Welcome

to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board AmeriCorps Program!

We are very excited that you and your organization will be joining us for the 2021-2022 AmeriCorps service year!

We are excited to embark on great year expanding the capacity of services of your organization while supporting the next generation of community leaders. This will be the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) AmeriCorps Program's 24th year of service in Vermont! As a seasoned program, we have learned a lot over the years and are confident that you’re entering into a high quality AmeriCorps partnership.

VHCB AmeriCorps’ main goal is to support that of Vermont Housing & Conservation Board’s, which is to create more stable affordable housing situations for Vermont residents while preserving the natural and working landscape and fostering a greater appreciation of and responsibility for the environment.

Our mission statement reads as follows:

“Since 1997, the VHCB AmeriCorps Program has been serving Vermont communities, cultivating leaders and inspiring collaborative solutions to expand housing opportunities and steward our natural resources. Serving on the front lines of community-based organizations, VHCB AmeriCorps members energize, engage, and empower Vermonters to address unmet needs at a local level, collectively creating positive change statewide. Through a grass roots approach, we believe we can bring Vermonters together, incite a spirit of active citizenship and build a healthy future for Vermont”

This service term, we will do all of these things for ourselves and the communities in which we live and work. We hope you are as excited as we are for the possibilities of what we can achieve together.

We are committed to helping you, your organization, and your AmeriCorps member have a productive and meaningful service experience through AmeriCorps. As both AmeriCorps Alums and supervisors, Francis and Ashley know the value of an AmeriCorps experience—it can be both transformative for the member and helpful toward achieving organizational goals. Our hope is that you will take this opportunity, give all that you can to make sure this experience meets your goals, and help us make this another great year!
Who We Are

Francis Sharpstene is the Program Director. He will be in close contact with you throughout your service term. His primary role is to ensure the program is running effectively and efficiently. He works at every level of the program, with members, supervisors, organizations, and our grantors to maximize its impact and to make certain the AmeriCorps experience is a positive one for everyone involved.

Ashley Swasey is our Program Coordinator. She handles member recruitment and manages member files. In addition, Ashley works diligently to ensure that all of our paperwork is submitted on time and accurately. You can expect to receive regular reminders about paperwork expectations and due dates from Ashley. It will be imperative that you are responsive to her throughout the year, as accurate paperwork is vital to our program’s sustainability.

The program will also have AmeriCorps Leader. The Leader will be an AmeriCorps member and will help organize service days and other events, make connections between AmeriCorps members and community resources /opportunities, and help tell the story of the work we’ll be doing. The Leader will work closely with our members this year to ensure all are having the best and most effective experience possible.

We encourage you to think of Francis, Ashley, and the Leader as resources for you throughout your service term.

To contact us:
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Leader  802.828.2425

The following material in this handbook will provide you with guidance regarding the VHCB AmeriCorps program.
Welcome ............................................................................................................................................. 2
Who We Are ........................................................................................................................................ 3
To contact us: ....................................................................................................................................... 3
What is AmeriCorps? ............................................................................................................................. 8
AmeriCorps ............................................................................................................................................. 9
AmeriCorps Programs ............................................................................................................................. 9
AmeriCorps State and National ............................................................................................................ 9
AmeriCorps VISTA ............................................................................................................................... 9
AmeriCorps NCCC and FEMA Corps ................................................................................................... 9
What can a Member expect from AmeriCorps service? ...................................................................... 10
The AmeriCorps Pledge ......................................................................................................................... 10
AmeriCorps Fact Sheets: ..................................................................................................................... 14
Differences between AmeriCorps Members and Employees ............................................................... 21
  Motivation for applying ....................................................................................................................... 21
  Potential need for greater support & coaching .................................................................................. 21
  Compensation .................................................................................................................................... 21
  Tenure in position .............................................................................................................................. 21
  Responsibilities .................................................................................................................................. 21
  Regional and national implications .................................................................................................... 21
  Ability to terminate ............................................................................................................................ 22
  Orientation ......................................................................................................................................... 22
  Contracts ............................................................................................................................................ 22
Prohibited AmeriCorps Activities ........................................................................................................ 23
AmeriCorps FAQs .................................................................................................................................. 24
AmeriCorps Education Award .............................................................................................................. 25
  Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards ............................................................................................... 25
  Amount, Eligibility, and Limitations ................................................................................................. 25
  Forbearance ....................................................................................................................................... 25
  Interest Payments ............................................................................................................................... 26
AmeriCorps Jargon .................................................................................................................................. 27
VHCB AmeriCorps ................................................................................................................................. 29
VHCB AmeriCorps

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Overview .......................................................... 30
  History ......................................................................................................................... 30
  Today ......................................................................................................................... 31
  Impact ....................................................................................................................... 31
  Other Programs ....................................................................................................... 31
VHCB AmeriCorps ........................................................................................................... 32
  What is the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board AmeriCorps Program? ... 32
    VHCB AmeriCorps Mission .................................................................................... 32
    What do VHCB AmeriCorps members do? ............................................................ 32
    What benefits do Members get? ............................................................................ 33
    What else? .............................................................................................................. 33
VHCB AmeriCorps 2021-22 Performance Goals .............................................................. 34
  CNCS Approved Primary Performance Measures .................................................. 34
  Additional Secondary Program Performance Measures ........................................ 35
Living Allowance ........................................................................................................ 38
Hours and Service Commitment .................................................................................. 40
  Service Hours ......................................................................................................... 40
  Time Off .................................................................................................................. 40
  Time Tracking ......................................................................................................... 41
Types of Service Hours ................................................................................................ 41
Early Exit ...................................................................................................................... 42
  FOR CAUSE: ............................................................................................................ 42
  FOR COMPELLING PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES: ........................................... 42
Contract Amendments ................................................................................................. 43
  To Shorten Term of Service: .................................................................................. 43
  To Extend Term of Service: ................................................................................... 43
Suspension .................................................................................................................... 44
Teleserving Policy ........................................................................................................ 45
Program Benefits ........................................................................................................ 46
Child Care .................................................................................................................... 46
Health Care ................................................................................................................ 46
Travel, Mileage and Accommodations ....................................................................... 46
Section 2

What is AmeriCorps?
AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps engages more than 80,000 Americans in intensive service each year at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country.

Since the program’s founding in 1994, more than 1,000,000 AmeriCorps members have contributed more than 1.4 billion hours in service across America while tackling pressing problems and mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve.

AmeriCorps Programs

AmeriCorps is your moment to take the path less traveled, to break the status quo, to stop talking about the problem and be the solution. By joining AmeriCorps, you can mentor and tutor kids, rebuild a community after disaster, help veterans, or work with local communities to alleviate poverty. There are thousands of opportunities to choose from.

AmeriCorps State and National

This is the broadest network of AmeriCorps programs. These groups recruit, train, and place AmeriCorps members to meet critical community needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment.

AmeriCorps VISTA

VISTA provides full-time members to nonprofit, faith-based and other community organizations, and public agencies to create and expand programs that bring low-income individuals and communities out of poverty.

AmeriCorps NCCC and FEMA Corps

AmeriCorps NCCC and FEMA Corps are full-time, team-based, residential programs for men and women ages 18-24. NCCC’s mission is to strengthen communities and develop leaders through direct, team-based national and community service, while FEMA Corps focuses on Disaster Relief.
What can a Member expect from AmeriCorps service?

*AmeriCorps is an Opportunity*

AmeriCorps is a way to put idealism into action. AmeriCorps members can help make the world a better place: help children learn, protect the environment, or bring needed services to a low-income community. There are opportunities in AmeriCorps for anyone who is willing to do something unique and exciting.

*AmeriCorps is an Experience*

AmeriCorps is a real-life education and work experience wrapped into one. Members will learn teamwork, leadership, responsibility and other essential skills that will help them for the rest of their life. They will gain the personal satisfaction that comes with taking on challenges and seeing the results of their efforts.

*AmeriCorps Offers Tangible Benefits*

Most AmeriCorps members receive student loan forbearance, training, and may receive a living allowance and health insurance. After completing their term of service, they will also receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to help pay for college, graduate school, or vocational training or to repay student loans.

**The AmeriCorps 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.*
Getting Things Done for America

AmeriCorps engages more than 80,000 men and women in intensive service each year at more than 21,000 locations including nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country. AmeriCorps members help communities tackle pressing problems while mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve. Members gain valuable professional, educational, and life benefits, and the experience has a lasting impact on the members and the communities they serve.

AmeriCorps consists of three main programs: the state and national AmeriCorps program, whose members serve with nonprofit and community groups across the country; AmeriCorps VISTA, through which members serve full-time addressing poverty and building the capacity of nonprofit organizations; and AmeriCorps NCCC, a team-based residential program for young adults 18-24 who serve in public safety, the environment, youth development, and disaster relief and preparedness.

AmeriCorps By the Numbers

- Engages more than 80,000 members annually
- Members serve at 21,000 locations across the country
- Mobilizes millions of volunteers annually
- Leverages more than $1 billion in outside funding and donations every year
- More than 1 Million Americans have served since 1994
VHCB AmeriCorps

Strengthening Nonprofits and the Volunteer Sector

Strengthening nonprofits: AmeriCorps members help faith-based and community groups expand services, build capacity, raise funds, develop new partnerships, and create innovative, sustainable programs.

Encouraging competition and local control: AmeriCorps pushes funding and decision-making to the state and local level. Most grantees are chosen by bipartisan state commissions appointed by the governor.

Advancing social innovation: AmeriCorps invests in entrepreneurial organizations that have been recognized for their innovative approaches to citizen problem-solving such as Citizen Schools, City Year, Experience Corps, Teach For America, and YouthBuild.

Expanding Educational Opportunity and Building Future Leaders

Expanding educational opportunity: In exchange for a year of full-time service, AmeriCorps members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award (equal to the maximum Pell Grant) that helps pay for college or pay off student loans. AmeriCorps members have earned more than $3.3 billion in these awards since 1994.

Preparing the 21st Century Workforce: AmeriCorps is a pathway to economic opportunity that provides members with valuable skills specific to their service (construction, teaching, weatherization, etc.) as well as general skills of leadership and problem-solving that all employers are looking for.

Creating future leaders: AmeriCorps members gain new and useful skills, advance their education, and become more connected to their communities. A longitudinal study has shown that AmeriCorps alumni are more likely to be civically engaged, to go into public service careers—such as teaching, public safety, social work, and military service—and to volunteer in their communities.

Leveraging a Powerful Return on Investment

Public-private partnerships: AmeriCorps leverages substantial private investment—more than $480 million in non-CSCF funds each year from businesses, foundations, and other sources. AmeriCorps has cut costs and become more efficient by supporting more members with fewer federal dollars.

Mobilizing volunteers: AmeriCorps is a powerful catalyst and force-multiplier for community volunteering. In 2013 AmeriCorps members recruited, trained, and supervised more than 2.3 million community volunteers for the organizations they serve.
Getting Things Done for America

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) engages more than 8,000 individuals annually to support community efforts to overcome poverty. AmeriCorps VISTA members serve full time for a year at nonprofit organizations or local government agencies to build the capacity of these organizations to carry out programs that alleviate poverty.

AmeriCorps VISTA members recruit and manage community volunteers, raise funds, and help coordinate projects. They support programs that improve academic performance, expand job opportunities, develop financial assets, alleviate hunger, reduce homelessness, and improve health services. They also support programs that increase housing access, develop economic opportunities for low-income veterans and military families, and expand access to technology.

AmeriCorps VISTA

- Engages more than 8,000 members annually
- Members serve at over 3,000 locations across the country
- Leverages $178 million in cash and in-kind resources each year
- Mobilizes 900,000 volunteers annually
- More than 220,000 individuals have served since 1965

NationalService.gov/AmeriCorpsVISTA

February 2017
Core Principles of AmeriCorps VISTA

Anti-Poverty Focus

AmeriCorps VISTA supports community efforts to overcome poverty. Any nonprofit organization, educational institution, or tribal or government agency with a project explicitly designed to alleviate poverty may sponsor an AmeriCorps VISTA member.

Community Empowerment

AmeriCorps VISTA values the inherent strengths and resources of the community. AmeriCorps VISTA expects project sponsors to involve residents of the community in planning, developing, and implementing the project. This approach allows low-income individuals the freedom to speak for themselves in determining the projects that best suit their specific needs.

Capacity Building

AmeriCorps VISTA expands the ability of sponsor organizations to alleviate poverty. AmeriCorps VISTA members strengthen and support organizations by building infrastructure, expanding community partnerships, securing long-term resources, coordinating training for participants, and much more. These capacity-building activities enable organizations to provide better services to low-income individuals and communities.

Sustainable Solutions

AmeriCorps VISTA members serve as a short-term resource to help sponsor organizations achieve lasting solutions to poverty.

Join AmeriCorps VISTA

AmeriCorps VISTA members work on impactful projects that lift people out of poverty while receiving comprehensive training and support, including a living allowance, skills-building, federal noncompetitive hiring eligibility, health benefit, and the Eli Segal Education Award or a cash stipend.

Sponsor a VISTA

Any nonprofit organization or public agency involved in alleviating poverty may partner with AmeriCorps VISTA to develop a project and host AmeriCorps VISTA members. Potential sponsors must have the capacity and commitment to recruit, train, supervise, and support AmeriCorps VISTA members.

National Service

AmeriCorps VISTA is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service through its AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Social Innovation Fund, and Volunteer Generation Fund programs, and leads the President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve.
AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) is a full-time, team-based residential program for men and women ages 18-24. AmeriCorps NCCC members are assigned to one of five regional campuses into teams of approximately ten members and complete 2-3 month projects responding to local communities’ needs throughout the United States. To achieve our mission of strengthening communities and developing leaders through service, members assist community and faith-based based organizations, national nonprofits, schools, local municipalities, national and state parks, and Indian tribes.

In 2012, AmeriCorps NCCC collaborated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and created a new unit called FEMA Corps. FEMA Corps promotes an ethic of national service, strengthens the federal government’s disaster capabilities, and expands educational and economic opportunities for young people. FEMA Corps training and experience prepares members for careers in emergency management and related fields. Members learn about community organizing, public speaking, customer service, and office management skills, all while positively impacting the lives of disaster survivors.

Since 2000, AmeriCorps NCCC teams have:

- Assisted 17.6 million people in disaster areas
- Recruited or coordinated nearly 840,000 volunteers
- Assisted more than 70,000 veterans
- Served 7.7 million meals
- Protected more than 1.3 million acres of land through firefighting and fire management

NationalService.gov/NCCC
Last year*, AmeriCorps NCCC members:

- Returned $16.5 million to communities through tax returns
- Supported or tutored 35,000 K-12 students
- Restored or protected more than 4,000 acres of wildlife habitats
- Weatherized or outfitted nearly 300 homes with energy efficient modifications
- Assisted nearly 19,000 individuals experiencing homelessness

* AmeriCorps NCCC projects ending between October 1, 2014, and September 30, 2015

AmeriCorps NCCC’s flexible program structure has created the opportunity to partner with non-profit or government organizations that might lack the capacity to manage longer grant programs, as well as the ability to create strategic collaborations with other national service programs and federal agencies to magnify the impact on communities served.

AmeriCorps NCCC projects span five issue areas:

- Natural and Other Disasters
- Infrastructure Improvement
- Environmental Stewardship
- Energy Conservation
- Urban and Rural Development

FEMA Corps members focus on disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery activities, providing support in areas ranging from working directly with disaster survivors to supporting disaster recovering centers to sharing valuable disaster preparedness and mitigation information with the public.
Cost-Effective Solutions for Our Communities and Nation

We are the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency and the nation's largest grant-maker in support of service and volunteering. We manage AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, the Social Innovation Fund, and the Volunteer Generation Fund.

Working hand in hand with local partners, we tap the ingenuity and can-do spirit of the American people to tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing our nation. Our service participants and the community volunteers they coordinate enable tens of thousands of non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and municipal agencies to solve tough problems and meet local needs. We serve, we build, and we make an impact that changes lives and communities.

Our Focus Areas

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

National Service By the Numbers

CNCS improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering.

- 324,000 Senior Corps and AmeriCorps members
- 3 million leveraged volunteers
- 55,000 service locations
- $1.26 billion leveraged
Getting Things Done for America
AmeriCorps provides opportunities for 80,000 Americans each year to give intensive service to their communities and country. AmeriCorps members tutor and mentor youth, build affordable housing, assist veterans and military families, provide health services, run after-school programs, help communities respond to disasters, and build the capacity of nonprofit organizations. In exchange for a year of full-time service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award that can be used to pay for college or graduate school, or to pay back qualified loans. Since 1994, more than 1 million Americans have given 1.3 billion hours of service through AmeriCorps.

Making a Difference for Generations
Each year, Senior Corps taps the skills, talents, and experience of more than 244,000 Americans age 55 and older to meet a wide range of community challenges through three programs: the Foster Grandparent Program, RSVP, and the Senior Companion Program. RSVP volunteers help local police departments conduct safety patrols, participate in environmental projects, provide intensive educational services to children and adults, and respond to natural disasters. Foster Grandparents serve one-on-one as tutors and mentors to young people with special needs. Senior Companions help homebound seniors maintain independence in their own homes.

Finding What Works, Making It Work for More People
The Social Innovation Fund (SIF) represents a new approach by the federal government to address urgent national challenges. The SIF mobilizes public and private resources to grow the impact of promising, innovative, community-based solutions that have evidence of compelling results. The program focuses on three areas of priority need: economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development. With its unique public-private partnership structure, the SIF annually leverages more than $93 million in matching funds through a network of more than 426 grantees in 44 states and the District of Columbia. The Social Innovation Fund reaches more than 700,000 individuals and will continue to impact tens of thousands more.

Other Programs and Initiatives
- The **Volunteer Generation Fund** strengthens the nation’s civic infrastructure by helping nonprofits recruit, manage, and support more volunteers.
- The **September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance** offers Americans the opportunity to honor victims, survivors, and those who rose up in service on September 11, 2001, through charitable service.
- The **Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service** supports community organizations in their efforts to engage local citizens in service on the Martin Luther King Jr. federal holiday.
- The **President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll** honors colleges and universities for the commitment of their students, faculty, and staff to community service.
- The **National Service Knowledge Network** provides training and resources to national service programs and nonprofits seeking to expand their capacity and impact.
- The CNCS annual **Volunteering and Civic Life in America** report provides comprehensive data to state and local leaders to help them expand the impact of service.
MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS IN VERMONT

More than 2,300 people of all ages and backgrounds are helping to meet local needs, strengthen communities, and increase civic engagement through national service in Vermont. Serving at more than 530 locations throughout the state, these citizens tutor and mentor children, support veterans and military families, provide health services, restore the environment, respond to disasters, increase economic opportunity, and recruit and manage volunteers.

Senior Corps: More than 1,300 seniors in Vermont contribute their time and talents in one of three Senior Corps programs. Foster Grandparents serve one-on-one as tutors and mentors to more than 750 young people who have special needs. Senior Companions help more than 370 homebound seniors and other adults maintain independence in their own homes. RSVP volunteers conduct safety patrols, renovate homes, protect the environment, tutor and mentor youth, respond to natural disasters, and provide other services through more than 340 groups across Vermont.

This year, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) will commit more than $6,200,000 to support Vermont communities through national service and social innovation initiatives. CNCS invests in cost-effective community solutions—working hand in hand with local partners to improve lives, expand economic opportunity, and engage citizens in solving problems in their communities. Serving in many of the state’s most impoverished communities, CNCS provides vital support to schools, food banks, homeless shelters, community health clinics, youth centers, veterans service facilities, and other nonprofit and faith-based organizations at a time of growing demand for services. Through a unique public-private partnership, this federal investment will leverage an additional $5,620,000 in other resources to strengthen community impact, build local support, and increase return on taxpayer dollars. Nationwide, CNCS, its grantees, and project sponsors generated more than $1.25 billion in outside resources from businesses, foundations, public agencies, and other sources in FY 2015.

AmeriCorps: This year AmeriCorps will provide more than 340 individuals the opportunity to provide intensive, results-driven service to meet education, environmental, health, economic, and other pressing needs in communities across Vermont. Most AmeriCorps grant funding goes to the Ser Vermont, which in turn awards grants to nonprofit groups to respond to local needs. Most of the remainder of the grant funding is distributed by CNCS directly to multi-state and national organizations through a competitive grants process. Other individuals serve through AmeriCorps VISTA, whose members help bring individuals and communities out of poverty by serving full-time to fight hunger and illiteracy, improve health services, and increase housing opportunities, and AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), a 10-month, full-time residential program for men and women between the ages of 18 and 24. In exchange for their service, AmeriCorps members earn an education award that can be used to pay for college or to pay back qualified student loans. Since 1994, more than 5,100 Vermont residents have served more than 7.6 million hours and have qualified for Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards totaling more than $17,860,000.

Social Innovation Fund: The Social Innovation Fund transforms lives and communities using limited federal investment as a catalyst to grow the impact of nonprofits with evidence of strong results. It harnesses the expertise of grantmaking intermediaries to identify, evaluate and expand effective nonprofits and engages funding partners to contribute nearly three dollars to every one federal dollar invested. As the Social Innovation Fund network grows programs that work in Vermont, more people are able to overcome their most pressing challenges in the areas of economic opportunity, health, and youth development. The Social Innovation Fund is investing more than $56,000 in expanding the impact of 1 nonprofit in Vermont.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. CNCS engages millions of Americans in service to meet local needs through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and national days of service, improves communities through the Social Innovation Fund, and leads volunteer initiatives across the nation. To learn more visit NationalService.gov or call 202-606-5000 or TTY 1-800-833-3722.
Differences between AmeriCorps Members and Employees

It’s essential to understand the differences between an AmeriCorps Member and a regular employee. As a supervisor, it is your job to make sure that staff members within your organization are coached on and aware of them. These differences provide a framework for how to meet the unique needs of the member.

*Motivation for applying* - Members are motivated by a desire to serve the community and ‘get things done’. Members receive little in the way of monetary compensation, and instead are driven by the satisfaction of their service. This makes it very important to have quality work and opportunities for successful projects lined up for the member(s).

*Potential need for greater support & coaching* - Members may be young and/or have little experience in the workplace. In addition to technical training, members may need assistance with general and basic job skills. Member Development is an important element of the program, and we ask that host sites work with Members to help them develop and grow in their positions.

*Compensation* - Members do not receive a wage or salary. Instead members receive a minimal living allowance, frequently set at/near the poverty level and subject to state and federal tax. Members also receive an education award at the completion of their service (also subject to tax). They may opt to enroll in the AmeriCorps health insurance whereby the monthly premium is covered. Additionally, members are gain valuable skills, training and networking opportunities through their service.

*Tenure in position* - Members are placed at sites on a temporary basis, most commonly 11 months. Full-Time members are contracted to complete 1720 hours, while half-time members will complete 915 hours of service. Members may sign on for a second term of service, but are not allowed to serve more than 4 terms of service.

*Responsibilities* - Members are guided by a position description developed before the position begins. Members should stick to the duties in the position description, unless permission is given by program staff. AmeriCorps positions should fill a unique niche at the organization, and should not displace other employed positions. Members are not allowed to perform general administrative duties, general fundraising, fill in for other staff, etc. Members also have many responsibilities to the AmeriCorps program. These responsibilities may include attending trainings, completing reports, engaging in other service projects, service learning activities, etc.

*Regional and national implications* – AmeriCorps is nationwide program that engages more than 80,000 members each year. As part of this program, members are subject to a special set of rules and regulations. *See page 18 for an overview of these rules and regulations*. In addition, members may be called away from the site for events that relate to AmeriCorps, such as providing relief services in the case of a disaster.
**Ability to terminate** - Unlike an employee, a member may not be “fired.” Members and sites must adhere to the grievance procedure set forth by the AmeriCorps Program. If an issue cannot be resolved and the member or site wishes to terminate the position, the program may exit the member from the program. In some cases, the member may be able to relocate to another site and/or the position may be refilled.

**Orientation** - Members attend an AmeriCorps Orientation before or at the start of their service. If members are relocating from another area, supervisors may have to help members meet some basic needs that a regular employee wouldn’t require. For example, the supervisor may want to assist the member in finding a place to live, locating key resources, and accessing local networks.

**Contracts** - AmeriCorps Members are placed for a contracted period, and are not permanent employees. The member will need to be thinking of “what’s next?” during their service. Sites should support the member in using their service experience as a springboard for “life after AmeriCorps.”

In the case that the site is hosting members from various branches of service, the site should be aware of the differences. The three branches of service are 1). AmeriCorps State and National, 2). AmeriCorps VISTA, and 3). AmeriCorps NCCC/FEMACorps. Each branch is subject to a different set of regulations, and there are differences in what the member can and can’t do.
Prohibited AmeriCorps Activities

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or CNCS, staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

a. Attempting to influence legislation;
b. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
c. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
d. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
e. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
f. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
g. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
h. Providing a direct benefit to—
   i. A business organized for profit;
   ii. A labor union;
   iii. A partisan political organization;
   iv. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these 9 provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
   v. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph 3.g. above, unless CNCS assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
i. Conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
j. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
k. Such other activities as CNCS may prohibit.

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

In addition to the Prohibited Activities listed above, as an AmeriCorps State* program, members are disallowed from:

- General fundraising for the host site or AmeriCorps, including funds that would be used for overhead costs, wages, general operation, or the Host Site’s cost share for the member.
- Conducting Administrative tasks that are not directly related to the members Direct Service.
AmeriCorps FAQs

What skills do members need to have?
Some programs have specific skill requests in certain areas, and others look for a bachelor's degree or a few years of related volunteer/job experience. For others, motivation and commitment may be the primary requirement.

Do they get paid?
For all AmeriCorps programs, members receive a modest living allowance, and some programs provide housing. They may not save much money during your year of service, but most members find the living allowance to be adequate to cover their needs. AmeriCorps members who complete a term of service also receive an AmeriCorps Education Award.

Is there an age requirement?
Members must be at least 17 years old, although some service opportunities require you to be at least 18. For one of our programs, the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), members must be between 18 and 24 years old, but for most there are no upper age limits.

Can a non-U.S. citizen join?
One must be a U.S. citizen, national, or legal permanent resident alien of the U.S. to be an AmeriCorps member.

Can members defer student loans during service with AmeriCorps?
Members may qualify for postponement, or forbearance, of the repayment of your loans during your service. The education award will help pay off qualified student loans when the term is completed. Members can contact their lender for more specific information or to confirm loan status during AmeriCorps service.

I'm confused. There are different programs, with different names, but they're all AmeriCorps?
Yes, basically. AmeriCorps is a national network of hundreds of programs throughout the United States. Two of these programs -- AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps NCCC -- are managed nationally. The others fall under the umbrella of our AmeriCorps State and National programs, which are administered by State Service Commissions in each state and U.S. territory. Depending upon interests and ability, we work with members to determine which program might be best for them.
AmeriCorps Education Award

Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards
Named after Eli Segal, one of the pioneers of the national service movement and the first CEO of CNCS -- are a post-service benefit received by AmeriCorps members, including those supported through AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps NCCC.

Upon successful completion of a term of service, members are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, which may be used only to pay college costs or to repay student loans. Members may earn up to two awards and have seven years to use this benefit. Since the inception of AmeriCorps in 1994, more than one million alumni have earned more than $3.3 billion in education awards.

The award, which was designed to encourage AmeriCorps alumni to seek postsecondary education opportunities, serves as a powerful recruitment tool for individuals to join AmeriCorps. Studies show that AmeriCorps alumni, with their commitment to service, also make excellent students. A growing number of higher education institutions, in order to encourage AmeriCorps alumni to enroll in their institutions, are “matching” the education award with scholarships and / or academic credits.

Amount, Eligibility, and Limitations
Beginning with terms of service that were supported with 2010 funds, the amount of a full-time education award is equivalent to the maximum value of the Pell Grant for the award year in which the term of service is funded. Prior to this time, the amount of an education award had remained the same since the AmeriCorps program began. Members should check with their program to confirm the amount of the award for which they are eligible.

Because the maximum amount of the Pell Grant can change every year, the amount of a full-time award can change in the future. However, once a member earns an award, the dollar value of that award will not increase. For all programs, award amounts for part-time terms of service vary based upon the length of the required term of service. Payments made from Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards are considered taxable income in the year that the Corporation makes the payment to the school or loan holder. A member serving in a full-time term of service is required to complete the service within 12 months.

Forbearance
Individuals who are serving in a term of service in an approved AmeriCorps position may be eligible to temporarily postpone the repayment of their qualified student loans through an action called loan forbearance. While your loan is in forbearance during your term of service, interest continues to accrue. However, if you successfully complete your term of service the National Service Trust will pay all or a portion of the interest that accrued on your qualified student loans during your service period.
You can request that your loan company (your “loan holder”) approve forbearance for your qualified student loans during your service period. You can easily and quickly request the forbearance on-line through My AmeriCorps Portal. After you finish your term of service, you will be responsible for repaying your loan according to the terms of the loan.
Interest Payments

Individuals who have successfully completed a term of service in AmeriCorps or Silver Scholars are eligible to have the Trust pay as much as 100% of the interest that accrued on their qualified student loan during their service. The portion that the Trust will pay is determined by the type of service (full or part-time) and the length of your service period. The Trust will only pay interest on qualified student loans, as described on the Using your Segal AmeriCorps Education Award web page (http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-americorps-education-award/using-your-segal-education-award).

The Trust will not pay interest if you fail to complete your term of service. Exceptions will be made only if you fail to complete your term of service for compelling personal circumstances and you have earned a pro-rated award. It is up to your individual program to determine compelling personal circumstances. Examples that might be considered are a serious illness or injury, death of your immediate family member, or early closing of your project. An interest payment can only be made after you have completed your service and have earned an award.

Interest payments are in addition to your education award; they are not deducted from your education award amount. Interest payments are based upon the interest that accrued only during the time you were serving in the AmeriCorps program.

Remember that interest payments, as well as payments made from your education award account, are considered by the IRS to be taxable income in the year in which a payment is made.
AmeriCorps Jargon

1. **Accepted applicants will become a “member”** of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board AmeriCorps Program, **not a “volunteer”**. We don’t want to disrespect people who give freely of their time by claiming we get no remuneration for the work we do, and yet we want to respect ourselves by acknowledging that we have committed to a year of national and community service by identifying them AmeriCorps Members.

2. **Volunteers** are persons who give their time with no financial reward. (School board members, land trust board members, church members, scouts, students, people participating in a project on their person (not work) time. We serve with volunteers, and often help to recruit and perhaps train volunteers to help mostly volunteer powered organizations/non-profits who depend on community and professional people to operate services. AmeriCorps **members** receive a living allowance (however small) **and** an educational award for the service they commit to.

3. As members, they were “selected”, **not “hired”**. They receive a “living allowance” and **not a “wage”**. They are a **“member”, not a “volunteer” or “employee”**. And they were selected to participate in a **service opportunity or to fulfill a season of service for your community, not to do a “job”**.

4. **Projects** are the collaborations we develop with community groups, and/or organizations based on their interest and needs. Projects have goals and **objectives**, develop from a **plan**, have resources and **needs identified, can be measured for success and impact** and can be continued without our assistance. We plan our own obsolescence due to the vagaries of political funding whims. Our goal is to leave communities empowered, so that they don’t need us in the future. If communities can continue these projects on their own without AmeriCorps program assistance, then the project is truly **sustainable**.

5. Members don’t do projects “for” communities, but rather they join “with” communities to carry out projects. This is more than a semantic difference, since our intent is to leave communities more empowered than they were to help themselves. We want to respond to their needs and ideas, not just act on our own and hope they fit in the community later. **Empowerment** is helping people help themselves. We always look for opportunities in our projects to involve those people who benefit from the project, as partners, collaborators and/or consultants in the project activity itself.

6. Please encourage members to refrain from using the words “**advocate**” and “**solicit**” when they are describing their service. Although what they do may involve advocacy or solicitation of resources for a
project, the Corporation for National Service is sensitive about the use of these words because of their misuse and misinterpretation in the past. It’s preferred that we say “I support the residents,” or “I obtained donated materials for this project from XYZCorp,” etc.

7. AmeriCorps members complete direct service with organizations that amounts to increased capacity building, something that enables host sites to expand their reach further than they could have without our efforts.

Thanks for your cooperation with this! Words truly matter to us....
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Overview

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board is an independent, state-supported funding agency which provides grants, loans, and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations, municipalities and state agencies for the development of perpetually affordable housing and for the conservation of important agricultural land, recreational land, natural areas and historic properties in Vermont.

History

The pace and pattern of development in Vermont in the mid-1980’s was threatening historic settlement patterns and the rural character of the state. Housing prices were rapidly rising beyond the reach of Vermonters, development pressure on the state’s valuable agricultural and natural lands was escalating at a record pace, and historic properties and downtowns were being abandoned for suburban, sprawl development. In 1986, a coalition of affordable housing, conservation, and historic preservation advocates concerned with this rapid change in the character of the Vermont landscape approached the state legislature with a plan to form a unique agency to review and fund projects addressing a range of community needs. The Legislature responded, passing the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund Act, enacted in June 1987, and capitalized with $3 million.

The statute dictated the makeup of the nine-member Board: five citizen-members appointed by the Governor, (to include an advocate for low income Vermonters and a farmer), the Commissioners of the state agencies of Agriculture, Housing and Community Development, and Natural Resources, and the Executive Director of the Vermont Housing Finance Agency. In July 1987, the Board held its first meeting.

In September 1987, then Governor Madeleine Kunin established a Commission on Vermont's Future, charged with the mission of assessing the concerns of Vermont citizens on the issue of growth, establishing guidelines for growth, and suggesting mechanisms to help plan for Vermont's future. Through a process of public hearings at which thousands of Vermonters spoke about their concerns, the Commission gathered public input to create their report, issued in January 1988, Guidelines for Growth. In 1988 Vermont had a budget surplus, and upon the recommendation of the Governor’s Commission on Vermont’s Future, the legislature appropriated $20 million to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund.

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board was up and running, and momentum was building. With the new source of state funding, housing and conservation nonprofits were able to conceive and carry out projects within communities around the state that had not previously been possible. VHCB funds closed a critical gap in the financing of affordable housing projects and brought new conservation funds to the table, initiating a new era in the conservation of Vermont's agricultural lands and natural areas.
Today

Now in its 33rd year, VHCB remains the forerunner in the nation in pioneering this comprehensive approach to affordable housing and community development linked with land conservation and historic preservation. The results have been impressive. With a cadre of nonprofit organizations working at the local level to identify and develop important projects in each community, the effects of 30 years of investment are discernible in every part of the state. VHCB has supported reinvestment in older housing in small town and village centers, revitalizing downtown neighborhoods where residents can walk to services, and rebuilding a sense of community while spurring other private investment. The conservation of Vermont’s open and wild lands preserves the landscape that is such an integral part of the state’s identity, supports the agricultural economy, protects wildlife habitat, and provides public access to the state’s waterways and woodlands.

Impact

Since its inception, the Board has awarded nearly $274 million to nonprofit housing and conservation organizations, towns, municipalities and state agencies to develop nearly 1,500 projects in 220 towns. This investment has directly leveraged approximately $1 billion from other private and public sources and resulted in the creation of more than 11,300 affordable homes, the conservation of 390,740 acres of agricultural and recreational lands and natural areas, and the restoration of 59 historic community buildings for public use. Many VHCB housing awards have supported housing in buildings eligible, nominated or listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places. Historic barns and farmhouses and archeological sites are located on many farms conserved with VHCB funding.

Other Programs

In addition to VHCB funding programs for housing development and land conservation, a number of supplemental programs supported with state and federal funds provide services and capacity to improve housing and conservation opportunities for Vermonters and to assist farmers with economic development, such as:

Farm and Forest Viability Program developed in collaboration with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets in 2003 to provide farmers with business planning and technical assistance.

VHCB AmeriCorps places AmeriCorps members with housing and nonprofit organizations statewide, providing community service, developing leadership skills and civic engagement.

Healthy Homes and Lead Paint Hazard Abatement Program provides financial and technical assistance to income-eligible landlords and home owners to reduce the risk of lead poisoning.

HOME Program Increases the affordability of rental housing with federal funds; $61.4 million administered since 1992.
**VHCB AmeriCorps**

What is the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board AmeriCorps Program?

The Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) AmeriCorps Program is a national service project that places AmeriCorps members with affordable housing, land conservation and environmental education organizations statewide. Members increase the capacity and effectiveness of the organization where they serve while gaining leadership skills and connecting with the mission and goals of a community based nonprofit organization.

**VHCB AmeriCorps Mission**

*Since 1997, the VHCB AmeriCorps Program has been serving Vermont communities, cultivating leaders, and inspiring collaborative solutions to expand housing opportunities and steward our natural resources. Serving on the front lines of community-based organizations, VHCB AmeriCorps members energize, engage, and empower Vermonters to address unmet needs at a local level, collectively creating positive change statewide. Through a grass roots approach, we believe we can bring Vermonters together, incite a spirit of active citizenship and build a healthy future for Vermont.*

What do VHCB AmeriCorps members do?

**Housing Members**

- Help homeless individuals and families find suitable housing, build life skills, develop résumés, access job training programs and obtain services.
- Assist first-time homebuyers to learn about budgeting and prequalify for low-interest mortgage loans at Vermont’s Homeownership Centers.
- Recruit volunteers, provide community outreach, make referrals, and provide direct services, information and technical assistance.
- Repair, make accessible and weatherize homes
- Provide residential services to low-income, elderly, and/or disabled individuals to help them maintain and remain in healthy, safe, affordable housing.

**Conservation Members**

- Provide environmental education and service opportunities for school-age youth.
- Educate groups about responsible hiking and camping practices.
- Increase public land access for individuals with emphasis on disadvantaged populations, and engage individuals in outdoor recreational activities.
- Recruit volunteers and raise awareness about conservation issues.
- Participate in natural area inventories, extract invasive plants and implement weed management plans.
- Perform trail maintenance, restoration and improvement.
- Co-develop, coordinate, and teach summer day camps and natural history programs.
- Create mailings, contact the media, produce newsletters, create and maintain database records and websites, organize special events.
- Educate residents and housing groups on energy conserving measures

**What benefits do Members get?**

In addition to having an opportunity to do meaningful, challenging work and gaining real-world experience, there are many tangible benefits as well, including:

- Living allowance: $20,400 for full-time service; $10,800 for half-time; $5,400 for quarter-time
- AmeriCorps Education Award to be used for existing student loans or for future education in the next seven years.
- Health Insurance: Covers major medical, hospitalization and prescriptions.
- Travel Reimbursement: Non-commuting travel is paid for service related activities.
- School Loan Forbearance: Deferment on federally subsidized school loans.
- Training Opportunities: In addition to an overnight Orientation, members have numerous training opportunities over the course of the year. Trainings may include Communicating through Conflict; Cultural Competency; Financial Literacy; Working with the Media; Poverty Issues; Volunteer Recruitment; Leadership; a Ropes Course and others. Additionally, members will attend a 2-day National Service Conference, a Team Retreat, several Group Service Days and a Closing Ceremony.
- Networking Opportunities: VHCB AmeriCorps is dedicated to offering its members a wide range of experiences and community engagement opportunities.

**What else?**

Members decide which host organization they would like to apply to. Members work closely with their supervisors in their host non-profit agencies. By signing on, members are making an 11 month commitment to service.

The VHCB AmeriCorps Program is committed to member development and will work with members to ensure they are having a positive yet challenging experience during their term of service.
CNCS Approved Primary Performance Measures

**Housing Placement Services**

2,500 economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless and near-homeless will have greater access to safe, affordable housing opportunities through housing placement and accessibility services provided by ACMs. Services will include housing identification, applications assistance, referrals, back rent and security deposit disbursements, and home sharing coordination.

450 economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless and near-homeless, will transition into safe, affordable housing as a result of ACM services.

**Living Independently and Residential Services**

ACM's will provide companionship, resource facilitation, food access, transportation, volunteer matching, and housing support to 500 individuals, including 150 individuals who are Homebound, Older Adults, and/or living with a disability.

75 individuals who are Homebound, Older Adults, and/or living with a disability will report increased social support due to member’s services.

**Food Access and Nutritional Services**

ACM's will implement community gardens, provide emergency food, deliver meals, support food pantries, and provide nutritional services and education to 2000 individuals.

**Improving Lands and Habitats through Environmental Stewardship**

ACM's will implement invasive species management, trail maintenance, boundary marking, easement monitoring, and tree planting/maintenance on 3,000 acres of parks and public lands. 2,000 acres of land will be assessed as improved according to the entities land management plan.
AmeriCorps Members will implement invasive species management; create, improve, and maintain access points; grow, plant, and maintain trees; remove debris; create and repair educational and safety signage; and improve trail accessibility. 100 Miles of trails will receive stewardship efforts, and 65 miles will be assessed as improved.

Environmental, Energy, and Outdoor Education

ACMs will deliver education on environmentally-conscious practices and outdoor recreation, including but not limited to sustainable energy and other natural resources, sustainable agriculture, and public land access and recreational opportunities to 900 individuals resulting in greater knowledge and appreciation for the natural environment and how people can help conserve energy and care for natural eco-systems. Education will be delivered through school programs, public programs, day camps, home visits, and service learning projects. Only Individuals surveyed for behavior changes may be counted.

As a result, 600 Individuals will report a change in behavior or intention to change behavior toward more environmentally-conscious practices.

Additional Secondary Program Performance Measures

Financial Literacy Services

ACMs will provide financial literacy services including credit repair education and counseling, household budgeting, foreclosure prevention/intervention, home ownership education, outreach, and development and distribution of educational materials to at least 250 economically disadvantaged individuals. 50 individuals will demonstrate improved financial literacy knowledge.

Housing Units Made Available

ACMs will develop, repair, or otherwise make available 150 affordable housing units for low income individuals and families, including older adults and people with disabilities. 100 economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless and near-homeless will remain in, transition into, or diminish risk of losing safe, affordable housing as a result of ACM services.

Energy Efficiency

ACMs will improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions of 100 housing units and structures through weatherization, retrofits and other energy efficiency measures.
Volunteer Mobilization

VHCB AC members will recruit, train, supervise, evaluate and recognize 1000 community volunteers so that these volunteer efforts help to further the missions of VHCB AC’s sponsoring organizations. Members will recruit at least 700 volunteers, and will manage at least 800 volunteers. The volunteers mobilized by VHCB AmeriCorps members will serve the equivalent of 5 full-time employees/10,400 hours of volunteer service at member host sites.

Capacity Building

In addition to volunteer mobilization, members involved in capacity building activities will expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness of services, programs and their organizations. Activities may also leverage resources for programs and/or organizations so that lasting positive outcomes for the beneficiary populations are achieved. Members will provide capacity building services for at least 25 organizations, will raise $5,000 worth of In-Kind or cash goods to support projects, and will improve 25 systems used by host sites such as information gathering, data tracking, organization outreach, community engagement, and internal communications. Note: AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of sponsors’ program services but may not raise funds for an organization's general operating expenses or endowment.

Member Development

100% of VHCB AmeriCorps Members will participate in VHCB AmeriCorps Member Development Initiatives which includes member training, program initiatives, and service learning. Upon successful completion of their AmeriCorps term, all graduating members will report improvement in at least 3 life skills needed to better secure employment and become productive, engaged community members.
Living Allowance

These are the terms used to describe the financial benefit that members receive from the AmeriCorps program they participate in. The living allowance that AmeriCorps members receive is not considered to be a salary, or an hourly wage, but a stipend. Under the law that established AmeriCorps, a member is not an employee, and will not receive a wage or salary.

For the 2021-2022 program year, members will receive the following maximum living allowance amount:

- Full-time members: $20,400
- Half-time members: $10,800
- Quarter-time members: $5,400

The amounts listed above are gross amounts and do not account for tax and FICA withholding amounts. The member is expected to pay all applicable local, state and federal taxes. These are withheld under standard withholding rules. The member may be eligible for a withholding exemption if no tax liability was withheld last year, and the exemption is expected to remain the same for the upcoming year. Withholding amounts will be based upon federal and state law based on information provided by the member on IRS W-4 form we provide.

The living allowance will be distributed every other week only while the member is actively serving. If a member does not serve during the living allowance period which is a minimum of 15 days in a row, the member must be suspended and will not receive a living allowance.

Living allowance will be issued via direct deposit every other Thursday. The living allowance is not based on actual hours served in a given pay period and thus will not fluctuate based on the number of hours served per week. It will not be paid on an hourly basis or be tied to hours served in any way. Instead it is divided evenly by the number of pay periods during the member’s contracted term of service. It is designed to help members meet their living needs while in service. However, if they fall behind in hours are seem to be unable to successfully complete the number of service hours needed to fulfill their contracted term of service by the last day, the Program Director will work with you and your member to modify their schedule to get back on track. Though the living allowance may not be affected, they are at risk of not receiving the Education Award by not completing the number of required hours.

The living allowance may affect the member’s eligibility for various federal assistance programs. The living allowance will not affect eligibility for federal work-study assistance, federal student aid, SSI, food stamps, Section 8 or public housing. It may however affect, AFDC (Aid for Families with Dependent Children), SSDI, and Medicaid. State and private student aid may or may not be affected, depending upon individual school regulations. Effects on state assistance programs will depend on state regulations.

Please note: The timesheet is the primary source of documentation for VHCB AmeriCorps to determine whether or not the member has been actively serving and what activities the member has been
performing. If the member fails to submit timesheets within a week of the due date, VHCB AmeriCorps will not have record of service activities and will assume you have not been serving. When this happens, the member will be placed in suspension. Living allowance payments are also suspended during this time. The member will be reinstated once all timesheets have been submitted to VHCB AC in full.
Hours and Service Commitment

Service Hours
Members are contracted to fulfill the following number of hours –

- Full-time: 1720
- Half-time: 915
- Quarter-time: 460
- Minimum Time: 310

The VHCB AmeriCorps Required Hours are set to ensure you have enough hours to exit the program successfully, and the number of hours that will be used to measure your hours progress throughout the service term. This is the minimum number of hours approved and verified, the member must serve in order to successfully complete the program and receive the education award. The number of hours served may include only up to 20% approved training hours and 10% fundraising hours.

In order to successfully complete the term of service, the member is required to not only complete her/his service hour requirement, but also fulfill the dates of service agreed upon in the contract. In some cases, a contract may be amended if the member, the Program Director, and the Host Site Organization agree (please see following page).

Only hours which are actually served count toward the minimum hours listed above. Members serving in AmeriCorps are not able to claim hours for vacation, sick time, holidays, personal time, etc.

Members operate on a 40 hours per week schedule at the host site. This schedule accounts for members to take time off for short vacations, holidays, and sick time as needed.

Time Off
Members that wish to take time off must first clear it with their direct supervisor at their host site. For more than 1 week off, members must inform VHCB AmeriCorps staff that they will be away. For 2 weeks or more off, members must also gain advance approval from the VHCB AmeriCorps Director or Program Coordinator. Timesheets must still be submitted during time off. If the member will be off during a time that a timesheet is due, it should be submitted in advance. Program should be notified if any time off will conflict with training or reporting dates, regardless of length of time off.
Time Tracking

Member’s time is tracked through an online portal known as OnCorps. Member’s time must be approved by the Direct Supervisor and reviewed by VHCB Program Staff. VHCB AmeriCorps staff will regularly review the members’ hours and give regular updates to members, however, it is the responsibility of the member to regulate hours so as to not fall behind. Members are required to maintain an average of 36 hours per week served. If a member falls behind in hours, the program may require the member and/or host site to submit a written plan to catch up. If the member is unable or not willing to catch up on hours, the program may exit the member for cause.

In the event that a member is far ahead in hours, the program may also request a plan from the member and/or host site to get back on target. While there is no maximum number of hours that a member may serve, it is not in the interest of the Program for members to burn out, nor wish to leave the program early once hour requirements have been met.

Types of Service Hours

**Service:** Direct Service is the bulk of what the member will do this year. This includes all activities on the position description that is not considered training or fundraising, and all activities that fall within AmeriCorps guidelines.

**Training:** The member will receive extensive training over the course of the service year. Training includes both professional development and technical assistance. Training will be provided by the program, SerVermont, and the member’s host site.

**Fundraising:** While a member may claim up to 10% of hours as fundraising activities, fundraising activities are limited in the following manner:

AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of your program’s service activities. Some examples:

- 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.
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 the Corporation or to any other Federal agency.

Other Eligible Hours

In addition to hours the members serves at the host site, the member will also claim hours for various activities during their active service term required or allowed by the VHCB AmeriCorps Program, SerVermont, or CNCS. Examples include: Program initiatives such as the Independent Service Project, R.A.R.E. Opportunity, Book Club, and Peer Site Visits; time to complete required paperwork and reporting; optional trainings and events to aid in member development, site visits from AmeriCorps staff, disaster relief deployment, etc.

Early Exit

Members that do not complete the required hours, discontinue serving before their end date, or otherwise leave the program early will be exited as follows:

**FOR CAUSE:** The member is exited for reasons within his/her control, for unsafe or poor behavior, or other breach of the Member Agreement. The member will not receive any portion of the education award. This reflects poorly on the member’s performance. Examples of “cause” are leaving the AmeriCorps program to accept an employment opportunity, to attend school without completing hours, to relocate, due to a breach of the Member Agreement, undisclosed criminal history appears on member’s record, etc.

**FOR COMPELLING PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES:** When exited for compelling personal circumstances, the member may be eligible for a pro-rated education award. In order to receive a pro-rated education award, the member must have served at least 15% of their total hours.

Examples circumstances beyond the member’s control:

- The member has a serious injury, illness, or other personal health issue that effects their service
- There is a serious injury, illness, or death of an immediate family member and the member is needed to care for that family member
- The member is drafted by the Armed Services of the United States
- Some other circumstance occurs that makes it impossible or very difficult for the member to complete the term of service and if and only if the VHCB Director deems that circumstance to be compelling.
Contract Amendments

As unforeseen circumstances may arise over the course of the service term, it may be possible to amend your contract with VHCB AmeriCorps to end early or extend your service. When amending contract dates, a member must still serve the contracted number of service hours. The Host Site Organization and the VHCB AmeriCorps Program must be in agreement with the member’s request for a contract amendment.

To Shorten Term of Service:
If members would like to end service early, and that date is at least nine (9) months after the start date then members should—

1. Gain approval from the member’s direct supervisor and/or host site.
2. Submit a written letter to the VHCB AC Program Director, at least sixty (60) days prior to the requested amended end date. The letter should list the new end date, the reason for request, and be signed by both the member and the site supervisor.
3. The VHCB AC Program Director will review the request and make a decision pursuant to AmeriCorps policies and provisions. If the VHCB AC Program Director approves the request, the member, supervisor, and VHCB AC Program Director will be required to sign a contract amendment.

Examples of reasonable amendments to shorten term of service:

- A member may decide to begin Grad school and need to leave the AmeriCorps position 3 weeks early to attend.
- A significant family vacation falls at the end of a member’s service and the member is well ahead of hours and the host site will not need the member’s service during the requested amended period.

Members understand that they may forfeit any living allowance payments due to them after the new, earlier end date, and they must complete the hours requirement for their position type by the new contracted end date.

To Extend Term of Service:
If members want to extend the end of service date, as long as the date is not more than twelve (12) months after the start date then the member should—

1. Gain approval from the member’s direct supervisor and/or HSO.
2. Submit a written letter to the VHCB AC Program Director, at least sixty 60 days prior to the original end date, listing the new end date and signed by both the member and site supervisor; and if the supervisor does not agree, then the date cannot be changed.
3. VHCB AC Program Director will review the request and make a decision pursuant to AmeriCorps policies and provisions. If the VHCB AC Program Director approves the request, the member, supervisor and VHCB Program Director will be required to sign a contract amendment.

Members understand that the living allowance that they may not receive additional living allowance
payments over the maximum living allowance amount.

Examples of reasonable amendments to lengthen a term of service:

- A member may have to unexpectedly take time off to care for an ill child or parent.
- A special project is happening at the host site, and both host site and the member would like to have the member participate.

A request to amend the contract is not necessary if the new end date will not affect pay periods (within two weeks of contracted end date). Instead, a standard contract amendment included in the exit paperwork should be used.

**Suspension**

If unforeseen circumstances arise, members may be placed in “suspension” at the request of the member or the Program. The time that a member is in suspension does not count toward the one-year limit. While in suspension, the member’s living allowance payments will pause. Once a member returns to service, the member’s circumstance and remaining hours will be evaluated and a contract amendment will be made. Suspension of a term may also be utilized for the following:

- If issues arise between a member and host site, or member and program, and additional time is required to address the situation.
- If a member requests to take extended time off for personal reasons.
- The program deems that the member is not acting in accordance to the member agreement or within the Programs’ code of conduct.
- The member needs time off to address personal or family health issues, including mental health.
- The member is not or is unable to actively serve in a full-time capacity.
- Service duties at the host site cannot be completed – for example, a loss of funding, disaster or emergency, or unexpected change in staffing.
Teleserving Policy

Teleserving, or telecommuting, is the concept of serving from home or another location outside of the provided office space. Teleserving is not a formal, universal member benefit. Rather, it is an alternative method of meeting the needs of the AmeriCorps Position when possible. AmeriCorps positions are meant to provide direct services, and teleserving should be used minimally and only when necessary. VHCB AmeriCorps and/or the HSO have the right to refuse to make teleserving available to a Member and to terminate a teleserving arrangement at any time. Members are not required to teleserve, and adequate office space to perform the duties of the position should be available to members. A member has the right to refuse to teleserve if the option is made available.

Service Benefits and Hours: The AmeriCorps Member’s, benefits, enrollment status, living allowance, and service responsibilities will not change when teleserving. Members are expected to adhere to AmeriCorps and Program rules, regulations, and responsibilities while teleserving. This includes wearing the AmeriCorps logo at all times while serving.

Eligibility and Limits: Members will be allowed to teleserve based on the suitability of their position and the ability of their supervisor to manage the member remotely. Allowing teleservice is at the discretion of the HSO and Supervisor, and the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director. The HSO may have telecommuting policies that add additional guidelines and restrictions which the member should adhere to. In cases that the policies don’t align, the Member should follow the AmeriCorps Program Policy.

AmeriCorps Service is meant to be direct and have regular interaction with the community. Regularly scheduled teleservice is limited to a maximum of one day per week. Regularly scheduled teleservice must be approved by the host site and the VHCB AmeriCorps Program. Irregular teleservice to accommodate poor travel conditions, illness, temporary loss of office space (cleaning or remodeling, etc), or other circumstances that warrant teleserving do not have a cap. Serving “in the field” or attending trainings and events is not considered teleservice. In cases of inclement weather or other hazardous travel, or in any other instance in which in-person service would be unsafe, Members may teleserve as necessary, and should never be expected to travel or operate in unsafe conditions.

Workspace and Equipment: The Member must have a suitable workspace and necessary equipment and supplies to serve remotely. At minimum, the Member must be able to be contacted by phone and email, and contact information must be shared with the HSO and VHCB AmeriCorps Program Staff. The HSO may provide specific tools/equipment for the Member to perform duties at their discretion. When the member uses their own equipment, the member is responsible for maintenance and repair of equipment. Any HSO materials taken home should be kept in the designated service area at home and not be made accessible to others. Confidential files and information should not be removed from the HSO office space and only accessed electronically using a secure process. Members must be available to remotely attend meetings deemed necessary by the HSO or Program.

Communication: Members must be available by phone and email during teleservice hours. Members must check in with their supervisor or designated representative of the HSO at the beginning of their teleservice with a plan of what the Member will be doing. Members must again check out at the conclusion of their teleservice with an outline of the day’s activities.
Program Benefits

Child Care
Full time AmeriCorps Members are eligible to apply for Childcare benefits. Benefits are based on enrollment status AND income eligibility.

For information on eligibility, contact AmeriCorps Program Staff.

Health Care
Members serving in a full-time capacity are eligible for health care provided through VHCB AmeriCorps. The premium is paid entirely by the program; there is no additional cost to members to be enrolled in AmeriCorps Health Plan. Members must accept the AmeriCorps provided health insurance if they do not have access to other health care coverage.

Travel, Mileage and Accommodations
Costs associated with travel required by VHCB AmeriCorps will be covered or reimbursed in full by the program, including overnight accommodations if required.

All mileage required by the program will be reimbursed at the current IRS rate set for mileage reimbursement. Mileage reimbursement between service sites or otherwise required by the host site is the responsibility of a member’s host site. Host sites will also use the IRS reimbursement rate. Mileage reimbursement cannot be paid for travel to and from the member’s first daily service site – i.e. regular commute travel.

Mileage reimbursement must be turned in to VHCB AmeriCorps within 30 days of the travel, or the member will risk losing the reimbursement.

Member Expectations

Background Checks
All members must submit to a National Service Criminal History Check. All members are subject to an FBI fingerprint-based Criminal History Check, Sex Offender Registry Check, State Repository checks from Vermont and their state of residence, and Adult/Child Abuse Check through the Vermont Agency on Human Services.

Members may not begin service until the National Service Criminal History Check has cleared. Program staff will notify the member and supervisor once the results have been received and the member is cleared to serve.

If the criminal history check results are received with a criminal record, further action will be required. Murder or sexual assault automatically disqualifies a member for service. All other criminal records are taken on a case-by-case basis and will be assessed for relevancy to service, recent activity, and action for
recourse. Members will be asked to respond to any criminal records before the conviction will be assessed.

VHCB AmeriCorps Members are subject to redo any background checks that are done incorrectly, have delayed results, or are otherwise warranted.

**Dress Code/AmeriCorps Logo**

*Members are expected to wear the AmeriCorps logo at all times when in service.* This includes while at your office/usual service space, while attending VHCB AmeriCorps events, and when out in the field/community. VHCB AmeriCorps provides members with shirts, sweatshirts, patches, pins, stickers, and nametags.

While members are welcome to sport the AmeriCorps logo while not serving, they should keep in mind that they are representing AmeriCorps while doing so and should therefore refrain from any AmeriCorps prohibited activities when wearing the AmeriCorps logo.

The member being identified as an AmeriCorps member while providing service is essential to the sustainability and longevity of the VHCB AmeriCorps program per the instructions of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Encourage your member to commit to wearing the AmeriCorps Member uniform during all community service outreach hours and during regular service hours.

Attire policies may vary by host Site. Members should adhere to the attire policies of their host sites but also ensure that AmeriCorps uniform expectations are being met.

Adequate safety clothing and equipment should be worn while on any type of construction, environmental, or maintenance duty. Work boots and protective gear must be worn on all assignments that put the member at any level of increased risk of physical harm.

**Newsletters/Story of the Week**

VHCB AmeriCorps collects and publishes a “story of the week” and produces a newsletter. *Each member is expected to submit at least once during their service term.* Multiple submissions are welcome. Submissions may be a story of your service, a reflection, a recap of event, something you’ve learned through your service, hints and tips for other members, etc. Please include photos with your submission if possible.

**Mandated Reporting**

Members are considered Mandated Reporters, which means they must report any cases of abuse witnessed by the Members. Members are required to take the online Mandated Reporter training session through the Vermont Department of children and families, and submit a certificate of completion to the Program. The webinar can be accessed at [http://dcf.vermont.gov/protection/reporting/mandated](http://dcf.vermont.gov/protection/reporting/mandated).
Who to Contact

Program Staff

Francis Sharpstene  802.828.3253  francis@vhcb.org

Contact Francis for: Any and all issues that arise with your host site and/or supervisor that require guidance or resolve; contract questions, concerns or amendments; requesting extended time off; if you will miss a training or event; income or benefits verification (i.e. 3squares), and payroll questions.

Ashley Swasey  802.828.3249  Ashley@vhcb.org

Contact Ashley for: member paperwork and reporting questions; assistance with timesheets; mileage requests; anything else in Francis’ absence.

Open Door Policy

VHCB AmeriCorps maintains an open door policy. This means members may contact the person they feel most comfortable addressing. In some cases, the issue may need to be shared and/or handled with other staff members. In this case, the person you originally addressed may still continue to serve as your point of contact. It is our belief that members should feel comfortable and safe approaching program staff on all matters.
Trainings & Events

VHCB AmeriCorps provides a series of trainings for Members throughout the course of the year. Attendance at all VHCB AmeriCorps trainings and events is required unless otherwise noted. Trainings and events include Orientation, Diversity/Equity/Inclusion, AmeriCorps Conference, MLK Day of Service, Team Building Activities, Service Days, Civic Reflection, Closing Ceremony, and More!

A schedule of trainings and events will be provided at the beginning of the year and updates will be distributed throughout the year as necessary. The Program makes every attempt possible to schedule trainings and events with at least 3 months notice to participants, though at times this is not possible.

Policies on Training Attendance:

- Members are expected to attend all VHCB AmeriCorps trainings (with the exception of those marked optional), and agree to do so in the Member Agreement.

- Other training days will possibly be made available as ‘optional.’ ACM’s must communicate with supervisors about upcoming trainings and are required to obtain permission from them to attend “optional” trainings.

- Members may also be sent to additional trainings by their Host sites, including required training events.

- Members may not spend more than 20% of their AmeriCorps hours in training.

- Members who are unable to attend training due to circumstances out of the member’s control (i.e. illness, being away, family emergency, etc.) must notify program staff in writing as soon as possible.

- Members may not miss a training to serve at their site. Members are restricted from claiming hour for serving at the host site during required training days/times.

- Members are expected to arrive on time and be prepared to begin by the scheduled start time, including all virtual trainings, and remain engaged in the training event until the scheduled closing time.

- Members are expected to actively engage in trainings and events, and act in manner that is respectful of peers and facilitators.
VHCB AmeriCorps Program Initiatives

Independent Service Project (ISP)

All Full and Half-Time Members are required to complete an Independent Service Project (ISP) outside of their regular host site. Members are required to perform a minimum of 15 and maximum of 30 hours for ISP. The following guidelines apply to ISP projects:

1. ISP hours should not be served at the member’s host site. Hours should be served with another community organization or in some cases may be carried out independently by the member with host site or other entity sponsorship.
2. The member has the option of (1) creating and implementing their own community project or (2) serving the hours with an organization in a general capacity that will aid the organization’s mission. All of the 15-30 hours should be allotted to either one project or one organization, though projects may involve multiple community organizations/entities.
3. The member must gain approval from VHCB AmeriCorps in advance. Requests should be submitted via email to the AmeriCorps Leader.
4. The project/organization must be based in Vermont.
5. At the completion of the ISP hours, the member will submit the ISP Report which will include:
   - documentation of the hours served approved by a representative of the organization
   - a written report and reflection
6. Members may collaborate in pairs or teams to complete ISP hours.
7. ISP hours may be carried out in member’s off time, or during regularly scheduled onsite hours with prior approval from the supervisor.
8. All ISP activities must fall within AmeriCorps regulations and guidelines.
9. A total of 20 miles per member will be allowed for reimbursement for all ISP travel.

Peer Site Visits

VHCB AmeriCorps allows members to claim mileage and service hours for up to two peer site visits - visits to other VHCB Host Site Organizations. The member should schedule site visits with the member at the organization. Site Visits must be pre-approved by both the visiting member’s supervisor and by the supervisor at the site being visited. Site Visits are not required, but VHCB AmeriCorps encourages members to take advantage of this opportunity.

With the direct Supervisors approval, the member may claim hours for additional peer site visits, but may not claim mileage with VHCB AmeriCorps.

BOOK CLUB

The VHCB AC Book Club is designed to give members the opportunity to gain a greater knowledge of their service through reading, while gaining training hours toward their service term.

- Each book review may be worth up to a total of 10 training hours.
- Full-time members may complete up to 6 book reviews, half-timers 3, and quarter-timers 1.
• Members are limited to one review per month unless approval is given by Program Staff.
• All books must be educational and relevant to member service.

After reading the book, members should submit a review using the 'Book Review Form' to gain hours. On VHCB AC’s website, under the ‘Current Members’ tab, you will find a list of pre-approved books. These books may be selected without further approval for a review. If you would like to choose a book that is not on the list, please submit a request to VHCB AmeriCorps staff for approval prior to reviewing the book.

Hours should be claimed as a lump sum on the timesheet, only after the book review has been reviewed and approved by Program Staff. Accurate actual time tracking is kept using the Book Report Form. All AmeriCorps Rules and Regulations apply to Book Club hours.

**R.A.R.E. Opportunity**

The VHCB AmeriCorps Regional AmeriCorps Recruitment Envoy (R.A.R.E) Opportunity initiative is designed to engage members in community events, activities, and outreach that promote outside individuals to participate in AmeriCorps Programs. Such activities may include (but not limited to):

• attending college or career fairs
• tabling at community events or public spaces
• presenting to school or community groups
• publishing articles or writing op-ed pieces about the members service
• assisting individuals with filling out an AmeriCorps application
• one-on-one meetings with persons interested in knowing more about AmeriCorps
• encouraging friends and family to consider serving in AmeriCorps
• speaking with volunteer groups you serve with about your AmeriCorps Service
• etc.

Some R.A.R.E. Opportunity hours may occur as part of a member’s regular duties. Members may claim up to 15 service hours for R.A.R.E Opportunity Hours outside of their regular service. Participation in R.A.R.E. Opportunity is optional for members, but highly encouraged by the program. Member’s that participate for a minimum of 15 hours will receive a prize!
Supervisor Handbook

Section 3

Member Supervision
Host Site Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

**Position Descriptions:** Provide the AmeriCorps Member with a well-developed and specific position description listing, approved by VHCB AmeriCorps. The position description should list “essential duties” of the position and have measurable outcomes that reflect the achievement of grant objectives. The Supervisor will use the position description to guide the member’s daily activities and should notify the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director before modifying any AmeriCorps Member’s position description, and send a new, clean copy of the updated version to for approval.

Provide each ACM with responsibilities for a minimum of 1,720 service, training, and fundraising hours (915 hours for half-time Members; 455 hours for Quarter Time) averaging 40 hours per week for full-time Members (20 hours per week for part-time Members) for the duration of the ACM’s stated contract term dates. Holiday, sick, and personal hours are not counted towards the 1720 (or 915 or 455) required hours. The member’s hours should be filled with a challenging and engaging flow, while not overwhelming the member.

**Regular Check-ins:** VHCB AmeriCorps requires that members and Supervisors check in on a regular basis. The program sets a minimum of once per week in which the member and supervisor have set aside time to discuss assigned tasks and any factors affecting the member’s service. Shared office space, regular communication, nor unscheduled check-ins meet this requirement.

**Direct Service:** The ACMs will be performing direct service to fill a need that the host organization has, and this need must fall within the limits of the mission, objectives and allowable activities of the VHCB AmeriCorps program, and relevant to the member’s approved position description. The supervisor should support the ACM in carrying out the direct services, and ensure the member is not regularly performing administrative tasks nor engaging in any unallowable fundraising or prohibited activities.

**Reporting and Documentation:** Assist members in completing required AmeriCorps paperwork and documentation. Ensure members are submitting timesheets on time on a bi-weekly basis, and approve them within 48 hours. Assist members with periodic reports detailing the member’s activities, and the successes and challenges that each ACM is experiencing. The supervisor may need to provide support for and assistance to the ACM for their respective data collection and activities reports as required by the Program. Make sure the member has time built into daily scheduling to complete required AmeriCorps paperwork and requirements.

**Member Recruitment:** The supervisor will recruit, interview, and select the member that the host site believes is the best fit for the position. Hosts agree to follow the Member selection guidelines as outlined in the VHCB AmeriCorps recruitment guidelines found online at www.vhcb.org/americorps.

**Member Retention:** The Supervisor should keep in mind that as a service position, the Member is not held to the exact same standards as an employee, and that it is not possible to ‘dismiss’ a Member after a trial period. VHCB AmeriCorps is committed to member retention and does not dismiss a member unless the Member has had access to due process (which might include more than one three-
way meeting to attempt to resolve issues or investigate situations with the Program Director, Supervisor, ACM and sometimes the Executive Director of the host organization as necessary). Members will be dismissed immediately if they are clearly performing illegal or unsafe acts, or their attitude warrants it. In these cases, clear documentation from the Host Site is imperative.

**AmeriCorps Rules, Regulations, & Policies:** The supervisor should be reasonably aware and knowledgeable of all AmeriCorps rules, regulations, policies, and practices put in place by CNCS, The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and SerVermont.

**Provide Appropriate Training:** Supervisors should provide any training necessary for each ACM to successfully complete their service term and carry out assigned duties. In addition to the technical skills that will be required for the member to complete tasks, VHCB requires that hosts assist each ACM in the development of basic professional skills such as phone etiquette, writing, time management, computer usage and any other applicable areas.

**Service space:** Supervisors must ensure that each ACM has an appropriate office space and the equipment and supplies necessary to perform to the best of their abilities. Hosts should provide the necessary office supplies, phone access, computer and internet access for the success of each ACM’s project(s). Additionally, as email is the main form of communication within the AmeriCorps program, all members should be allowed time and access daily to check the email account listed with VHCB AmeriCorps.

**Host Site Orientation:** Provide a thorough, on-site orientation for your ACM, including any emergency protocols the host organization follows. This will include providing an outline of your organization’s philosophy, policies and procedures. In addition, we request that Hosts introduce each ACM to the organization’s staff and make them an active part of the daily life and culture of the office.

**Performance Review:** Complete ACM performance reviews two times per Member service term, with evaluations midway and at the end of the ACM’s term, and provide regular feedback on the member’s progress and placement.

**Member Safety:** Comply with VHCB AmeriCorps' commitment to practicing effective risk management to ensure the safety, dignity, and legal rights of its participants. Properly manage any incidents that occur so as to minimize injury and other forms of loss.
Top 10 Tips for Effective AmeriCorps Supervision:
Advice from VHCB AmeriCorps Alumni

1. **Provide a clear position description with goals and expectations.** Be flexible when possible and willing to change them as necessary, but makes sure they are in place to serve as a guide for the term.

2. **Meet with the member regularly.** While it’s easy to get distracted by busy schedules, regular check-ins are critical for exchanging timely feedback to ensure the member is on course. Set aside one-on-one time with the member at least once a week.

3. **Ensure members receive a full orientation to the site, including protocols, staff introductions, and the mission of the organization.** A comprehensive introduction to your organization will allow them to be more effective early on in their term.

4. **Prize members with tangible, meaningful tasks that can be completed over the course of their term.** This will help them feel satisfied they have made a lasting contribution to the organization and helps your organization tackle "wish list" projects.

5. **Trust that the member is highly motivated and wants to be challenged.** Provide an appropriate level of challenge: too little and they feel undervalued and too much leads to burn-out and dissatisfaction.

6. **Understand the difference between AmeriCorps members and interns or volunteers.** AmeriCorps members bring both advantages and constraints that differ from volunteers and interns (see the "What's the difference?" handout in the Supervisor Handbook). Give a copy of "Understanding Our AmeriCorps Members" handout to all staff at your organization.

7. **Honest, open communication is key.** Effective communication in the present prevents problems later.

8. **Give feedback.** Members want to learn and become a competent professional. Provide as much constructive feedback as possible- both areas for improvement as well as what they’re doing right.

9. **Create opportunities for the member to network.** Invite members to attend meetings, conferences, site visits, and events.

10. **Approve member timesheets and complete AmeriCorps paperwork on a timely basis.** In order to ensure successful placements, VHCB needs both members and supervisors to do their part in meeting the administrative requirements.
Understanding Our AmeriCorps Members

What’s the program?
Our AmeriCorps members belong to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board AmeriCorps Program (VHCBA C). The program’s overarching goals are to create more stable affordable housing opportunities for Vermont residents while fostering a greater appreciation of and responsibility for the environment. Funding comes from the federal government, VHCBA, and its sponsoring organizations (i.e. our organization) and can fluctuate from year-to-year.

Who are the members?
VHCBA C’s membership is made up of an impressive and demographically diverse group of socially conscious, engaged citizens. These members are committed to making a difference in Vermont. They have ranged in age from 18 to 72 years old, with varying educational and professional backgrounds. They bring lots of energy, passion, and commitment to our mission. Often, they are early in their careers or are making a career-shift, and have lots to learn!

What do they get?
AmeriCorps members gain valuable work experience, learn about your organization’s approach to [affordable housing or homelessness or conservation, etc.] and connect with other [housing or environmental] professionals. They receive an education award for school expenses, health insurance, trainings, and a taxable living allowance of. Many members enroll in 3SquaresVT or hold additional jobs to make ends meet. Holiday, sick, vacation and personal hours do not count toward their 1700 (or 900) hours of service (they are “unpaid”). Members also gain life-long friendships with their co-members.

What do we get?
To many host organizations, AmeriCorps Members are critical and could not accomplish the work that they do without them. They put in 1720 (or 915) hours of service overall. Sites get fresh ideas and perspectives, skills and experiences that staff members may not have, a community liaison, great energy and curiosity, and dedication. We provide a cash match per member, training, and reimbursement of travel expenses, conference fees, office space, etc.

How can YOU support our AmeriCorps members?

- Honor their commitment to our mission by:
  - Getting to know them: learn their names and ask about their backgrounds
  - Being willing to explain “how things are done” in your organization
  - Treating him or her as a colleague and valued team member
  - Recognizing his/her dedication to service and to housing/conservation work, and the challenges of living for a year on a very small stipend.
  - Helping them to develop professionally by providing coaching and mentoring whenever appropriate.
Member On-Site Orientation Checklist

Please complete and return this form to VHCB AmeriCorps by ________________.

Member Name:__________________________ Supervisor Name:__________________________

A thorough orientation to the host site is crucial for setting the tone of the member’s service year. It can assist the supervisor in more accurately assessing the training needs of the new member in order to increase their skills, competence, and expertise. At the end of the on-site orientation, members should have a basic knowledge or understanding of the following:

- Background, purpose and structure of the host organization.
- Background of community and identification of important community leaders.
- Nature of the population served by the VHCB AmeriCorps project.
- Potential resources that can be applied to achieve project goals.
- Specific member assignments and skills needed to accomplish tasks.
- Specific goals and purpose of ACM (AmeriCorps Member) position at the host site organization (organization staff should also be made aware of this)

Onsite Orientation Checklist

Member should initial each item once completed. Both member and supervisor should Sign at bottom when all items have been reviewed and return to VHCB AMERICORPS.

_____ The member’s position description has been reviewed and member and supervisor have strategized an initial service plan. The member has been set up the for successful completion of first tasks with deadlines, including an order of priorities.

_____ Expectations and protocols around punctuality, calling-in late, breaks, personnel policies, drug-free workplace, requesting time off, reporting sexual harassment, dress code, etc., have been reviewed.

_____ Any organizational practices or policies that will apply to the member have been covered.

_____ The member is aware of what to do in the case of a fire or emergency, knows the evacuation procedure, and has any safety training and/or gear that necessary for the position.

_____ Confidentiality practices and how sensitive information is communicated at the host site has been reviewed.

_____ A regular check-in time for feedback, discussing issues, and planning (2-way; minimum of 15 minutes per week) has been established.

When will the meeting take place: ________________________________
____ A system for regular review of timesheets has been established.

____ Member has been made aware of office procedures for mileage and expense reimbursement.

____ Member has been informed on practices for accessing, acquiring, and re-ordering supplies, etc.

____ Member has been provided with materials about the mission/vision, goals and objectives of the nonprofit where the member will be serving (annual reports/brochures, website, etc.).

____ Member has been introduced to all staff, their role/position, as well as how the member might interface/work with them, and contact information.

____ Member has been given a tour of the site, including common areas, supplies, copier, fax, postage, first aid, kitchen, storage space, etc., supplying directions for the use of all equipment.

____ Reasonable special accommodations needed are supplied. (Members should not feel compelled to disclose health or other conditions; that is a voluntary decision and action on their part.)

____ All known VHCB AmeriCorps training & events dates have been blocked out on the calendar.

____ Member and supervisor have discussed a plan to ensure the member does not serve with vulnerable populations until the member’s background check results have been received.

____ Other information about the community or assignment/project that is relevant has been shared.

____ Member has taken the online Mandated Reporter training session through the Vermont Department of children and families, and attached the certificate of completion to this form. The webinar can be accessed at http://dcf.vermont.gov/protection/reporting/mandated.

____ Member and supervisor have reviewed the quarterly reporting requirements together, and set up a system for tracking the needed information, including orienting them to any systems that already exist for doing so. A plan for tools and process is in place for pre/post testing, surveying, or other verification required. Please briefly describe your data collection process below:

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

Member signature ___________________ Date ____________

Supervisor signature ___________________ Date ____________
Supervisor Handbook

Section 4

Supervisor Responsibilities
2021-2022 Reporting Due Dates

Every other Friday: •Member Timesheet Approval

January 7th: •1st Qtr. Member Progress Report (beginning of service – Dec. 31)
•1st Qtr. Cash Match- Invoice will be sent to your organization

March 19th: •Member Mid-Term Performance Review

April 1st: •2nd Qtr. Member Progress Report (Jan. 1 – Mar. 31)
•2nd Qtr. Cash Match- Invoice will be sent

July 1st: •3rd Qtr. Member Progress Report (Apr. 1 – Jun. 30)
•3rd Quarter Cash Match - Invoice will be sent

August 5th: •Member End-of-Term Performance Review
•Final Member Progress Report (July 1- Sept. 30)
•Final Cash Match - Invoice will be sent
Cash Match

As part of the Host Site Agreement, HSO’s provide a cash match to support the financial aspects of the program. The cash match is calculated as a percentage of the ACM’s living allowance. For the 2021-22 AmeriCorps year, the cash match is set at 45% of the ACM living allowance.

The host site will be billed a maximum per member of:

- $9,180 (45% of $20,400) for full-time
- $4,860 (45% of $10,800) for half time
- $2,430 (45% of $5,400) for quarter time,
- $1,417 (45% of $3,150) for a minimum time.

VHCB will bill HSOs for the cash match on a quarterly basis. Payment should be returned to VHCB within 30 days of billing. The cash match bill amounts to 45% of the living allowance that was paid out to the member in the last quarter, and will fluctuate each quarter depending on the number of pay periods that fell within the quarter. In the event that a member leaves service early and does not receive the full living allowance, HSO’s will be responsible only for 45% of what was paid out of the member and not the full maximum amount. In cases in which the HSO contributes to the member leaving service early, such as employing the member, or not providing adequate supervision, the HSO will be responsible for paying the full maximum cash match.

VHCB will compensate each ACM bi-weekly and will take responsibility for payroll taxes, W-2s, etc. Direct deposit of checks is encouraged. The living allowance does not include the Educational Award which the ACM will receive in voucher form from the National Service Trust upon successful graduation from the Program.
Dear Jenny Supervisor,

Your invoice for your organization’s quarterly costs of the Member Living Allowance appears below. Please forward this invoice to your accounts payable department if you are not the billing contact. Please note, in some cases this invoice may be sent to both the member’s supervisor and the financial contact on file. Please be sure not to duplicate payments.

Thank you,
Amanda Moran-Moshinskie
Assistant Controller
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board
58 East State St.
Montpelier, VT 05602
Ph. (802) 828-5069
Fax (802) 828-3203

January 5, 2020

Vermont Housing Organization
ATTN: Jenny Supervisor
555 Main St
Montpelier, VT 05602

RE: Quarterly Billing for AmeriCorps Living Allowance

Dear Jenny:

As per the Sponsor Contract relating to the AmeriCorps Program, we ask you to remit your organization’s costs of the Member Living Allowance. These figures are based on the amount paid to each member for Vermont Housing Organization from September 1st through December 31st, 2017. Your share is calculated as follows:

Member: Eduardo AmeriCorps
Member Stipend September 1st through December 31st 2019: $4,462
Sponsor share per contract: 45%
Amount due to VHCB: $2,007.90

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE TO VHCB UPON RECEIPT: $2,007.90

Checks should be made payable to Vermont Housing & Conservation Board and mailed before January 30, 2020. Please make note of the member’s name on the payment. If you have any questions in regards to this billing please contact Francis Sharpstene at 828-3253.
Site Forms and Paperwork

Paperwork Checklist

**Initial Paperwork**
- Host Site Application
- Position Description
- 501c3 documentation (only need to provide once)
- Contract with VHCB AmeriCorps
- New Supervisor Form

**Member Enrollment Paperwork**
- Member Application (VHCB AmeriCorps will have online applications on file
- Interview Notes signed by supervisor
- Phone Reference Check Notes
- 2 Written Recommendations
- Information Disclosure Form (signed by applicant)
- Signed Position Description (member will also sign)
- Signed On-Site Orientation Checklist (member will also sign)

**Paperwork throughout the Service Term**
- Member Timesheets Approved bi-Weekly in OnCorps
- Mid-term Member Performance Review (completed with member)
- End of Term Member Performance Review (completed with member)
- Quarterly Cash Match Payments (your organization will receive an invoice each January, April, July, and October)
- Incident Report (as necessary)
- End of Year Survey
- New Supervisor Form (if there is a change in supervision)

**As Needed**
- Program Evaluation (usually every three year)
- Documentation of poor performance or member issues
AmeriCorps Member Timesheets

To document your service hours, you must submit a completed VHCB AC Timesheet every other week. Your service hour weeks will start on Sunday and the “Week Ending” date is Friday. The timesheet should be submitted on the final day of service in a two week period (normally on Friday unless the member does not serve on Fridays – in which the timesheet is submitted earlier) to your site supervisor for approval.

***If you do not fill out and submit your Timesheet on a bi-weekly basis with the required information and/or fall behind on your hours, you put the continued funding for the VHCB AC in jeopardy. The timesheet is the primary source of documentation for VHCB AC to determine whether or not the member has been actively serving and what activities the member has been performing. If you fail to submit timesheets within two business days of it’s due date, it will be assumed that you are not actively serving and you will be placed in suspension until the approved timesheets have been submitted to VHCB AC in full.

Daily Description of Activities

Each day must contain specific information covering the following:

- A brief description of the allowable activity(ies) occurred
- The number of hours served per day. Please only record hours to the nearest quarter hour.
- Any other information that would verify these service hours

Travel time up to 3 hours each way (to and from) statewide and other trainings may be counted as training hours. Regular commuting time to and from the service site may not be counted. Driving time from your Host Site to another work site may be counted. Lunch should not be counted if a lunch break is taken. If you serve through lunch, these hours may be counted.

Full -time members should be scheduled to serve approximately 40 hours per week, and averaging at least 36 hours/week to successfully complete your term of service by the last day. Holiday, sick or personal time you choose to take is not counted on timesheets – only actual hours served are logged. If you are over or under that average by more than 20 hours, the Program Director will work with you to modify your schedule to get back on track. You will not receive your education award unless your hours are complete (see exceptions in Member Agreement). A member may not take longer than 12 months to complete their hours under any circumstances.

Timesheet Activity Descriptions

Activity Description Do’s:

1. Add a description for each day you claim AmeriCorps Hours.
2. Be brief, concise, and clear in your activity descriptions.
3. Describe activities in a manner that someone that doesn’t understand anything about your position will be able to know what you did.
4. Avoid any descriptors that may be misconstrued as a prohibited or otherwise unallowable activity
   a. Example: if you collected and sorted donated goods for clients at a shelter, list as “collected and processed donated clothing items for shelter guests”. If you write “accepted donations” it may appear to someone that you were soliciting monetary donations for the shelter.
   b. Example: “checked email” or “updated facebook” is not clear that it was service-related tasks vs your own email/facebook. A better descriptor would be “reviewed and responded to service email” or “added program photos to host site social media”
   c. “Organized desk and service space” is okay, “cleaned office” is not clearly service related.
5. ISP: Define the activity and that it is ISP related. i.e. “Mentored student through Rainbow Readers for ISP”
6. Define ALL acronyms – either in an initial description or in the comments box
7. Please use individual’s position titles not their proper name (i.e. “weekly meeting with supervisor”)

Activity Description Don’ts:

1. Do NOT use these words/phrases: Work, Marketing, Administrative, front desk, advocated, solicited, fundraiser, names of private businesses, names of individuals served.
2. Do not use vague descriptors that allow room for uncertainty regarding unallowable activities. Examples of poor descriptions:
   a. “Staffing shelter”
   b. “administrative tasks”
   c. “serving in office”
3. Use generic wording around fundraising – all fundraising or donation gathering should be clearly defined by activity and purpose.
4. Do not enter personal information, confidential information, or irrelevant information in the timesheet.
5. Do not add insignificant activity or time not accounted for into timesheet – i.e. “dropped off check on way to field site”; “15 minute break to take a personal call”; “sat at front desk”.

Timesheet Examples:

The following are poor examples of timesheet descriptions:
1. Guest Intakes, took out recycling, trained new volunteers on shelter meal prep, facilitated off site group meeting and dropped off check on the way.
   “Dropped off check” and “took out recycling” is not a significant and necessary description
2. Staffed shelter, trained 3 new volunteers, sorted mail, accepted donations, group meeting “sorted mail”, and “group meeting” are not clearly service related activities. “accepted donations” is not clear to know whether this is an allowable activity or not.
3. Guest Intakes, volunteer training for meal prep, sorted guest mail, FWG meeting, met with Pam

*Uses an undefined acronym, and first name of person rather than relevant role*

The following is a good example of a timesheet description:

New guest intakes, meal prep and training new shelter volunteers, organized common space, delivered guest mail, accepted and sorted clothing donations for guests, facilitated Friday Women’s Group meeting, met with supervisor
# VHCB AmeriCorps

**VT Housing and Conservation Board AmeriCorps**

**Member:** HANNAH EPSTEIN  
**Site:** TNC-Nature Conservancy  
**Period:** 05/11/2020 - 05/26/2020

## Timesheet Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description/Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Total Daily Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon May 11</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Feedback on map designs, writing Goche BDR, Long Pond bird survey planning</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue May 12</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Writing Goche BDR</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>AmeriCorps resume workshop</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed May 13</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>All staff meeting, strategic plan meeting to prioritize actions</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>AmeriCorps education workshop</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu May 14</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Pulled garlic mustard and cleaned up trail at Williams Woods</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri May 15</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Meals for Goche BDR</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat May 16</td>
<td>(No Time Entered)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun May 17</td>
<td>(No Time Entered)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon May 18</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Check in meeting with supervisor, Goche BDR, planning for Long Pond bird survey</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue May 19</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Conservation Programs staff meeting, Snowbird staff meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed May 20</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Caught up on service emails, maps and photo report for Goche BDR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu May 21</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Prepared for field day tomorrow, maps for Goche BDR</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>TNC Young Emerging Professionals career development workshops</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri May 22</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Pulled garlic mustard at Raven Ridge, prepared equipment for field days next week</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat May 23</td>
<td>(No Time Entered)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun May 24</td>
<td>(No Time Entered)</td>
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<td><strong>Totals:</strong></td>
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**Member Comments:**  
BD = Baseline Documentation Report, new conservation easement property  
TNC = The Nature Conservancy

## History

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>User</th>
<th>User Type</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>HANNAH EPSTEIN</td>
<td>AmeriCorps Member</td>
<td>BD = Baseline Documentation Report, new conservation easement property TNC = The Nature Conservancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>05/26/2020</td>
<td>9:31 AM</td>
<td>Lynn McNamee</td>
<td>Site Supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>05/26/2020</td>
<td>9:37 AM</td>
<td>Ashley Hawley</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AmeriCorps Member:** HANNAH EPSTEIN  
**Site Supervisor 1:** Lynn McNamee  
**Site Supervisor 2:**          
**Site Supervisor 3:**          
**Program Director:**          

**Date Submitted:** 05/22/2020 6:23:30 PM  
**Date Approved:** 05/26/2020 9:31 AM

6200 B2020 OnCorps Reports, Inc.
Quarterly Progress Report

****For specific definitions and data collection forms, refer to the Performance Measure Instrument Packets at http://www.vhcb.org/acorps/paperwork.html****

The general member activities (or 'Performance Measures') members will report on are as follows. Many ACMs will report on more than one:

1. Housing Placement Services
2. Improving Lands and Habitats through Environmental Stewardship
3. Environmental Education
4. Financial Literacy Services
5. Food Access
6. Homeless Services
7. Energy Conservation
8. Volunteer Mobilization
9. Capacity Building

Progress Reporting Guidelines and Sample Report

There are two different reports members are required to submit:

1) Quarterly Progress Report- submitted via EmailMeForm
2) Volunteer Log- submitted via email using an Excel template

Both these reports are due in January, March, July, and August.

Progress Report:

Members will complete and submit their Periodic Activities Reports via EmailMeForm. They will be emailed a link per report to access the system. We report on two indicators of performance:

1. Outputs- represent program effort -the amount or units of services that members have completed, or the number of beneficiaries members have served.
2. Outcomes- refer to a change that has occurred in communities or in the lives of community beneficiaries or members.

1. Be careful that your member does not double count the same individual for the same measure in succeeding quarters! For example, they can count 40 residents total that benefitted from their service work in quarter 1. In quarter 2, there were 4 new residents
plus the previous 40 who benefitted. So, the member would count only 4 new residents that benefitted in quarter 2.

2. **However! They CAN count the same individual for separate measures if s/he has received each of the specified, breakdown measures.** For example, person A and B received emergency food services. Person A also received financial literacy services. They would count person A separately for both those measures, but they would not count either of those people again in quarter 2 for the same measure.

3. **Data storage/retention-** Members will use the data collected to report your activities performance, but will not need to submit the data collection documents themselves (e.g. logs, rosters, pr/post tests, etc.). They should retain all data collection proof and documents at your site. Documents should be stored up to 7 years and made available to VHCB AmeriCorps should we need them for auditing purposes.

- **Great Story-** We like to supplement our numbers with *qualitative* impacts of members’ service. Please have your member share anything that occurred during their term that was meaningful for you in some way. Perhaps they experienced a 'Wow!' moment or made a breakthrough with a client. Perhaps a family was housed in permanent housing, or a child went hiking for the first time. What is important to include in a "great story" is what the member’s role was in whatever that meaningful event was (i.e. their impact).

Real names of individuals should NOT be used. We may share these stories with the SerVermont and/or CNCS (you can use alias names). As always, we love photos; members should obtain photo release forms for any youth or other vulnerable individuals that may appear in the photos (we have photo release forms available if you need them).

**Volunteer Log:**

- Members submit this at the same time that they submit the performance report.
- Members SHOULD NOT double count the same person.
- Members SHOULD count their cumulative hours logged.
- The log asks members to identify the volunteer by age category. They do not need to ask anyone their age; they can simply make a reasonable guess.

1. If another national service member (of the same or other program) participates in an event or type of service and is counting his/her hours on their respective timesheets, members should NOT count that member among their tally (s/he would not be considered a volunteer). If the member is not logging AmeriCorps hours or otherwise reporting it as part of his/her service term then they may be counted.

2. Members should submit the Volunteer Log even if they have not engaged any volunteers that quarter. They can simply claim "0".
**Definition of Terms**

Members should always refer to the Performance Measure Instrument Packets for Definitions (included in their handbook) specific to that measure. Here are a few universal definitions for their reference:

**Beneficiary of service** - Anyone who has benefited from your service work, either directly or by virtue of your efforts.

**Children with special needs** - Children who are abused or neglected; in need of foster care; adjudicated youth; homeless youth; teen-age parents; and children in need of protective intervention in their homes.

**Economically Disadvantaged** - Must be receiving or meet the income eligibility requirements to receive: TANF, Food Stamps, Medicaid, SCHIP, Section 8 housing assistance OR have a poor credit score OR are at least 60 days behind on one or more personal/family accounts. The income criteria would follow the same federal and/or state criteria for each of the above-listed programs.

**Measure** - Each of the questions in the report and captures a unit of performance and/or output. For example, “number of adults receiving environmental education” is one measure.

**Service Learning** - A process whereby students learn and develop through active participation in organized service experiences that actually meet community needs. Service learning provides students opportunities to use their acquired skills and knowledge in real life situations in their communities; this enhances teaching by extending student learning into the community and helps foster a sense of caring for others. Examples include having an after-school group or class prepare a meal at a homeless shelter, or a college class providing GIS mapping services for a local park.

**Special characteristics** - Qualities that would identify a person with a population that may be in need of a particular service, such as person living with a mental or physical disability; veteran; older adult; homeless or near-homeless; disadvantaged youth; economically disadvantaged, etc.
2018-2019 Final Progress Report
VHCB AmeriCorps Quarterly Progress Report.
Captures remainder of service year and anything not previously reported.
Due by end of service

1. Personal Information and Verification
2. Housing Placement, Living Independently, and Resident Services
3. Environmental Education and Stewardship Services
4. Other Services
5. Short Answer
6. AmeriCorps Initiatives and Activities

Name *

First Last

Email *

Host Site *

List other VHCB AmeriCorps Members Covered by this report.

Before beginning, please verify that you have adhered to the following:

I confirm that I have referred to the Performance Measure Information in section 5 of the VHCB AmeriCorps Member Handbook that was given to me as part of my AmeriCorps Orientation.

Additionally, I acknowledge:
- Data is only to be reported once per service term and should not be duplicated from preceding quarterly reports. This report does not include figures recorded in previous reports submitted in the current service term.
- Please DO count anything from previous quarters that was missed, overlooked, or otherwise not counted.
- Members serving at a host site with multiple VHCB AmeriCorps members should work with the other members to ensure double-counting does not occur. Members may submit a joint report.
- Data logs and documentation should be stored at the host site and be accessible to AmeriCorps Program Staff if need be.
- Data (Individuals, acres, units, etc.) may be counted in multiple questions and/or categories in this report.
- Data from ISP and other service activities outside of normal host site duties should be included in this
- Be as qualitative as possible in text responses.
- Do not leave any questions blank. Use "0" or "N/A" for questions that do not apply to you.

☐ By checking this box, I confirm that I have referred to the Performance Measure Information in section 5 of the VHCB AmeriCorps Member Handbook.
**2018-2019 Final Progress Report**  
VHCB AmeriCorps Quarterly Progress Report.  
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Housing Placement Services

Please read through and answer all that apply, even if Housing and Resident Services are not your main focus area.

To avoid duplication of numbers, please include data taken from this quarter only unless information was not previously reported!

Individuals may be counted in multiple boxes - example: an individual may have received housing placement services, transitioned into housing, and received financial literacy services. The individual should be counted in all three boxes.

Please Provide the number of:

**Economically disadvantaged individuals including homeless individuals, receiving housing placement services.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count the number of Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless, transitioned into safe, healthy, affordable housing (count number of Individuals):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enter number of Individuals</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**Number of older adults or individuals with disabilities receiving services to help allow them to live independently.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enter number of Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Number of older adults or individuals with disabilities who reported having increased ability to live independently.

Enter number of Individuals with increased social ties/perceived social support.

Number of all individuals receiving services to help allow them to live independently or remain in their housing.

Enter number of Individuals receiving residential services, regardless of age or ability.

Total number of individuals receiving services to improve access to food/nutrition and/or older adults/persons living with a disability to help allow them to live independently or

Enter number of unduplicated Individuals receiving food access services, and older adults or persons with disabilities receiving services to help allow them to live independently.

Economically disadvantaged individuals receiving financial literacy services (count number of Individuals):

Enter number of Individuals

Economically disadvantaged individuals with demonstrated improvement in financial literacy (count number of Individuals):

Enter number of Individuals who completed surveys or tests and showed improvement

Units of information disseminated, aimed at improving financial knowledge (e.g brochures, info packets, literacy curriculum materials, flyers, etc.) through case management, housing placement services, financial literacy and credit repair workshops, homebuyer education classes, etc. (count number of units of information such as fliers, mailings, etc):

Enter units of information: example - 1 brochure = 1 unit

Homeless individuals that received housing, resident, employment services (count number of Individuals):

Enter number of homeless INDIVIDUALS

Homeless families that received housing, resident, employment services (count number of family units):

Enter number of FAMILY UNITS, not individuals. i.e. A family of 3 people equals 1 unit.

Of the number of individuals that received any type of housing service above, the number that are Veterans:

Enter number of individual veterans
Units of housing improved or made available such as through landlord negation, weatherization, home repairs, housing vouchers etc. (count number of housing units):

[Blank]

enter number of housing units. example: 1 housing unit = 1 single family home, 1 apartment, 1 mobile home, etc.

Comments or further explanation of any numbers listed above:

[Blank]
Environmental Stewardship/Education:

Please read and respond to all applicable questions, even if Environmental Stewardship/Education is not your main focus area.

To avoid duplication of numbers, please include data taken from this quarter only!

**Please Provide the number of:**

**Individuals receiving environmental education or training in environmental stewardship and/or environmentally-conscious who were surveyed for a change in behavior or the intent to change behavior:**

Enter the number of individuals that received pre/post testing for a gain in knowledge or were surveyed for a change in behavior or intent to change behavior. Please remember that you should be surveying as many individuals as possible. Only individuals that are surveyed can be reported to our AmeriCorps Grantors.

**Individuals that reported a change in behavior or intent to change behavior within one year in order to better protect the environment, engage the outdoors, and/or reduce energy consumption as a result of the educational event or training they received:**

Enter the number of individuals

**All Individuals receiving environmental education or training in environmental stewardship and/or environmentally-conscious practices (including but not limited to sustainable energy and other natural resources and sustainable agriculture):**


enter number of Individuals. You may count all individuals that received environmental education services in this field regardless if they received pre/post testing and/or surveying.

**Of the individuals receiving environmental education or training in environmental stewardship and/or environmentally-conscious practices, the number that were elderly, living with a disability, living in poverty, or minorities?**

enter number of Individuals. You may count all individuals that received environmental education services in this field regardless if they received pre/post testing and/or surveying.

Of the individuals receiving environmental education or training in environmental stewardship and/or environmentally-conscious practices, the number that were students or youth (under 18):

enter number of youth Individuals. You may count all individuals that received environmental education services in this field regardless if they received pre/post testing and/or surveying.

**Total number of acres of parks or other public lands that were treated/stewarded: (includes but not limited to invasives removal, trail maintenance, cleaning, tree hazards removal, tree planting, buffering, culvert repair, boundary marking, signage, etc.):**

enter the number of acres

**Number of acres that were assessed by the host site as improved according to the host sites land management plan/goals:**

enter number of acres

**number of MILES of trails/paths that were created, maintained, or otherwise stewarded (this should also be counted in acres above):**

enter number of miles (this should also be counted in acres stewarded above)

**number of MILES of rivers, shoreline, or other waterways that were maintained, cleaned, or otherwise stewarded:**

enter number of miles (this should also be counted in acres stewarded above)

**number of acres of land or waterways that were stewarded with an intent to improve water quality**

enter number of acres. You may include acres in which water quality improvement is a by-product of the stewardship activities rather than the main purpose. These acres should also be counted in the acres stewarded above.

**Number of trees planted and/or maintained:**

enter number of trees. Acreage upon which the trees were planted should also be counted in the acres stewarded above

**Per parcel stewarded, please list:**
1) Name of the properties/parks/parcels of land that were stewarded and location (town, GIS coordinates, etc)
2) Number of acres per parcel
3) Brief description of the type of stewardship activity
Example: Barre Town Forest in Barre Town - 10 acres of corridor along trails (garlic mustard invasives removal).

Briefly describe how your host site assesses land for improvement.
Examples:
- Site supervisor visits site after completion of stewardship to monitor improvements.
- Host site is provided with photo documentation and/or mapping of improved lands for review and approval
- Host site conducts aerial surveying of properties
- Supervisor or representative of host site was present for the stewardship activities and documented improvement

Total number of acres of parks or other public lands that were managed or monitored and not counted above or in previous reports:

[enter the number of acres]

For acres not previously counted, per parcel stewarded, please list:

1) Name of the properties/parks/parcels of land that were stewarded and location (town, GIS coordinates, etc)
2) Number of acres per parcel
3) Brief description of the type of service activity
Example: Barre Town Forest in Barre Town - 10 acres of corridor along trails (stewardship monitoring and assessing invasive species).
### 2018-2019 Final Progress Report

VHCB AmeriCorps Quarterly Progress Report. Captures remainder of service year and anything not previously reported. Due by end of service.

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<td>Environmental Education and Stewardship Services</td>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>Short Answer</td>
<td>AmeriCorps Initiatives and Activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Services

Use this section to describe other services.

**Individuals with improved access to healthy foods or improved food security (count number of Individuals):**

Enter number of individuals that were engaged with services at least three times.

**Individuals that received job placement services such as job seeking help, resume/application assistance, training, etc. (count number of Individuals):**

Enter number of individuals.

**Number of Veterans receiving services**

Enter the number of Veterans. This field is not limited to housing placement services. In this field include Veterans that have received ANY service.

**Number of military families receiving services**

Enter the number of family units. This field is not limited to housing placement services. In this field include Veterans that have received ANY service.

**Number of housing units that have received services intended to improve energy efficiency and/or reduce carbon emissions through weatherization, retrofits and other energy efficiency measures.**

Enter number of housing units. Example: 1 housing unit = 1 single family home, 1 apartment, 1 mobile home, etc.
List any services you've engaged in relating to Disaster Relief/Emergency Preparedness.

number of organizations that have received capacity building services to expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness of services and or programs?

enter number of organizations, including your host site, partnering organizations, ISP Organization, etc.

List the organizations counted above

number of systems used by host sites such as information gathering, data tracking, organization outreach, community engagement, and internal communications that are improved through member service:

List the systems counted above

Total amount of funds raised including donations, grant procurement, In-Kind donations value, etc.

Please refer to the handbook to review which types of fundraising are allowable for VHCB AmeriCorps Members.

List how the funds reported in the question above were procured:

examples:
- Pizza House donated 10 pizzas for community lunch valued at $120.
- procured grant from Vermont Gardener's Assc to purchase all materials and supplies to put in a community garden at the shelter: $1500.
- Received $450 donation from Tim's Hardware Store to provide full scholarships for 3 economically disadvantaged youth to participate in week-long summer camp.
2018-2019 Final Progress Report
VHCB AmeriCorps Quarterly Progress Report.
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Environmental Education and Stewardship Services
Other Services
Short Answer
AmeriCorps Initiatives and Activities
Great Story
Certification

Short Answer

Please use this section to capture data not collected elsewhere in this report. Please be as quantitative as possible when filling in the short answer questions.

List the various Direct Service activities you have participated in which led to the numbers you submitted earlier in this report. (e.g. public programming, identified housing, arranged childcare, facilitated day camp, assisted with applications, trail maintenance, invasives removal, HomeShare matching, Landlord negotiations, etc.).

List the various Direct Service activities you have participated which were NOT previously captured in this report. (e.g. mental health service for homeless clients, resident programming, public events, etc.).
be sure to quantify when possible - i.e. number of participants at event, number of meetings and attendees, etc.

List the various Capacity Building activities you participated in (e.g. database management, outreach, volunteer mobilization, secured donations, attended agency meetings, tutored host site staff or peers, distributed fliers, etc.).

List what Impacts and Outcomes you have seen as a result of your activities (e.g. increased attendance, greater community cohesion, money disbursed, permanent housing for family whose children now have opportunity to attend the same school on a consistent basis leading to more stable learning environment, etc.):

If possible, list both quantitative and qualitative results
How has your host site benefited from your service? List benefits that are a direct result of your service (e.g. able to offer environmental services to 25 additional youth, 10 new volunteers, etc.) and tangential benefits (e.g. new community connections, expanded outreach efforts, organizational networking, technology or other system improvements, etc.):

If possible, list both quantitative and qualitative results

Please list any community connections you’ve made or fostered through your service. Include organizations, businesses, committees, groups, etc, and the type of connection (a new supplier, means of gaining new volunteers for your site, marketing for your site, new resources for referrals, a free service for you clients, etc).

If possible, list both quantitative and qualitative results. List both formal and informal connections, as well as both one-time and recurring arrangements.

Please list any additional information regarding your service activities that does not fit elsewhere in this report.
AmeriCorps Initiatives and Activities

**How many books did you review this quarter as part of the AmeriCorps Book Club, if any?**

List only completed book reviews. Do not include books for which a report has not been submitted to VHCB AmeriCorps.

**List any books you reviewed this quarter:**

include the title and author of the book

**Enter the number of hours you dedicated to R.A.R.E Opportunity in this quarter.**

Round hours to the nearest (.25). Include all time regardless whether it was listed on your timesheet.

**Please list any AmeriCorps Outreach (R.A.R.E. Opportunity) activities you participated in:**

Examples of activities include: representing AmeriCorps at public events, AmeriCorps recruitment efforts, sharing stories of your service (including print and online), meeting with individuals to talk about AmeriCorps Opportunities, assisting an individual with an AmeriCorps Application, talking to school groups, dispersing AmeriCorps materials, etc. Include activities not listed on your timesheet

**List any peer site visits you completed in this quarter:**
List the member, site and date you visited. Also list the AmeriCorps Program if the visit was to an non-VHCB AmeriCorps site.

**Briefly describe your progress toward your Independent Service Project (ISP):**

Please include what stage the project is in (not started, planning, executing, completed, etc).

**Please list any projects or collaborative efforts that you collaborated on with other AmeriCorps members or their host sites, or other means in which you've interacted with other members.**

Briefly describe the projects/events/type of interaction, the nature of your participation/contribution, and with whom you collaborated.

**List any trainings or events outside of VHCB AmeriCorps events that you have attended as part of your service:**

**List any networking opportunities you have taken part in as part of your service:**

examples: conference or meeting attendance, job shadowing, mentoring, participating in a social group, informal meet-ups, regional gatherings, informational interviews, etc.
2018-2019 Final Progress Report
VHCB AmeriCorps Quarterly Progress Report.
Captures remainder of service year and anything not previously reported.
Due by end of service

Great Story

Please share a “Service Story” from your service term - a reflection on something meaningful or significant that you have experienced, observed, or that came about as a result of your service. Include how you believe YOU had an impact on the individual, situation, etc. Please submit any supporting photos to AmeriCorps staff via email. For sensitive cases, please use substitute names in place of real names to protect the privacy of clients.

Lengthy stories may be submitted to Francis or Erin via email rather than submitted here. Please note in box above in emailing story.
Please attach a photo to go with your story. If you do not have a photo that matches your story, you may submit a photo of yourself (wearing the AmeriCorps logo).

Browse...

We love to get photos of your service. Please email us photos of you, your projects, or other relevant service photos at any time!
**2018-2019 Final Progress Report**
VHCB AmeriCorps Quarterly Progress Report.
Captures remainder of service year and anything not previously reported.
Due by end of service

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<td>AmeriCorps Initiatives and Activities</td>
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### Certifications

**Have you submitted the Volunteer Log?**
- Yes, it has been emailed to VHCB AC staff.
- No, I do not have any volunteers to report.

**Please verify that all information stated in this report is correct:**
- By clicking here, I certify that I have informed my sponsor where the supporting documentation for this data (e.g. logs) is stored. I understand that this documentation will need to be available to VHCB and/or the CNCS upon request for at least seven years.
- By clicking here, I certify that my supervisor and/or host site have reviewed and approved the data submitted in this report.
- By clicking here, I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the data provided in this report is true and correct.

**Signature**

Upon submission of this report, you will receive a copy of your completed report via email. Please retain a copy of this report for your records.
Mid-Term Member Performance Review

Instructions
1. Member completes self-review and gives completed review to supervisor by March 1st.
2. Supervisor responds and adds to member review, and rates the performance in each category.
3. Both supervisor and member meet to discuss review.
4. Completed and signed evaluation is returned to VHCB AmeriCorps Staff by March 15th.

Member Name: ____________________________________________

Member Signature: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Supervisor Name: ____________________________________________

Supervisor Signature: ___________________________ Date: ________________

__________________________________________________________________________

HOURS FULFILLMENT AND PERFORMANCE (To be completed by supervisor)

- Overall, Member has performed satisfactorily: ____Yes  ____No

- Number of approved hours member has completed at the time of this review: _______

- If the member has not yet completed all the hours, is s/he on track to complete them by his/her end date? _____ yes  _____ no

Please share a brief story, highlight, or favorite memory from your member’s service:
1. **QUALITY OF WORK** (accuracy, timeliness, organization, thoroughness, attention to detail, results, care taken, etc.)

   Member:

   Supervisor:

   ___ unacceptable  ___ needs improvement  ___ good  ___ very good/notable  ___ exceptional

   Comments:

2. **QUANTITY OF WORK** (productivity, pace, results, steadiness of work, amount of “slacking”, willingness to take on additional responsibility, personal understanding of boundaries and limits, etc.)

   Member:

   Supervisor:

   ___ unacceptable  ___ needs improvement  ___ good  ___ very good/notable  ___ exceptional

   Comments:
3. **DEPENDABILITY & MOTIVATION**: attendance, punctuality, reliability, work relationships, communication, cooperation, positivity, helpfulness, teamwork, attitude, takes initiative, etc.

Member:

Supervisor:

___ unacceptable  ___ needs improvement  ___ good  ___ very good/notable  ___ exceptional

Comments

4. **TECHNICAL UNDERSTANDING and PROBLEM SOLVING** (has project knowledge and understanding, knows agency and program procedures and abides by them, recognizes and identifies problems, contributes ideas for improvement, shows innovation, follows directions, etc.)

Member:

Supervisor:

___ unacceptable  ___ needs improvement  ___ good  ___ very good/notable  ___ exceptional

Comments
5. **FACTORS SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE WORK** Identify the factors that you believe help the member be effective in his/her role. For example, weekly check-ins with supervisor, having clear expectations, deadlines, being able to discuss ideas with co-workers, autonomy, frequent feedback, etc.

Member:

Supervisor:

6. **FACTORS CHALLENGING EFFECTIVE WORK** Identify factors you believe may create barriers (occasional or on-going) for the member to achieve more effective work. For example, lack of access to co-workers, lack of knowledge, insufficient time, communication issues, not enough resources, etc.

Member:

Supervisor:

7. **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT** Please describe the skills learned or expanded in this position, training you’ve received, and motivation to take advantage of professional growth opportunities.

Member:

Supervisor:
8. COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS PROGRAM  Please describe your commitment to the AmeriCorps Program including: training and events attendance, use of program initiatives (book club, peer site visits, ISP), collaborative efforts with other members, meeting program requirements (reporting and paperwork), and other ways in which you’ve helped engage or enhance the program.

Member:

Supervisor:

9. ACHIEVEMENT OF GOALS (Member Only)  Please review your goals and for your service year and describe the progress you’ve made toward them. What were the major achievements during the first half of the program? Describe any obstacles preventing goals from being met. Have your goals altered or have you added new goals since the beginning of your service? Let us know if you’d like a copy of your goals sheet for review.

Member:
Other Responsibilities

Mileage and Expense Reimbursements
Any travel required of the member by the host organization will be reimbursed by the host site and should be directly submitted to the member’s supervisor or appropriate person at the organization to handle reimbursements. Examples of travel that should be reimbursed by the host site when using your personal vehicle include: transporting clients, traveling to a work/field site, making a delivery for the host site, picking up supplies or gear for the host site, attending trainings or events required or sponsored by the host site. Please check with your supervisor for the mileage reimbursement policy and how-to at your site.

Please note, the host organization must reimburse members at the current IRS rate. This may be different than the organization’s policy for reimbursing other staff.

Member Training
Host Sites are responsible for providing on-site training at the host site that will cover all technical training to carry out the duties listed in the position description. The member and supervisor will complete the On-Site Orientation Checklist to document the training has occurred.

Additionally, the HSO should provide the member with additional training, including external training, as time and budget allows. The HSO should consider allowing and covering expenses for relevant conferences and workshops, having the member attend board meetings as appropriate, be part of staff meetings, sit in on informative sessions, etc.
Supervisor Handbook

Section 5

Program Policies and Agreements
Common Programmatic Compliance Issues
This list of "red flag" issues, as distributed by the CNCS, can be used to help identify problematic practices of AmeriCorps program, staff or members. Please consult the VHCB AmeriCorps Director or the current AmeriCorps Provisions for a full statement of the requirement. The listing below is not exhaustive, and some provisions and guidelines vary depending on the type of AmeriCorps program. Items that mention specific member activities refer to when an AmeriCorps member is logging AC hours, wearing AC gear, speaking on behalf of AmeriCorps or the Program, or is otherwise representing AmeriCorps.

- Program staff or members are engaged in inappropriate fund raising activities.
- Members perform administrative, supervisory or other inappropriate duties.
- Members participate in efforts to influence legislation.
- Members participate in partisan or political activities.
- Members are involved in religious activities.
- Members participate in a voter registration drive.
- Members assist or deter union organizing.
- AmeriCorps program participants engage in activities that pose a significant safety risk to them or others.
- Members illegally using drugs.
- Members engage in activities that benefit a for-profit business.
- Program service activities do not result in a specific identifiable service or improvement that, without AmeriCorps, would be provided with existing funds or volunteers.
- Members are inappropriately discriminated against in their recruitment or selection.
- Program does not maintain appropriate and signed member contracts.
- Employees are displaced by members.
- Member living allowances are withheld as punishment.
- Inappropriate fines are levied against members.
- Members do not have access to an appropriate grievance process.
- Members earn service hours for inappropriate activities.
- Program does not meet progress reports, FSRs, and other submission deadlines.
- Legal applicant is not an eligible applicant.
- Grantee does not provide reasonable accommodation to members with known disabilities.
- Criminal background checks are not conducted for members
- Program does not require members to sign contracts that meet minimum requirements.
- More than 20% of the aggregate of all member service hours are spent in training; or more than 10% spent fundraising.
- Members are not supervised.
- Program does not conduct at least mid- and end-of-term written evaluations of each member's performance.
- Program does not assist members who are high school dropouts in earning a high school diploma equivalency.
- Members do not serve a term of service of approved length, i.e. other than 9-12 months.
- Eligible members are not offered health care and child care benefits.
- Eligible members are not allowed family and medical leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.
- Grantee does not maintain the confidentiality of member information.
Nonduplication and Nondisplacement

**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 paragraph of this section are met, Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.

**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.
- An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
- A participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
- A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that—
  - Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or (ii) Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
  - A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any— (i) Presently employed worker; (ii) Employee who recently resigned or was discharged; (iii) Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures; (iv) Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or (v) Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

Host sites are prohibited from paying Members to do any work for them for the term of their service, or to compensate them monetarily in any way. If hosts wish to provide non-cash financial provisions to Members (e.g., housing), they must do so in accordance with VHCB AmeriCorps established policy.
Policy on VHCB AmeriCorps Host Sites Providing Financial Provisions to Members
(Cash or In-Kind)

1. Cash provisions beyond the living stipend may not be offered to currently enrolled members.

2. In-Kind housing provisions may be given to currently enrolled members with the caveat that IRS tax guidelines are followed and that VHCB AmeriCorps is notified of the intent to provide in writing before the provision is offered.

3. Specific to offering housing as a provision, the guidelines below must be met and demonstrated to VHCB AmeriCorps (in a letter) in order to provide for a non-taxable provision:
   a. The housing must be furnished on the premises of the host site.
   b. The housing must be furnished for the convenience of the host (and this means that the host has a substantial business reason for providing the lodging other than to provide additional compensation to the member).
   c. The housing is a condition of service (the member must accept it in order to be able to properly perform his/her duties).
   d. You must not offer a provision value that is more than the difference between the maximum stipend allowable to be paid a member in a given program year and the actual stipend amount that VHCB AmeriCorps is paying to that member in the year the provision is received.

4. If the above guidelines (in section A.) do not apply or cannot be met, then the benefit will be taxable for the member. In this case you must meet the following guidelines:
   a. You must inform VHCB AmeriCorps in a letter of your intent to offer the provision.
   b. You must inform the member that this provision will be taxable to them, and have them sign a statement saying that they understand this.
   c. You must report on the provision value to VHCBC on a periodic basis (to be determined by VHCB depending on the provision) in order for VHCB to calculate and withhold applicable taxes from the member’s stipend.
   d. You must assume the cost of the FICA charges that will accrue as a result of the member’s increased tax liability.
   e. You must not offer a provision value that is more than the difference between the maximum stipend allowable to be paid a member in a given program year and the actual stipend amount that VHCB AmeriCorps is paying to that member in the year the provision is received.

5. Educational and training benefits are a great way to invest in your Members. Please check in with the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director before providing any additional benefits to the members serving at your host site.
VHCB AmeriCorps Host Site Organization Agreement

Year 24 Agreement between the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and VHCB AmeriCorps Host Site Organization (HSO)

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (“VHCB”) expects the HSO (“Subgrantee” or “HSO”) to:

1. Provide VHCB and each AmeriCorps Member (known herein as “ACM” or “Member”) with a well-developed and specific position description which lists “essential duties” of the position and includes measurable outcomes that reflect the achievement of grant objectives. The ACMs will be performing direct service to fill a need that the HSO has and this need must fall within the limits of the mission, objectives, and allowable activities of the VHCB AmeriCorps program. By signing this agreement, the HSO agrees to support the ACM in carrying out the AmeriCorps position duties as outlined in the ACM position description specific to your site. Should any modifications to the position description be deemed necessary, the HSO agrees to present the changes to the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director for approval prior to implementing or acting on the proposed changes.

ACMs will focus on direct services, having an area of concentration in one or more of the following areas: 1) homeownership and/or financial literacy services, 2) support for homeless and marginally housed people, 3) conservation and stewardship activities, 4) environmental education and environmentally-sustainable practices, 5) energy conservation/weatherization, and/or 6) food and nutrition assistance. All ACMs may include other community volunteers in the scope of their activities, either by recruiting, training, supervising, or otherwise engaging them in service activities. None of these foci will necessarily exclude direct service with the VHCB AmeriCorps team and other ACMs or assisting with physical housing projects.

2. Recruit, interview, and recommend a candidate for selection that is able to begin service by the AmeriCorps Orientation for full-time member positions, unless an alternative date has been agreed upon and approved by the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director. If the Member is not selected by the recruitment deadline or is unable to begin service for the VHCB AmeriCorps Orientation, VHCB AmeriCorps has the right to re-allot that slot elsewhere. HSOs agree to follow the Member selection guidelines as outlined in the VHCB AmeriCorps recruitment guidelines found online at www.vhcb.org/american.

The minimum requirements for an ACM include the following: 1) must be at least 18 years of age (or 17 with written parental permission verified by phone); 2) a US citizen or US national or lawful permanent resident “alien”; and, 3) must also have a high school diploma or certificate of equivalency, or be willing to work towards such a goal as part of their AmeriCorps service year. Additionally, Members must not have dropped out of elementary or secondary school in order to enroll as an AmeriCorps Member. Other requirements of service may be added by the HSO with VHCB AmeriCorps approval.
The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and VHCB AmeriCorps have zero-tolerance for the harassment of any individual or group of individuals for any reason. CNCS and VHCB AmeriCorps are committed to treating all persons with dignity and respect. CNCS prohibits all forms of harassment based upon race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or parental status, or military status. All programs administered by CNCS funds, including VHCB AmeriCorps, must be free from all forms of harassment. It is against the law for organizations that receive federal financial assistance from the Corporation for National Service to discriminate on the above-mentioned personal or group attributes. It is also unlawful to retaliate against any person or organization who files a complaint about such discrimination. All VHCB AmeriCorps HSOs must comply with the CNCS Civil Rights and Non-Harassment Policy.

Furthermore, the State of Vermont is opposed to discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, ancestry, sex, marital status, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, membership or non-membership in the VSEA, and any other factor that is prohibited by law. Further, the State of Vermont is contractually bound to respond to any discrimination complaint against employees with established protocols for reporting, investigating and resolving allegations of discrimination.

During the recruitment process, the HSO is responsible for informing the potential Member that any information disclosed in the interview process will be shared with the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Staff. The HSO is responsible for sharing any disclosures made in the interview with the VHCB AmeriCorps Director.

The HSO should also perform the requisite number of reference checks (2 written, 1 verbal) as well as supply the VHCB AmeriCorps staff with copies of interview and reference notes in addition to copies of any additional application materials.

3. The HSO understands that as a service position, it is not possible to ‘dismiss’ a Member after a trial period unless they are clearly performing illegal or unsafe acts, the member has had a breach of the VHCB AmeriCorps Agreement, or unless their behavior warrants it, and then if, (and only if) there is clear documentation of these acts and if and only if the Member has had access to due process (which might include more than one three-way meeting to attempt to resolve issues or investigate situations with the Program Director, HSO Supervisor, ACM and sometimes the Executive Director of the HSO as necessary). The HSO may remove the member for the host site immediately and at any time if the member is causing any harm, engaging in illegal or prohibited activities, under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or acting unsafe in any manner.

If the grievance procedure outlined hereinafter is entered into beyond the initial stages of verbal and written warnings, VHCB AmeriCorps reserves the right to have the General Counsel of VHCB present at additional meetings as the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director sees fit.
If HSOs want to dismiss an ACM from the Host Site, the HSO should: 1) have sufficient documentation that dismissal is warranted, 2) submit a letter to the Program Director at VHCB outlining the reasons you have for wanting to dismiss your ACM, 3) attend a three-way meeting with the Member and the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director if requested by the Program Director or ACM, 4) have the approval of the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director, and 5) complete all required evaluations and reporting procedures.

4. Provide the member with adequate support to successfully complete the term of service including, but limited to:
   (a) Provide the member with a Host Site Supervisor that will be able to be adequately available to guide the member through the service term and serve as a point of contact for the AmeriCorps Program.
   (b) Provide adequate training and skill-building to complete the tasks of the position description.
   (c) Provide each ACM with responsibilities as outlined in the position description for a minimum of 1,720 service, training, and fundraising hours (915 hours for half-time Members; 460 hours for Quarter Time; 305 for Minimum Time) with a goal of 40 hours per week for the duration of the ACM’s stated contract term dates. Holiday, sick, and personal hours are not counted towards the 1720 (or 915 or 460 or 305) required hours.
   (d) Supporting the member through challenges during the service term as needed by providing mentoring, additional training, engaging in facilitated dialogues, providing/pointing to necessary resources.
   (e) Providing meaningful service opportunities, regular feedback, and opportunities for growth and reflection.
   (f) Meeting the VHCB AmeriCorps Supervisor requirements including meeting with the member regularly, completing required documentation in a timely manner, and being available to the member for ongoing support as needed.
   (g) Not engaging in any activity that would jeopardize the VHCB AmeriCorps Program’s ability to retain 100% of members through the completion of a successful term of service. Such activities would include:
      a. Inadequately supervising the member
      b. Offering a member an employed position to begin before the completion of their service term.
      c. Not providing the member with meaningful tasks in accordance with the position description to account for the required service hours.
      d. Dismissing Member from HSO without adequate documentation and/or due process.
      e. Any action that encourages the ACM to break the Member Agreement (a copy of the agreement can be found in the Supervisor Handbook or on VHCB AmeriCorps website).

5. Provide the following percentage of the ACM’s living allowance as a cash match from non-federal sources for the 2020-21 AmeriCorps year: 45% of the ACM living allowance. VHCB will bill HSOs for the cash match on a quarterly basis. Payment should be returned to VHCB within 30 days of billing.

The host site will be billed a maximum per member of:

- $9,180 (45% of $20,400) for full-time
- $4,860 (45% of $10,800) for half time
- $2,430 (45% of $5,400) for quarter time,
- $1,620 (45% of $3,600) for a minimum time.

At the request of VHCB, or as a result of failure to remit cash match payments within 30 days of billing, cash match payments may be required in advance of the ACM providing service.

The rest of the ACM’s living allowance will be paid by the Corporation for National and Community Service and/or VHCB. VHCB will compensate each ACM bi-weekly and will take responsibility for payroll taxes, W-2s, etc.

In addition, the HSO agrees to share the responsibility of attrition by paying the HSO’s share (45%) of the expended living allowance of any ACM who leaves the program before successfully completing their AmeriCorps season of service.

In the event that the HSO contributes to the ACM’s reason for leaving the term of service early by not providing the member with adequate support to successfully complete the term of service (see #4 above), the HSO agrees to pay the full maximum cash match within 30 days of the ACM’s departure from the VHCB AmeriCorps Program.

If the HSO requests a replacement Member, they understand that they must provide the full cash match for the new Member.

The living allowance does not include the Educational Award which the ACM will receive in voucher form from the National Service Trust upon successful graduation from the program.

6. The HSO will reimburse their member(s) for any non-commuting travel and training expenses incurred on behalf of the HSO. Travel reimbursements will be paid directly from the HSO to the ACM at the mileage reimbursement rate set forth by the IRS. The rate is may change throughout the service term. Mileage to and from VHCB AmeriCorps trainings and events will be reimbursed by VHCB or SerVermont. The ACMs must submit a reimbursement claim to VHCB for such mileage.

7. The HSO agrees to adhere to rules and regulations of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and regulations found in 45 CFR Chapter XII including:

   (a) 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 paragraph (f) of this section are met, Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.

   (b) Nondisplacement.

      (1) 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.

      (2) An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.

      (3) A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
(4) A participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.

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

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

HSOs are prohibited from paying Members to do any work for them for the term of their service, or to compensate them monetarily in any way. If HSOs wish to provide non-cash financial provisions to Members (e.g., housing, health benefits, personal/professional development), they must do so in accordance with VHCB AmeriCorps established policy.

(c) **Prohibited Activities.** While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

   (1) Attempting to influence legislation;
   (2) Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
   (3) Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
   (4) Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
   (5) Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
   (6) Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities which are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
   (7) Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
   (8) Providing a direct benefit to—
      (i) A business organized for profit;
      (ii) A labor union;
      (iii) A partisan political organization;
      (iv) A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative;
      (v) An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities; and
(9) Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
(10) Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
(11) Such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

 Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-Corporation funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so. The Host Site agrees to display AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities at the Host Site Organization.

(d) Additionally, the following service activities are prohibited:

(1) Members are further disallowed to do clerical work unless such activities are incidental to their direct service activities.

(2) A member’s service activities may not include organized fundraising activities that help the Grantee achieve its matching requirements, that support an organization’s general operating expenses, or that provide fundraising assistance to other community-based organizations that do not provide immediate and direct support to a Grantee’s approved Program objective. These disallowed activities include financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, or preparation of grant proposals. Service activities that raise funds or in-kind contributions while generating, involving and/or encouraging community support may be considered appropriate and allowable, such as serve-a-thons, to the extent they are in direct and immediate support of an approved objective of the Program and provided that they are not the Program’s primary activity or involve significant amounts of an individual member’s time.

8. Review, approve, and submit ACM timesheets in a timely manner utilizing the OnCorps online system. Members will submit timesheets on a biweekly basis and supervisors should review and approve the timesheets within 48 business hours. The accounting of the ACM’s time on timesheets is very important, as that is the primary record to document the service requirements and minimum number of service and training hours. Members are allowed to claim no more than 20 percent of total hours as training without approval from the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director. Members are allowed to claim no more than 10 percent of total hours for fundraising under any circumstance. There is no minimum requirement for either training or fundraising. In addition to service performed at the HSO, ACMs will also claim time on timesheets for activities requested or required by the VHCB AmeriCorps Program, which may include but not be limited to the following:

(a) Hours for Peer Site Visits – VHCB AmeriCorps allows members to claim mileage and hours for up to two peer site visits - visits to other Statewide AmeriCorps HSOs, with a maximum of one site visit occurring at a non-VHCB AmeriCorps HSO. ACM’s must request their supervisor’s approval if the site visit occurs during a time the ACM would normally be serving the HSO. With the direct supervisor’s approval, the member may claim hours for additional peer site visits, but may not claim mileage with VHCB AmeriCorps.

(b) Hours for Independent Service Projects – All Members are expected to complete an Independent Service Project (ISP) outside of their regular host site. Members are allowed a minimum of 15 and maximum of 30 hours for ISP. ACMs will be responsible for coordinating with their supervisor to ensure ISP activities do not interfere with regular site duties.
(c) Hours for AmeriCorps Book Club – Members are allowed to read and review approved books relevant to their term of service. Each book review is allowed a maximum of ten training hours. Full-time members are limited to 6 book reviews, half-time members are limited to 3 book reviews and quarter time members are limited to 2 book reviews over the course of the service term.

(d) Hours for R.A.R.E. Opportunity – Members are allowed to claim 15 hours for community outreach relating to their AmeriCorps service. Members may claim additional hours for AmeriCorps community outreach will the HSO’s approval.

(e) AmeriCorps Trainings and Events – a calendar will be provided by the AmeriCorps Program

(f) Networking and Special Projects – such as regional get-togethers with other members, assisting or collaborating with other ACM’s

(g) Meeting AmeriCorps requirements and paperwork

(h) Training, mediation, counseling, or other means of conflict resolution relating to ACM or HSO issues affecting the ACM’s term of service.

(i) Engage in Disaster Relief services if called upon by VHCB AmeriCorps, SerVermont, or AmeriCorps. The host agrees to release the member for up to two weeks worth of activity for disaster relief services in Vermont. Members may engage in additional disaster relief service with permission from the host site and VHCB AmeriCorps. Members may also engage in disaster relief activities through the host site.

(j) Other tasks deemed necessary by AmeriCorps Program Staff for the ACM to complete the AmeriCorps term of service successfully.

The ACM Supervisor is responsible for verifying the accurate accounting of time and signing off on it. The ACM will not successfully exit the Program or receive the Educational Award if the timesheets do not demonstrate that the minimum requirements have been met. The supervisor should feel comfortable attesting to the fact that the hours represented are actually the hours served and likewise the activities recorded. Failure to review and submit timesheets in a timely manner (repeated late approvals or any timesheet approved later than two weeks submission) may jeopardize continued partnership in future years.

9. Set aside one-on-one check-in time with each ACM at least once every week.

The HSO further agrees to release the ACM Supervisor to attend (or arrange for another staff Member of your organization to attend) the VHCB AmeriCorps New Supervisor Orientation, and release the ACM Supervisor to attend (or arrange for another Member of your organization to attend) up to two additional scheduled Supervisor meetings and/or trainings throughout the program year. Additionally, the ACM Supervisor must be available for part of the day for two site visits from the Program Director or other staff annually.

Should supervision change during the course of the year, the HSO agrees to notify VHCB AmeriCorps as soon as possible of the change by submitting a VHCB AmeriCorps Supervisor Assessment Form. The new ACM Supervisor must be willing and able to attend a Supervisor Orientation to the Program at the office of the Program Director before taking over supervision of the member. The ACM Supervisor appointed by the HSO should have adequate supervision experience to carry out the duties of the ACM supervision. VHCB AmeriCorps reserves the right to
request an alternative Supervisor after reviewing the Supervisor Assessment Form or if the acting Supervisor is unable to effectively perform the functions of the Supervisor role.

10. HSOs must provide any training necessary for each ACM to successfully complete their service term and carry out assigned duties. The HSO agrees to hold the ACM’s professional development in high regard and consider the ACM’s professional growth as an important outcome of a successful member placement. The HSO will include the member in staff meetings, staff trainings, and assist the member in gaining a comprehensive understanding of how the HSO operates and exposure to individuals, organizations, and systems within the HSO’s network. When possible, the HSO agrees to allow time and cover costs of outside trainings that would be of value according to the ACM’s position or professional interest. VHC requires that HSOs assist each ACM in the development of basic professional skills such as phone etiquette, writing, time management, computer usage and any other applicable areas as necessary.

Release the ACM for an average of two to three days per month for AmeriCorps-related activities (trainings, service, and team-building days), most which will require Member attendance. Member absences from VHC AmeriCorps trainings and events must be approved beforehand by the VHC AmeriCorps Director and, for SerVermont sponsored events, the Executive Director of the SerVermont, via a written waiver request from the Member and submitted to the VHC AmeriCorps Director. If an ACM does not attend a required training or event and has not received an attendance waiver for that event and does not notify the Program by the RSVP date, the ACM may incur the cost of their portion of the event. Returning members are expected to attend all VHC AmeriCorps required trainings and events. HSOs agree that ACMs will not be expected to miss AmeriCorps sanctioned meetings and events to conduct regular duties at the HSO. In the event that an ACM is absent from an AmeriCorps training or event, the member will not be allowed to claim hours for service performed at the site on that day.

11. HSOs must provide each ACM with an appropriate (as determined by position description) office space and the equipment and supplies necessary to perform to the best of their abilities. HSOs should provide the necessary office supplies, phone access, computer and internet access for the success of each ACM’s project(s). Additionally, as email is the main form of communication within the AmeriCorps program, all members must be allowed time and access daily to check the email account listed with VHC AmeriCorps.

Should any ACM be performing any construction duties, it is necessary to have an area for the storage of any tools, small supplies or safety equipment. ACMs must be thoroughly trained in safety procedures should they be handling any construction equipment whatsoever.
12. Provide a thorough, on-site orientation for your ACM, including any emergency protocols the HSO follows. This will include providing an outline of your organization’s philosophy, policies, and procedures. Members are expected to adhere to and act in accordance to the HSO’s personnel policy and/or other staff policies and guidelines set forth by the HSO, except when such policies or guidelines conflict with VHCB AmeriCorps policies or guidelines. In cases in which policies/guidelines conflict, the member should defer to AmeriCorps policy or guideline, unless approval has been granted by the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director to defer to the HSO’s policy/guideline.

In addition, HSOs agree to introduce each ACM to the organization’s staff and make them an active part of the daily life and culture of the office.

13. Provide support and assistance to the ACM for their respective data collection and Progress Reports as required by the Program. The ACM Supervisor should be familiar with the member's data tracking and reporting requirements and allow time and support for the member to adequately track data. ACM Supervisors should review and provide feedback on member reports if necessary before they are submitted to VHCB AmeriCorps. The HSO will support ACMs that provide environmental education or independent-living services to collect the required participant surveys.

If requested, complete periodic reports detailing the successes and challenges that each ACM is experiencing, and any support needed (other than monetary) to make the project more effective, along with requested associated demographic data of the service area and/or tracking statistics that the organization may have.

14. Complete ACM performance reviews two times per Member service term, with evaluations midway and at the end of the ACM’s term (QT Members require only one performance evaluation to be completed at the end of the term). You will receive from the Program Director the appropriate reports and evaluation forms required for your compliance as an AmeriCorps HSO and site ACM Supervisor. It is expected that they will be completed and submitted to VHCB in a timely fashion. Failure to do so may jeopardize continued partnership in future years.

The ACM must receive overall satisfactory performance reviews for at least the final performance review in order to satisfy the successful exit requirements and receive the Educational Award. Should an ACM receive an unsatisfactory performance evaluation during the first reporting period, a meeting will be scheduled between the ACM Supervisor, the ACM and the Program Director at the Supervisor’s written request. During this meeting a corrective action plan will be established in order to give the ACM an opportunity to raise the unsatisfactory performance rating to a satisfactory or better.

15. Comply with VHCB AmeriCorps' commitment to practicing effective risk management to ensure the safety, dignity, and legal rights of its participants. It is also our intent to properly manage any incidents that occur so as to minimize injury and other forms of loss. As such, VHCB AmeriCorps HSOs agree to implement basic emergency procedures covering any major, unanticipated event that would disrupt the delivery of services and/or place the ACM and/or activity participants in
danger. This includes, at minimum, obtaining emergency contact information forms, permission slips, liability waivers, and photo release forms for participants who are minors or who are need of special support services. All ACMs should be trained on organizational emergency procedures (e.g., tool safety, evacuation plans, phone numbers of back-up staff, local police and fire stations, incident report forms, etc.). All ACMs who are operating or accompanying a vehicle for a service-related activity shall do so in a safe and reasonable manner, shall adhere to state law on operating motor vehicles (Vermont, Title 23, Chapter 13) and shall carry a valid driver’s license. Should an incident occur, the HSO (or member, if appropriate) agrees to notify VHCB within one business day from the event and submit a completed Incidence Form within 36 hours of the event.

16. Support Members and assist coordination of cross-collaborative projects with other regional HSOs as appropriate.

17. The HSO will display the following at the HSO’s main work space: AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities, Drug-Free Workplace Notice, and AmeriCorps Site Sign.

18. Assure that the HSO has a current 501(c)(3) tax status, is an educational institution, or is a municipality.

19. Read the AmeriCorps Provisions that are associated with the grant and agree to abide by them to the best of your abilities. AmeriCorps Provisions can be found in the VHCB AmeriCorps Supervisor Handbook or online at www.americorps.gov

20. Agree to the VHCB AmeriCorps Grievance Procedure as listed below

21. Adhere to the following Memorandum of Understanding when applicable:

I understand that, in order to be in compliance with the Corporation for National and Community Service’s Final Rule on criminal history checks (CFR, Vol. 72, No. 164, Parts 2522 and 2540), all AmeriCorps Members National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) consisting of (1) a criminal registry search, which involves an authorized FBI fingerprint check to determine whether an applicant has a criminal history, and (2) a background check through the state system from the state in which the member lived at the time they applied to the program and the state of service, and (3) a National Sex Offender Public Registry check, which consists of individuals that are required by their States to register as sex offenders. An individual who refuses to consent to a National Service Criminal History Check is not eligible to serve. While results of the check are pending and until they have been reviewed and verified by VHCB AmeriCorps, the Member is not permitted to have access to vulnerable populations as part of VHCB AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps programs without being accompanied by an authorized representative from the HSO who has been cleared for such access.

The HSO understands that if the member criminal check indicates a conviction(s) for a crime(s), an individual of our organization may be appointed to and serve on an investigative panel comprised of said appointee, the applicable ACM, the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director and possibly the VHCB General Counsel. This investigative panel would review the charges and negotiate an outcome.
The HSO understands that VHCB AmeriCorps has agreed to use the criminal record information received for the purposes intended by law, and that VHCB AmeriCorps has agreed to not disclose the contents of any criminal record information without the ACM’s permission to any individual other than the ACM, as well as properly designated representatives of VHCB, SerVermont, or CNCS who have a documented need to know the contents of said record. Any and all information that any individual Member is made privy to is strictly confidential.

22. The HSO will adhere to the following Grievance Procedure between the ACM and VHCB AmeriCorps Program, or the ACM and HSO.

A grievance procedure has been established to assist HSOs and/or the VHCB AmeriCorps Program in settling service placement related matters with an ACM. A grievance may occur when an action taken by an ACM is deemed inappropriate by the HSO or VHCB AmeriCorps Program, or when an action taken by the HSO and/or VHCB AmeriCorps is deemed inappropriate by the ACM.

The grievance procedure is as follows:

1. Attempt to settle the matter with the party involved directly.

2. If you cannot settle the matter directly, notify your site supervisor, VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director, and/or the ACM and discuss the problem with them. They can help you to clarify your concerns and strategize to reach a resolution. If the problem is with your site supervisor, specify your problem in writing and submit it to the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director at the VHCB headquarters office.

3. If the issue is settled directly, a three-way meeting will be arranged: This meeting should include the ACM, the other party involved, and a neutral party appropriate to the situation. This may be the site supervisor or program director or other party depending on the circumstances of the problem. During this meeting the neutral party will facilitate a discussion to resolve the issue. An action plan to remedy the situation will be devised and implemented immediately.

4. Two-Week Follow Up: The facilitator/neutral party will follow up within two weeks to assess whether or not any improvement has been made.

5. Grievance Hearing: If the action plan is unsuccessful, you can file a written grievance with the Program Director (or designee, in the case of the program director being the neutral party in the informal dispute resolution process) who will hold a grievance hearing including other VHCB and/or AmeriCorps staff, provided that a request is made within one year of the date of the alleged occurrence (except in cases alleging fraud or criminal activity pursuant to 14 CFR § 2540.230). The grievance hearing will provide each side with an opportunity to present their position, and the Program Director will render a decision. The hearing must be held no later than 30 calendar days after the filing of the grievance, and a decision must be made no later than 60 calendar days after filing.
6. Mediation: Should a grievance hearing be unsuccessful or should it be determined more appropriate to replace the step of the grievance hearing, the Program will require the grievance to be presented to a trained mediator instead of or in addition to a grievance hearing. A neutral mediator will be designated by the Program, and will attempt to facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution. The mediator must not have participated in any previous decisions concerning the issue in dispute. Any and all mediation sessions will be confidential. The mediator may not participate in any subsequent proceedings. The mediation session should be facilitated no later than 30 days after the request is made, and an agreement must be reached within 45 days after filing. This step, whether in place of or in addition to a grievance hearing, is required before bringing the case to binding arbitration. The cost of mediation must be divided evenly between the parties.

7. Binding arbitration: In the event that the decision made following the grievance hearing is adverse to you or if no decision is made within 60 calendar days of the filing of the grievance, an opportunity for a binding arbitration will be provided. The arbitrator must be independent and selected by agreement of both you and the other party. If you and the other party cannot agree on an arbitrator, the Corporation’s Chief Executive Officer will appoint one within 15 calendar days after receiving a request from one of the parties.

An arbitration proceeding must be held no later than 45 calendar days after the request for arbitration, or no later than 30 calendar days after the appointment of an arbitrator by the Corporation’s CEO. An arbitration decision must be made no later than 30 calendar days after the commencement of the arbitration proceeding.

The cost of arbitration must be divided evenly between the parties, unless the grieved party prevails in an arbitration against the program, in which case the program must pay the total cost of the proceeding as well as the prevailing party’s attorney fees. A law suit to enforce an arbitration award may be brought in any Federal district court having jurisdiction over the parties.
VHCB AmeriCorps Member Agreement

Whereas, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) have jointly entered into this Agreement to promote national service and community leadership among the citizens of the United States to help address critical human needs related to poverty and the environment while implementing strategies for long-term solutions, and;

Whereas, the goal of the VHCB AmeriCorps Program is to engage a diverse group of Americans in working partnerships with communities to provide real and measurable service while developing leadership skills, and fostering responsible citizenship.

AUTHORITY: This Agreement is entered into pursuant to the authority of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended (42 USC 12501 et. Seq.), Public Law 103-82.

It is the purpose of this Agreement to delineate the terms, conditions, and rules of Membership regarding participation in the VHCB AmeriCorps Program.

This Agreement is hereby entered into between the VHCB AmeriCorps Program (hereinafter referred to as VHCB AC or simply the “Program” and the participating AmeriCorps Members (hereinafter referred to as the “member” or “ACM”).

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I. Minimum Qualifications

The member certifies that they are a United States citizen, a US national or a legal permanent resident, and at least 17 years of age, and has disclosed to the program if they have been previously terminated for cause from another AmeriCorps Program. If a member is 17 years old, they agree to provide a consent form to VHCB AC signed by a parent or legal guardian. The member further certifies that they have obtained a high school diploma or equivalency certificate or agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent before using an education award and will begin to do so as a goal of their AmeriCorps
year. The member also certifies that they have not dropped out of elementary or secondary school in order to enroll as an AmeriCorps member.

The member understands that, in order to be in compliance with the Corporation for National and Community Service’s Final Rule on criminal history checks (CFR, Vol. 72, No. 164, Parts 2522 and 2540), all AmeriCorps members must undergo a National Service Criminal History Check consisting of (1) a criminal registry search, which involves an authorized FBI fingerprint check to determine whether an applicant has a criminal history, (2) a background check through the state system from the state in which the member lived at the time they applied to the Program, and the state in which the member will be serving (3) and a National Sex Offender Public Registry check, which consists of individuals that are required by their States to register as sex offenders. Additionally members must undergo (4) a Vermont Child Protection Registry check; and, (5) a Vermont Adult Abuse Registry check. A program must conduct a criminal registry check and NSOPR check the first time an individual applies to a covered position in an AmeriCorps State and National program, but a second check is not required for an individual who is serving a consecutive term of service within the same program. A consecutive term of service means that there is no intervening break in service of more than 180 days during which the applicant did not serve in that specific program.

An individual who refuses to consent to a National Service Criminal History Check is not eligible to serve. No VHCB AC applicant may have unsupervised access to vulnerable individuals (children, people living with disabilities, frail elders, etc.) until the results of his or the criminal registry checks have been reviewed and verified by the Program. The Program will reimburse associated costs incurred by the potential member and/or Host Site Organization (HSO) in order to comply with the Policy (e.g. mileage to travel to fingerprinting sites).

The member further understands that if the criminal check is returned showing a conviction, they will be able to meet with an investigative panel comprised of the VHCB AC Program Director or appointee, an appointee from the HSO, and possibly the General Counsel for VHCB, to review the charges and negotiate an outcome based on the advice and the judgment of the aforementioned parties. This outcome may include release for cause. The member understands that by signing this contract they give authorization to VHCB AC to disclose information to any of the aforementioned parties and any other appropriate parties, such as those in supervisory roles at their HSO. If the member disagrees with the contents of the results, they may appeal the finding to the Program Director of VHCB AC and the issuing body.

The member understands that VHCB AC has agreed to use the criminal record information for the purposes intended by law, and that VHCB AC has agreed to not disclose the contents of any criminal record information without the member’s permission to any individual other than the member, as well as properly designated employees of VHCB who have a documented need to know the contents of said record, or designated entities which monitor the program for compliance. In addition to the foregoing, it is acknowledged that any and all information that any individual member of VHCB is made privy to is strictly confidential and that each unauthorized disclosure shall constitute a separate civil violation and may result in a fine.
The member understands that if the final criminal check indicates that they have provided false information on the legal section of the VHCB AC application or elsewhere, or that they have been convicted of a crime against children, a violent crime or a crime that violates the public trust, murder, or sexual offense, this Agreement will become null and void, and they will be dismissed from the VHCB AmeriCorps program for cause.

II. Term of Service

This member is serving the following term: ____________________________
Full-Time (1720 hours), Half-Time (915 hours), Reduced Half Time (685 hours), Quarter Time (455 hours), or Minimum Time (305 hours).

This _____________ term (_______ hours) will start on ______________________, and will end on ______________________. Living Allowance payments will begin on ______________________ and end on ______________________. There are ______ pay periods that fall within this term of service. This member will receive $______________ per pay period, not to exceed a total amount of $_______________. This member will serve a minimum of _____________ hours and maintain an average of at least _____________ hours per week.

Once a term of service is set and a member signs this Agreement, the distribution of the living allowance cannot be altered, without permission of VHCB AC pursuant to AmeriCorps regulations, policies, and provisions.

For full-time members, the end date cannot be less than nine months and not more than twelve months from the start date. Half-time members, quarter-time members and other part-time members understand that this AmeriCorps term counts as a term of service. Individuals may not serve more than four (4) terms of service. The 4 terms include incomplete terms in which members served more than 15% of total hours, regardless of the reason for not completing service; and incomplete terms in which members served for less than 15% of total hours and were released for misconduct.

Individuals may not receive more than the amount equal to the aggregate value of two full-time education awards.

The member, if full-time, must complete a minimum of 1720 hours of direct community service within the above-stipulated timeframe in order to be eligible for the education award. The 1720 hours may include only up to 20% (344) approved training hours and 10% (172) fundraising hours. A half-time member must complete 915 hours of direct service, which may include only up to 20% (183) approved training hours and 10% (92) fundraising hours. A quarter-time member must complete 460 hours of direct service, which may include only up to 20% (92) approved training hours and 10% (46) fundraising hours.
hours. A minimum-time member must complete 310 hours of direct service, which may include only up to 20% (62) approved training hours and 10% (31) fundraising hours. In some cases, members may serve more than the maximum of 20% training hours with written Program approval. Members should contact the VHCB AC Program Director to request approval to claim training hours in excess of 20% total hours.

While a member may claim up to 10% of hours as fundraising activities, fundraising activities are limited in the following manner:

“45 CFR §2520.40-.45 Under what circumstances may AmeriCorps members in my program raise resources?
(a) AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of your program's service activities.
(b) Examples of fundraising activities AmeriCorps members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:
(1) Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read;
(2) Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers;
(3) Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals;
(4) 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;
(5) Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current members.
(c) AmeriCorps members may not:
(1) Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment;
(2) Write a grant application to the Corporation or to any other Federal agency.”
[70 FR 39597, July 8, 2005]

In order to successfully complete the term of service, the member is required to complete the minimum hours requirement and fulfill the dates of service agreed upon unless an amendment signed by the member and the Program Director is completed.

If members would like to change their end date, then they should do the following:

To Shorten Term of Service:
If members would like to end service early, and that date is at least nine (9) months after the start date then members should:
Gain approval from the member’s direct supervisor and/or host site.
Submit a written letter to the VHCB AC Program Director, at least sixty (60) days prior to the requested amended end date. The letter should list the new end date, the reason for request, and be signed by
both the member and the site supervisor. If the supervisor does not agree, then the date cannot be changed.

The VHCB AC Program Director will review the request and make a decision pursuant to AmeriCorps policies and provisions. If the VHCB AC Program Director approves the request, the member, supervisor, and VHCB AC Program Director will be required to sign a contract amendment.

Members understand that they may forfeit any living allowance payments due to them after the new, earlier end date.

To Extend Term of Service:
If members want to extend the end of service date, as long as the date is not more than twelve (12) months after his/her start date then the member should:
Gain approval from the member’s direct supervisor and/or HSO.
Submit a written letter to the VHCB AC Program Director, at least sixty 60 days prior to the original end date, listing the new end date and signed by both the member and site supervisor; and if the supervisor does not agree, then the date cannot be changed.
VHCB AC Program Director will review the request and make a decision pursuant to AmeriCorps policies and provisions. If the VHCB AC Program Director approves the request, the member, supervisor and VHCB Program Director will be required to sign a contract amendment.

Members understand that the living allowance amount may not be able to be re-calculated, and the member may not be able to receive additional living allowance payments past the original end date. The member also understands that they are not entitled to living allowance payments that would total more than $20,400 for full time members ($10,800 half time; and $5,400 quarter-time).

The member understands that in order to be eligible for serving a succeeding term of service, they must receive at least one satisfactory performance review for any previous term of service. The member’s eligibility for a subsequent term of service will be based on at least a mid-term and end of term evaluation of their performance focusing on factors such as:
Completing the required number of hours;
Satisfactorily completing assignments, tasks, or projects as well as required paperwork; and,
Meeting any other criteria that were clearly communicated orally or in writing at the beginning of the term of service (see the Member Performance Review for all evaluation criteria), including receiving a satisfactory performance evaluation from HSO supervisors.

The member understands, however, that mere eligibility for an additional term of service does not guarantee selection or placement. The Program is under no obligation to enroll members for a second term of service. The member will have to apply and be considered with any other applicants applying for positions.

Due to the priority of AmeriCorps to provide resources in times of natural or man-made disasters and emergencies, AmeriCorps or SerVermont may call up and deploy AmeriCorps members to respond to
Vermont disasters as part of an emergency response effort. The deployment may continue for up to 10% of their service time (up to a maximum of 120 hours) over the course of a year of service. During the period of deployment, the Program will continue to pay the living allowance and insurance for AmeriCorps members. All AmeriCorps program policies, terms and conditions shall continue while on special disaster relief assignment. All benefits and protections afforded and provided to AmeriCorps members shall continue while AmeriCorps members remain on special disaster relief assignment. AmeriCorps members may continue to accrue service hours during any deployment. Although VHCB AmeriCorps is required to allow the deployment, individual members may refuse the assignment.

III. Benefits

The member will receive from the Program the following benefits:

Living Allowance: A maximum living allowance of $20,400 less tax and FICA withholdings for full-time members or a maximum living allowance of $10,800 less tax and FICA withholdings for half-time members, or a maximum living allowance of $5,400 less tax and FICA withholdings for quarter-time members (withholding amounts will be based upon federal and state law based on information provided by the member on IRS/OMB W-4 forms). The allowance will be distributed every other week only while the member is actively serving, beginning with the Thursday one to three weeks after the member’s term of service begins, and only if the Program has documentation that the member is actively serving including approved timesheets and required enrollment paperwork sent into VHCB AC on a timely basis.

The living allowance is not based on actual hours served in a given pay period. It is designed to help members meet their living needs while in service. The living allowance will not fluctuate based on the number of hours served per week.

Health Care Coverage: Members must have Health Care Coverage, either as provided by the AmeriCorps plan or by another health care plan. AmeriCorps Health Care Coverage will be set up by VHCB AmeriCorps through a plan that meets AmeriCorps requirements and has been selected by VHCB AmeriCorps.

Child Care Subsidy: A child care allowance to be provided directly to the state-qualified provider, if the member is qualified for the allowance (only full-time, state-eligible members may qualify for this benefit) and if the State Program is somehow not suited to their needs.

Worker’s Compensation Insurance

The member will receive from AmeriCorps the following benefits:

Education Award: Upon successful completion of the member’s term of service, the member will receive an education award in voucher form having a gross value of $6,345.00 for full-time members or $3,172.50 for half-time members, or $1,678.57 for quarter-time members, or $1342.86 for minimum-
time members if they have not received the aggregated value of two (2) full-time education awards previously. Any member who has previously received the value of two (2) full time previous education awards from the National Service Trust will not be eligible for additional education awards under any circumstances. The member understands that this award counts as taxable income in the year in which it is used.

Prior to using the education award, the member agrees that in the event that they have not yet received a high school diploma or its equivalent, including an alternative diploma or certificate for individuals with learning disabilities, then they must obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent (unless the member is enrolled in an institution of higher education on an ability to benefit basis or the Program has waived the requirement due to the results of the member’s education assessment). The member further agrees to provide the National Service Trust with documentation of successful completion of their GED so as to be able to access the education award.

The member understands that failure to disclose to the Program any history of having already served in previous terms as an AmeriCorps member (of any type) or of having been released for cause from another AmeriCorps Program will render the member ineligible to receive the education award.

Members understand that if they are at least 55 years old when they start service and they meet all AmeriCorps requirements, then they may be eligible to transfer all or part of the education award to a child, grandchild, foster child, or foster grandchild.

Members are eligible to receive forbearance on qualified student loans during the term of service.

Upon successful completion of the term of service, the National Service Trust will repay some to all of the interest that accrued on loans in forbearance during the term of service of an amount which is based on a formula determined by AmeriCorps, and assuming the proper forms are submitted. The interest that the Trust will pay is also subject to income taxes.
IV. Rules of Conduct

The member agrees to act in conformance with, and abide by, all current and future rules and procedures established by VHCB AC and the Host Site Organization.

The member is expected to, at all times while acting in an official capacity as a VHCB AC AmeriCorps Member or while wearing any part of the AmeriCorps uniform having a logo:
(a) demonstrate mutual respect toward others;
(b) conduct themselves in a cooperative manner;
(c) direct concerns, problems, and suggestions to the appropriate HSO and/or Program official;
(d) be punctual and have regular reliable attendance at service site;
   (e) effectively meet the objectives laid out in the position description;
(f) prioritize, attend, and fully participate in AmeriCorps trainings and events;
(g) complete the requirements of an Independent Service Project;
(h) always identify as an AmeriCorps member and wear some type of AmeriCorps identification during service hours (e.g., shirt, pin, sticker, sweatshirt);
(i) comply with VHCB AmeriCorps’ commitment to practicing effective risk management to ensure the safety, dignity, and legal rights of its participants. It is also our intent to properly manage any incidents that occur so as to minimize injury and other forms of loss. As such, VHCB AmeriCorps members agree to follow basic emergency procedures covering any major, unanticipated event that would disrupt the delivery of services and/or place the member and/or activity participants in danger. This includes, at minimum, obtaining emergency contact information forms, permission slips, liability waivers, and photo release forms for participants who are minors or who are need of special support services. All members should participate in its host site’s training on organizational emergency procedures (e.g., tool safety, evacuation plans, phone numbers of back-up staff, local police and fire stations, incident report forms, etc.). All members who are operating or accompanying a vehicle for a service-related activity shall do so in a safe and reasonable manner, shall adhere to state law on operating motor vehicles (Vermont, Title 23, Chapter 13) and shall carry a valid driver’s license. Should an incident occur, the member (or supervisor, if appropriate) agrees to notify VHCB within one business day from the event and submit an Incidence Report Form within 36 hours;
(j) abide by all rules, regulations, and guidelines set forth in the VHCB AmeriCorps Member Handbook; and,
(k) abide by any corrective action plans, agreements, and/or written warnings put forth by the Host Site Organization or VHCB AmeriCorps Program Staff.

The member understands that the following acts will also constitute a violation of the Program’s rules of conduct:
Unauthorized repeated tardiness or absences;
Repeated use of inappropriate or derogatory language (i.e. profanity) at service site;
Repeated failure to wear appropriate clothing or AmeriCorps logo to service assignments;
Stealing or lying;
Providing false information on timesheets or failing to submit timesheets on time;
Engaging in activity that may physically or emotionally damage self, other members of the Program or members of the community;
Refuse or otherwise not meet the standards outlined in the AmeriCorps Member Position Description, including performing the listed functions;
Failing to respond to communication requests from Program Staff or HSO in a timely manner;
Failure to notify the Program of any criminal arrest or conviction that occurs during the term of service; or
Failure to meet the standards in section IV, paragraph 2.

Prohibited Activities. While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, 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;
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;
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 Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
   i. Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
   j. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and,
   k. Such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the above (legal) activities on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-Corporation funds. The AmeriCorps logo should not be worn while doing so.
Members are further disallowed to do clerical or administrative service unless such activities are incidental to their direct service activities.

Members should be trained on organizational emergency procedures (e.g., evacuation plans, phone numbers of back-up staff, local police and fire stations, incident report forms, etc.). All members who are operating or accompanying a vehicle for a service-related activity shall do so in a safe and reasonable manner, shall adhere to state law on operating motor vehicles (Vermont, Title 23, Chapter 13) and shall carry a valid driver’s license. All members who are operating potentially hazardous equipment (e.g. electric saws, tractors, etc.) shall have proper training and guidance prior to operating the equipment. The member understands that, if the aforementioned protocols and information have not been made accessible by the member’s HSO, the member will submit a request to their HSO to provide the appropriate resources.

A member’s service activities may not include organized fundraising activities that help the Grantee achieve its matching requirements, that support an organization’s general operating expenses, or that provide fundraising assistance to other community-based organizations that do not provide immediate and direct support to a Grantee’s approved Program objective. These disallowed activities include financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, or preparation of grant proposals. Service activities that raise funds or in-kind contributions while generating, involving and/or encouraging community support may be considered appropriate and allowable, such as serve-a-thons, to the extent they are in direct and immediate support of an approved objective of the Program and provided that they are not the Program’s primary activity or involve significant amounts of an individual member’s time.

**Consequences:** In the event of a violation of any of the above stated rules, the Program Director, Host Site Supervisor, or representative of the VHCB AC Program or Host Site may do the following; however, there is no requirement that the Program follow a prescribed sequence in the imposition of a particular consequence:

1. An appropriate Program official will issue a verbal warning to the member;
2. An appropriate Program official will issue a written warning and reprimand to the member;
3. The member may be required to submit a written corrective action plan to be approved and signed by appropriate Program official(s) or be assigned a corrective action plan by an appropriate Program official.
4. The member may be suspended for one or more days without compensation if additional time is needed to correct a violation.
5. The Program may release the member for cause.

The Program reserves the right to impose any one of the above sanctions regardless of the number of the offense (first, second, or third) if the Program determines that the violation is serious enough to warrant a severe sanction. Examples would be in cases where during the term of service the member
has been charged with or convicted of a violent felony, possession, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance, refuses to engage in a corrective action plan, knowingly engages in prohibited activities while serving, causes harm to another individual during service, etc.

V. Release From Term of Service

The member understands that they may be released for the following two reasons:
for cause, as explained in paragraph 2 of this section; or
compelling personal circumstances as defined in paragraph 3 of this section.

The Program will release the member for cause for the following reasons:

The member has dropped out of the Program without obtaining a release for compelling personal circumstances from the VHCB AC Program Director,
The member is found to have lied on the application, including and especially the legal section,
The member decides to leave the Program for any of the following: to enroll in school, because of dissatisfaction with the Program, to move to another location, to get married or to enter into a civil union, or to take a job or service position (unless the member certified at the beginning of their term of service that they were enrolled in a welfare-to-work or Reach-Up program upon enrolling in AmeriCorps),
During the term of service the member has been convicted of a violent felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance,
The member has committed an offense in accordance with paragraphs 2 through 7 of section IV of this Agreement, or
Any other serious breach that in the judgment of the Program Director or Host Site Organization would: undermine the effectiveness of the Program,
show blatant disrespect for any individual,
or put any supervisor, staff, other member, self, organization, or program at risk or in harm’s way.

The Program may release the member from the term of service for compelling personal circumstances if certain circumstances beyond the member’s control occur, and the member is able to provide documentation of the circumstances. For example:

The member has a serious injury or illness that makes completing the term of service impossible;
There is a serious injury, illness or death of an immediate family member and the member is needed to care for that family member or take over the duties of the family member;
The member is drafted by the Armed Services of the United States; or
Some other circumstance occurs that makes it impossible or very difficult for the member to complete the term of service and if only if the VHCB Director deems that circumstance to be compelling. Any circumstance listed in paragraph 2 of this section will not be considered compelling.

The Program will suspend the member’s term of service for the following reasons:
during the term of service, the member has been charged with a violent felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance.

during the term of service, the member has been convicted of a first offense of possession of a controlled substance. If the member, however, demonstrates that they have enrolled in an approved drug rehabilitation program, the member may be able to resume the term of service with approval from the VHCB AC Director and HSO.

The Program does not have documentation that the member is actively serving such as completed timesheets, required enrollment paperwork, or timely responses to communication from the Host Site or VHCB AC.

Any of the following issues arise and will take time for corrective action:
A personal issue arises with the member;
an issue or disagreement arises between the member and HSO, the member and the Program, or the member and a client or volunteer; or,
an issue arises at the host site such as funding loss or change in staff.

If the member discontinues their term of service for any reason other than a release for compelling personal circumstances as described in paragraph 3, the member will cease to receive the benefits described in section III and will receive no portion of the education award or interest payments.

If the member discontinues their term of service due to compelling personal circumstances as described in paragraph 3 of this section of this Agreement, the member will cease to receive benefits as described in Section III. If, however, the member has completed at least 15% of the required service hours (255 for full-time or 135 for half-time), the member will receive a pro-rated portion of the education award or interest payments described in section III.

The Program may release the member for cause if, in the opinion of the Program Director, the member’s conduct undermines the effectiveness of the Program or an assigned project, or the member repeatedly or periodically continues to demonstrate inappropriate behavior by engaging in a pattern of misconduct or not complying with corrective action plans.

A term that ends early, either for cause, or for compelling personal circumstances, is still considered a term and the education award that a member receives, or would have been eligible to receive, will count in determining the maximum amount of education award benefits that individuals may receive through service with AmeriCorps.

VI. Grievance Procedure (see Appendix II)

The member understands that the Program has a “grievance procedure” to resolve disputes concerning the member’s suspension, dismissal, service evaluation or proposed service assignment.
The member understands that, as a participant of the Program they may file a grievance in accordance with the Program’s grievance procedure.

VII. Program Responsibilities to Members

select all members in an impartial and nondiscriminatory manner that bolsters VHCB/AmeriCorps’ vision of diversity;

provide members with approved handbooks, documents, and forms needed to follow the provisions of VHCB/AmeriCorps and the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993;

provide members with the orientation, training, technical assistance, and supervision necessary to complete their service activities and to grow and develop as citizens, community problem-solvers, and developing leaders;

provide opportunity for the member to create service projects in conjunction with their HSO so that the members will have productive and useful service projects in human needs and/or the environment;

structure service schedules to ensure that members will be reasonably able to perform 1,720 hours of service within twelve months (or the total amount of hours in their term in a reasonable amount of time);

treat all members with respect and provide them with the guidance, support, and discipline they reasonably require to perform VHCB AC service; and

provide and/or encourage other additional support and services to encourage success in the Program.

VIII. Amendments to This Agreement

This Agreement may be changed or revised by written consent of all parties (VHCB, VHCB AC, HSO as appropriate and Member).

IX. Certification

By signing this agreement, the member certifies that:

If they have served in a previous AmeriCorps program of any type, and/or if they were released for cause from a previous AmeriCorps term, those facts have been disclosed to the Program Director.
They understand that the law places restrictions on the purposes for which the education award can be used and that generally its redemption is limited to qualified loans covered by Title IV of the Education Act of 1965 and cannot be transferred to another person or used to pay off general loans even if those loans were used to pay education expenses. They further understands that they cannot be given a cash payment in lieu of an education award administered by the National Service Trust.

They understand that by signing this Agreement, they are making a commitment to complete the full term of service and that the receipt of the education award is contingent upon the successful completion of the full term of service. If they should choose to leave before the completion of the service, regardless of how many hours have been completed, and the situation is not deemed a compelling personal circumstance by the Director, then they are not eligible for any part of the education award.

They understand that they are not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act and is not eligible for overtime pay. For example, they are not eligible for overtime pay for time served in excess of eight (8) hours in a day or forty (40) hours in a week although such times does count toward completing the required term of service. They also understand that they are not eligible for unemployment compensation as no employer/employee relationship exists and since the position is a contractual one with stated starting and finishing dates.

They understand they are not a Federal employee and that they do not obtain any special status with respect to seeking a Federal job on the basis of having successfully completed a term of service.

They understand that this Program is subject to the availability of government funds and that should those funds become unavailable, the Program would be terminated and this agreement made null and void. It is further understood that the Program may be subject to a temporary shutdown in the event of a Government shut-down.

They understand that member information is kept confidential and may only be released to authorized recipients (e.g., SerVermont, AmeriCorps, or its Inspector General) or as required by law (e.g., as pursuant to a subpoena or search warrant). An exception to this overall rule is that the VHCB AC Program may use your name or photograph in a limited way for newsletter, publicity or promotional purposes only and that this notification constitutes informed consent to do so. VHCB AC may also release aggregate or other non-identifying information about members.

They are eligible to be enrolled in the National Service Trust; and will use the Education Award as described in this Agreement. To be eligible to be enrolled in the National Service Trust:

individuals may not serve more than four (4) terms of service. The 4 terms include incomplete terms in which members served more than 15% of total hours, regardless of the reason for not completing service; and incomplete terms in which members served for less than 15% of total hours and were released for misconduct.
Individuals may not receive more than the amount equal to the aggregate value of two (2) full-time education awards.

X. Authorization

The member and Program hereby acknowledge by their signatures that they have read, understand, and agree to all terms and conditions of this Agreement, including the nine appendices:

I.) Public Notice of Non-Discrimination
II.) Grievance Procedure
III.) Drug-Free Workplace Notice
IV.) Policies page
V.) Criminal History Background Checks
VI.) Confidentiality, Reporting Abuse, Reporting Accidents
VII.) 45 CFR §2540.100(e)-(f)
VIII.) 45 CFR §2520.40-.45, and,
IX.) AmeriCorps Member Position Description.

VHCB AC AmeriCorps Member:______________________________

Signature_________________________ Date____________________

VHCB Host Site Representative:______________________________

Signature_________________________ Date____________________

VHCB AC Program Director:______________________________

Signature_________________________ Date____________________

VHCB Administrative Officer:______________________________

Signature_________________________ Date____________________
APPENDIX I to the VHCB AmeriCorps Member Agreement

Public Notice of Nondiscrimination

It is against the law for organizations that receive federal financial assistance from AmeriCorps to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, sex, age, political affiliation, or, in most programs, religion. It is also unlawful to retaliate against any person or organization who files a complaint about such discrimination.

In addition to filing a complaint with local and state agencies that are responsible for resolving discrimination complaints, you may bring a complaint to the attention of the Corporation for National Service. If you believe that you or others have been discriminated against, or if you want more information, contact:

Francis Sharpstene
AmeriCorps Program Director
Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
58 E. State St.
Montpelier VT 05602

Phone: (802) 828-3253
State TTY/TDD relay #: 1-800-253-0191
Fax: (802) 828-3254
E-mail: francis@vhcb.org

or

Equal Opportunity Office
Corporation for National Service
1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20525
(202) 606-5000, ext. 312 (voice); (202) 565-2799 (TTY/TDD)
(202) 565-2816 (FAX); eo@cns.gov (e-mail)
APPENDIX II to the VHCB AmeriCorps Member Agreement

VHCB AC Grievance Procedure

This organization respects its members as adults, and expects them to take responsibility for their own behavior and actions. When we have a problem with your behavior or actions, we will follow the appropriate procedure as outlined in the Member Agreement. When you have a problem with the behavior of another member, staff person, the Program or a community person, we expect you to bring up the problem to the appropriate person, and follow the appropriate procedure. The first step to resolving any dispute is to talk it over directly with the party involved.

If you have a problem that is affecting your ability to serve, to honor your commitment to communities, your statewide team, yourself and/or the VHCB AC, TRY TO WORK IT OUT, NOT WALK OUT.

HINT: If you want or expect a response or follow-up, always put your concern and the facts (when, who, where, what) as you know them, in writing, date when you write it, and ask for a response in a reasonable time frame. Keep a copy for yourself, and give to the person who is first in-line to respond (often your site supervisor). Why document? It is easier to make sure that all the information is given, it helps ensure that a response is given in a timely manner (especially if it is dated), it helps to clarify what is the problem, what is the expectation, and what has been done to remedy it already.

In case of problems with another member, a community member, or a member of the staff of your HSO (not your supervisor):

1. Set up a time to talk with that person. You might want to write down what happened and how you felt as a result of it (when this happened, I felt....), and what you expect from the other party (an explanation, an apology, etc....). Try to work it out between yourselves, first. Don’t let it build into a bigger problem.
2. If you need help, talk to your site supervisor and see what they can do to help.
3. If this doesn’t work, continue as outlined below.

In case of problems with your site supervisor:

1. Set up a time to talk with your supervisor, stating specifically what is bothering you, how it affects you, and what you expect for a response from them that would help resolve the issue. Don’t let it simmer and create resentment.
2. If you aren’t able to resolve the problem after meeting, state your problem in writing and send it to the Program Director of VHCB AC. S/he will proceed as outlined below.

In case of problems with the VHCB AC:
1. Discuss the problem with your site supervisor and see if they can help resolve the problem.

2. If you can’t get resolution from your supervisor, write your problem down, define what it is you have a problem about, what you would like for a response, date it and send it to the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director. The Director will get back to you in writing after investigating and researching related program information and/or considering your request in the context of the whole Program. After receiving a written response, you can speak with the Director about it. They will postdate a response to you within twelve working days of receipt of your correspondence.

3. If you aren’t satisfied after receiving the Director’s response, you can then write to Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, 58 E. State St., Montpelier, VT. 05602, the VHCB AC Sponsor.

The grievance procedure is as follows:

1. Attempt to settle the matter with the party involved directly.

2. If you cannot settle the matter directly, notify your site supervisor, VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director, and/or the ACM and discuss the problem with them. They can help you to clarify your concerns and strategize to reach a resolution. If the problem is with your site supervisor, specify your problem in writing and submit it to the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director at the VHCB headquarters office.

3. If the issue is settled directly, a three-way meeting will be arranged: This meeting should include the ACM, the other party involved, and a neutral party appropriate to the situation. This may be the site supervisor or program director or other party depending on the circumstances of the problem. During this meeting the neutral party will facilitate a discussion to resolve the issue. An action plan to remedy the situation will be devised and implemented immediately.

4. Two-Week Follow Up: The facilitator/neutral party will follow up within two weeks to assess whether or not any improvement has been made.

5. Grievance Hearing: If the action plan is unsuccessful, you can file a written grievance with the Program Director (or designee, in the case of the program director being the neutral party in the informal dispute resolution process) who will hold a grievance hearing including other VHCB and/or AmeriCorps staff, provided that a request is made within one year of the date of the alleged occurrence (except in cases alleging fraud or criminal activity pursuant to 14 CFR § 2540.230). The grievance hearing will provide each side with an opportunity to present their position, and the Program Director will render a decision. The hearing must be held no later than 30 calendar days after the filing of the grievance, and a decision must be made no later than 60 calendar days after filing.

6. Mediation: Should a grievance hearing be unsuccessful or should it be determined more appropriate to replace the step of the grievance hearing, the Program will require the grievance to be presented to a trained mediator instead of or in addition to a grievance hearing. A neutral mediator will be designated by the Program, and will attempt to facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution. The mediator must not
have participated in any previous decisions concerning the issue in dispute. Any and all mediation sessions will be confidential. The mediator may not participate in any subsequent proceedings. The mediation session should be facilitated no later than 30 days after the request is made, and an agreement must be reached within 45 days after filing. This step, whether in place of or in addition to a grievance hearing, is required before bringing the case to binding arbitration. The cost of mediation must be divided evenly between the parties.

7. Binding arbitration: In the event that the decision made following the grievance hearing is adverse to you or if no decision is made within 60 calendar days of the filing of the grievance, an opportunity for a binding arbitration will be provided. The arbitrator must be independent and selected by agreement of both you and the other party. If you and the other party cannot agree on an arbitrator, the Corporation’s Chief Executive Officer will appoint one within 15 calendar days after receiving a request from one of the parties.

An arbitration proceeding must be held no later than 45 calendar days after the request for arbitration, or no later than 30 calendar days after the appointment of an arbitrator by the Corporation’s CEO. An arbitration decision must be made no later than 30 calendar days after the commencement of the arbitration proceeding.

The cost of arbitration must be divided evenly between the parties, unless the grieved party prevails in an arbitration against the program, in which case the program must pay the total cost of the proceeding as well as the prevailing party’s attorney fees. A law suit to enforce an arbitration award may be brought in any Federal district court having jurisdiction over the parties.
APPENDIX III to the VHCB/VHCB AC Member Agreement

Drug-Free Workplace Notice

It shall be the policy of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to prohibit any VHCB employee or member of the VHCB AmeriCorps Program from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of controlled substances in any work or service site. Printed information of the dangers of using drugs is available to all employees and members and is located in the VHCB library.

The following conditions are applicable to all employees of the VHCB, as well as members of its AmeriCorps program:

1. Members of the VHCB AC, as a condition of their service, are required to abide by the terms and conditions of the Drug-Free Workplace policy.

2. Any member convicted of a violation of any criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace shall be required to so notify the Executive Director of VHCB or the Program Director of VHCB AC within five days after such conviction. The Executive Director or Program Director is then required to notify the Federal grant agency of any such conviction within ten (10) days after receiving notice. Appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective action will be taken by the VHCB within thirty (30) days after receiving notice of the conviction.

3. Any member convicted of a violation of any criminal drug statute in the workplace may be referred to the State of Vermont Employee Drug Assistance Program, through the Department of Alcohol and Drug Abuse (or other appropriate agency). This Program will provide assessment, screening and referrals to employees needing counseling and rehabilitation.

4. Any conviction for the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of controlled substances in any VHCB workplace, or the failure to report any such conviction as required, will result in appropriate action against a member so convicted, up to and including immediate dismissal.

5. Each member shall make a good faith effort to maintain a drug-free workplace.
APPENDIX IV to the VHCB AmeriCorps Member Agreement

**VHCB AC POLICIES:**

**POLICY ON ATTENDANCE AT VHCB AC and SERVERMONT SPONSORED EVENTS**

Members are required to attend an average of 2 to 3 days per month for AmeriCorps-related activities: trainings, team-building days, retreats, and service and celebration days. Members are required to attend an Orientation with VHCB AmeriCorps and other trainings and events including but not limited to: Ropes Course, Cultural Competency, Leadership, the statewide AmeriCorps Launch and Spring Conference (both two-days), MLK Day of Service, Conflict Resolution and CPR/1st Aid, a Winter Gathering, a VHCB Service Day and the VHCB AC year-end Closing Celebration (dates all TBA), and all others as listed on the current Trainings and Events Calendar. Trainings and events listed are subject to change.

Member absences from the aforementioned trainings and events must be approved beforehand by the VHCB AC Director and, for SerVermont sponsored events, the Executive Director of SerVermont, via a written waiver request from the member and submitted to the VHCB AC Director. If a member registers for and does not attend a required training or event and has not received an attendance waiver for that event and does not notify the Program by the RSVP date, the member may incur the cost of their portion of the event and will be held responsible for paying the cost.

Members missing more than one of these days will violate this contract and therefore possibly their successful completion of the program (and receipt of their education award).

Members are ultimately responsible for getting themselves to these events and for arranging their own transportation. Carpooling is encouraged. VHCB AC will reimburse for mileage to these events at the rate of the current IRS rate, assuming members submit their mileage claims by the end of the month in which an expense is accrued. Members may count travel time as training/service hours up to 3 hours one-way maximum. Members will be allowed a total cumulative amount of 20 miles for reimbursement to complete Independent Service Projects and will not be reimbursed for additional miles required to complete projects.

**II. MEMBER HOURS/PAYROLL POLICY**

The compensation members receive is considered a “living allowance” rather than a “wage”, and this living allowance is not based on an hourly rate or paid out based on the exact number of hours served. However, the checks received from payroll are based on the number of pay periods that fall within a certain contracted service term. The amount per paycheck will be determined by the number of pay periods that fall within the contractually-agreed service term based on the maximum living allowance amount. The member understands that, if they choose or need to convert the original service term, they are not owed any difference in living allowance not paid prior to the conversion. If the member
completes the term requirements and exits the Program early, they understand that they are not owed any portion of the unpaid living allowance. The member understands that, if they are not actively serving or unable to serve for more than two consecutive weeks, the member will be temporarily suspended from the Program and the living allowance payment will cease until the member has been reinstated.

The member also understands that the timesheet is the primary source of documentation for VHCB AmeriCorps to determine whether or not the member has been actively serving and what activities the member has been performing. The member understands that if they fail to submit timesheet by the timesheet due date, VHCB AmeriCorps will not have record of the member’s service activities and will assume the member has not been serving, in which case the member will be placed in suspension. When this occurs, living allowance payments are also suspended. The member will be reinstated once all timesheets have been submitted to VHCB AC in full, and corrective measures are in place to ensure future timesheets are submitted on time.

Note: If a member gets more than 20 hours behind in their targeted cumulative hours to date, they may be warned that they should address the problem in writing, with a plan to make up the hours. While VHCB AmeriCorps staff will track member hours deficits and issue warnings, it is ultimately the member’s responsibility to keep track of hours throughout the service term; this information will be available to members and supervisors through the OnCorps electronic system.

Members must also realize that extending their service time beyond 12 months is strictly prohibited by AmeriCorps and will jeopardize their satisfactory completion of their service year and their education award.

Other policies relating to member hours include:
Members may never count more than 3 hours of travel one way to any service or training event.
Members may not count at least 8 hours worth of sleep time at overnight training events (an exception to this might be approved ahead of time if members will be responsible for supervising/chaperoning youth in an overnight camping event or responding to a disaster), and should also not count hours that they are neither serving or in the company of other team members.
Members should not count lunchtime as service time unless they are serving through lunch.

APPENDIX V

Criminal History Background Checks
Grant Provisions of the Corporation for National and Community Service as well as the VHCB AmeriCorps Program require all AmeriCorps members undergo a National Service Criminal History Check.

Information from background checks is confidential. If there are any findings, members are informed. There are procedures for expunging inaccurate or obsolete information and for appeals.
APPENDIX VI

Confidentiality, Reporting Abuse, Reporting Accidents, etc.

Client confidentiality: Information about a client/student/family may not be disclosed in a way that identifies the person.

Mandated Reporting of Abuse, Exploitation, or Neglect: As a member, you are not an employee of your site or VHCB AC but you are mandated to report any situations of suspected abuse, exploitation, or neglect immediately. Members must undergo a Mandated Reporter training as part of their VHCB AmeriCorps Orientation.

Accident Reports for Workers’ Compensation Insurance: Members are covered under VHCB’s workers' compensation policy while serving and performing Program activities and services outlined in the member position description.

In case of an injury while performing VHCB AC activities, contact the VHCB AC Program Director immediately. An incident report should be completed and submitted within 36 hours. If your injury is life-threatening, seek medical help first.

The report is intended to capture information as soon after the incident as possible. If you have an accident but do not think you need medical attention, still contact the Program Director and fill out the report so it is available in case you need medical attention related to the incident at a later date.

Above all, members should consider safety issues before acting and not take necessary risks. (Note, the AmeriCorps Health Care Plan, and others like it, specifically state they do not cover injuries occurring while “on the job.”)

Seat belts: AmeriCorps members are required to wear seat belts while traveling and performing Program activities and services.

Carpooling: Carpooling is highly recommended and encouraged.

Auto liability insurance: A member must carry their own adequate liability coverage protecting their vehicle. In the event of an accident while performing Program activities and services, the member’s private insurance is the primary payer.

Media and publicity release: I hereby give permission for the VHCB AmeriCorps Program to use my name and/or my photograph in any media form, written or electronic, without payment or other consideration. I release VHCB AmeriCorps from any liability in connection with the use of my name or photograph in the media for publicity purpose support activities.
APPENDIX VII
45 CFR §2540.100(e)-(f) What restrictions govern the use of Corporation assistance?
(e) 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 paragraph (f) of this section are met, Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.
(f) Nondisplacement. (1) 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.

APPENDIX VIII
45 CFR §2520.40-.45 Under what circumstances may AmeriCorps members in my Program raise resources?
(a) Members may raise resources directly in support of your Program's service activities.
(b) Examples of fundraising activities members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:
(1) Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read;
(2) Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers;
(3) Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals;
(4) 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;
(5) Seeking donations from alumni of the Program for specific service projects being performed by current members.
(c) Members may not:
(1) Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment;
(2) Write a grant application to the Corporation or to any other Federal agency.
[70 FR 39597, July 8, 2005]

APPENDIX IX
Member Position Description

The members understand that they must sign a Member Position Description (PD), developed by the Host Site or Program and approved by VHCB AC. Once approved and signed by the member, the PD will become Appendix IX of this agreement. This Member Agreement, which incorporated the Member Position Description, sets for the expectations, responsibilities, and duties for the service term.
Grant Program Civil Rights Policy

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has zero tolerance for the harassment of any individual or group of individuals for any reason. CNCS is committed to treating all persons with dignity and respect. CNCS prohibits all forms of discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or parental status, or military service. All programs administered by, or receiving Federal financial assistance from CNCS, must be free from all forms of harassment. Whether in CNCS offices or campuses, in other service-related settings such as training sessions or service sites, or at service-related social events, such harassment is unacceptable. Any such harassment, if found, will result in immediate corrective action, up to and including removal or termination of any CNCS employee or volunteer. Recipients of Federal financial assistance, be they individuals, organizations, programs and/or projects are also subject to this zero tolerance policy. Where a violation is found, and subject to regulatory procedures, appropriate corrective action will be taken, up to and including termination of Federal financial assistance from all Federal sources.

Slurs and other verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual’s gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or any other basis constitute harassment when it has the purpose or effect of interfering with service performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive service environment. Harassment includes, but is not limited to: explicit or implicit demands for sexual favors; pressure for dates; deliberate touching, leaning over, or cornering; offensive teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions; letters, phone calls, or distribution or display of offensive materials; offensive looks or gestures; gender, racial, ethnic, or religious baiting; physical assaults or other threatening behavior; or demeaning, debasing or abusive comments or actions that intimidate.

CNCS does not tolerate harassment by anyone including persons of the same or different races, sexes, religions, or ethnic origins; or from a CNCS employee or supervisor; a project, or site employee or supervisor; a non-employee (e.g., client); a co-worker or service member.

I expect supervisors and managers of CNCS programs and projects, when made aware of alleged harassment by employees, service participants, or other individuals, to immediately take swift and appropriate action. CNCS will not tolerate retaliation against a person who raises harassment concerns in good faith. Any CNCS employee who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, and any grantee that permits harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to a finding of non-compliance and administrative procedures that may result in termination of Federal financial assistance from CNCS and all other Federal agencies.

Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against in violation of civil rights laws, regulations, or this policy, or in retaliation for opposition to discrimination or participation in discrimination complaint proceedings (e.g., as a complainant or witness) in any CNCS program or project, may raise his or her concerns with our Office of Civil Rights and Inclusiveness (OCRI). Discrimination claims not brought to the attention of OCRI within 45 days of their occurrence may not be accepted in a formal complaint of discrimination. No one can be required to use a program, project or sponsor dispute resolution procedure before contacting OCRI. If another procedure is used, it does not affect the 45-day time limit. OCRI may be reached at (202) 606-7503 (voice), (202) 606-3472 (TTY), eo@cns.gov, or through http://www.nationalservice.gov/.