

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How old do I need to be to participate?

The **minimum age requirement for most programs is 18**. However, some accept applications from 16-17-year-olds. While a few programs are designed specifically for young adults, **the majority of our programs have no upper age limit**.

## What are the three main AmeriCorps programs?

**AmeriCorps State and National:** AmeriCorps State and National supports a broad range of local service programs that engage thousands of Americans in intensive service to meet critical community needs. [Learn more about AmeriCorps State and National](#).

**AmeriCorps VISTA:** AmeriCorps VISTA provides full-time members to community organizations and public agencies to create and expand programs that build capacity and ultimately bring low-income individuals and communities out of poverty. [Learn more about AmeriCorps VISTA](#).

**AmeriCorps NCCC:** The AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps is a full-time residential program for men and women, ages 18-26\*, that strengthens communities while developing leaders through direct, team-based national and community service. [Learn more about AmeriCorps NCCC](#).

## Do I Need a degree?

You do not need a college degree to serve. If you don't have a high school diploma, you may still be eligible to serve.

## Will I get paid?

AmeriCorps programs do not pay a wage or salary to members, however, most programs offer a modest living allowance throughout the term of service.

## What about housing?

Housing accommodations vary across the different opportunities that are available to you. Some are residential, and others do not provide housing so you can live wherever you would like.

## What skills do I need to apply?

Most programs look for people with the passion to be part of the greater good. Some programs list desired skills, others look for applicants with specific education, volunteer, or job experience.

## Will I get any training before I begin my service?

Yes, you will receive training at the beginning of your service, as well as project-specific training during service.

## How long are the assignments, and are they all full-time?

The time commitment varies depending on the needs of the program. Generally, the service commitment can be from three months, e.g. a summer program, up to one year. Many terms of service are full time, but there are also part-time service opportunities available.

## What benefits are provided during and after service?

- Living allowance
- Education Award to pay for college or trade school expenses, or to repay qualified student loans
- Loan deferment and interest forbearance on qualified student loans, while in service
- Professional Development
- Alumni Network

Some of our programs provide health care benefits or a stipend to purchase healthcare. You may also be eligible to receive a childcare benefit if you have children under the age of 13.

## Can I defer student loans during my service with AmeriCorps?

Members may qualify for postponement, or forbearance, of the repayment of their loans during service. The education award will help you pay off qualified student loans when you're finished. You may also qualify to have the interest accrued on your student loans during service paid for by the National Service Trust. Contact your lender for more specific information or to confirm your loan status during AmeriCorps service. To learn more, see [Education Award FAQs](#).

## What if I'm out of school and not interested in the Education Award? Can I get that money in cash?

If you're part of AmeriCorps VISTA, you may opt for a cash payment instead if the education award. All other AmeriCorps members are eligible only for the education award. However, if a member is 55 years of age or older at the time they start service, they can transfer their education award to an eligible child or grandchild.

## Is AmeriCorps just for young people?

No, AmeriCorps values the experience of older Americans. Whether you want a career change or have just retired, it's never too late to serve. You can also check out opportunities specifically for individuals 55 and older through the Senior Corps programs at [seniorcorps.gov](#).

## Will my race, sexual orientation, or disability affect my application?

We are committed to the idea that everyone can serve. AmeriCorps is an opportunity to learn about our differences while working toward a common goal. We strive to create an inclusive environment and offer reasonable accommodations for applicants with disabilities.

## Can I join if I'm not a U.S. citizen?

For AmeriCorps State and National and AmeriCorps NCCC you must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or legal permanent resident alien of the United States to be an AmeriCorps member. For AmeriCorps VISTA, you must have one of the following citizenship statuses: U.S. Citizens, U.S. Nationals, Lawful Permanent Resident Aliens, or persons legally residing in a state that have the following legal residency classifications: refugee, asylum or asylee, temporary protected status or deferred action for childhood arrivals (DACA) status. By law, only VISTA members who are either U.S. Citizens, U.S. Nationals, or Lawful Permanent Resident Aliens—sometimes referred to as “Lawful Permanent Residents”—are eligible to receive an AmeriCorps Segal Education Award. All other members will receive an end of service cash stipend.