Frequently Asked Questions

How old do I need to be to participate?

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

Do I need a degree or diploma?

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, although most programs require a minimum of a high school diploma or G.E.D.

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 benefits are provided during and after AmeriCorps?

Living allowance, and 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, and more. Some programs provide health care benefits or a stipend to purchase healthcare.

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 up to one year. Many terms of service are full-time, but there are also part-time service opportunities available.

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 do I apply?

Each AmeriCorps programs' application process is slightly different. Use the Fit Finder (americorps.gov/serve/fit-finder) to find the right program for you. On the program-specific pages, scroll to the How to Apply section. Ultimately, all AmeriCorps applicants must submit an application on the MyAmeriCorps Portal.

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How long does it take to complete the application?

Each AmeriCorps programs' application process is slightly different. Most applications will take you roughly 30 minutes to complete. Some applications require references, a phone survey, or supplemental questions.

What type of references do I need to apply?

A valid reference must be new (within the past 24 months). You must have at least one personal and one professional reference for your application to be assessed. Professional references include: supervisors, clergy members, mentors, teachers, coaches etc. Having professional references boosts your application during the assessment process.

What is the maximum amount of an education award?

The maximum amount of a full-time education award is equivalent to the maximum amount of the Pell Grant for the year for which the national service position was approved. To determine the amount of each AmeriCorps education award, AmeriCorps will use the amount of the Pell Grant as of the first day of the Federal fiscal year (i.e., October 1st) in the fiscal year in which that national service position is approved.

Do I have to be a U.S. citizen to serve in AmeriCorps?

To serve in AmeriCorps State and National or AmeriCorps NCCC, you must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or legal permanent resident alien of the United States. To serve in 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 AmeriCorps 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.