seeks to meet the Nation's pressing human, educational, environmental and public safety needs through service and to reinvigorate the ethic of civic responsibility across the Nation.

If AmeriCorps is to meet these goals, it is critical for each of the states to be actively involved.

As stated in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, to be eligible to apply for program funding, or approved national service positions, each state must establish a State Commission on national and community service to administer the state program grant making process and to develop a state service plan.

What is a State Commission? (45 CFR 2550.20(l))

According to 45 CFR 2550.20(l), a State Service Commission is "a bipartisan or nonpartisan State Entity, approved by the Corporation, consisting of 15–25 members (appointed by the chief executive officer of the state), that is responsible for developing a comprehensive national service plan, assembling applications for funding and approved national service positions, and administering national and community service programs in the state."

In Other Words

In other words, State Service Commissions are boards appointed by a state's governor to oversee the community service and volunteer initiatives in their state or US territory.

AmeriCorps awards funds to State Commissions to cover the Federal share of operating the State Commissions and fund national service programs in their states.

We'll dive deeper into how Commissions receive and use AmeriCorps funding in a later section.

Commission Location

State Commissions can be located in a few different places, and they're not always a part of a government agency. A State Commission can be any of the following. Click on each option.

Housed in the Office of the Governor or Lt. Governor - These Commissions are often considered part of the governor's budget and a part of the executive agenda for the state. For example, Alabama's commission, the Governor's Office of Volunteer Services, is housed in the Executive office of the Governor.

A Free-standing State Agency - A commission can be a free-standing state agency. As such, they apply to the state legislature for state dollars, like all other state agencies. For example, Mississippi's Commission is a free-standing agency: Volunteer Mississippi.

Housed in another State Agency - These Commissions often receive administrative and fiscal support from the hosting agency and are included in the agency budget request to the

state. For example, Alaska's State Commission, Serve Alaska, is housed in the state's Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development.

An Independent, Non-Profit 501c3 Organization - These Commissions manage themselves organizationally as a non-profit, and often approach state legislatures, for-profit organizations and foundations for funding. For example, the Texas State Commission is a 501(c)(3) called the OneStar Foundation.

Regardless of where the Commission is housed, all requirements found in the National Community Service Act of 1990 and the Code of Federal Regulations apply.

Governing Authorities and Bylaws

State Commissions are subject to the AmeriCorps governing authorities, their state authorities, and their own bylaws. Each Commission has developed a set of bylaws, which provide the basic organizing principles for the Commission.

Bylaws traditionally cover such topics as:

- Creation and Purpose
- Members
- Meetings
- Officers
- Committees
- Conflict of Interest
- Amendments

Knowledge Check

True or False: State Commissions are not subject to the Code of Federal Regulations, only State laws.

- True
- **False (Answer)**

Knowledge Check

Select the places a State Commission can be located:

- In the Office of the Governor or Lt. Governor
- In a State Agency
- As an Independent, Non-Profit 501c3 Organization
- **Any of the Above (Answer)**

Composition Requirements and Restrictions

State Commission Composition

State Commissions are made up of both commission staff and the Commissioners themselves. The commission staff are responsible for the State Service Commission operations and programming to execute its mission. The Commissioners are the governor-appointed volunteers responsible for the Commission's national service and grant-making

decisions. The National Community Service Act of 1990 outlines the composition requirements for commissioners. But first, let's take a look at staffing.

Commission Staffing

State Commissions range from staff teams of three to as many as 10 or more depending on the state established role of the commission and the size of the AmeriCorps portfolio.

Click on each role below to read about typical roles and responsibilities.

CEO/Executive Director/Director: Reporting to the State Service Commission, Board of Directors, and/or Fiscal Agent, the Executive Director (ED) has overall strategic and operational responsibility for the commission's staff, programs, expansion, and execution of its mission. They develop deep knowledge of the national service field, core programs, operations, and business plans.

Finance/Accounting: Staff in this position perform accounting data entry for budgets and expenditures for local, state, federal, and private funding, contracts, and grants; monitor and review accounting and related system reports for accuracy and completeness; perform accounting data entry for revenue, expense, payroll entries, invoices, and other accounting documents; lead and/or participate in subgrantee audits, which include planning, executing, directing, and/or completing financial audits.

Commission Program Officer: The Program Officer manages the program portfolio, assists in the development of an annual monitoring plan, manages monitoring and reporting activities, and oversees compliance of grant agreements, regulations, and policies.

Training/Events Manager: This type of position works to strengthen subgrantees and communities through program development and management, event planning, training, and support.

Commissioners (45 CFR 2550.50)

Now let's look at the composition requirements for Commissioners. Click NEXT.

Size and Terms (45 CFR 2550.50(a))

The Chief Executive Officer of a state must appoint 15–25 voting members to the State Commission in addition to any non-voting members they may appoint.

Voting members of a State Commission must be appointed to renewable three-year terms, except that initially a chief executive officer must appoint a third of the members to one-year terms and another third of the members to two-year terms.

Required Voting Members (45 CFR 2550.50(b))

A member may represent none, one, or more than one category, but each of the following categories must be represented:

1. A representative of a community-based agency or organization in the state;
2. The head of the state education agency or his or her designee;
3. A representative of local government in the state;
4. A representative of local labor organizations in the state;

 AmeriCorps

5. A representative of business;
6. An individual between the ages of 16 and 25, inclusive, who is a participant or supervisor of a service program for school-age youth, or of a campus-based or national service program;
7. A representative of a national service program;
8. An individual with expertise in the educational, training, and development needs of youth, particularly disadvantaged youth;
9. An individual with experience in promoting the involvement of older adults (age 55 and older) in service and volunteerism; and
10. A representative of the volunteer sector.

Other Voting Members (45 CFR 2550.50(c))
Any remaining voting members of a State Commission are appointed at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer of the state. AmeriCorps suggests the following types of individuals:

1. Educators, including representatives from institutions of higher education and local education agencies;
2. Experts in the delivery of human, educational, environmental, or public safety services to communities and persons;
3. Representatives of Indian tribes;
4. Out-of-school or at-risk youth; and
5. Representatives of programs that are administered or receive assistance under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended (DVSA) (42 U.S.C. 4950 et seq.).

Ex Officio, Non-Voting Members (45 CFR 2550.50(d))
The Chief Executive Officer of a state may appoint as ex officio, non-voting members of the State Commission officers or employees of state agencies operating community service, youth service, education, social service, senior service, or job training programs.

Composition Diversity (45 CFR 2550.50(e))
To the extent practicable, the Chief Executive Officer of a state shall ensure that the membership for the State Commission is diverse with respect to race, ethnicity, age, gender, and disability characteristics.

Not more than 50 percent plus one of the voting members of a State Commission may be from the same political party.

In addition, the number of voting members of a State Commission who are officers or employees of the state may not exceed 25% of the total membership of that State Commission.

Other Composition Requirements
Click each tab to view the last 4 composition requirements listed in 45 CFR 2550.50.

Selection of Chairperson. The chairperson is elected by the voting members of a State Commission. To be eligible to serve as chairperson, an individual must be an appointed, voting member of a State Commission. See 45 CFR 2550.50(f).

Vacancies. If a vacancy occurs on a State Commission, a new member must be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer of the state to serve for the remainder of the term for which the predecessor of such member was appointed. The vacancy will not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the duties of the Commission. See 45 CFR 2550.50(g).

Compensation of State Commission Members. A member of a State Commission may not receive compensation for their services, but may be reimbursed (at the discretion of the state) for travel and daily expenses in the same manner as employees intermittently serving the state. See 45 CFR 2550.50(h).

The role of the AmeriCorps Representative. AmeriCorps will designate one of its employees to serve as a representative to each state or group of states. This individual must be included as an ex officio non-voting member on the State Commission. In general, the Corporation representative will be responsible for assisting states in carrying out national service activities. See 45 CFR 2550.50(i).

Knowledge Check
How long is a Commissioner's renewable terms?

- 1 year
- 2 years
- **3 years (Answer)**
- 5 years

Knowledge Check
Select the category that MUST be represented as voting members of a State Commission:

- A representative of a community-based agency or organization in the state;
- The head of the state education agency or their designee
- A representative of business
- An individual with expertise in the educational, training, and development needs of youth, particularly disadvantaged youth
- An individual with experience in promoting the involvement of older adults (age 55 and older) in service and volunteerism
- A representative of the volunteer sector
- **All of the above (Answer)**

Knowledge Check
Not more than _____ percent plus one of the voting members of a State Commission may be from the same political party.

- 25%
- **50% (Answer)**
- 75%

Alternative Administrative Entities
Alternative Administrative Entities (45 CFR 2550.20)
What is an Alternative Administrative Entity?

An AAE is a State Entity approved by the Corporation to perform the duties of a State Commission, including developing a three-year comprehensive national service plan, preparing applications to the Corporation for funding and approved national service positions, and administering service program grants.

In general, an AAE must meet the same composition and other requirements as a State Commission, but may receive waivers from the Corporation to accommodate state laws that prohibit inquiring as to the political affiliation of members, to have more than 25 voting members (the maximum for a State Commission), and/or to select members in a manner other than selection by the Chief Executive Officer of the state.

Commission vs AAE
AmeriCorps recognizes that some states, for legal or other legitimate reasons, may not be able to meet all of the requirements of the State Commissions.

The AAE is essentially the same as a State Commission; however, it may be exempt from some of the State Commission requirements.

A state that cannot meet one of the waivable requirements of the State Commission outlined in 45 CFR 2550.60, and which can demonstrate this to AmeriCorps, should seek to establish an AAE.

AAE Exemptions (45 CFR 2550.60)
Click each of the three criteria which may be waived for an A.A.E. to read more.

The requirement that a state's Chief Executive Officer appoint the members of a State Commission. If a state can offer a compelling reason why some or all of the State Commission members should be appointed by the state legislature or by some other appropriate means, AmeriCorps may grant a waiver.

The requirement that a State Commission have 15-25 members. If a state compellingly demonstrates why its commission should have a larger number of members, AmeriCorps may grant a waiver.

The requirement that not more than 50% plus one of the State Commission's voting members be from the same political party. This requirement was established to prevent State Commissions from being politically motivated or controlled; however, in some states it is illegal to require prospective members to provide information about political party affiliation. For this or another compelling reason, AmeriCorps may grant a waiver.

Similarities (45 CFR 2550.60)
Again, any time AmeriCorps grants one or more of these waivers for a State Entity, that entity becomes an AAE.

In all other respects an AAE is the same as a State Commission, having the same requirements, rights, duties, and responsibilities.

Input (45 CFR 2550.30)

Regardless of which entity a state employs, each state is required to solicit broad-based, local input in an open, inclusive, non-political planning process.

Commission Duties

State Entity Duties

The CFR lists 13 duties for both State Commissions and AAEs, collectively referred to as State Entities.

In the following sections, we'll explore each of the duties listed in 45 CFR 2550.80.

1. State Service Plan
2. Program Selection
3. Service Learning Applications
4. Administration of the Grants Program
5. Evaluation and Monitoring
6. Technical Assistance
7. Program Development and Training
8. Recruitment and Placement
9. Benefits
10. Activity Ineligible for Assistance
11. Recommendations to AmeriCorps
12. Coordination
13. Supplemental State Service Plan

Duty 1 – State Service Plan

Duty #1 - Development of a three-year, comprehensive national and community service plan and establishment of state priorities.

The State Entity must develop and annually update a statewide plan for national service covering a three-year period, the beginning of which may be set by the state, that is consistent with AmeriCorps' broad goals of meeting human, educational, environmental, and public safety needs.

State Service Plan Requirements Part 1 (45 CFR 2550.80(a))

State Service Plans must meet the following minimum requirements:

- The plan must be developed through an open and public process (such as through regional forums or hearings) that provides for the maximum participation and input from a broad cross-section of individuals and organizations, including national service programs within the state, community-based agencies, organizations with a demonstrated record of providing educational, public safety, human, or environmental services, residents of the state, including youth and other prospective participants, State Educational Agencies, traditional service organizations, labor unions, and other interested members of the public.

- The plan must ensure outreach to diverse, broad-based community organizations that serve underrepresented populations by creating state networks and registries or by utilizing existing ones.
- The plan must set forth the state's goals, priorities, and strategies for promoting national and community service and strengthening its service infrastructure, including how AmeriCorps-funded programs fit into the plan.

State Service Plan Requirements Part 2 (45 CFR 2550.80(a))

Continued:

- The plan may contain such other information as the State Commission considers appropriate and must contain such other information as AmeriCorps may require.
- The plan must ensure outreach to, and coordination with, municipalities and county governments regarding the national service laws.
- The plan must provide for effective coordination of funding applications submitted by the state and other organizations within the state under the national service laws.
- The plan must include measurable goals and outcomes for national service programs funded through the state consistent with the performance levels for national service programs.
- The plan is subject to approval by the Chief Executive Officer of the state.
- The plan must be submitted, in its entirety, in summary, or in part, to AmeriCorps upon request.

State Service Plan Assessment (45 CFR 2550.80(a))

AmeriCorps assesses the quality of State Plan as evidenced by:

- The development and quality of realistic goals and objectives for moving service ahead in the state;
- The extent to which proposed strategies can reasonably be expected to accomplish stated goals; and
- The extent of input in the development of the state plan from a broad cross-section of individuals and organizations.

State Service Plan Examples

Click these Commission websites to see their State Service Plans.

Duty 2 –Selection of Programs

Duty #2 - Selection of subtitle C programs and preparation of application to the Corporation.

Each state must:

- Prepare an application to AmeriCorps to receive funding or education awards for national service programs operating in and selected by the state.
- Administer a competitive process to select national service programs for funding. The state is not required to select programs for funding prior to submission of the application.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(b).

Duty 3 – Service Learning Applications

Duty #3 - Preparation of Service Learning applications.

The State Entity is required to assist the state education agency in preparing the application for subtitle B school-based service learning programs.

The State Entity may apply to AmeriCorps to receive funding for community-based subtitle programs after coordination with the State Educational Agency.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(c).

Duty 4 – Administration of Grant Programs

Duty #4 - Administration of the grants program.

After AmeriCorps funds are awarded, State Entities are responsible for administering the grants and overseeing and monitoring the performance and progress of funded programs.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(d).

Click for Examples.

Examples of grants administration include:

- Developing all administrative and operational policies and procedures related to managing the grants program in the state.
- Day-to-day work associated with managing the grants.
- Monitoring subgrantee fiscal performance, processes, and actions to ensure they are appropriately using federal funds on reasonable, necessary, allocable, and allowable expenses.
- Monitoring programmatic performance, processes, and actions to ensure the subgrantees are complying with all required AmeriCorps and state rules and regulations related to the programmatic operation of the AmeriCorps program.
- Taking corrective actions if noncompliance or unallowable/prohibited activities are identified.

Duty 5 – Evaluation and Monitoring

Duty #5 - Evaluation and monitoring.

State Entities, in concert with AmeriCorps, shall be responsible for implementing comprehensive, non-duplicative evaluation and monitoring systems.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(e).

Duty 6 – Technical Assistance

Duty #6 - Technical assistance.

The State Entity will be responsible for providing technical assistance to local nonprofit organizations and other entities in planning programs, applying for funds, and in implementing and operating high quality programs. States should encourage proposals from underserved communities.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(f).

Duty 7 – Development and Training
Duty #7 - Program development assistance and training.

The State Entity must assist in the development of subtitle C programs; such development might include staff training, curriculum materials, and other relevant materials and activities. A description of such proposed assistance must be included in the state comprehensive plan. A state may apply for additional subtitle C programs training and technical assistance funds to perform these functions. The Corporation will issue notices of availability of funds with respect to training and technical assistance.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(g)

Duty 8 – Recruitment and Placement
Duty #8 - Recruitment and placement.

The State Entity, as well as the Corporation, will develop mechanisms for recruitment and placement of people interested in participating in national service programs.

45 CFR 2550.80(h).

Duty 9 – Benefits
Duty #9 - Benefits.

The State Entity shall assist in the provision of health and child care benefits to subtitle C program participants, as will be specified in the regulations implementing the subtitle C programs.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(i).

Duty 10 – Activity Ineligible for Assistance
Duty #10 - Activity ineligible for assistance.

A State Commission or AAE may not directly carry out any national service program that receives financial assistance under section 121 of the National and Community Service Act or title II of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(j).

Duty 11 – Recommendations to AmeriCorps
Duty #11 - Make recommendations to the Corporation with respect to priorities within the state for programs receiving assistance under Domestic Volunteer Service Act.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(k).

Duty 12 – Coordination
Duty #12 - Coordination with other state agencies and with volunteer service programs.

A State Entity must coordinate its activities with the activities of other state agencies that administer Federal financial assistance programs under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) or other appropriate Federal financial assistance programs.

In general, the State Entity shall coordinate its functions (including recruitment, public awareness, and training activities) with such functions of any division of ACTION, or the Corporation, that carries out volunteer service programs in the state.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(l) for more details.

Duty 13 – Supplemental State Service Plan
Duty #13 - Supplemental State Service Plan for Adults Age 55 or Older.

To be eligible to receive a grant or allotment under subtitles B or C of title I of the National and Community Service Act (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.), or to receive a distribution of approved national service positions under subtitle C of title I of that Act, a state must work with appropriate state agencies and private entities to develop a comprehensive state service plan for service by adults age 55 or older.

See 45 CFR 2550.80(m).

Duties Recap
Those are the 13 duties listed in 45 CFR 2550 for State Entities. Let's move next to activity restrictions. Click NEXT for a quick knowledge check.

Knowledge Check
Which of these is NOT a State Commission duty listed in the Code of Federal Regulations?

- Development of a three-year, comprehensive national and community service plan and establishment of state priorities.
- Administration of the grants program.
- Implementing comprehensive, non-duplicative evaluation and monitoring systems.
- **Create a supplemental state service plan for youth ages 16-20. (Answer)**

Conflicts of Interest
Conflicts of Interest
Conflicts of Interest.

To avoid a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest regarding the provision of assistance or approved national service positions, members of a State Commission or AAE must adhere to three categories of provisions listed in 45 CFR 2550.90:

- The General Restriction
- The Exception to Achieve a Quorum
- The Rule of Construction

Click NEXT.

General Restriction (45 CFR 2550.90(a))

Members of State Commissions and AAEs are restricted in several ways from the grant approval and administration process for any grant application submitted by an organization for which they are currently, or were within one year of, the submission of the application,

officers, directors, trustees, full-time volunteers or employees. The restrictions for such individuals are as follows:

- They cannot assist the applying organization in preparing the grant application;
- They must recuse themselves from the discussions or decisions regarding the grant application and any other grant applications submitted to the Commission or AAE under the same program (e.g., subtitle B programs or subtitle C programs); and
- They cannot participate in the oversight, evaluation, continuation, suspension, or termination of the grant award.

Exception to Achieve a Quorum (45 CFR 2550.90(b))

If the general restriction creates a situation in which a Commission or AAE does not have enough eligible voting members to achieve a quorum, the Commission or AAE may involve some normally excluded members subject to the following conditions:

- A Commission or AAE may randomly and in a non-discretionary manner select the number of refused members necessary to achieve a quorum;
- Notwithstanding, no Commission or AAE member may, under any circumstances, participate in any discussions or decisions regarding a grant application submitted by an organization with which they are or were affiliated according to the definitions in the general restriction; and
- If recused members are included to achieve quorum, the State Commission or AAE must document the event and report to the Corporation within 30 days of the vote.

Rule of Construction (45 CFR 2550.90(c)

The general restriction shall not be construed to limit the authority of any voting member of the State Commission or AAE to participate in discussion of, and hearings and forums on, the general duties, policies, and operations of the Commission or AAE, or general program administration, or similar general matters relating to the Commission or AAE.

Commission Funding

Funding for State Commissions

In ASN Academy 201, you learned that ASN awards grants with competitive funds or formula funds, and that there are separate processes for competitive and formula grantmaking:

- Competitive Funding - All organizations apply and compete against each other for funding.
- Formula Funding - Formula funds are allocated to State Commissions according to an established formula.

Let's dig into each of those funding processes for Commissions.

Competitive Funding

With Competitive Funding, all programs across the United States applying for operational grants apply and compete against each other for funding.

In ASN 101, you learned that programs operating in more than one state apply for funding directly to AmeriCorps State and National. Programs operating in only one state apply to

their State Commission, and the Commission selects the applicants to move forward to the ASN competitive grant competition.

That means that all National Direct applicants and State Commission sub-applications compete against each other for the same pool of competitive funding.

Formula Funding

With Formula Funding, funds are allocated to State Commissions according to an established formula. State Commissions receive formula funding for operational grants and administrative grants.

For Formula funded operational grants:

All State Entities get formula funds to support AmeriCorps state programs. State Commissions decide which programs to fund. ASN does not review or decide which sub-applicants the State Commission funds. State Commissions make their own decisions on how to spend their formula funding, and then submit their formula packages to AmeriCorps for approval.

For Formula funded administrative grants:

State Entities receive two kinds of administrative grants to support their commission's work: Commission Support Grants (CSG) and Commission Investment Funds (CIF). These grants support administrative functions such as staff salaries, staff training, and monitoring. They do not include AmeriCorps members.

Conclusion

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have reached the end of ASN 501, State Service Commissions.

You've learned what State Commissions are, and why they are crucial to national service, commission composition requirements, their duties and restrictions, and Commission grantmaking.

Click NEXT.

Exit Course

Thank you for completing this module. Select CLOSE to exit.

Important: After this browser window closes, select NEXT MODULE to mark this course as complete.

ASN 601: Applying for an ASN Grant

Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to ASN 601: Applying for an ASN Grant. This course includes audio. Would you like help navigating this course?

- Yes, show me around.
- No, let's dive in!

Navigation

Select each marker to learn more about the navigation elements of the player. To exit this course at any time, close this browser window. Select NEXT to continue.

Course Outline

Through ASN Academy, from 101 to 501, you've learned a lot about AmeriCorps State and National. In this last course, you'll learn how to apply for an ASN grant.

You'll learn about:

- The Notice of Funding Opportunity;
- Application Requirements;
- Selection Requirements; and
- Grantee Resources.

Click NEXT.

Governing Authorities

Throughout the course, we'll reference governing authorities like the Code of Federal Regulations, or CFR, and the AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions, all of which you can access online.

Referencing the CFR

Anytime the CFR is referenced, you can head to the resources tab at the top right corner of this screen to find a quick link to the four main parts on eCFR.gov we'll be referring to.

Searching the CFR

To drill down to a specific section, for example "45 CFR 2521.30," go to eCFR.gov and search for "45 CFR 2521.30," and it will take you to that section.

As we read from the CFR, you'll hear AmeriCorps referred to as the "Corporation," because AmeriCorps was previously called the Corporation for National and Community Service.

In the CFR, AmeriCorps is referred to as the "Corporation."

Get Started

Let's start with the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Click NEXT to dive in.

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Where to Get Started

When you're ready to apply for an ASN grant, you can find open funding opportunities on the AmeriCorps.gov website.

Click NEXT to see how to find funding opportunities.

Funding Opportunities

All open funding opportunities are listed on the Funding Opportunities page of AmeriCorps.gov, located under "Partner" on the main menu.

ASN Grant Page

When an ASN grant is available, it's funding opportunity page will give you everything you need to apply for the grant, including:

- The Notice of Funding Opportunity
- The Application Instructions
- Mandatory Supplemental Information
- Training and Technical Assistance Resources

Notice of Funding Opportunity

The Notice of Funding Opportunity is your starting point when applying for an ASN grant. This key document officially opens the grant competition and gives you crucial information, including:

- Important dates in the application process;
- The agency's funding priorities;
- Award types and budget information;
- Eligibility information;
- Application and submission information;
- Application review information; and
- Federal award administration information.

Click NEXT to continue.

Start with the Notice

When you're getting started, it's important that you read the Notice carefully and follow the application instructions when submitting your application.

In the next sections, we'll deep dive into application and selection requirements.

Click NEXT to continue.

Application Requirements

Introduction

This section covers:

- Eligible Program Applicants;
- Application Requirements; and

- Duplication of Services.

Eligible Program Applicants (45 CFR 2521.10)
Who can apply for AmeriCorps grants?

- States and territories
- Subdivisions of States
- Indian Tribes
- Public or Private Nonprofit Organizations, including religious organizations and labor organizations
- Institutions of Higher Education

Eligible Program Applicants Part 2 (45 CFR 2521.10)
The fifty States, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico must have a State Commission or alternative administrative or transitional entity to be eligible.

A State Commission may not directly run an AmeriCorps program. Instead, they subgrant to other eligible organizations to run an AmeriCorps program.

Eligible Program Applicants Part 3
AmeriCorps may also enter into contracts or cooperative agreements for AmeriCorps assistance with Federal agencies that are Executive Branch agencies or departments.

Application Requirements (45 CFR 2522.300)
All eligible applicants seeking AmeriCorps program grants must:

- Provide a description of the specific program(s) being proposed, including the type of program and of how it meets the minimum program requirements.
- Comply with any additional requirements as specified by AmeriCorps in the Notice of Funding Opportunity and Application Instructions.

When a grant competition opens, AmeriCorps releases a Notice of Funding Opportunity that includes everything you need to know and do to apply for a grant. You can reference current and closed funding opportunities on the Funding Opportunities page on AmeriCorps.gov, linked under resources.

Duplication of Service (45 CFR 2522.340)
Because of restrictions on duplicating services already available as well as matching requirements based on year of funding, the differentiation of new projects from existing projects is very important.

AmeriCorps will consider two projects to be the same if AmeriCorps cannot identify a meaningful difference between the two projects based on a comparison of the following characteristics, among others:

- The objectives and priorities of the projects;
- The nature of the services provided;
- The program staff, participants, and volunteers involved;

- The geographic locations in which the services are provided;
- The populations served; and
- The proposed community partnerships.

Section Conclusion
Let's turn to the next stage in the grantmaking process and look at Selection Requirements.

Selection Requirements

Introduction
AmeriCorps uses a multi-stage selection process, which may include review by panels of experts, AmeriCorps staff review, and approval by the Chief Executive Officer or the Board of Directors, or their designee. (45 CFR 2522.400)

The Board of Directors has general authority to determine the selection process, including priorities and selection criteria, and has authority to make grant decisions. The Board may delegate these functions to the Chief Executive Officer. (45 CFR 2522.410)

The Selection Process (45 CFR 2522.415)
Click each photo to read what the selection process includes.

Application Requirements - Determining whether your proposal complies with the application requirements, such as deadlines and eligibility requirements;

Selection Criteria - Applying the basic selection criteria to assess the quality of your proposal;

Priorities or Preferences - Applying any applicable priorities or preferences, as stated in these regulations and in the applicable Notice of Funding Availability; and

Innovation and Diversity - Ensuring innovation and geographic, demographic, and programmatic diversity across AmeriCorps national AmeriCorps portfolio.

Selection Criteria
There are three basic selection criteria used for evaluating your grant application that make up your overall score:

- Your program design (worth 50% of your score);
- Your organizational capability (worth 25%);
- Your program's cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy (worth 25%).

Special Considerations (45 CFR 2522.450)
After scoring program proposals, AmeriCorps will seek to ensure that its portfolio of approved programs includes a meaningful representation of proposals that address one or more priorities that fall under these three categories.

Click on each category to the right and read the priorities.

Prioritized Program Models.

- Programs operated by community organizations, including faith-based organizations, or programs that support the efforts of community organizations, including faith-based organizations, to solve local problems;
- Lower-cost professional corps programs

Prioritized Program Activities

- Programs that serve or involve children and youth, including mentoring of disadvantaged youth and children of prisoners;
- Programs that address educational needs, including those that carry out literacy and tutoring activities generally, and those that focus on reading for children in the third grade or younger;
- Programs that focus on homeland security activities that support and promote public safety, public health, and preparedness for any emergency, natural or man-made;
- Programs that address issues relating to the environment;
- Programs that support independent living for seniors or individuals with disabilities;
- Programs that increase service and service-learning on higher education campuses in partnership with their surrounding communities;
- Programs that foster opportunities for Americans born in the post-World War II baby boom to serve and volunteer in their communities; and
- Programs that involve community-development by finding and using local resources, and the capacities, skills, and assets of lower-income people and their community, to rejuvenate their local economy, strengthen public and private investments in the community, and help rebuild civil society.

Prioritized Programs Supporting Distressed Communities

- A community designated as an empowerment zone or redevelopment area, targeted for special economic incentives, or otherwise identifiable as having high concentrations of low-income people;
- An area that is environmentally distressed, as demonstrated by Federal and State data;
- An area adversely affected by Federal actions related to managing Federal lands that result in significant regional job losses and economic dislocation;
- An area adversely affected by reductions in defense spending or the closure or realignment of military installation;
- An area that has an unemployment rate greater than the national average unemployment for the most recent 12 months for which State or Federal data are available;
- A rural community, as demonstrated by Federal and State data; or
- A severely economically distressed community, as demonstrated by Federal and State data.

AmeriCorps will also prioritize any other programs that meet any additional priorities as AmeriCorps determines and disseminates in advance of the selection process.

Read the Notice of Funding carefully for information about special considerations and priorities.

Other Factors

AmeriCorps seeks to ensure that our portfolio of AmeriCorps programs is programmatically, demographically, and geographically diverse and includes innovative programs, and projects in rural, high poverty, and economically distressed areas.

In applying the selection criteria, we may also consider one or more of the items listed in 45 CFR 2522.470 for purposes of clarifying or verifying information in a proposal, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage Federal funds. The list includes items such as Form 990, an organization's annual report, member satisfaction indicators, and more.

For State Commissions (45 CFR 2522.465)

If you are a State Commission applying for State competitive funding, you must prioritize the proposals you submit in rank order based on their relative quality and according to the following table:

- If you submit 1 to 12of state competitive proposals to AmeriCorps, then you must rank at least top 5 of proposals.
- If you submit 13-24 of state competitive proposals to AmeriCorps, then you must rank at least top 10 proposals.
- If you submit 25 or more of state competitive proposals to AmeriCorps, then you must rank at least top 15of proposals.

While the rankings you provide will not be determinative in the grant selection process, and AmeriCorps will not be bound by them, we will consider them in our selection process.

Knowledge Check

When grant applications are scored during the selection process, which Selection Criteria is worth 50% of your overall score?

- Organizational Capability
- Cost-Efficiency and Budget Adequacy
- **Program Design (Answer)**

Grantee Resources

What's Next?

For funded programs, the support from AmeriCorps doesn't stop once you've received your award. We make sure grantees are equipped and confident from program startup to closeout. Click NEXT.

Portfolio Manager

Your biggest support as a grantee is your AmeriCorps Portfolio Manager. Your Portfolio Manager is your one stop shop for grants management support, technical assistance, and questions.

If you are a National Direct grantee, your Portfolio Manager is your direct line of support.

If you are a Single State Grantee, awarded through a State Commission, your direct line of support is your State Commission who is supported by an AmeriCorps Portfolio Manager.

Click NEXT.

New Direct Grantee Resource Guide
Grantees getting started with an ASN grant also have the New Direct Grantee Resource Guide. This guides you through your support teams at AmeriCorps, the grant award process, governing authorities and guidance, and program start-up actions.

Click NEXT.

Developing Policies and Procedures
Next, new grantees develop their program's policies and procedures with the help of the Developing Policies and Procedures e-course and its workbook.

New Grantee Checklist
Use the New Grantee Checklist to track everything you need to do to get up and running.

Resources
All of these resources and more are on the AmeriCorps.gov website on the "Grantees & Sponsors" tab. You'll find resources for State Service Commissions, State and National Direct Grantees, and resources to manage your grant.

Conclusion
Conclusion
Congratulations! You have reached the end of ASN 601: Applying for an ASN Grant. You've learned about:

- The Notice of Funding Opportunity;
- Application Requirements;
- Selection Requirements; and
- Grantee Resources.

This was the final course in the ASN Academy. You can refer back to all of the courses in ASN Academy under the RESOURCES tab. Click NEXT.

Exit Course
Thank you for completing this module. Select CLOSE to exit.

Important: After this browser window closes, select NEXT MODULE to mark this course as complete.