UServeUtah

Utah Commission on Service & Volunteerism

AmeriCorps Program Directors Manual

Effective November 1st, 2018

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CHAPTER 1
Introduction

- *Purpose of This Manual*
- *Laws/Grant Agreement*

PURPOSE

The Utah AmeriCorps Program Director Policy and Procedure Manual was specifically designed by the Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism (UServeUtah) as a guide for those who administer Utah AmeriCorps programs. This manual will assist in detailing the process for monitoring, supporting, and evaluating programs and, above all, for working collaboratively to make AmeriCorps programs in Utah successful.

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

The Utah AmeriCorps Program Director Policy and Procedure Manual has been developed to help those who are newcomers to their positions to gain a general understanding of the management functions for overseeing the AmeriCorps programs/sites and their portfolio. It is intended to:

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

It is important that sub-grantees become familiar with all the information contained in this manual. The Utah AmeriCorps Program Director Policy and Procedure Manual will be revised as needed. Notification of revisions will be sent to each Utah AmeriCorps Program Director. We look forward to working together, as we strive to make a difference in Utah.

LAWS

You will also find the requirements for AmeriCorps programs in the following documents:

Laws

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

Please visit https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/page/Service_Act_09_11_13.pdf *for more information.*

Regulations

- 45 CFR Parts 2500 – 2504 Corporation for National and Community Service Chapter XXV.

Please visit http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/45CFR_chapterXXV.pdf for the AmeriCorps Regulations.

Federal Terms and Conditions

Please visit

https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cncs-grants

Grant Agreement

- Your AmeriCorps grant contract, issued by your state commission (UServeUtah), includes all the special conditions applicable to operating your program;
- Your AmeriCorps proposal (application) and modifications to it that may have been negotiated with you; and
- The budget for your program, which contains the maximum amount of funds the Corporation has provided for your program as well as your obligations to raise matching funds and/or in-kind contributions.

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CHAPTER 2
National Service

- *Brief History of National Service*
- *National Service Programs*
- *AmeriCorps Overview*
- *National Days of Service*
- *Organization*
- *Training and Technical Assistance*
- *Volunteer Recognition*
- *Collaboration*

BRIEF HISTORY OF NATIONAL SERVICE

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

Revival of Interest in National and Community Service

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

National & Community Service Trust Act

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

National Service Today

On March 31, 2009 the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act was passed. This bill focuses on significantly expanding and improving opportunities for utilizing National Service to meet specific national challenges. President Obama, reflecting on the passage of the new legislation said *"Our work is not finished when I sign this bill into law – it has just begun. It is up to each of us to seize this opportunity, to do our part to lift up our fellow Americans, to realize our own true potential. I call on all Americans to stand up and do what they can to serve their communities, shape our history and enrich both their own lives and the lives of others across this country."*

NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAMS

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 initiated the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The Corporation supports a range of national and community based service programs, providing opportunities for Americans to serve as full-time and part-time stipend participants or volunteers, and as individuals or as teams. CNCS provides opportunities for Americans of all backgrounds to serve their communities and the nation through three programs: AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Social Innovation Fund. Members and volunteers serve with national and community nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies to help meet pressing community needs.

The National Senior Service Corps, also known informally as "Senior Corps," taps the skills, talents, and experience of more than 500,000 Americans age 55 or 60 and older to meet a wide range of community challenges through three programs: Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and RSVP. These programs receive funding through annual appropriations and are selected by CNCS State Offices on a non-competitive basis. In addition, National Senior Service Corps programs may compete nationally for funding as Programs of National Significance.

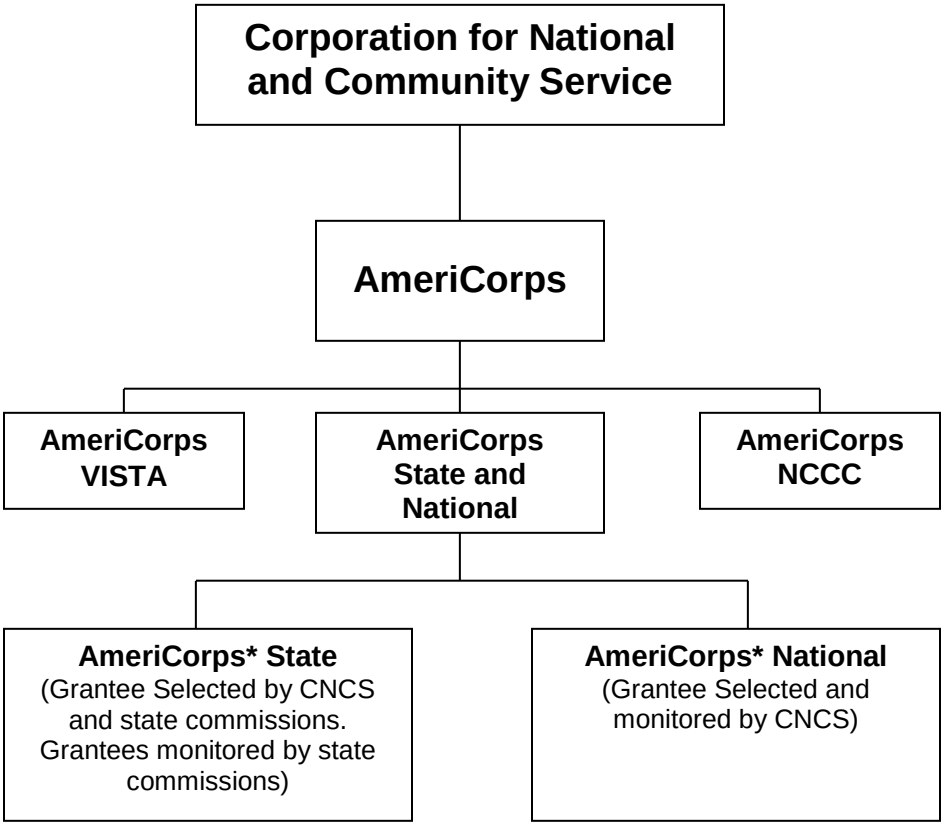
The Social Innovation Fund (SIF) is a powerful approach to transforming lives and communities that positions the federal government to be a catalyst for impact—mobilizing public and private resources to find and grow community-based nonprofits with evidence of strong results. An initiative enacted under the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the SIF is a new way of doing business for the federal government that stands to yield greater impact on urgent national challenges. The Social Innovation Fund targets millions in public-private funds to expand effective solutions across three issue areas: economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development and school support.

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

NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAMS

AmeriCorps, sometimes referred to as "the domestic Peace Corps," is the national service program that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in results-driven service in the five priority areas of education, public safety, environment, homeland security, and other human needs. AmeriCorps programs provide full and part-time opportunities for members to provide service to their communities through community organizations and agencies. Over 750,000 people have served in AmeriCorps since the program was founded in 1994.

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



NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAMS

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

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

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

AmeriCorps*VISTA members serve low-income communities and families across the country. Members of AmeriCorps*VISTA work and live in the communities they serve, creating or expanding programs that continue after they complete their terms of service. AmeriCorps*VISTA members are assigned to local project sponsors and focus on building community capacity, mobilizing community resources, and increasing self-reliance. VISTA project host sites are selected by the State Offices of CNCS, with the approval of each state's governor.

AmeriCorps*NCCC is a 10-month residential national service program for more than 1,200 members ages 18 to 24. Based on a military model, it sends members in teams of 10 to 14 to help nonprofit groups provide disaster relief, preserve the environment, build homes for low-income families, tutor children, and meet other challenges. AmeriCorps*NCCC teams meet community needs in cooperation with non-profit programs, state and local agencies, and other community groups. Members live at one of five regional campuses located in Baltimore, Maryland, Denver, Colorado, Vicksburg, Mississippi, Sacramento, California, and Vinton, Iowa, though their projects often take them to other communities throughout their region. Members are trained in CPR, first aid, and mass care and can be assigned to new duties on short notice; they are particularly well-suited to meeting the emerging homeland security needs of the nation.

NATIONAL DAYS OF SERVICE

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day- "A day ON…not a day off" occurs annually on the third Monday in January (the day of observance of the federal holiday honors Dr. King's birthday). The Corporation for National and Community Service is responsible for promoting this day as a day of service to honor the life and teachings of Martin Luther King, Jr. See http://www.nationalservice.gov/mlkday for more information. **AmeriCorps Utah programs must engage any and all actively serving members in a service project on or during the week of MLK Day. Projects and any data on what was accomplished should be reported to the commission and/or CNCS accordingly.**

Global Youth Service Day is an annual global event that highlights and celebrates the contributions of youth to their communities through volunteer service. During Global Youth Service Day, youth around the world organize community service projects to address the needs of their local communities through service, to be recognized for their contributions, and to be a part of a global youth service movement. Global Youth Service Day is held over a weekend every April. For more information, visit www.gysd.org.

National Volunteer Week held in April, began in 1974 when President Richard Nixon signed an executive order establishing the week as an annual celebration of volunteering. Every President since has signed a proclamation promoting National Volunteer Week. It has become the official time to recognize and celebrate the efforts of volunteers at the local, state, and national levels. For more information, visit https://ww2.pointsoflight.org/nvw.

9/11 Day of Service & Remembrance observed annually on September 11th provides a positive and forward-looking way for Americans and others to forever honor and remember those affected by 9/11. Including the victims, survivors, first responders, recovery workers, volunteers, public safety officers and members of our military. For more information, visit http://www.serve.gov/?q=site-page/september-11th-national-day-service-and-remembrance **AmeriCorps Utah programs must engage any and all actively serving members in a service project on or during the week of 9/11. Projects and any data on what was accomplished should be reported to the commission and/or CNCS accordingly.**

Make A Difference Day is the most encompassing national day of helping others -- a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors. Everyone can participate. Created by USA WEEKEND Magazine, Make A Difference Day is an annual event that takes place on the fourth Saturday of every October. Visit http://makeadifferenceday.com/ for more information.

National Family Volunteer Day-The Points of Light Foundation launched the Family Matters initiative to encourage and engage families in community-oriented projects. National Family Volunteer Day is held the Saturday before Thanksgiving every year and kicks off National Family Volunteer Week as part of an annual public awareness. For more information, visit http://www.pointsoflight.org/signature-events/family-volunteer-day

ORGANIZATION

CNCS (headquarters)

As the primary federal source of funding for national volunteer activities, CNCS is obviously the most important "player on the field". AmeriCorps operates in a decentralized manner that gives a significant amount of administrative responsibility to states and national and local nonprofit groups. CNCS realizes that the many organizations and individuals around the country with which it shares administrative responsibility for AmeriCorps will look to it for assistance on a broad range of issues and problems. The following table suggests some of the principal support functions that the CNCS office can provide:

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

CNCS State Office

CNCS also operates offices in each state. These offices are responsible for administering AmeriCorps*VISTA projects as well as the three Senior Corps programs. The state office director typically also serves as an ex-officio member of the State Service Commission. For a list of CNCS State officers and contact information, please go to:
http://www.nationalservice.gov/stateoffices

ORGANIZATION

U Serve Utah
Utah Commission on Service & Volunteerism

About the Commission

UServeUtah, the Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism, was created by state statute in 1994 and is comprised of 20 members representing local government; community based organizations and statewide networks as well as 8 staff. As the state's central coordinating body for service and volunteerism, the Commission is responsible for developing, implementing, and sustaining a vision and culture of civic engagement and national and community service within the state.

Since its inception in 1994, UServeUtah has focused on increasing the capacity of organizations to serve, strengthen and transform communities through service and volunteerism. It furthers its mission by: promoting volunteerism, administering National Service programs, connecting people with opportunities to serve, building organizational capacity for effective volunteer engagement, and participating in strategic initiatives that mobilize volunteers to meet local needs.

Fundamentals

The **purpose** of the Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism is to enable individuals, communities and organizations in Utah to benefit from the service, power, skills, and passion of volunteers.
Our **mission** is to strengthen and grow bonds across Utah communities through the uniting power of service and volunteerism.
Our **vision** is to have vibrant, inclusive, productive communities with active, engaged citizens.
Our work is based in these core **values**:

- Service Unites-Volunteering collectively grows bonds across various experiences, beliefs, backgrounds and barriers.
- We believe that volunteerism is a uniquely American form of civic engagement that is fundamental to our democracy and critical to our communities.
- We believe volunteers build strong communities and have a lasting impact on local needs.
- Utah volunteers are exceptional. They are willing to make the time, and the connections that come from reaching out in service to and with others.
- We know that volunteers are bedrock in any community. Neighborhoods where volunteers gather and serve are more vibrant, safe, and engaged.
- People who volunteer feel a unique sense of ownership and responsibility and are in turn transformed by the experience.

Objectives

UServeUtah's work is directed by a 3-year strategic plan which is the roadmap to building systems that harness and focus our unique and invaluable resource – the cultural ethic of service and volunteerism that exists among Utah citizens. The plan lays out a comprehensive framework based on guiding objectives with strategies and specific activities outlined.

All strategies, activities and performance measures are consolidated under three Commission **objectives**:

- Objective #1 **Build and cultivate** capacity in the volunteer and service community. A primary aim of UServeUtah is to help organizations effectively use service & volunteerism as a strategy to fulfill their mission and to address critical community problems.
- Objective #2 **Promote and inspire** statewide National Service and volunteerism Utah has a culture of volunteerism, but individuals need to be made aware of needs and occasions to serve. UServeUtah is committed to creating ways for Utahn's to identify and engage in quality volunteer and service opportunities.
- Objective #3 **Recognize** the effort of outstanding volunteers. As our values state, Utahns are exceptional, they are willing to make the time, and the connections that come from reaching out in service to and with others. We are dedicated to recognizing and acknowledging individuals for their volunteer efforts.

For more information on UServeUtah visit www.UServe.Utah.gov

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

UServeUtah is committed to helping build the skills, knowledge, and capacity of individuals and the organizations they serve by providing effective training and technical assistance. Annually, UServeUtah develops a training and technical assistance plan to meet the needs of National Service and volunteer programs. The plan is broad and covers various strategies including conducting needs assessments, developing and maintaining resources, providing specific training to grantees and other volunteer programs, connecting the broad spectrum of programs that are engaged in volunteerism and National Service, and enhancing partnerships and collaboration among members of the National Service field.

Knowledge Networks

The Corporation for National and Community Service has agreements with several national training and technical assistance (T/TA) providers to help meet programs' training and technical assistance needs. Information can be found through the Corporations Resource Center at https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources. The Knowledge Networks have many online tools and training resources to strengthen your volunteer or service program. Administered by ETR Associates, the Resource Center is the central point for:

- Sharing training and technical assistance information among the Corporation's three main programs — Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Social Innovation Fund
- Sharing information with potential grantees to help them apply for Corporation resources
- Providing technical assistance to any organization using volunteers to strengthen local communities

The Knowledge Networks contain online training tools, event calendars, and effective practices, as well as a catalogue of printed publications and videos available on loan.

Commission Training

The Commission will provide various trainings for programs throughout the year. The following meetings and conferences are **mandatory**:

- Quarterly Program Director Trainings
  - Usually held in February, May, August and November. All program directors are required to attend these meetings.
- Annual Member Gathering
  - It is mandatory that all currently serving members attend.

Other Required Training

- Annual Regional National Service Training Conference
  - It is mandatory for at least one program staff to attend, preferably the program director.
  - The National Service Training Events are led by a state service commission in each region in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service. These events provide training for staff of AmeriCorps State/National and Senior Corps programs.

Technical Assistance

Before seeking assistance for technical issues, a program director should utilize the resources on the Program Director Resources page on the USeveUtah website at: https://userve.utah.gov/userveutah/americorps-program-director-resources

The site contains links to IPT user guides for program directors, site supervisors and members. It also contains the online forms used to request IPT form deletions and user access changes. The AmeriCorps General Provisions link on the resources page will direct you to the CNCS website where policy/procedural answers can be found, in regulations and terms and conditions.

If you are unable to find a resolution to your issue you please contact UServeUtah. For policy and procedural questions contact the National Service Program Manager, Elizabeth Oliver at 801-245-7221 or eoliver@utah.gov. For issues specific to IPT or reimbursements you can reach the National Service Finance Specialist, Ruqia Qasim at 801-245-7219 or rqasim@utah.gov. For technical assistance and training requests you can reach the National Service Quality Assurance Specialist, Scott Keyes at 801-245-7283 or scottkeyes@utah.gov

Program Staff Development Scholarships

The Utah Commission has allocated funding to provide state funded AmeriCorps programs up to $500 scholarships each year for program staff development. One staff member or many depending on associated costs for training can use this allotment. In cases where programs do not use all or any of the scholarship funds, the Commission supports program staff from National Direct, Senior Corps, VISTA programs and volunteer centers. Depending on the identified need of program staff, Commission staff may recommend specific training. In some cases, programs seek training for staff development individually.

The following Utah Commission/CNCS sponsored volunteerism and related conferences are encouraged:

The *Utah Homeless Summit* sponsored by the Division of Housing and Community Development is held each fall. The purpose of the summit is to build broader collaboration among public officials, service providers, and private citizens in order to form a coordinated effort to end chronic homelessness in Utah. The summit focuses on innovations and strategies that have significantly reduced chronic homelessness in other cities and sharing of best practices local programs have implemented in addressing these issues.

National Conference on Volunteering and Service (www.volunteeringandservice.org)
The National Conference is organized by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and the Points of Light Institute each summer with an average of 4,500 participants from around the country with breakout sessions on volunteer management, community collaboration, fundraising/sustainability, financial management, AmeriCorps/CNCS programs, member development, program development and a variety of topics on the nonprofit sector in general.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

If you have any requests or suggestions regarding training needs, please contact the Commission by calling 888-755-8824.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

The Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism strives to recognize outstanding volunteer efforts in the state. The Commission encourages programs to participate in the following recognition opportunities:

- **The On-Going Volunteer Recognition Certificate Program:**

The Lt. Governor's Volunteer Recognition Certificate program is an opportunity for nonprofit, faith-based, corporate and government agencies to recognize the on-going volunteer efforts in their own agencies with a certificate signed by the Lieutenant Governor. Nominees for this certificate are automatically eligible for the Power of Service Award.

To nominate outstanding ongoing volunteers please complete our online form: https://userve.utah.gov/userveutah/volunteer-recognition-certificate-form

- **Utah Philanthropy Day:**

Each November since 1999, the Utah Society of Fund Raisers and the Utah Nonprofits Association have celebrated Utah's outstanding philanthropists and volunteer leaders at the annual Philanthropy Day Luncheon. UServeUtah joined as a co-sponsor of the event in 2014, adopting the Governor's Career Humanitarian award and the Lieutenant Governor's Public Service awards to the rest of the award categories. The award categories are:

- Philanthropic Leadership Award
- Foundation Spirit of Giving Award
- Corporate Spirit of Giving Award
- Governor's Career humanitarian Leadership Award
- Outstanding Young Volunteer Award
- Norma Matheson Outstanding Volunteer Award
- Lt. Governor's Public Service Award
- Heart and Hands Awards

For more information please visit the Philanthropy Day website at: https://www.utahphilanthropyday.org/

- **The President's Volunteer Service Award :**

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

For more information please visit the President's Volunteer Service Award website at:

https://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/

COLLABORATION

Collaboration is an intentional relationship between two or more individuals or organizations that come together to communicate, cooperate, and coordinate for the purpose of achieving common goals. These goals create shared values that enhance sustainable communities and citizen involvement.

The promotion of collaboration between the National Service Programs is a priority in the process of creating support networks on both local and statewide levels. Creating strong, local CNCS collaborations is an important step toward creating collaborations with and among community agencies. It is especially important that members and staff of the Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism, the Utah State Corporation Office, and volunteers and staff of the national service program projects engage with organizations that include and represent low-income and other underserved individuals and communities.

Expectations for Collaboration

- Each organization will define its own purpose and goals to accomplish, and will seek to develop partnerships that will support and enhance that vision.
- National service programs will educate others through their networks, the definition of and expectations for collaboration.
- National service programs will host regional community forums to begin the development of networks and collaborative opportunities.
- National service programs will create a development of regional networks. Subsequently, there will be an increase in the percentage of national service programs that report working with community partners; such as other volunteer programs, national service programs, and volunteer centers, for the purposes of peer support and collaboration.
- National service programs will develop collaborative goals for the community, in partnership with members of their regional network, and work together to achieve those goals. National service programs will continue to participate in networking opportunities or conferences.
- National service programs will continue to invite and include other national service programs (VISTA, AmeriCorps State/National, Senior Corps, and Social Innovation Fund) to trainings or conferences, as appropriate.
- Ensure collaboration will promote growth for each partnering organization.
- Be sure to create a unified structure and discuss, in detail, any assumptions or expectations in accomplishing a successful collaboration, such as:
  - Any pre-defined goals
  - Roles and responsibilities for each partner
  - Shared resources
- Keep in mind that not every community or program will find circumstances for collaboration.

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CHAPTER 3
Getting Started

- *Program Contracting*
- *Recruitment*
- *Disability Inclusion Initiative*
- *Member Eligibility*
- *Background Checks*
- *Nondiscrimination Laws*
- *Member Orientation*
- *Member Status*
- *Member Slots*
- *Member Benefits*

PROGRAM CONTRACTING

The Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism enters into an annual contract with each sub-grantee. The purpose of the contract is to establish requirements for the funding period.

One month prior to the contract being issued, programs are required to submit one copy of the following documents:

- Organization Chart
- Program Recruitment Plan
- Training Plan for the Year (Member & Site)
- Pre-service orientation agenda
- Sub-site Memorandum of Understanding
- Sub-site Monitoring Instrument
- Corporation Funding Compliance Agreement
- Disability Surveys (Submitted once per three year grant cycle)
- Criminal History Check Policies & Procedures

The UServeUtah Program Manager will use the above documents to complete a Program Risk Assessment ranking to be used to determine a monitoring plan for each program. The sub-grantee must return the signed contract within four weeks of receipt or the funds may be forfeited and reallocated according to the recommendation of the AmeriCorps Committees.

As an AmeriCorps program director, your responsibilities include—but are not limited to—recruiting and selecting members, supervising and training members, observing programmatic and fiscal responsibilities, facilitating members' end of service, and reporting to your contact agency.

Programs are required once per three year grant cycle, as part of the pre-contracting process, to complete and a site accessibility survey for the program home site and any placement sites where AmeriCorps member serve. This survey is to be submitted to the Commission within the first quarter of the applicable program year.

Pre-contract files:

- Pre-contract Checklist
- Site Accessibility Survey

RECRUITMENT

Recruitment Expectation

UServeUtah has an expectation that programs enroll all members within six months of the contract start date unless the program design specifically requires rolling recruitment.

Community Recruitment:

As an AmeriCorps program, you must actively seek to recruit program members from the community in which the project is conducted. Programs must recruit members of diverse races and ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, education levels, genders, and individuals with disabilities, unless, and to the extent that the approved program design requires emphasizing the recruitment of staff and members who share a specific characteristic or background. However, in no case may you violate the non-discrimination and non-displacement rules governing participant selection.

National Recruitment:

To assist you in reaching a national pool of potential members, you can list your program opportunities and select applicants online. CNCS has consolidated the grants management and recruiting system so that you can perform both functions in one place. You will access the recruitment system through the Corporations web-based system e-Grants. For additional information regarding this recruitment tool please visit;

http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/recruitment

Service Year Exchange:

The Service Year Exchange connects individuals who want to do a service year with organizations who are looking for diverse talent to help them reach their mission. The website offers programs the ability to post information about their organization as well as their open positions. It also allows potential members the ability to post profiles about themselves showing where they would like to serve and in what field. It may be a great recruitment advertising platform as well as a way to seek out applicants that meet your program needs.

https://serviceyear.org/

Mission

The Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism (UServeUtah) encourages individuals with physical or mental disabilities to participate as AmeriCorps members through National Service programs operating in the state of Utah. We encourage a diverse membership that includes people with disabilities to participate as national and community service members through our many programs.

Definition of Disability

According to the ADA, the term "disability" means, with respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the individual's major life activities, a record of having such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment. "Major life activities" means functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, etc. Additionally, a "qualified individual with a disability" is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable accommodations, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the program.

Policy

Under Federal law, any program which receives federal funds must comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In compliance with the Federal law, the Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism prohibits all National Service programs operating in the state of Utah from any form of discrimination against persons with disabilities in recruitment, as well as in service. No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the program, services, or activities of the program, or be subjected to discrimination by the program. Nor shall the program exclude or otherwise deny equal services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability.

Reasonable Accommodation

A reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment to a program site that will enable a qualified applicant or AmeriCorps member with a disability to participate in the application process or to perform essential service functions. Reasonable accommodation also includes adjustments to assure that a qualified individual with a disability has rights and privileges in service equal to those of individuals without disabilities.

All National Service programs shall make reasonable accommodations in practices and/or procedures when the accommodations are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability. Accommodations are "reasonable" when they are practical or feasible. The program does not have to provide reasonable accommodations that would impose undue hardship on the operation of the program. According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC):

> *It is not necessary to provide a reasonable accommodation if doing so would cause an undue hardship. Undue hardship means that an accommodation would be unduly costly, extensive, substantial or disruptive, or would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the business. Among the factors to be considered in determining whether an accommodation is an undue hardship are the cost of the accommodation, the employer's size, financial resources and the nature and structure of its operation.*

Procedure for Requesting Reasonable Accommodation Funds

CNCS offers reasonable accommodation funds to assist AmeriCorps*State, AmeriCorps*National, and AmeriCorps Education Award Only program sites. Visit the Disability Inclusion Resources page on their website for online training courses, the disability accommodation reimbursement form and other resources.

https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/disability-inclusion

ADA Files Available on the Program Director Resource Page

https://userve.utah.gov/userveutah/americorps-program-director-resources

- Access AmeriCorps Checklist
- Site Accessibility Survey

MEMBER ELIGIBILITY

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

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

All programs are required to use the Enrollment Eligibility Verification Form found in IPT (Utah AmeriCorps Tracking System) to gain consent for National Service Criminal History Checks and to gather information regarding a member's eligibility to serve. The form includes:

- Member information such as name, address, date of birth, maiden name.
- Education requirement information. Members may self-certify that they have received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. Members who have not earned a high school diploma or equivalency certificate must initial that they agree to pursue a diploma during their term of service and obtain a diploma before using the education award and certify they have not dropped out of school to enroll as an AmeriCorps member.
- Age requirement information including documentation to verify age such as a birth certificate and consent by parent or legal guardian if necessary. If a member is under 18 years of age, parental consent is required to participate in AmeriCorps. A separate form created by the program that is signed by the parent, member, and program staff is acceptable. This form must be uploaded under "Supporting Documents" on IPT.

NATIONAL SERVICE CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS

Corporation regulations which went into effect April 21, 2011, require grantees in the national service programs to check a statewide criminal history repository of the state of residency and the state where the member will work/serve and the National Sex Offender Public Registry (NSOPR) maintained by the U.S Department of Justice, for any listings of applicants who enroll as program volunteers or are hired as grant-funded employees.

Individuals serving in, or working for, a program or project that allows for recurring access to a vulnerable population must also undergo a fingerprint-based FBI criminal history repository check in addition to the state check and NSOPR.

Under the regulation, any individuals found to be on the NSOPR, or, who refuse to consent to a state registry check, are deemed "unsuitable" for a Corporation-funded position. Any individual who has been convicted of murder is also prohibited from serving. If an individual is found on a State criminal registry, and not the NSOPR, that individual's eligibility is left for the program to decide (with the exception of murder), but the regulation requires that grantee program officials document consideration of the background check results prior to selection.

National Service Criminal History Check Enforcement and Disallowances

It is critical that all components of the NSCHC are performed on-time for members and staff in covered positions. UServeUtah will strictly follow the rules outlined in the CNCS NSCHC Enforcement guide for issues identified with NSCHC checks. This will include significant cost disallowance and expansion of scope (if required) as outlined in the guide. UServeUtah will issue a debt letter to the program after or during corrective action. The program and/or host organization will be required to repay the debt within thirty days of the date of the letter. The disallowance will also be sent to the Corporation for National and Community Service. If CNCS later determines that the amount of the disallowance is different than that assessed by the state commission, the program will be refunded or an additional debt letter will be issued. Also in accordance with the enforcement guide, repayment of such dis-allowances cannot be made from grant funds or be claimed as match.

You are responsible for following these procedures:

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

(b) Using the Enrollment and Eligibility Form in IPT obtain prior, written authorization from the individual for the State and/or FBI criminal registry checks. The form also covers appropriate sharing of the results of that check within the program. (Authorization is not required to perform the NSOPR check);

(c) **Complete the NSOPR check prior to a member serving any hours at all.** Include targeted individual state searches for any state that was not included in the nation-wide search. Any results found on the search must be annotated and signed by the program staff indicating how they determined the result was not the member being screened. Results must be uploaded to IPT.

(d) **Initiate all appropriate background checks before a member serves any hours.** "Initiation" is defined as one step further than gaining consent to run a background check. Your program policies and procedures must clearly state what step your program staff takes beyond gaining consent to initiate background checks. **The date of initiation must be documented in IPT. Image**

page one of background checks in IPT according to the instructions on page 25. The following checks are required:

1. For Members without access to a vulnerable population a state or FBI check is required.
    a. Vulnerable populations include children age 17 or younger, persons age 60 and older, and/or individuals with disabilities. ''Individuals with disabilities'' has the same meaning given to the term in the Rehabilitation Act in 29 U.S.C. § 705(20)(B), and includes any person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.
2. For members with recurring access to vulnerable populations a state and FBI check are required. Recurring access is defined as ''the ability on more than one occasion to approach, observe, or communicate with, an individual, through physical proximity or other means, including but not limited to, electronic or telephonic communication.''
    a. Accompaniment is required for members with access to vulnerable populations until their background checks have been cleared. You must document and utilize the accompaniment forms in IPT when a member is serving while on accompaniment.
    b. A person is accompanied when he or she is in the physical presence of a person cleared for access to a vulnerable population.
3. For any member who resides outside the state of Utah an additional check is required from their state of residency.

(e) Document the individual's understanding that selection into the program is contingent upon the organization's review of the individual's criminal history;

(f) Provide a reasonable opportunity for the individual to review and challenge the factual accuracy of a result before action is taken to exclude the individual from the position;

(g) Maintain the results of the criminal history check in a secure location and document in writing that the grantee considered the results in selecting the applicant.

(h) Provide safeguards to ensure the confidentiality of any information relating to the criminal history check, consistent with authorization provided by the applicant.

Grantees found to have violated National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) regulations will be assessed a disallowance for each non-compliant file in accordance with the CNCS NSCHC Enforcement Guide.

For any staff or members found to be totally ineligible the commission shall dis-allow any reimbursements or costs under the grant associated with the individual. The program and host organization may also be restricted or denied eligibility for future grants, and are solely responsible for reimbursing the Corporation for all education awards, accrued interest awards, salaries and other benefits allocated to participants and grantee staff deemed ineligible due to criminal background check requirements. The rule is codified at 45 C.F.R. §§ 2540.

Annual NSCHC training and certification is required for all program directors and any staff member tasked with member enrollment. Programs should re-complete the training each August and new staff should

receive the training immediately before enrolling any members. The online training course is found at: http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check

It can often take an extended period of time to get the results of a criminal history check, so complete required checks as soon as possible.

To obtain information on how to conduct the required criminal history check in your area, contact the following:

Utah Department of Public Safety
Bureau of Criminal Identification
3888 West 5400 South
Salt Lake City UT 84118
(801) 965-4445

Programs are required to provide documentation of the background check in the AmeriCorps tracking system (IPT) in one of the following formats:

- Only the first page of the BCI FBI or the State criminal history check if an FBI check was not completed.
    - If a program has received results for both a State and FBI background check back, the first page of each check should be uploaded to the FBI line as one compiled document.

  Or

- Approved alternate document that verifies check has been completed

  AND

- State of Residency check for out of state members. (When Applicable)

The following guidance must be met when storing background check information:

- Only page one of BCI records can be imaged.
- No Social Security Numbers will be stored in the IPT system in any capacity. All SSN's must be redacted from background check documentation.
- The criminal history documentation (BCI or other) is uploaded to the appropriate field for either the state check or FBI check. The document should be in only one location, not both.
- State of residency checks for members that reside outside of Utah must be uploaded in addition to the Utah check.
- The following language must be included on the background check documentation.
    - *A (state only or state & FBI) criminal history check was conducted through the Utah State Bureau of Criminal Identification. The results of this check were reviewed and used in determining eligibility for an AmeriCorps position.*

NATIONAL SERVICE CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS

This criminal history check was performed in accordance with the Serve America Act to determine eligibility for service in an AmeriCorps program. Any further dissemination or use of this check is prohibited by state statute 53-10-108.

OR

- *A (state only or state & FBI) criminal history check was conducted in accordance with the CNCS approved Alternate Search Protocol. The results of this check were reviewed and used in determining eligibility for an AmeriCorps position.*

For more detail on CNCS NSCHC Requirements please visit:

https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/nschc__requirements_and_definition_of_terms.pdf

NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

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

- The Utah Antidiscrimination Act (34 U.C. 5)
- The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000a-2000h-6) (as amended)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794)
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C 12101 et seq.)
- Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 (Equal Employment Opportunity)

For details on CNCS Guidelines regarding Non-Discrimination please visit:

https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nondiscrim_gl.pdf

CNCS General Terms and Conditions also clearly addresses Non-Discrimination Public Notice and Records Compliance requirements. To view terms and conditions visit the following website:

https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cncs-grants

The recipient must include information on civil rights requirements, complaint procedures and the rights of beneficiaries in member or volunteer service agreements, handbooks, manuals, pamphlets, and post in prominent locations, as appropriate. The recipient must also notify the public in recruitment material and application forms that it operates its program or activity subject to the nondiscrimination requirements. Sample language, in bold print, is: This program is available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, political affiliation, or, in most instances, religion. Where a significant portion of the population eligible to be served needs services or information in a language other than English, the recipient shall take reasonable steps to provide written material of the type ordinarily available to the public in appropriate languages.

Sample Language:

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

(Name, address, phone number – both voice and TTY, and preferably toll free – FAX number and email address of the recipient) or
Office of Civil Right and Inclusiveness
Corporation for National and Community Service
250 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20525
(800) 833-3722 (TTY and reasonable accommodation line)
(202) 565-3465 (FAX); eo@cns.gov (email)

MEMBER ORIENTATION

Ensure that all National Sex Offender Public Registry checks are completed and appropriate background checks are initiated before the member serves any hours including orientation.

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

Listed below are items the Commission **mandates** to be covered in the orientation of members:

- Member rights and responsibilities
- Specific skills and knowledge to perform service
- Program's code of conduct
- Prohibited Activities (see page 38)
- Allowed Activities (see page 39)
- Drug Free Workplace
- Suspension and Termination Rules
- Grievance Procedures
- Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action
- Sexual Harassment Awareness Education
- Specific Safety Procedures
- Sensitivity to the Community
- Introduction to National Service and AmeriCorps
- Background Checks
- Utah AmeriCorps Tracking System (IPT)
- My AmeriCorps Portal

Listed below are items the Commission strongly encourages to be included in the orientation of members:

- National Service: The Big Picture (The AmeriCorps orientation video, "Getting Things Started" is a good tool to utilize)
- The History of Service in America
- AmeriCorps network of over 600 programs and over 40,000 members
- Discussion of the AmeriCorps ethic
- Importance of Getting Things Done
- Meaning of the Community
- Responsibilities individuals have to themselves, their families, their community, and the nation
- Program Rules, Regulations, and Benefits
- Member Handbook
- Benefits
- Living Allowance
- Staff and member roles
- Understanding the Objectives of the program and how to collect data
- Have members fill out National Trust Enrollment Forms
- Enroll eligible members in Health Care/Childcare

Service Gear

It is a contracted requirement of the AmeriCorps program that members are visibly wearing the AmeriCorps A anytime they are in service. Grant funds may be used to pay for a standard Service Gear package (AmeriCorps T-shirt, sweatshirt, hat, pin, decals, and buttons) for members. The Commission urges programs to provide this package to members. If the standard Service Gear package is not purchased, Programs must provide Members with a comparable and sufficient package. Service Gear may be purchased through private vendors or through the CNCS recommended distributor Industries for the Blind, Inc.

http://www.nationalservicegear.org/

Material Requests

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

Items can be ordered online at
https://pubs.nationalservice.gov/

Other Vendors

http://gooddeed.org/americorps.aspx

https://socialimprints.com/

MEMBER STATUS

Member Enrollment

The member must complete and sign the Enrollment and Verification form before starting service as this form gives consent for background checks to be initiated.

All National Sex Offender Public Registry checks must be completed and appropriate National Service Criminal History Checks must be initiated before the member serves any hours, including orientation. Effective July 2nd, 2018 programs must also complete the pre-enrollment process in eGrants including checking the two certification boxes for the NSOPW check and background check initiation and ensuring that the prospective member's citizenship status and social security information in eGrants has been verified. Without exception, all of these steps must be done prior to the member serving any hours.

The Member Service Agreement must be signed in IPT on or before the first day of service.

All Member Enrollment Forms must be entered and approved in eGrants within 8 days of a member beginning service in the program.

Programs may enroll members through the first quarter of the program year without permission from the Commission. Programs must receive approval from the Commission prior to enrolling members after the first quarter unless prior approval has been given based on program design.

To request approval for enrolling members after the first quarter, programs must submit a written request stating:

- The number and type of position to be filled
- Expected start and end date of the member
- How the member will be trained
- How many hours per week the member will need to serve to complete service

Change of Status

Programs must inform the Commission prior to entering and approving a member Change of Status in eGrants. Programs shall notify the UServeUtah Program Manager via email prior to making any changes.

Member Service Suspension

If a member will be unable to serve for a period of time that will affect their ability to successfully complete their service hours, within the limit of their year of service, the program should place the member on a suspension of service. As a rule of thumb this would include any time that a member is unable to serve for longer than the duration of one pay period. The program is required to notify the National Trust of the suspension through the eGrants system within 30 days as they would report an exit. Suspensions should be noted on the contact log in IPT on the member's detail page. Questions regarding suspensions should be directed to the UServeUtah National Service Program Manager.

Completion of Terms of Service

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

In circumstances that meet the CNCS definition of personal and compelling circumstances (http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/45CFR_chapterXXV.pdf Sec § 2522.230), if the member has completed at least 15% of the service hour requirement, the member may receive a pro-rated education award. The program must properly document the personal compelling circumstance and narrate the IPT contact log. A slot cannot be refilled if a prorated education award is given or the member has served over 30% of their hours.

Member Exit:

Whenever possible members should complete the IPT exit form to provide updated information and Alums information.

All Member Exit Forms must be entered and approved in eGrants within 30 days of a member exiting the program. All members must complete their term of service within the contracted program year unless prior approval has been received from the Commission. This completion requirement is for all members including those who have had their terms suspended.

For members that are exiting before a full year, you may need to unlock the eGrants exit survey. Follow this file path in eGrants to unlock the form:

In eGrants → Portal Home → Pending Exits (shows members already pending for exit – unlocking the exit form will send a member here) → Manage Programs → Select Program → View Members → Select Member → Click View next to current service info → Click unlock exit form.

MEMBER SLOTS

The allowable slot types that members may serve and associated Member Service Years (MSY) are listed in the table below.

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

Slot Corrections for Unfilled Slots

Programs may change the type of slots awarded to their program in eGrants if all of the following are true:

1- The change does not increase the total MSYs authorized in the Notice of Grant Award (i.e. one half-time position cannot be changed to one full-time).
2- The change does not increase the value of the education award.
3- For Full-cost Fixed Amount or Professional Corps Fixed Amount awards, the slot will be filled by a member serving in a full-time capacity.

Slot Corrections for Refill Slots

Slot corrections on refilled slots follow the same procedures as unfilled slots. However, keep in mind the following items regarding refill slots:

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

With the exception of recipients whose awards have special award conditions under 2 CFR §§ 200.207 or 200.338. Programs may not refill the same slot more than once.

Living Allowance

Generally, you must provide a living allowance to your full-time members. Minimum and maximum required amounts are subject to change each year and are posted for each year in the corresponding Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

https://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities

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

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

Bonuses and Incentives

CNCS strongly discourages the use of gift cards and/or cash. Using monetary incentives as a recruitment strategy may seem reasonable and necessary to meet outcomes, however the burden of proof is on the grantee or sub-grantee to make that case.
In addition a grantee or sub-grantee **cannot** use CNCS grant funds for any incentives or bonuses and **cannot** claim any such expenses as match.
If a program decides to offer any bonus or incentive a very clear policy must be in writing and on file that clearly describes when an incentive/bonus would be used to ensure that there is no possible perception of favoritism toward any member.

Education Award

Amount of the AmeriCorps Education Award

The amount of the AmeriCorps Education Award depends on the length of a member's term of service. The award amount typically matches Pell grant amounts. The amount varies each year and is listed in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):

Example: 2018-2019 Program Year:

Term of Service	Service Hours	Education Award
Full-Time	1700	$5,920.00
Reduced Full-Time	1200	$4,144.00
Half-Time	900	$2,960.00
Reduced Half-Time	675	$2,255.24
Quarter-Time	450	$1,566.14
Minimum-Time	300	$1,252.91

Payments made from 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 service within 9 to 12 months.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Eligibility

Members are eligible for an AmeriCorps Education Award if they successfully complete their term of service in accordance with the member contract with one of the following approved AmeriCorps programs: AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*VISTA, AmeriCorps*NCCC.

In order for the member to use the AmeriCorps Education Award, they must have received a high school diploma, or equivalent.

Award Limitations

Members may serve up to four terms of service, however they are only eligible to receive the equivalent of two full time education awards. If a member reaches the maximum education award eligibility prior to serving four terms, the member may continue to serve up to four terms of service, but will not receive any additional education awards. Full-time, half-time, reduced half-time, quarter time, and minimum time terms of service each count as one term of service. Generally, if a member is released for cause before completing their term of service and they do not receive an education award, that term of service counts as one of the four terms.

Members have seven years to use the education award from the date of their completion of service. They can divide up their award and use portions of it at different times, as long as it is for authorized expenditures within the specified time period. Members could, for example, apply a portion of it to existing qualified student loans and save the remainder to pay for authorized college costs in the future. Under certain circumstances, members can use the education award to study outside the United States. Contact the National Service Trust at 1-800-942-2677 for further information. In addition, members who are 55 or older when they began their service in an AmeriCorps State or National Program can transfer the award to a qualifying child, grandchild or foster child. The individual receiving the transferred award has 10 years from the date the term of service was completed to use the award.

The National Service Trust does not make payments to anyone other than qualified schools and loan holders. Members are advised to see a financial aid counselor for information on how they handle disbursements and reimbursements of the AmeriCorps Education Award.

For more information about the Eli Segal Education Award please visit

http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-americorps-education-award/using-your-segal-education-award

College/University Match

Many colleges and universities match the AmeriCorps Education Award for their students. The complete list may be found by visiting

http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-americorps-education-award/matching-institutions

Child Care

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

Programs must have sufficient policies and procedures in place to ensure child care providers are notified, in a timely matter, when members have a change in status that affects benefit eligibility.

Member Eligibility:

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

- Their needs are consistent with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990.
- Their total family income is within the state median income guidelines, as defined under CCDBG guidelines.
- They with and be a parent or guardian of a child under the age of 13.
- They are a full-time member (1700 hours in 12 months) or 900 hours in six month period (only with prior approval of the Corporation).
- They need Child Care in order to participate in the AmeriCorps Program.
- They are not receiving child care from another source at the time of acceptance into the program.
- They have a family income that does not exceed the state's income eligibility guidelines.

To qualify for payment through AmeriCorps Child Care Benefits Program, a child care provider must qualify as a legal provider under the CCDBG state plan. To get information on child care for a member go to http://www.americorpschildcare.com or contact AmeriCorps Child Care Benefits Program at 1-855-886-0687.

Health Insurance

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

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

For members starting after 6/1/2017, programs are required to upload verification for each full time member into IPT showing that the program has provided coverage or that the member has opted out due to access to other adequate health care coverage.

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

Any of the following health insurance options will satisfy the requirement for health insurance for full-time AmeriCorps members (or less than fulltime members serving in a full-time capacity): staying on parents' or spouse plan; insurance obtained through the Federal Health Insurance Marketplace of at least the Bronze level plan; insurance obtained through private insurance broker; Medicaid, Medicare or military benefits.
AmeriCorps programs purchasing their own health insurance for members must ensure plans are minimum essential coverage (MEC) and meet the requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

On Friday May 2, 2014 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for members in AmeriCorps State and National programs, who are not provided health insurance options or who are provided short-term limited duration coverage or self-funded coverage not considered MEC. Members in the AmeriCorps State and National programs and their dependents in the Federally-facilitated Marketplace (FFM) are eligible to enroll in Marketplace coverage when they experience the following triggering events:
• On the date they begin their service terms; and
• On the date they lose any coverage offered through their program after their service term ends. (Source: 45 CFR § 155.420(d)(9)).
Members have 60 days from the triggering event to select a plan. Coverage effective date is prospective based on the date of plan selection. A copy of the HHS Notice, which provides instructions on how to activate the special enrollment period is available at https://www.cms.gov/CCIIO/Resources/Regulations-andGuidance/Downloads/SEP-and-hardship FAQ-5-1-2014.pdf. Members can also visit healthcare.gov for additional information about special enrollment periods: https://www.healthcare.gov/coverage-outside- open enrollment-enrollment-period/.
If coverage is being provided via the Healthcare Marketplace, and thus third-party payment is not an option, programs must develop a process to reimburse members for monthly premiums. Reimbursements for health insurance premiums are considered taxable income for the member, and programs must have a way to document such reimbursements.

Loan Forbearance

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

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

This postponement of the student loan payment (forbearance) is not automatic. Members must request it from their loan holders by completing the National Service Forbearance Request Form. Members may complete the Forbearance Request Form by accessing their My AmeriCorps Portal.

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

Interest Accrual Payments

AmeriCorps members who have earned a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award are eligible to have the Trust pay up to 100% of the interest that accrued on their qualified student loan during their service. To have the Trust pay all or a portion of the interest accrued on a qualified student loans, the Trust must receive verification from the Program indicating the member has completed their service and are eligible for an award. A member and their lender also must complete the Interest Accrual Form, which indicates the amount of interest accrued during your service period. The loan holder sends this completed form to the Trust for payment.

For further information regarding Forbearance and Interest Accrual Payments, visit: http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-americorps-education-award/using-your-segal-education-award/postponing

Defaulted Loans

Most student loans that are in default are not eligible for forbearance. If a member has loans that have gone into default before they begin their AmeriCorps service, they can attempt to negotiate an arrangement with the loan holder or collection agency to bring the loan out of default so forbearance can be granted and interest paid.

4

CHAPTER 4
Member Supervision

- Member Service Agreements
- Member Activities
- Grievance Procedure
- Drug Free Workplace
- Member Tracking
- Member Living Allowance
- Public Assistance
- Nepotism Policy

MEMBER SERVICE AGREEMENTS

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

1) Member position description;

2) The minimum number of service hours (as required by statute) and other requirements (as developed by the grantee) necessary to successfully complete the term of service and to be eligible for the education award;

3) The amount of the education award being offered for successful completion of the terms of service in which the individual is enrolling;

4) Standards of conduct, as developed by the grantee or sub grantee.

5) List of prohibited activities, including those specified in the regulations at 45 CFR 2520.65 (see page 38).

6) Requirements under the Drug-Free Workplace Act (41 U.S.C. 701 *et seq*.);

7) Civil rights requirements, complaint procedures, and rights of beneficiaries;

8) Suspension and termination rules;

9) The specific circumstances under which a member may be released for cause;

10) Grievance procedures; and

11) Other requirements as established by the grantee.

Programs must ensure that the service agreement is signed before commencement of service so that members are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities. IPT will not allow a member to count hours before the date the MSA was signed.

UServeUtah requires programs to use the "Member Service Agreement" form in IPT which is customizable to each program.

Forms can be previewed on IPT by selecting "Create New Form Batch" and then preview next to the form. Most information on the MSA will be populated from the student detail page, so be sure to complete all necessary fields on that page. Utilize the IPT User Guides available on the Program Directors Resource Guide for assistance with the form:

https://userve.utah.gov/userveutah/americorps-program-director-resources

Prohibited Activities

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

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

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, members 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, and the grantee may not use grant funds to support the following activities (see 45 CFR § 2520.65):

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 for-profit entity;
   ii. A labor union;
   iii. A partisan political organization;
   iv. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in the preceding sub-clause, unless grant funds are not used to support the religious activities; or
   v. A nonprofit entity that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of U.S. Code Title 26.
i. Voter registration drives by AmeriCorps members is an unacceptable service activity. In addition, Corporation funds may not be used to conduct a voter registration drive.
j. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
k. Raising funds for living allowances or an organization's general (as opposed to project/program) operating expenses or endowment.
l. Writing grant applications for any Federal agency including CNCS.
m. Such other activities as the Corporation 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-Corporation funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the above activities on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-Corporation funds. The AmeriCorps logo should not be worn while doing so.

Allowable Activities

After reading the list of prohibited activities there may still be questions about what kind of service work can be credited to AmeriCorps Education Awards hours.

Members must serve at least 80% of their time must be spent doing direct service, of which no more than 10% may be fundraising. 20% can be credited to education and/or training that they receive that relates to their work in AmeriCorps.

Direct service is work that addresses human need, the environment, public safety, and/or education in one form or another. It is working directly with people to make change, or doing work that is involved in making that direct change. It can be outreach, fundraising, case management, training, teaching, tutoring, mediating, cleaning, counseling, recruiting volunteers, catching up on paperwork related to clients, preparing for class, coaching, listening, cooking, serving, providing health care, food, clothing, etc. Direct service hours should constitute 80% or more of an AmeriCorps member's total hours served.

Education and/or training, hours are only applicable when they reflect the AmeriCorps service that the member credits to the education award he or she will receive. Any on-the job training that refers to direct service would be part of this category. All orientations, including the AmeriCorps orientation, would be included, as well as any state or regional trainings, seminars, or workshops pertaining to issues related to direct service. Examples would be conflict resolution seminars, teacher development days, team-building exercises or a class on training techniques. Only 20% of the entire member's credited service hours can be dedicated to education and training, even if more hours have been spent in this area.

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

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

a. Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals, for the AmeriCorps members to use, in their efforts tutoring children;

b. Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers in their AmeriCorps program;

c. Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals as part of their AmeriCorps program;

d. Securing financial resources from the community to assist a faith-based organization in launching or expanding their AmeriCorps program that provides social services to the members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the members of the faith-based organization; or

e. Seeking donations from alumni of their AmeriCorps program for specific service projects being performed by current members.

All AmeriCorps service activities must take place in the state of Utah only.

A member may not count service hours if they are performing a prohibited activity as described in AmeriCorps regulations.

There may be times where a member is volunteering or working in another capacity for the same organization that they serve for. In order for the member to do this their duties for service hours must be clear, separate and distinct and must not include any prohibited activities. Any hours spent with the organization outside their distinct service duties should not be recorded toward their service hours. For instance, if a member is teaching six classes a day for a faith based organization and two of those are related to a religious subject unrelated to their service, only the four other classes would be acceptable to record on his or her service hour record. Performance data should also only be reported for work done during their hours spent in service.

Individual Service Project

In addition to the above listed activities for direct service, a program has the option to allow members to participate in an **Individual Service Project (ISP)** during their term of service; if the program has outlined the ISP in their program design as part of their grant application. The ISP should involve a minimum of 80 hours and can be counted toward the members direct service requirement. Members are encouraged to find a different area of need for their ISP service than the one the program currently focuses on. However, program directors must review and approve planned ISPs before a members begin the project to ensure prohibited activities, duplication, displacement and sup-plantation will not occur.

The service must be provided through an organization and not just neighbor to neighbor. All applicable prohibited member activities still apply to the ISP and it must be done within the state of Utah. Approval from the program director is required and host site approval is recommended. The goal of the ISP is to expand the member's exposure to needs within their communities, with the hope that they will continue to be engaged after their term of service. UServeUtah recommends that programs participate in the ISP option.

Duplication, Sup-plantation and Displacement

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

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

UServeUtah has the following requirements for Grievance Procedures and Drug-Free Workplace compliance:

Grievance Procedure

All programs must establish a grievance procedure or members who believe that they have been unfairly released from the program and for other grievances filed by members or other interested parties. This grievance procedure should be attached to the AmeriCorps member's contract. The procedure must include an opportunity for a hearing and binding arbitration within statutory deadlines. Programs must ensure the procedure is in accordance with Federal regulation 45 CFR 2540.230.

To ensure all AmeriCorps programs are in compliance with federal regulations regarding grievance procedures, member files will be reviewed during monitoring site visits to ensure members have signed a grievance policy. Grievance procedures will be submitted at the beginning of the program year prior to contracting, and will be reviewed for quality and compliance using the Grievance Procedure Component list. Programs will be notified in writing of any required changes and given an appropriate time frame to complete those revisions.

Additionally, the Commission encourages programs to establish an alternative dispute resolution procedure, such as mediation. While a member is going through the grievance procedure, be sure to make it very clear what stage they are in, what the time-line is, and what the next steps are (i.e. whether they are in a mediation, grievance hearing or binding arbitration).

Grievance Procedure Components

Members are required to read and sign either a copy of the grievance procedures or a copy of a contract that includes but is not limited to the following grievance procedure regulations.

- Grievance filed within one year of alleged occurrence
- Grievance hearing within 30 calendar days of filing a grievance
- Decision made within 60 calendar days of filing a grievance
- Hearing by person not involved in previous decisions on the issue
- Grievant can request binding arbitration if decision is adverse to grievant or if decision is not reached within 60 calendar days
- Binding arbitration hearing is held within 45 days after request for arbitration or within 30 days after CEO appoints arbitrator
- Within 30 days of the binding arbitration hearing, there is a decision

Refer to Federal regulation 45 CFR 2540.230 for a full list of requirements.

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

Drug-free Workplace Requirements

In accordance with the AmeriCorps Grant State and Federal Provisions and 41 U.S.C. § 701, programs are required to give notice about the Drug-Free Workplace Act to members and to conduct a drug-free awareness program.

Persons other than individuals
No person, other than an individual, shall receive a grant from any Federal agency unless such person agrees to provide a drug-free workplace by—

A. Publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition;

B. Establishing a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about—
   a) the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
   b) the grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
   c) any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
   d) the penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations;

C. Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of such grant be given a copy of the statement required by subparagraph (A);

D. Notifying the employee in the statement required by subparagraph (A), that as a condition of employment in such grant, the employee will—
   a) abide by the terms of the statement; and
   b) notify the employer of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than 5 days after such conviction;

E. Notifying the contracting/granting agency within ten calendar days after receiving notice of a conviction under subparagraph (D)(ii) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction;

F. Imposing a sanction on, or requiring the satisfactory participation in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program by, any employee who is so convicted, as required by section 703 of this title; and

G. Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of subparagraphs (A), (B), (C), (D), (E), and (F).

Individuals
No Federal agency shall make a grant to any individual unless such individual agrees as a condition of such grant that the individual will not engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance in conducting any activity with such grant.

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

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

MEMBER TRACKING

The Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism has established the Utah AmeriCorps Tracking System as the official system of record for all AmeriCorps service forms. This tracking system hosts the following forms:

- Enrollment and Eligibility Verification *
- Member Service Agreement *
- MSA Addendum (pre 2018-2019)
- Monthly Progress & Demographic Reporting
- Accompaniment 1**
- Accompaniment 2**
- Weekly/Monthly Service Hour Record *
- Exit Form *

* Required. ** Required for accompaniment.

As of January 1, 2013 the forms indicated are required for all members enrolling in Utah AmeriCorps programs. The program may select either the Monthly Service Hour Record or the Weekly Service Hour Record to track their member time.

The Commission will conduct random reviews of member documents in IPT using the member file checklist. Additional information related to these reviews, can be found in Chapter 6. Problems found during a review such as missing documents, inconsistent calculations, unsigned service hour records, prohibited activities, etc., it will be considered compliance issues and will initiate the corrective action process.

IPT User guides (Program Directors, Site Supervisors and Members), as well as a copy of the member file review guide, can be found on the UServeUtah Program Director Resources page. All required verification items described in the member file review guide must be uploaded for each member within 30 days of their service start date.

Items reviewed specific to service hour records will include the following:

- Are all service hour records signed and dated by the member, site supervisor and a program representative?
    - The program signature indicates the service hour record has been received and accepted from the member and site supervisor. The purpose of the third signature is for programs to identify any trends in late or unsigned records. A program's policy should indicate when these signatures are due and what process is in place to ensure timeliness and accuracy.
    - If the site supervisor is a member of the program's staff a third signature will not be required.
    - A program level signature is required for all service hour records effective 6/1/2017.
- Are the member service activities listed on service hour records in line with the approved objectives and are not prohibited activities?
- If descriptions are provided, would a reasonable person understand what activities are being performed by the member, based on those descriptions, and would that person be able to acknowledge that no prohibited activities occurred?
- Are members on target to attain their intended number of service hours?
- Do the service hour records clearly track the service activities to ensure adherence to the 20% rule relating to training?
- Do the service hour records clearly track the service activities to ensure adherence to the 10% rule relating to fundraising?

Living Allowance Amounts

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

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

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

Example 2: Distinct position descriptions for full time first year members and returning members who mentor other members as part of their duties.

Remember members cannot supervise other members, however they can act as leads or mentors.

Programs must adhere to minimum and maximum living allowance requirements as defined each year in the CNCS Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Example: 2018-2019 Program Year:

Term of Service	Service Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Living Allowance	MSY
Full-Time	1700	$13,732	$27,464	1.000
Reduced Full-Time	1200	N/A	$19,386	0.700
Half-Time	900	N/A	$14,539	0.500
Reduced Half-Time	675	N/A	$10,905	0.381
Quarter-Time	450	N/A	$7,270	0.265
Minimum-Time	300	N/A	$4,847	0.212

Proration of Living Allowances

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

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

MEMBER LIVING ALLOWANCE

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

Distribution of Member Living Allowance

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

Deduction to Living Allowance

Programs occasionally request the ability to deduct amounts from living allowances for member absences and other purposes. Programs may make deductions to living allowances or other payments made to AmeriCorps members; however, programs may not deduct any portion of the living allowance paid to the member by the Corporation.

Before making any deductions, programs are advised to consider the implications related to the treatment of employment laws, including those laws addressing minimum wage and unemployment compensation. In addition, programs that deduct amounts from member living allowances may be required to increase their match funds in other areas as a result.

If necessary programs may hold the living allowance payment for a member if they are not complying with time reporting or responding to communications. The check must be printed on time and can be held in the program office until the member responds accordingly.

For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps Grant State and Federal Terms and Conditions.

Wage Garnishments

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

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

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Food Stamps

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

Public Housing

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

Unemployment Benefits

AmeriCorps members are **not entitled** to unemployment benefits. The Corporation for National and Community Service has interpreted federal legislation to mean that there is no employer/employee relationship between members and programs. Utah has chosen to agree with this interpretation and denies unemployment benefits to members; hence, programs are not required to pay unemployment taxes.

Supplemental Security Income

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

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

SSI recipients who are (1) under the age of 22 and (2) neither married nor the head of a household are eligible for the student earned income exclusion, which excludes from countable earned income $1,290 per month and up to $5,200 per year (amounts as of January 1, 2001). This exclusion may be combined with existing SSI work incentives and other income disregard rules, which should encourage more young people with disabilities to participate in AmeriCorps State Programs.

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

Social Security Disability Insurance

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

NEPOTISM POLICY

Nepotism

In order to avoid the presence or perception of nepotism within AmeriCorps Utah, it is UServeUtah's policy that no sub-grantee will recruit or hire an AmeriCorps member that is a close relative of any program staff member. In addition, programs should not place members at a site where their direct or indirect supervisor would be a close relative.

For this purpose, the term "close relative" includes relationships such as a: parent, child, grandchild, grandparent, sibling, spouse, cousin, niece, nephew, aunt, or uncle.

Any such close relatives interested in service can and should be encouraged to apply at another AmeriCorps Utah program.

5

CHAPTER 5
Managing the Program

- Match
- Budget
- Fiscal Reporting
- Program Progress
- Grant Closeout
- Sustainability
- Record Retention
- Branding and Media Requirements
- Contract Extensions

Match

Programs should meet the proposed match, established in the program's application, every quarter. Programs that are not meeting proposed levels of match at the end of the second quarter must submit an explanation addressing the following:

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

Corporation funds may be reduced by the Commission on Service and Volunteerism (UServeUtah) for failure to meet the proposed or minimum match requirements. This would be done to bring the program in line with the match requirements as submitted in the application.

Programs must provide and account for the matching funds as agreed upon in the approved application. This means that the proposed match included in the application must be met even if it exceeds the minimum match requirement.

Matching Funds/Voluntary Cost Share

Cash or in-kind matching contributions that exceed the required minimum will be considered voluntary cost share. Programs that cannot meet the amount of voluntary cost share proposed in their application may submit a request to reduce the amount of cost share their program will contribute. However, the cost share/match cannot be reduced below the minimum percentage requirements as indicated below. See page 50 for more information relating to budget modifications.

Overall Cost Match

Subject to the requirements of § 2521.45, and except as provided in paragraph (b), your overall share of program costs will increase as of the fourth consecutive year that you receive a grant, according to the following timetable. (This is not applicable to Fixed Award grant programs.)

A grantee must have contributed matching resources by the end of a grant period in an amount equal to the combined total of the proposed or minimum overall annual match for each year of the grant period.

	YR 1	YR 2	YR 3	YR 4	YR 5	YR 6	YR 7	YR 8	YR 9	YR 10
Minimum Overall Share	24%	24%	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

In-Kind Match

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

In-Kind Contribution Verification

Forms documenting in-kind contributions must include:

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

Pre-Award Costs

UServeUtah does not allow programs to request reimbursement for any expense incurred before the contracted program start date or after the contracted program end date (without an approved extension). Pre-award costs are not allowed.

Budget Modifications

UServeUtah understands that AmeriCorps programs must sometimes modify their budget during the program year. These budget modification guidelines summarize the AmeriCorps regulations on this issue. They are intended only as guidance and are not a substitute for the federal rules and regulations. For more information, please refer to AmeriCorps rules and regulations found at:

https://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/managing-americorps-grants#AmeriCorps Provisions

Line Item Changes - Deadline and Process

Programs may move funds between line items without Commission approval if the amount moved is 10% or less of the total program budget. For example, a program with a budget of $100,000 may move up to $10,000 between line items without approval as long as the transfer is in compliance with all other applicable requirements. Programs who wish to transfer funds totaling more than 10% of the program budget must receive prior approval from UServeUtah and the Corporation. (OMB Circular A-11, Subpart C, Section 25.)

Modification requests of more than 10% of the total program budget must be submitted before the end of the second quarter of the current program year. This level of adjustment will require the approval of the Corporation for National and Community Service and as such we will need ample time for the Commission and the Corporation to review the request before members complete their term of service.

Programs submitting a budget modification of more than 10% must submit the following:

1. A letter detailing the request and explaining why the modification is needed.
2. A revised budget form.
3. A revised budget narrative.

Programs should not consider budget modification requests approved until written notice is received from the Utah Commission and the Corporation.

Sub-granting Funds

Programs must receive prior approval from the Commission and the Corporation to sub-grant or subcontract program activities not previously approved in the application for funding. Programs must receive prior approval from both the Commission and Corporation to transfer the grant or to sub-grant to a different organization. For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps regulation, terms and conditions.

Equipment

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

FISCAL REPORTING

Fiscal reports through the 15-16 grant year were generated in a State of Utah grants management system called WebGrants. Since 2018, all fiscal reports or reimbursement requests are submitted in IPT. A tutorial on how to submit reimbursement requests in IPT can be found on the Program Directors resource page on our website.

Request for Reimbursement

A Request for Reimbursement (RFR) packet is submitted in IPT from sub grantees on a minimum of a quarterly basis and a maximum of monthly. The packet is submitted in IPT as an attachment.

The packet must include the following:

- Completed Detailed RFR Ledger Reconciliation Spreadsheet, identifying how category totals were calculated.
- Copies of general ledger detail supporting all expenditures (Corporation and Grantee funds)
- Completed Income Report – this document must equal the match listed for the current reporting period.

Incomplete and/or inaccurate packets will be returned to sub grantee via email for revisions. Programs must respond with revisions within ten calendar days. Late and/or incorrect requests are tracked and will be considered in future funding decisions.

Education Award Only grants (EAP), and Fixed Amount Award grants (FAA) will need to submit funding draw down requests in IPT. When submitting such requests, programs need to attach the following to their requests in IPT:

- Completed Education Award Only grant workbook (for EAP programs)
- Completed Fixed Amount Award Grant Workbook (for FAA programs)
- Invoice

Source Documentation

All source documentation related to the RFR is to be retained by sub-grantee as addressed in contract under section titled "Records Administration." Source documentation includes the following:

- Employee time sheets that identify time spent on the Corporation for National Service project
- Payroll registers that identify salary and benefit amounts
- Original invoices or receipts
- Travel vouchers and supporting documentation
- Copies of canceled checks
- Copies of deposit slips or bank statements verifying deposits
- Cost allocation plan
- Indirect cost plan

- Inadequate or unacceptable documentation includes
- Purchase orders (without a supportive invoice or receipt)
- Statements (without supporting invoice details)
- Bids

NOTE: The Fiscal Analyst will be evaluating program expenses at the end of each program year to determine the program actual cost per MSY. The Commission allows the year end cost per MSY to be no more than $15,000. Corporation funds in this line may be reduced at the end of the program year if the $15,000 maximum is exceeded. This would be done to bring the program in line for cost per MSY.

Financial Reporting Resources

CNCS has additional information available at:

http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/financial-management

PROGRAM PROGRESS

Performance Measurement

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

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

The Corporation for National and Community Service requires AmeriCorps Programs to submit performance measures as part of their application. Progress toward the accomplishment of these performance measures is reported in a Program Progress Report that is submitted to the State Commission on a quarterly basis.

For more information on performance measures, go to:
http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/americorps

Progress Reporting

AmeriCorps programs are required to submit four (4) progress reports to the State Commission annually. Progress reports monitor a program's progress toward meeting its annual program objectives, assess program strengths and challenges, highlight unique program achievements, and identify opportunities for training and technical assistance.

Progress reports, are due to the Commission on or before the 20th of corresponding months January, April, July, and October. These should be sent to the National Service Program Specialist by email and copied to the National Service Program Manager at UServeUtah. They are reviewed by the UServeUtah program staff and forwarded to CNCS as part of an aggregate report bi-annually in April and October. Responses to any clarification requested by UServeUtah will be due ten calendar days after receipt of the request. However, in April and October more immediate responses may be required to meet Federal reporting requirements.

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

- All questions are answered with new and detailed responses each quarter. Please do not copy and paste forward old responses.
- Program impact should be clearly stated.
- Challenges and Successes should be clearly outlined.
- Measures to address challenges, improve the program, and/or comply with federal laws and regulations are clearly identified.
- Special care should be taken to explain any performance measures that have not been or are not on track to being met. Explain what is being done to improve performance and if or how the program expects to reach the goal by the end of the grant year.
- Programs must also explain any performance goal in which the actuals achieved exceed 400% of the expected target. Programs should regularly evaluate their forecasting to ensure each new grant application has progressive and realistic targets for their outputs and outcomes.
- Programs must ensure that all data is reported but not duplicated.

PROGRAM PROGRESS

- The commission provides progress report templates each year prefilled with program determined performance measures and targets. These templates automatically total year to date data from quarterly entries.
- Data from all programs within a prime grant is compiled using spreadsheets which aggregate demographic information which is reported to CNCS.
- Commission staff will review data each quarter for evidence of duplication or any other indicators of inaccurate reporting.
- Any issue identified with the quarterly report will be addressed with programs using the Progress Report Review Feedback Form and a formal response will be required with a set deadline.
- Source documentation will be reviewed by UServeUtah staff during programmatic site visits to verify validity.

GRANT CLOSEOUT

Grant Closeout Forms

Programs will be notified by UServeUtah by email when it is time to close out a grant. The forms needed for grant closeout are available on the Program Directors Resource Page at:

https://userve.utah.gov/userveutah/americorps-program-director-resources

Final Project Report

Programs completing the final year of their three-year grant cycle must submit a Final Project Report. A Final Project Report is a cumulative report covering the entire project period. This report is due 90 days following the end of the three-year grant cycle and should include the following information:

The narrative should include a three page, double-spaced summary of the qualitative accomplishments that the AmeriCorps grant has made for the duration of the grant period. Include a discussion of the impacts of any special initiatives that fall within this grant. Discuss what exists now in the communities that are served that did not exist prior to the grant. Use of quantitative data to support the impact statements is encouraged.

There is no form for this report.

Final Financial Status Report

A program completing the final year of its three-year grant cycle must submit a Final Financial Status Report (Standard Form 269A) that is cumulative over the entire project period. This FSR is due 90 days following the end of the three-year grant cycle. This Final FSR should be completed on the required form.

Closeout Certification

Programs completing the final year of their three-year grant cycle must also submit a 3/1 certification form. This is due 90 days following the end of the three-year grant cycle. The form is also available on the program directors resource page.

Equipment Inventory-The first section of the form is for any equipment inventory having a current fair market value of $5,000 or more and purchased with federal grant funds.

Residual Supplies-The second section of the form is for any unused or residual supplies inventory purchased with federal funds exceeding $5,000 in value. If no equipment or supplies were purchased using federal funds, programs should reflect this on each form.

Section 3 of the 3/1 form is a certification that the program has completed all closeout actions; accomplished all program and financial requirements; secured all reports; and reconciled all funding with respects to sub-grant awarded.

SUSTAINABILITY

General Overview

UServeUtah defines "sustainability" as a plan that, through an organization's use of various resources, will provide for a stronger infrastructure, stronger programs, and community self-sufficiency in regards to supporting the needs of its constituents, its financial health, and its ability to be well managed and accountable.

Sustainability Policy

Programs must comply with the Sustainability Policy. Each program is required to gradually decrease reliance on federal funds, while continuing to meet the minimum match requirements. Training and more information on sustainability requirements may be found on the CNCS website at:

https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/americorps/sustainability-planning

Policy Guidelines

The Corporation for National and Community Service has published an increasing match requirement for all AmeriCorps programs. Under this policy, each program is required to gradually decrease its reliance on federal funds, yet still meet the Overall Minimum Match requirements. By either cash or in-kind matches in any category, programs must reach the required match level each year.

The Commission will provide assistance to programs in the area of sustainability by sponsoring additional training and technical assistance on collaborations and partnerships, leadership, and fundraising, as needed.

Policy Implementation

The intent of the policy on sustainability is to decrease program dependency on federal funds, to ensure that services provided by AmeriCorps members will continue if federal funding is discontinued, and to make more funding available to support new programs.

Each grantee is encouraged to develop a Sustainability Plan as part of the initial application for funding. This plan should provide details on community outreach and collaborations, new partnerships, and new resources provided to, or received from, the community.

Records Retention

All financial records, supporting documentation, statistical records, evaluation and performance data, member information, and personnel records must be retained for three years after the close of the Commission's AmeriCorps Grant.

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

TYPE OF DOCUMENTATION	EXAMPLES
All Materials Related to the Grants Process	• NOFAs • RFPs or RFAs • all applications received (not just those funded) • all correspondence and notes from negotiations • score sheets • reviewer confidentiality/conflict of interest agreements • CNCS approvals of awards
Grant Agreements and Contracts	• Grants and contracts between State Commissions and grantees • Grants and contracts between National Programs and sites
Program Documents	• Reports • Correspondence • Policy Statements
Monitoring Notes	• Monitoring Reports • Site visit tools • Reports on site visits to grantees/sites
Official Correspondence	• Letters on Other Matters

BRANDING AND MEDIA REQUIREMENTS

Branding Requirements

CNCS Branding Requirements and Recommendations for AmeriCorps Grantees and Members can be found at:

https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2016-AmeriCorps-Branding-Messaging-Guidance.pdf

Branding requirements are also addressed in the Specific Terms and Conditions by grant year which can be accessed at:

https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cncs-grants

Publish ready AmeriCorps and CNCS Logos and other branded materials can be downloaded at:

http://www.nationalservice.gov/logos

Media Policy

In an effort to reinforce the branding of the AmeriCorps network and all its applications, special attention is being paid to ensuring all sub-grantees consistently identify as AmeriCorps programs. UServeUtah will employ a search-engine alert system to monitor sub-grantee press, media, recruitment and other information for identification with the AmeriCorps brand.

When interacting with the media, programs should clearly represent the program as an AmeriCorps program and members as AmeriCorps members. They should also clearly convey to the media that this should be reflected in any broadcast or publication. **It is the program's responsibility to ensure that the program and members are represented as affiliated with AmeriCorps by the media. All penalties will be enforced with no exceptions.**

Beginning in the 2017-2018 grant year: If a communication piece does not include "AmeriCorps" and/or the AmeriCorps logo, a penalty of $500 will be levied against the AmeriCorps grant. See Attachment A of your program contract for more information.

The program director and legal applicant will be notified of each occurrence within seven (7) days of the aberrant publication or media article.

CONTRACT EXTENSIONS

No Cost Extension Policy

Although highly discouraged, the commission may at times approve a no-cost extension for programs to allow members to continue service past a program's original contract end date. In event that a program determines they need a no cost extension, a written request must be made to the commission. The following apply to requesting a no cost extension:

a. Unless continuous recruitment is part of the program design an extension should be a last case scenario. Programs must explore all avenues to avoid a contract extension before making a request. For example exploring slot conversions and offering shorter term positions that could be completed by the original end date.

b. Programs must send their request in writing to the National Service staff (program manager and program specialist).

c. Programs must request an extension within 60 calendar days of the end of their contract year. Requests will not be taken before or after this period.

d. If a program anticipates that an extension will be needed based on ongoing recruitment, the program must notify the UServeUtah National Service staff immediately when the need is identified. The program will still be required to send a written request for extension to the National Service staff within 60 days of the end of the contract.

e. When an extension is granted an addendum will be created to the contract which will require original signatures from the program's authorized representative and the Director of UServeUtah.

f. During an extension period, programs are only allowed to draw from grant funding in section II (Member Costs) of the budget.

g. Programs will not be able to access grant funding for sections I and III that are not directly related to a member cost. Other costs incurred in those sections during the extension will need to be met through match funding.

h. Costs and financial documentation for each grant year must be kept separate and separate reimbursement requests must be submitted for each grant year.

i. Data must be tracked, maintained and reported in separate quarterly reports for each grant year during an extension period. This includes providing a separate progress report for each active grant year.

6

CHAPTER 6
Program Monitoring

- *Program Monitoring*
- *Monitoring Checklists*
- *Performance Indicators*

PROGRAM MONITORING

Components of the UServeUtah Monitoring Strategy

- Annual Risk Assessment
- Desk Reviews
    - Member File Review Checks
    - Reimbursement Request Reviews)
- On-Site Reviews
    - Programmatic review
    - Fiscal Review
- Document Reviews as needed
- Surveys
- One-on-one technical assistance

Purpose of Monitoring

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

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

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

Risk Assessment

The Utah Commission uses a risk based assessment strategy for monitoring programs. At least annually, and as new projects are funded, Commission staff will assess the risk associated with each sub-grantee using the Risk Assessment Review Form. The form can be found on the program directors resources page:

https://userve.utah.gov/userveutah/americorps-program-director-resources

UServeUtah uses this process to classify each program as low-, medium-, or high-risk. The risk assessment utilized by UServeUtah looks at a variety of factors including experience with federal grant management, existing financial management policies and procedures, past performance, and program sustainability. Based on this determination, UServeUtah will implement an individualized monitoring plan for your program. Please note that all new awardees will automatically be classified as high-risk. Other high risk factors include: award amount, history of non-compliance, new personnel or systems, and program complexity.

PROGRAM MONITORING

Overview of Monitoring by Risk Type

	Low-Risk Programs	Medium-Risk Programs	High-Risk Programs
Member File Checks*	Each program is subject to routine Member File Checks based upon UServeUtah's stratified sampling methodology as described below.		
Reimbursement Request Reviews*	At least one at any point throughout the three-year grant cycle.	At least two at any point throughout three-year grant cycle.	At least one annually for each of the three years in the grant cycle.
Programmatic Site Visits*	One visit per year may be conducted.	At least one site visit per year.	At least two site visits per year, with the first conducted within 2 months of the start date.
Fiscal Site Visits*	At least one at any point throughout the three-year grant cycle.	At least one at any point throughout the three-year grant cycle.	At least two, with one taking place in the first year of the grant cycle.
Communication and Support	Occasional telephone conversations and regular email correspondence.	Regular telephone conversations and regular email correspondence.	Regular telephone conversations and frequent email correspondence.
Training and Technical Assistance	All sub-grantees in UServeUtah's portfolio have access to a suite of trainings offered by CNCS, ASC Basecamp, as well as those that UServeUtah has developed and hosted throughout the grant award period.		
*All sub-grantees are subject to additional desk reviews and site visits as necessary based on findings or concerns that may require continued attention and follow-up.			

Desk Review

Desk reviews will be completed throughout the year to ensure the accuracy of member files and reimbursement requests. Files will be reviewed by UServeUtah staff requests for information, feedback and any applicable corrective action requests will be sent to program directors.

IPT Member File Checks

Member file reviews will be conducted continuously throughout the year to ensure compliance with National Service Criminal History Check requirements, enrollment and exit guidelines, accuracy of member files and other regulations.

UServeUtah determines the number of files it reviews annually using a stratified sampling methodology as follows: the total number of files reviewed will be equivalent to 10% of the total number of allotted slots across our portfolio. From there, each program is weighted based on allotted MSY to determine its total number of reviewed member files.

Programs will be notified of an upcoming desk audit by email approximately one week in advance.

PROGRAM MONITORING

Member files will be reviewed as outlined on the Member File Check Review Guidelines document available on the program director resources page. The topics covered in these reviews are: No social security numbers displayed on IPT, IPT Member Contact Information, Enrollment and Eligibility forms, enrollment in eGrants, Member Service Agreements, member position descriptions, National Service Criminal History Checks, accompaniment forms, member mid-term and final evaluations, service hour records (timesheets), hour compliance, benefits forms, IPT exit form, and exit in eGrants.

After the review the program will receive the Member File Review Document by email with a deadline to make all necessary corrective actions resulting from the review. Deadlines are set at ten calendar days unless the corrective action is expected to take a longer period of time. Programs will be notified if an expansion of scope is required and additional verification will then be requested.

The Member File Review Guidelines describe in detail what is reviewed and are available any time on the AmeriCorps Program Directors Resources Page.

Reimbursement Request Reviews

Based on a sub-grantee's monitoring plan and other considerations, UServeUtah conducts routine desk reviews of previously submitted reimbursement requests. In the event of a desk review, a UServeUtah program staff member will request all relevant source documentation to verify the Section I and II costs that have been submitted for reimbursement. Sub-grantees are expected to provide all requested source documentation within ten calendar days of receiving the request (please refer to page 57 for UServeUtah's policies on record retention and page 51 for guidelines on how to properly retain source documentation). Examples of the source documentation that may be requested include:

- Documentation of match (both cash and in-kind)
- Staff timesheets and payroll registers
- Mileage documentation and travel vouchers
- Member payroll list and healthcare roster (if applicable)
- Copies of cancelled checks
- All paid invoices, receipts, agendas, etc.

UServeUtah reviews submitted documentation to ensure that costs are:

- Reasonable, allocable, and allowable
- Spent according to contractual limitations
- Treated consistently
- Determined in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the applicable OMB cost principles (2 CFR 200 Subpart E)

Findings or concerns that arise based on a routine desk review of a reimbursement request may result in additional training, corrective action, or
of funds.

Programmatic Monitoring Site Visits

Program site visits are conducted for two purposes:

1. To provide assistance on program development and implementation issues; and
2. Ensure compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations.

All programs should anticipate programmatic site visits. Programs in their first three years of funding typically require more assistance than programs that have been operating for four or more years. When necessary additional staff focus may be dedicated to visiting and providing assistance to new programs.

PROGRAM MONITORING

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

In addition, all programs with high risk levels, as determined by the Risk Assessment Tool, may receive additional visits from the National Service Program Manager. This policy will help to ensure high quality AmeriCorps programs are implemented while maximizing staff time and meeting the recommendations of the Inspector General in regards to program monitoring.

Notice and Preparation

All visits will be scheduled in advance. The National Service Program Manager will contact you to schedule your monitoring visit(s). At least one week prior to the site visit, a copy of the instruments to be used will be sent to the program's contact person. To prepare properly for a site visit, program staff should:

- Review the Programmatic Monitoring Tool provided by the National Service Program Manager and be prepared to present any pertinent or requested documentation. This monitoring tool is also available on the Program Director Resources Page.
- Schedule the visit with the National Service Program Manager at a time when the appropriate people will be available for meetings.
- Verify that member time sheets and files are up to date prior to the meeting.

Procedure

Programmatic Monitoring Activities:	Staff Involved:
Interview/Document Review	AmeriCorps Program/Site Director
Member File Checks of Physical Member Files	AmeriCorps Program/Site Director
On-Site Observation of Member Activities	AmeriCorps Members
Field Interviews	Site Supervisor, AmeriCorps Members

On-site the National Service Program Manager will review the program's written policies, procedures, and documentation relating to: Recruitment, selection, eligibility and enrollment including NSCHC requirements, tracking member hours, exiting members, developing and implementing member training, member supervision, data tracking/recording, progress reporting, sub-site management, and continuous improvement strategy.

The visit will also include a visit to one or more of the program's AmeriCorps service sites. Interviews may be conducted with members and site supervisors to gauge understanding of AmeriCorps rules, regulations and to ensure no prohibited activities are occurring. The National Service Program Manager will arrange this with program staff when the Programmatic Monitoring Site Visit is scheduled.

Exit Conference and Follow-Up Monitoring Letter

The results of the visit will be reviewed with program staff at the end of the day. Subsequent feedback sent to the program will address only those issues discussed during the visit.

After each site visit, a copy of the completed monitoring tool and recommendations/corrective action letter will be e-mailed to the program contact person/program director. This will occur within four weeks. The program director must address any corrective action requests and provide a written response to UServeUtah within the timeframe allowed. The National Service Staff will review the response and provide any additional guidance required.

PROGRAM MONITORING

Fiscal Monitoring Visits

Programs should anticipate one or more fiscal monitoring visit every three year grant cycle. New programs and those who have been assessed as high risk will receive additional visits as necessary by the UServeUtah Fiscal Analyst. For efficiency, UServeUtah may combine a fiscal and programmatic monitoring visit into one trip when possible.

Notice and Preparation

All site visits will be scheduled at least 30 days in advance and may be conducted simultaneously with a programmatic monitoring visit for efficiency. At least one week prior to the site visit, a copy of the instruments to be used will be sent to the Program Manager. The program is expected to ensure that all key financial staff and any other requested personnel are present and available during the scheduled time. They are also expected to reserve necessary space for the visit to take place and to prepare all requested documentation in advance.

Procedure

Fiscal Monitoring Activities:	Staff Involved:
Interview	Program Director and key financial staff member(s)
Document Review	Financial staff should be available to answer questions, but no staff is required in the review itself

The site visit will be broken down into two main portions: an interview with fiscal and program staff and a documentation review. UServeUtah staff will conduct interviews with financial and other program staff to review policies and procedures relating to: internal controls, financial reporting, matching contributions, accounting systems, timekeeping, payroll, cash management, oversight/monitoring, and record keeping. Additionally, staff will conduct a review of a previously submitted request for reimbursement and all relevant source documentation, similar to the desk review as described on page 65.

After each site visit, a copy of the completed monitoring tool and recommendation/corrective action letter will be e-mailed to the program contact person/program director. This will occur within four weeks. The program director must address any corrective action requests and provide a written response to UServeUtah within the timeframe allowed. The National Service Staff will review the response and provide any additional guidance required.

Exit Conference and Follow-Up Monitoring Letter

At the end of the visit, preliminary results will be reviewed with program staff. This is an opportunity for UServeUtah and the sub-grantee to have additional conversation as necessary regarding potential findings, to clear up possible misconceptions, and to secure any information needed.

Within four weeks of the site visit, UServeUtah will email a follow-up monitoring letter to the Program Director. This monitoring letter will convey UServeUtah's conclusions from the site visit regarding exemplary or adequate performance, need for technical assistance and/or additional training, or findings that require corrective action. This monitoring letter and any formal response from the program should be entered into grant records and retained for three years.

Monitoring Checklist

In general, it is expected that program staff will monitor grantees and sites to examine the following:

Member Documentation

- No visible social security numbers on IPT
- Application Form
- National Service Criminal History Checks (BCI, NSOPW, and FBI)
- Eligibility and Enrollment Form
- Retention Statistics (end of term/exit, change of status/term, terms of release)
- Hours Worked and Service hour records
- Training Received
- Benefits (child care, health care, etc.)
- Member Service Agreement
- Position Description
- Performance Evaluations
    - Mid-term evaluations are required for members serving 900 hours or more.
    - End of year evaluations are required for all members and must include the following according to terms and conditions:
        - Whether the member has completed the required number of hours.
        - Whether the member completed assignments satisfactorily.
        - Whether the member met the performance criteria that were clearly communicated at the beginning of the term of service.

Program Documentation

- Grievance Procedures
- Prohibited Activities
- Staff Time keeping
- Progress Toward Meeting Performance Measure Targets
- Measurement Tools
- National Identity (signage, uniforms, published materials)
- Mechanism for Community Input and Collaboration
- Subcontracts or Host Site Agreements (if applicable)

Member Service Agreement

- Minimum number of hours and other requirements necessary for a post-service education award
- Start and end dates of the member's term of service
- Amount of the living allowance
- How the member will be paid
- Description of the other benefits available to the member
- Standards of conduct and sanctions for improper conduct
- Prohibited activities
- Requirements under the Drug-Free Workplace Act

- Termination and suspension rules (including the specific circumstances under which a member can be released for cause)
- Position description for the member
- Grievance procedures
- Any other program-specific requirements
- Signatures of both the member and the program director

Member Orientation

- See Member Orientation Section

Financial Documentation

- Match (where applicable)
- Receipts for Grant Expenditures
- Internal Controls Systems
- Accounting Systems
- Payroll System
- A-133 Audit (if applicable)

Monitoring Review Tools and Documents

All monitoring tools and guides are available on the program directors resources page. It is recommended that program staff is familiar with these documents and seeks to ensure that their program operates in a manner consistent with AmeriCorps rules and regulation as well as Utah State Commission policies and procedures.

https://userve.utah.gov/userveutah/americorps-program-director-resources

Performance Indicators

CNCS maintains high standards for member enrollment, retention, 8 day enrollment rate and 30 day exit rates in eGrants. These four metrics are referred to on eGrants progress reports as performance indicators. Due to these high standards it is important for the UServeUtah National Service Staff to monitor programs closely to ensure that the proper focus is given to these areas. It is important for programs to show improvement when not meeting these expectations.

Compliance Monitoring

Performance indicator reports will be run on a quarterly basis by the National Service program staff at UServeUtah to check compliance with performance indicators. Non-compliance will be addressed with the program using a performance improvement letter which will require a formal response from the program. A reasonable deadline will be provided to allow the program time to respond.

Expectations

Enrollment Rate – 100%

CNCS expects programs to fill 100% of the slots that they are awarded. Written explanation must be provided during the October and April progress reporting cycles for any rate below 100%. The program must also provide a detailed explanation of what is being done to improve the enrollment rate. Failure to meet the enrollment rate may affect funding decisions.

Retention Rate – 90% Formula – 100% Competitive

Retention refers to the percentage of enrolled members that remain with the program for their full term and are exited successfully with an education award. For programs funded through the Utah State Formula Grant the expectation for retaining members is 90%. For all programs funded competitively through CNCS the expectation is 100%. Written explanation must be provided during the October and April progress reporting cycles for any rate below the expectation level. The program must also provide a detailed explanation of what is being done to improve the retention rate. Failure to meet the enrollment rate may be an indicator of poor member experiences with your program. As a result this may affect funding decisions.

8 Day Enrollment in eGrants – 100%

Programs must ensure that each member is enrolled in the eGrants system within 8 days of beginning service. Written explanation must be provided during the October and April progress reporting cycles for any rate below 100%. The program must also provide a detailed explanation of what is being done to correct any non-compliance. Failure to meet this indicator may affect funding decisions.

30 Day Exits in eGrants – 100%

Programs must ensure that each member is exited from the eGrants system within 30 days of their last day of service. Written explanation must be provided during the October and April progress reporting cycles for any rate below 100%. The program must also provide a detailed explanation of what is being done to correct any non-compliance. Failure to meet this indicator may affect funding decisions.