AmeriCorps Georgia

Reference Training Manual for Sub-Grantees of Georgia Serves

dba Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism

2022-23PY

Table of Contents

Revisions

- 06/04/2022 **Reviewed and updated manual in its entirety.**
    - **Included new NSCHC Requirements** – went into effect May 1, 2021
    - **Added new GCSV Policies/Forms**
    - **Updated Member File Checklist**

- 07/01/2018 **Page 11 Identity and Citizenship Verification Process:**
  - NEW POLICY- The process for verifying the identity and citizenship status of individuals applying to serve in AmeriCorps has been automated.

- 07/01/2018 **Page 17 Member Enrollment:**
  - NEW POLICY- A new policy for enrolling Members has been established and will go into effect on July 1, 2018.

- 06/19/2018 **Page 67 Compliance Visits:**
  -Added "Staff files"

- 09/26/2016 **Page 21 Slot Transfers to Other Sub-Grantees Within Portfolio:** - Removed "No funds may be transferred with the slots."
    - According to the Corporation, funds may be transferred along with slots within the formula portfolio. Funds may not be transferred between competitive grants.

- 09/26/2016 **Page 44 Departmental Order (DO) FBI Checks – expires 03/31/2016**
  - Removed "Departmental Order (DO) FBI Checks and replaced with "Updates to the "Not Cleared" challenge Process

- 06/19/2018 **Page 67 Compliance Visits:**
  -Added "Staff files"

What is AmeriCorps

It's a network of national service programs that seeks to address critical community needs and foster civic engagement.

About 80,000 AmeriCorps Members serve throughout the country each year.

Members serve in nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based non-profit organizations with 501(c)3 status.

Some of the things AmeriCorps Members do include:

- Help communities recover from natural disasters
- Build affordable housing
- Increase economic opportunities
- Promote environmental sustainability
- Help students increase academic performance
- Assist veterans and their families
- Promote healthy futures

The AmeriCorps Member Pledge

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

I will bring Americans together
to strengthen our communities.

Faced with apathy,
I will take action.

Faced with conflict,
I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity,
I will persevere.

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

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

Georgia Serves Mission

The Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism (GCSV, Commission) is a catalyst to address critical needs in Georgia by working with AmeriCorps and community partners.

- We create and promote opportunities for Georgians to serve.
- We support organizations that use volunteer service to solve Georgia's community problems.
- We make sure the investment in volunteer service is protected and managed well.

Working within the Department of Community Affairs, the Commission has provided more than $80 million in AmeriCorps funds to Georgia's communities since 1994. Over this time, tens of thousands of Georgians have served in AmeriCorps.

Purpose of Georgia Serves

The Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism, #GeorgiaServes, is located within the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

Georgia Serves is a catalyst to address critical needs in Georgia by working with AmeriCorps and community partners.

• We create and promote opportunities for Georgians to serve.
• We support organizations that use volunteer service to solve Georgia's community problems.
• We make sure the investment in volunteer service is protected and managed well.

Funding is made possible by AmeriCorps, the federal agency. AmeriCorps is a federal agency that brings people together to tackle the country's most pressing challenges, through national service and volunteering. AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serve with organizations dedicated to the improvement of communities. AmeriCorps helps make service to others a cornerstone of our national culture. Learn more at AmeriCorps.gov.

AmeriCorps, "the domestic Peace Corps," is a National Service program that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in team-based, results-driven service.

Authorization

Established in 1994 as a direct response to the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. Also responsive to the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act of 2009.

Eligible Areas

Statewide.

Eligible Applicants

- Indian Tribes (2 CFR §200.54)
- Institutions of higher education (2 CFR §200.55)
- Local governments (2 CFR §200.64)
- Nonprofit organizations (2 CFR §200.70)
- States (2 CFR §200.90)

Program Benefits/Eligible Uses

Georgia Serves is part of a cadre of community improvement tools available through the Community Development Division within the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). AmeriCorps programs provide a variety of specific and identifiable direct services that address community needs.

Since 1994, more than 1,000,000 individuals have served in AmeriCorps, providing needed assistance to millions of Americans through projects ranging from tutoring, youth mentoring, public safety, housing rehabilitation, health care, environmental issues, and disaster relief.

AmeriCorps members may commit to a one-year term of service. At the successful completion of that service, the full-time member is eligible to receive a monetary education award to use toward tuitions or student loans. The amount of the education award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant and the value is subject to change annually. Effective October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021, the amount of the education award for a full-time AmeriCorps Member was $6,345. For FY22, full-time AmeriCorps Members may receive, in the form of a living allowance, a minimum of $16,502 during their year of service. Living allowances and education awards are less for members who serve less than full-time.

Funding Limits

Funding is dependent on the availability of funds granted to the State Commission by AmeriCorps, the federal agency. The State's allocation is determined by using a state population-based formula. Guidelines are set by AmeriCorps and additional Georgia-specific guidelines are set by Georgia Serves and may vary from one program year to another. In FY22, applicants may request a maximum of $28,800 per MSY, which can be defined as a full-time member who commits to serve a minimum of 1,700 hours during a program year. Members may also commit to serve three-quarter time, half-time, reduced half-time, quarter-time, or minimum time. An overall match requirement of 24% is mandatory for the first 3 years of funding. The match requirement is graduated accordingly after the initial three-year period.

Application/Approval Procedure

Funding is competitive, and applications are typically due in mid-February of each year. A series of workshops are held prior to the application due date. If you would like to receive an invitation to the workshops, please send an email to AmeriCorpsGA@dca.ga.gov.

Oversight and Monitoring

GCSV staff reports directly to AmeriCorps, the federal agency in Washington, DC as well as to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Needless to say, the GCSV (aka Georgia Serves) staff must be cognizant of the many state laws as well as federal rules and regulations involved in managing the federal dollars that pass through this State Agency.

Over the years, GCSV staff has developed a number of tools to assist in the oversight and monitoring of AmeriCorps programs.

Grant Agreements

Each organization must sign a “Grant Agreement” which is an agreement between the Sub-grantee (AmeriCorps award recipient receiving funds from the GCSV), aka the Grantee, and the Grantee’s State Agency (pass through agency receiving funds from AmeriCorps, the federal agency).

The purpose of this agreement is to specify the amount of the grant as well as other specific terms and conditions pertaining to the grant such as the number of Member Service Years, the legal recipient and other grant requirements. When this agreement is signed by all parties, it means that the sub-grantee has accepted the funds, the terms, and agrees to operate the program in accordance with the approved grant application, performance measures, budget, supporting documents and other representations made in support of the approved application. Violation of any of these terms and conditions may result in non-compliance.

It is important to note that GCSV Board Members approved the application, budget, performance measures and all documents supporting the application when they voted to fund the applicant. It should also be noted that the Grant Agreement was signed and agreed upon by all parties. These items should not be taken lightly as they are all legal and binding documents. Therefore, it is extremely important that the sub-grantee strictly adhere to the budget, application, performance measures and all other documentation in the form they were submitted. Any changes must be justified and will require pre-approval.

It should be noted that the grant agreement includes due dates of many of the reporting requirements of AmeriCorps, the agency as well as those of the Georgia Serves. It also specifies the frequency for submitting reimbursement requests. Failure to meet Georgia Serves deadlines will result in the issuance of a Letter of Non-Compliance and will have a negative impact on your program’s Risk Assessment score, which may affect future funding decisions.

Desk Audits

Each time a Request for Reimbursement is submitted, a desk audit is performed. The form used to perform this desk audit is known as the "Desk Review Grant Reimbursement Approval Form" and can be found in the Appendix.

The desk audit is a check of fiscal, programmatic, and compliance adherence for the period covering the request. If there are issues related to any of these areas of compliance, the request will most likely not be processed until the issues have been corrected. These are all very good reasons why programs should submit Requests for Reimbursements on a regular basis in line with the terms in their respective Grant Agreements. If there are any issues, they can be caught and resolved early as opposed to the program submitting requests late just to learn that they are not compliant and cannot be processed. When Requests for Reimbursements are held, financial stress may be placed on the program. Nonetheless, Georgia Serves staff cannot and will not process Reimbursement Requests that are not compliant.

A complete Request for Reimbursement consists of the following:

1. Signed Request for Reimbursement
2. Periodic Expense Report (PER) (in the OnCorps System)
3. PER Workbook (must follow labeling requirements)
4. Support Documents (Corresponding support documents must follow each page of the workbook to which they pertain.)

The Request for Reimbursement Form and the PER Workbook can be found in the Appendix and will be discussed in detail below.

1. **Signed Request for Reimbursement:** This form is the formal request for reimbursement and is submitted from the sub-grantee to the grantee. It must be submitted in the eCivis system unless otherwise instructed that it be submitted electronically via email. It should include the name of the program, the date of the request and the month that the request for reimbursement covers. It is important to note that all funds are on a reimbursement basis. In other words, the program must have expended the funds (paid the invoices/receipts, member living allowances, etc.) before submitting the Request for Reimbursement. Invoices showing an amount due will not be reimbursed. The grantee must show proof that the invoice has actually been paid. Requests should cover only one month. One exception to the rule is that Georgia Serves allows educational institutions to submit requests a month in arrears due to the convoluted nature of their accounting systems, requests should only cover one month.

   The organization should note that by signing this the Request for Reimbursement form, they are certifying that they have reviewed and reconciled the PER, the payroll registers, and the general ledger prior to submission of this form. They are also certifying that the information they are submitted has been checked and double-checked to ensure accuracy and completeness. Source documentation must accompany the request and must include receipts, invoices, agendas, payroll registers, check stubs, sign-in sheets, etc.). If the sign-in sheet is from a webinar using an electronic platform, attendees must use their full names and not nicknames or phone numbers. A photo of attendees does not replace a sign-in sheet. It is strongly advised that the person(s) submitting Requests for Reimbursement check the request thoroughly before submitting them for processing. If requests are not complete or are not accurate, they will be sent back to the program for correction. This back-and-forth between the PO and the program will delay processing of the request.

It should also be noted that if requests are late and the program has not contacted their program officer, the program will receive a notice of non-compliance. The board will be copied on all Notices of Non-Compliance. Three notices of non-compliance may lead to rescinding funds for this grant. In any event, the Georgia Serves board is kept abreast of all programs' performance (both positive and negative) on a regular basis.

2. **Periodic Expense Report (PER) (in the OnCorps System):** Your program will populate the budget portion of the PER in OnCorps at the beginning of the program year or as soon as AmeriCorps has approved funding for your program. It should mirror the original budget that was voted on and approved by the Georgia Serves board and awarded by AmeriCorps. Each time a Request for Reimbursement is submitted, the PER should be populated in OnCorps and the entire packet submitted via eCivis. Your program officer will check to ensure that all line items are within budget. S/He will also check to make sure that the program is following the proposed budget (i.e., number of staff on budget and percentages of time). They will also check to ensure that there is backup documentation to justify all expenses on the PER.

3. **PER Workbook:** The PER Workbook should match the PER exactly. The PER Workbook is an Excel spreadsheet and its purpose is to assist your program officer in matching source documentation with line item expenses in the PER. Several expenses may be included in a line item and it is difficult to match expenses if it is not clear and obvious. The program officer would have to guess the receipts, invoices, etc. for a line item without clear documentation. Clear documentation is also necessary for a clean and clear audit trail. When Georgia Serves receives an audit visit from (Office of the Inspector General) OIG, we want to make the process as simple and as transparent as possible. The PER Workbook will aid in this process.

   The person(s) submitting the Request for Reimbursement should complete the workbook and use the comments section to provide and explain calculations for transparency and clarification purposes, for the person processing the request and any person that may review the PER in the future. All documents should be labeled to correspond to line items in the PER Workbook. The following example will demonstrate how the documents should be labeled.

   Note that the PER Workbook Excel Spreadsheet will have a separate tab for each line item. A summary sheet is also included in the PER Workbook but it is not editable by the end-user. It has been password protected to maintain integrity.

A. PERSONNEL EXPENSES		$4,841.38	$	$ -	$ 4,841.38	
PLEASE DO NOT TYPE IN SHADED SECTIONS						
PAY PERIOD	DOC #	CNCS	GRANTEE - CASH	GRANTEE - IN KIND	TOTAL	COMMENTS
06/01/15-06/15/15	A1	$ 1,663.00	$	$ -	$ 1,663.00	John Smith-Program Director salary 100%
06/01/15-06/15/15	A2	$ 550.00	$ -		$ 550.00	Jane Johnson-Admin Salary $2,750*20%
06/01/15-06/15/15	A3	$ 207.69	$		$ 207.69	Barbara Harris- Site Sup $1,384.61*15%
06/16/15-06/30/15	A4	$1,663.00			$ 1,663.00	John Smith-Program Director salary 100%

4. **Source Documents:** In the example above, there should be at least four documents to support the above expenses. They should be labeled “A1, A2, A3, and A4”; corresponding with the PER Workbook. You will note that the budget you completed in eGrants is labeled as “A. Personnel Expenses”. These labeling conventions for the headings of the budget form in the eGrants system. An example of support documentation for Doc #A1 is below.

A1

EMPLOYEE PAY STUB

EMPLOYER NAME	**EMPLOYEE NAME**
ABC Agency	John Smith
EMPLOYER ADDRESS	**EMPLOYEE ADDRESS**
1621 Garfield Park Drive P. O. Box 88888 Atlanta GA 30035	320 South Marshall Place P. O. Box 22222 Atlanta GA 30016
EMPLOYER TELEPHONE	**EMPLOYEE #**
404-679-3214	1248111
CHECK #	**SSN (LAST FOUR DIGITS)**
5789	3111
PAY PERIOD	**PAY DATE**
6/1/2015 - 6/15/2015	6/15/2015

GROSS EARNINGS	RATE	HOURS	CURRENT TOTAL	YEAR TO DATE
REGULAR	$27.059	80	$2,164.77	$21,647.70
OVERTIME	0	0	0	0
OTHER	0	0	0	0

DEDUCTIONS	CURRENT TOTAL	YEAR TO DATE
FICA – MEDICARE	140.76	1407.60
FICA – SOCIAL SECURITY	98.23	982.30
FEDERAL TAX	181.56	1815.60
STATE TAX	81.22	812.20
OTHER	0	0

CURRENT GROSS	**YEAR TO DATE GROSS**
$2,164.77	$21,647.70
CURRENT DEDUCTIONS	**YEAR TO DATE DEDUCTIONS**
$501.77	$5,017.70
CURRENT NET PAY	**YEAR TO DATE NET PAY**
$1,663.00	$16,630

Notices of Non-Compliance

Non-Compliance is the result of the sub-grantee’s failure to follow AmeriCorps Rules and Regulations, the Code of Federal Regulations, or regulations specific to Georgia

Serves such as the signed Grant Agreement or the signed Request for Reimbursement. In addition, Georgia Serves has created Policies and Procedures which can be found in the Appendix. Grantees receiving Notices of Non-Compliance will be in danger of losing funding. All Notices of Non-Compliance are shared with the GCSV Board of Directors. These notices will also affect Risk Assessment Scores. The following are examples demonstrating when a sub-grantee may receive a notice of non-compliance. Please know that this list is not exhaustive.

- Failure to submit correct Requests for Reimbursement on a regular basis.
- Failure to submit PM Progress Reports when they are due.
- Failure to submit AFRs (Aggregate Financial Reports) when they are due.
- Failure to conduct criminal background checks on the appropriate individuals.

Compliance Visits

Every sub-grantee in the GCSV's portfolio of programs will receive at least one compliance visit per program year. These visits are not to be feared. They are simply a means of checking to ensure that all programs are compliant. They are also opportunities for Georgia Serves Board members to tour your program to become more familiar with positive impacts being made in the communities as a result of your program. During a compliance visit, the program officer will check the following:

- Member files
- Staff files
- Signage at program site(s)
- Observance of Members wearing gear
- May privately interview members and other stakeholders
- Member surveys (sent prior to visit)
- Self-assessment (sent prior to visit)
- May review financial systems
- May tour sub-sites
- NSCHC checks and documentation

All of these checks and reviews are to ensure that all programs are performing adequate administrative oversight. When the Office of Inspector General visits Georgia, we want to make sure that everyone is prepared. We also want to diminish situations where costs may be questioned or, in more severe cases, where the sub-grantees are required to return funds to the federal government.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are conducted to quantitatively measure programs' levels of risk. It allows Commission staff to effectively monitor compliance and progress of AmeriCorps State projects in Georgia for the current and previous program year and to provide an adequate level of both on-site and off-site technical assistance needs based on the systematically assessed capacity of the sub-grantee to administer the project. Each Georgia AmeriCorps project will be analyzed and assigned a risk level of High, Medium, or Low. The monitoring strategy will specifically address issues contributing to the assigned risk categories for each program. Risk categories include the following:

- Previous findings and whether or not corrective actions were taken.
- Number of years in the Georgia Serves portfolio vs. level of proficiency.
- Performance Measures
  - History of meeting performance measure targets
  - Timeliness of performance measure reports
  - Meaningful performance measure reports
- Member Management
  - Member enrollment
  - Member retention
  - Member success
  - Member exits
  - End-of-term evaluations
  - Member satisfaction
  - Change of Status
  - Up-to-date and accurate member time sheets
- File Management
  - Criminal History record checks and confidential information
  - All documents on the file checklist are maintained in the member files
  - Access to files
- Letters of Non-Compliance
- Communications between program and GCSV staff
  - GCSV staff kept up-to-date on progress concerning issues
  - Staff turnover
  - Attendance at GCSV specific trainings.
- Fiscal
  - Meeting required match
  - Most recent audit reviews
  - Timeliness of PERs/Reimbursement Requests

The overall monitoring strategy will allow for the most time-intensive monitoring of the highest risk projects, with less time-intensive monitoring strategies applied, as appropriate, to lower risk projects. Risk scores may be as high as 149 or as low as 0. A score of 0 would indicate a very outstanding and proficient program!

Introduction to Member Recruitment

Recruitment is a critical aspect of program management. A strategic recruitment process is one that connects your program with the right candidates – those who can bring their skills to help accomplish program goals and can grow personally in doing so. Because members are in the community performing direct service, they become the face of your program! The success of a program is directly tied to its ability to effectively recruit qualified individuals. Your program should strive to find, place, and retain the best applicants for available positions with your organization while ensuring a rewarding experience for all stakeholders, including members, staff, partners and especially those served by your program.

When recruiting AmeriCorps Members, there are a number of things you should consider:

1. How many AmeriCorps Members do I need?
2. Should they be full-time or less than full-time?
3. Should they be from the immediate community or surrounding areas?
4. Will they require their own transportation?
5. What skills, knowledge and abilities should they possess?
    a. Develop a position description.
6. Set a recruitment timeline by considering the desired start date, advertising period for the position, dates of interviews, estimated time for NSCHCs, and any other screening requirements set by your organization.
7. Where and when to post the position(s).
8. You may print brochures from AmeriCorps.Gov or ask your State Commission for brochures.
9. Consider sources for recruitment:
    a. MyAmeriCorps
    b. Local colleges and universities
    c. Social media (LinkedIn, Indeed, etc.)
    d. Local Newspapers
    e. Public Service Announcements
    f. Church bulletins
    g. Word of mouth
    h. Job fairs
    i. School fairs
    j. Unemployment office
    k. Rotary Clubs
    l. Community Centers
    m. Indeed.com
10. Remember there is no maximum age limit for AmeriCorps Members.

Who Are You Looking For and Where Will You Find Them? Your next step is to figure out exactly what kind of members you're looking for and where to find them.

Identifying Likely Candidates

You'll save yourself a lot of work if you spend a little time thinking about where you'll find likely applicants for AmeriCorps. After all, the best materials and the best recruiters will do you little good if you don't match them up with people who might be interested in devoting a year of their lives to AmeriCorps. So, start by thinking about who would be most likely to want to join AmeriCorps.

Here are some tips:

➳ Don't overlook your own backyard!

Think about particularly good volunteers who have worked with your organization in the past, or who may have worked with other organizations.

➳ Look for groups of people in transition from one phase of their lives to another.

That would include people who are leaving or will soon be leaving their jobs or schools and might be more open to doing something unique and rewarding for a year. Recent retirees are another example.

➳ If you have hosted AmeriCorps members before, survey your current and former members about their motivations to serve and look for applicants who share similar interests. Consider the reasons they joined. Ask them where to reach people with similar motives or interests.

➳ Focus on people who are already active in their community through volunteer service, and particularly on people who have expressed or demonstrated an interest in the community problem you're working on. Of course, you'll want to be careful to remember the legal requirements for all potential AmeriCorps members. All members must be United States citizens, nationals, or legal permanent aliens. In addition, AmeriCorps members must be at least 17 years old. If they are 17, they must have a parent's signature. Sources of Potential Members and just where do potential AmeriCorps members hang out? Where should you look? And to whom should you talk? Here are some suggestions:

➳ The National AmeriCorps Referral System;

➳ Career counseling and planning centers;

➳ Other AmeriCorps programs that may have waiting lists—contact them through your state commission and state office;

➳ Members who are graduating from other AmeriCorps programs in the area;

➳ Local Learn and Serve America programs in your area—call 1-800-808-SERVE or go to www.learnandserve.org to identify programs;

➳ Local social service offices;

➳ Local volunteer clearinghouses and volunteer centers or campus community service centers;

➳ Local nonprofit and volunteer organizations;

➳ Places of worship—clergy often know a lot about who in their congregation might make good AmeriCorps members; Recruiting AmeriCorps Members

➳ College career fairs;

➳ High school career days for graduating seniors, including vocational or magnet schools, and those with a service-learning component;

➳ Teachers and guidance counselors in both public and private schools;

➳ Downsizing companies or military bases;

➳ The local Peace Corps recruitment office—call 1-800-424-8580 to find out where that is; and

➳ Local senior centers

Recruitment Timeline

It is important to create and implement a stringent recruitment timeline. It can be difficult for programs to set aside the time needed for recruitment. A timeline can help establish outreach windows, application deadlines, interview times, and clear targets for the staff facilitating recruitment efforts. When creating your timeline, consider these tips:

-Move backwards from your proposed program start date;

-If other staff/project sponsors are involved, make sure to coordinate schedules;

-Ensure you're aware of all tasks involved including (but not limited to):

-Write position descriptions;

-Create an outreach/publicity plan;

-Establish a process for handling applications, interviewing candidates, and eventually placing new members;

-Develop an acceptance letter and member handbook

-Establish a process for conducting criminal record checks

-Allow adequate time for successful applicants to give notice to their current employer and/or to relocate;

-Create a waiting list as a back-up plan for withdrawals;

-Be prepared for any unanticipated issues and the time to resolve them.

Special Challenges:

Because every community is different, each will pose its own unique set of challenges. Here are some tips other AmeriCorps programs and sponsors have found useful for overcoming specific recruitment issues.

Recruiting in Small Communities and Rural Areas:

Because small communities and rural areas offer fewer opportunities to find large gatherings of potential members, recruitment in such areas requires some special tactics. Think about where you get the most information about your community. It may be your community newspapers or bulletin board, a popular restaurant, or the local grocery store. Here are some approaches that have been successful in the past:

➳ Get the help of influential town members to get people talking about your program.

➳ Contact national and regional clubs, such as teachers associations, Rotary, and Cooperative Extension/4-H. These can be valuable contacts to reach retired and student membership groups.

➳ Ask for a chance to speak at a meeting and put a notice in the newsletter to spark interest among service-oriented individuals.

➳ Place posters or fliers on community bulletin boards and at grocery stores and restaurants –depending on the qualifications you need for the program.

➳ Host information events at local libraries, town meetings, or local and county fairs to spread the word.

➳ Talk to someone at the local newspaper or television station and ask to have a story run about your organization's work and need for members to help in the community. Smaller papers and stations are often very receptive to suggested story ideas, particularly if you can provide them with solid background information and names and numbers of sources.

Incorporating Diversity:

Diversity can include many things: age, gender, sexual orientation, income level, educational attainment, ethnic background, race, physical abilities, geography, skills, and more. A healthy mix of members on a program can make for a better program, and a better experience for the members and sponsoring organizations. Some tips on improving the diversity of your members include:

➳ Ask current members to promote your program in local communities where they serve. Ask them to recommend people within the community who would make good applicants.

➳ Plan outreach and advertising campaigns targeted to reach organizations or areas where diverse members can be found.

➳ Partner with local agencies or organizations serving diverse populations to help in your recruitment campaign.

➳ Be sure to pay careful attention to any cultural sensitivities as you recruit—calling potential recruits on religious holidays, for example.

Finding and Persuading Potential Applicants

Once you decide on your timeline, figure out your budget, and write a plan and a position description, you're ready to start talking to potential applicants. When it comes to recruitment, most AmeriCorps programs rely on four basic outreach methods: face-to-face recruitment, the national AmeriCorps referral system, networking, and the media. Some programs use all four methods while others pick and choose. What you do, and in what mix, will depend on your resources, your plan, and your community.

Face-to-Face Recruitment

Nothing compares with looking potential applicants in the eye, shaking their hands, and telling them why you think the opportunity you're offering is something they shouldn't pass up. It is by far the most direct, and generally the most effective way to recruit members. Unfortunately, it can also be more expensive and time-consuming than other approaches, but with proper planning, you can make the investment of time and money amply worthwhile. Some events, speaking engagements, and other face-to-face recruitment opportunities may require no out-of-pocket costs at all. The following are a few examples and hints for face-to-face recruitment. Stress Your Strengths In your one-on-one conversations with potential members, don't forget to play to your strong suit. Emphasize:

➳ The appeal of being part of a national movement;

➳ The opportunity to help the community;

➳ The chance to meet new people, and have an adventure;

➳ Training in job skills and career networking opportunities;

➳ Student loan deferment or forbearance;

➳ An education award to pay off most student loans or for future study; and

➳ The chance to apply education and experience to help communities.

Outreach Events

Once you've thought about where you're likely to find potential applicants, choosing the right events to attend is easy. Set up display tables at events such as career fairs or expositions, special conferences or meetings, town festivals, or city heritage days. Before you spend your time and resources on these events, think about the following:

➳ Make sure the intended audience of an event is likely to be there before you decide to attend. A college career fair for prospective or recent graduates, especially a nonprofit career fair, is a good example of an appropriate event audience. You'll also want to assess whether event sponsors have promoted the event sufficiently to draw a crowd.

Make sure you have a good display space—both in terms of size and location. If you have a choice about where to set up, walk through the space and see where the natural flow of the area takes you. See where your eyes are led. Make note of which doors people will enter the space through, and which direction they will naturally walk. Know the size of your display space and then create or request a display appropriate to the space.

Displays are available for loan by calling the AmeriCorps Hotline at 1-800-942-2677.

➳ Bring enough materials with you. You should give people enough information to understand your agency and the position, but not a copy of everything you have. The first thing potential applicants read should tell them right away what your program is doing and what AmeriCorps is. Have a few applications behind the table for people who seem very interested in your program.

➳ Have a sign-up sheet at your table. It'll save you from losing the name and contact information for potential applicants. Take notes on anyone you talk with who seems particularly interested, and what they had to say. That way you'll know whom you're talking to when you follow up. It's important to make your display space visually appealing so people are drawn to it, and equally important that whoever staffs the table is outgoing and good at talking with people.

Here are some ideas:

➳ Use a tabletop display or table banner to brighten up your space.

➳ Display large pictures of members in service in an attractive and professional manner.

➳ Show a video, if an electrical connection is available. You can use the AmeriCorps recruitment video "Walk the Walk" (available by calling 1-800- 942-2677) or a video of your program.

➳ Stand in front of or beside the table. If you are sitting down, reading a newspaper, or talking with another presenter, people will be less likely to want to bother you.

➳ Offer food to draw people to your table. Candy is always a cost-effective enticement.

➳ Bring other giveaways as incentives for people to come talk to you. For example, you can give away pens, water bottles, highlighters, magnets, and other items that include contact information— your phone number, program name, and the AmeriCorps 1-800 number. Check your local yellow pages or the Internet for promotional item vendors and consider asking for an in-kind contribution. Low-cost AmeriCorps products and giveaways are available by calling (601) 984-3200. You can download an AmeriCorps catalog at www.nationalservice.org/americorps/resources/index.html.

➳ Actively pursue event attendees. Greet people as they approach your table or look your way. Start a conversation with a question like, "Are you familiar with AmeriCorps?" If they say no, follow up with, "Well, let me tell you about it." Then get them talking to you.

Sample Four-Month Recruitment Timeline for a program starting in September

June

- Finalize program calendar, performance goals/benchmarks, and logistics
- Develop an advertising plan
- Create member position descriptions (i.e., eligibility requirements, description of service activities, summary of benefits, etc.)
- Develop an application process (paper vs. online applications, interview process, reference checks process, etc.)
- Notify stakeholders involved in the recruitment process (i.e., partner service sites)

July

- Post service opportunities to the My AmeriCorps Portal and/or other public media (i.e., newspaper, bulletin boards, college campuses, online volunteer recruitment sites, social media, etc.)
- Forward applicable recruitment materials to stakeholders and maintain ongoing communication.
- Receive and process applications (ensure that applicants meet the eligibility criteria)

- ❖ Schedule interviews with potential candidates
- ❖ Interview potential candidates – let them know that the potential start date is in September
- ❖ Develop acceptance materials
- ❖ Make member selection decisions (provide selected candidates with information related to New Member Orientation)
- ❖ Initiate and record the National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC)
  - **Hint: If you have experienced receiving slow reports from Truescreen and Fieldprint, you may need to move this task close to the beginning of the month.**

August

- ❖ Develop New Member Orientation agenda
- ❖ Submit a Member Contract to GCSV for review/approval
- ❖ Develop a Member Handbook (policies and procedures/do's and don'ts)

September

- ❖ Conduct New Member Orientation (Target Date: first day of Members' term of service)
- ❖ Selected Members commence term of service.
  - Make sure NSCHCs have been adjudicated at least the day before a member begin service
  - Make sure member has signed MSA (Member Service Agreement
  - Make sure all parties have signed the grant agreement

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES, MEMBER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CRITERIA

The basic eligibility requirements for AmeriCorps Members are:

- Members must be at least 18 years of age (or 17 years of age with parental consent).
- Members must be a US Citizen or a Lawful Permanent Resident.
- Members must have a High School Diploma/GED or have a plan in place to earn it before the completion of their service.
- Members must successfully clear all applicable background check protocol.

Programs may establish additional guidelines based on the type of service position and the basic skills/aptitude required in order to be successful in the service position.

Member recruitment and selection requirements may be found in the Corporation's regulations at 45 CFR Part 2522.210. The sub-grantee must ensure that the following procedures are followed:

1. **Notice to the Corporation's National Service Trust:** The grantee must notify the Corporation's National Service Trust within 30 days of a Member's selection for, completion of, suspension from, or release from a term of service. Suspension of

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

The grantee must also notify the Trust when a change in a Member's status is approved and changed (i.e., from full-time to less than full-time or vice versa). Failure to report such changes within 30 days may result in sanctions to the grantee, up to and including suspension or termination. Sub-grantees meet notification requirements when they use the appropriate electronic system to inform the Corporation within the approved time frames. Any questions regarding the Trust should be directed to the Trust Office (800) 942-2677.

Penalties for false information: Any individual who makes a materially false statement or representation in connection with the approval or disbursement of an education award or other payment from the National Service Trust may be liable for the recovery of funds and subject to civil and criminal sanctions.

2. **Slot Conversions for Fixed Amount Grants:** With the exception of Education Award Only Grants, grantees with fixed amount grants may not convert Members to less-than-full-time slots.

3. **Parental Consent:** Parental or legal guardian consent must be obtained for members under 18 years of age before beginning a term of service. Sub-grantees may also include an informed consent form of their own design as part of the Member contract materials.

4. **Reasonable Accommodation:** Programs and activities must be accessible to persons with disabilities, and the grantee must provide reasonable accommodation to the known mental or physical disabilities of otherwise qualified Members, service recipients, applicants, and staff. All selections and project assignments must be made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation. Please, visit the link below for additional information on Disability Inclusion.

5. **Identity and Citizenship Verification:** The process for verifying the identity and citizenship status of individuals applying to serve in AmeriCorps has been automated. When the individual is enrolled, the individual's information will be automatically reviewed by the Social Security Administration within 3 business days. If the individual's information is verified, the AmeriCorps grantee or sponsor will not need to do anything. The individual's status will appear as "Verified" in their My AmeriCorps account and in eGrants for your records. If the individual's information cannot be automatically verified by the Social Security Administration, AmeriCorps State & National grantees will receive an email regarding the next steps which will include a request for documentation. Within eGrants, the status of an individual's identity and citizenship review can be seen at any time. If you have questions, please contact the National Service Hotline at 1-800-942-2677 or via web at www.nationalservice.gov/questions.

Recruiting People with Disabilities

How do I successfully recruit people with disabilities in National and Community Service? There are two basic approaches to recruitment of persons with disabilities as participants in your program. The first is to recruit persons with disabilities as part of your overall recruitment process. This will happen naturally as your program becomes increasingly accessible and inclusive. The second approach is to conduct specific outreach activities with communities of persons with disabilities and organizations that serve these communities.

How can I make recruitment activities inclusive? The first step toward inclusive recruitment is creating an inclusive service environment. An inclusive service environment is one that proactively seeks to include persons with disabilities, ensures that everyone can make a valued contribution, and weaves access and accommodations into all aspects of the program. There are several ways that you can ensure that your recruitment activities are inclusive:

- Include images of people with disabilities as service providers in your brochures, videos, and other materials.
- Make sure that any videos you produce are captioned and audio-described.
- Make a clear statement of your willingness to provide accommodations. Sample Statement: Qualified individuals with disabilities who need accommodations may make arrangements by contacting (insert your program contact person and number/email).
- Familiarize your staff with your state relay services or your TDD/TTY number.
- Insert a non-discrimination clause in all of your written materials.
- Proactively let the public know that you will provide materials in alternative formats. Example Statement: This document and others are available in alternate formats.
- Ensure that your website is accessible (good information on how to incorporate accessibility features on your website can be found at www.cast.org)
- Be sure your application forms ask no questions regarding disabilities, history of disabilities (the applicant or their family), or other medical information unless it requests a voluntary response that is separated and filed separately and used for statistical purposes only.
- Identify organizations or individuals in your community with disability experience who can review materials to ensure that your language is appropriate.
- Hold meetings and events in locations that are barrier free, and let people know the events are accessible. Example Statement: The AmeriCorps kickoff event will be held in an accessible location. Other accommodations will be provided upon request. Please contact (insert your program contact person and number/email).

Outreach to Persons with Disabilities: People with disabilities are in every community, organization, and neighborhood. Disability crosses all demographic groups. People with disabilities are young and old, rich, poor, and middle-class, highly educated, etc.. Some individuals with disabilities are very committed to service; while others have never been exposed to service. Some have not had a lot of experience working alongside people without disabilities; others have.

Before you begin to aggressively recruit, make sure that your staff, participants, and whoever else may be involved in recruitment are prepared for this initiative. It will not help your efforts to do great outreach and have staff unprepared for persons who may request accommodations! Be sure to provide training to all staff and participants.

SSN Validations Status - Glossary of Terms

Pending: The individual's information is being verified for Social Security number status. The status will be automatically updated within three business days.

Pending Manual Verification: the CNCS was unable to automatically verify the applicant's Social Security number status based on the information provided in their application. If this applicant was applying to an AmeriCorps State/National program, please refer to emails about this applicant's issue sent to your organization regarding next steps. If this applicant was applying to an AmeriCorps VISTA project, please follow-up with the State Office.

Verified: The individual's information has been verified on the date listed.

Manually Verified: The individual's information has been manually verified on the date listed. If you are an AmeriCorps State/National program, please keep a record of this individual's information in their file.

Manually Returned: CNCS received insufficient paperwork to verify the applicant's Social Security number. If this applicant was applying to an AmeriCorps State/National program, please refer to emails about this applicant's issue sent to your organization regarding next steps. If this applicant was applying to an AmeriCorps VISTA project, please follow up with the State Office.

Returned: CNCS was unable to automatically verify the applicant's Social Security number based on the information provided in their application. If this applicant was applying to an AmeriCorps State/National program, please refer to the email about this applicant's issue sent to your organization regarding next steps. If this applicant was applying to an AmeriCorps VISTA project, please follow up with the State Office.

Cannot be Verified: All possible actions have been taken to achieve verification and it is currently not possible to verify the data regarding this individual's application.

Previously Served: This individual has prior service and will not need their SSN and Citizenship verified unless requested by CNCS.

Service Opportunity Listings: Once you know what you're looking for, you can target your advertising of available service positions to reach a qualified and diverse applicant pool. Research all available recruitment or communication channels available to you in your community or via the Internet. Word of mouth is still a great recruitment tool so do not ignore tapping into alumni, individuals, organizations, etc. Actively seek diversity so that your Corps represents the community in which it serves.   Recruitment and retention are large determinants of future funding so make retention a goal in the recruitment process. One red flag is an applicant who has held several positions in a short time span that were not short-term internships or contracted/temporary work assignments.

Some other recruitment tools not required but for your consideration:

- Hero 2 Hired (http://www.h2h.jobs/) or the Department of Veterans Affairs
- My AmeriCorps Portal
- Organizations serving people with disabilities such as State and Local Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies
- Welfare-to-Work

Creating a service opportunity in My AmeriCorps: To create a service opportunity listing in My AmeriCorps Portal, follow the steps below:

1. Log into eGrants (http://egrants.cns.gov).
2. Click Portal Home" on home page.
3. Click "Recruitment Workbasket" in the left-side menu.
4. Click the "Service Opportunities" tab.
5. Click "Create Opportunity Listing" and complete the applicable fields.
6. The listing will be reviewed/approved by the CNCS Recruitment Administrator.

Application Screening Process

Make sure you have an effective screening process in place for applicants. Example screening processes include (but are not limited to):

- **Application Review/Rating System:** This allows you to narrow down the candidate pool for interviewing. It is helpful to have more than one individual to review and rate applications.
- **Reference checks:** A minimum of two references are desired. If an applicant previously served with an AmeriCorps program, acquire feedback from that program. Depending on agency policy, some programs may be limited in information they can release. However, one can at least discover whether or not an applicant honored their commitment to a previous term of service.
- **Previous terms of service:** Make sure you check to determine whether or not the applicant completed their previous term of service and left on favorable terms. Make sure you determine the number of terms of service the applicant has already served.
- **Individual interview:** Conduct in-person (if local). If the person is from out of town, you may consider Skype, FaceTime, or phone. Be sure to develop open-ended interview questions that allow a reasonable assessment of the applicant's skills and experience.
- **Group interview:** This method allows the use of teambuilding activities to gauge how well applicants work with others and their ability to be creative and solve problems.
- **Criminal Record Checks:** Sub grantees must successfully complete all required components of the criminal records check process. You will need to get

the applicants permission to conduct a background check. Many organizations include the permission statement in the initial application for the position. This is a best practice.

Applications Acceptance vs. Rejection

Once you have identified and screened your applicants, make a decision. For those who are accepted, provide them with a written confirmation of their acceptance. The acceptance letter congratulates applicants on their selection and provides any additional preliminary information members may need to prepare for New Member Orientation. Members should be provided a deadline by which to accept the position in order to reserve the member slot. In the case where an applicant withdraws, the program may offer the position to another candidate. Maintain a copy of acceptance letters in member files.

Remember that members may not start service before the following:

- NSCHC checks must be completed and adjudicated at least the day before a member or staff begin service or work
- Member Service Agreement is signed and date
- Members have been enrolled in eGrants
- Citizenship and SSN must be cleared
- Grant award has been received by the Commission
- Grant Agreement must be signed by all parties

If all of these criteria are not fulfilled prior to the member service start date, all costs related to members and/or staff may be disallowed.

If applicants are rejected, provide them with a written confirmation of the rejection, a polite way to say, “thank you for your interest, but this may not be the best match.”

Member Orientation

Member orientation is the program’s opportunity to lay the foundation for a successful term of service. It is during orientation that AmeriCorps Members learn their responsibilities, rights, expectations set forth by the program, the big picture of National Service, and the fundamental issues that may impact their service (i.e., local community challenges and needs, partner agencies, beneficiaries, etc.).

Member orientation should be held at the beginning of the AmeriCorps Members’ term of service. Orientation may count as the first day of service. The program must have an agenda and sign-in sheets for each day of the training in order to be reimbursed for expenses. Orientation should include the following:

- Member Rights and Responsibilities
- Program Code of Conduct
- Allowable vs. Non-Allowable Activities (Including Prohibited Activities as defined by the AmeriCorps State and National Provisions)
- Drug-Free Workplace Act Requirements (41 U.S.C. 701 et seq.)

- Policies and Procedures (including but not limited to):
    - AmeriCorps apparel policy/dress code
    - Mileage reimbursement policy
    - Sexual harassment policy
    - Evaluation procedures
    - Disciplinary procedures
    - Grievance procedures
    - Risk management procedures
- Position Description and Performance Measures
- Outline of Member Training Requirements
- Explanation of Member Benefits
- Any applicable paperwork (i.e., enrollment forms, media release forms, etc.)

Member orientation may also include the following:

- History of National Service (mission, streams of service, etc.)
- Orientation to the program (history, mission, culture)
- Orientation to the local community
- Orientation to the service site
- Ice breakers
- Teambuilding exercises
- Reflection activities
- Testimonials from 2nd year Members, AmeriCorps Alumni, community stakeholders…

Note: No Member related expenses will be reimbursed that took place prior to signing the Grantee Agreement and the Members' signing of the Member Service Agreement.

Member Service Agreement

Georgia Serves developed a Member Service Agreement template and it contains all components required by AmeriCorps Provisions and Regulations. It is recommended that each program utilize this agreement template. Programs may not change the template but may add addendums as appropriate. For example, each program should clearly define what determines a successful completion of a service term. **In any event, all programs are required to submit the Member Service Agreement and all of its addendums to their respective program officer for approval prior to Members signing the agreement.**

Member Enrollment

THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE WAS COPIED DIRECTLY FROM A MEMO FROM SONALI NIJHAWAN, DIRECTOR OF AMERICORPS STATE AND NATIONAL DATED APRIL 16, 2021

Below is a chart that lays out the changes being made in the eGrants My AmeriCorps Portal screens related to the enrollment process.

Enrollment Parameter	Members enrolled prior to April 29, 2021	Members enrolled after April 29, 2021
Enrollment certification timeline	• Certification of member enrollments required within 8 days • Enforced by My AmeriCorps system validations	• Certification of member enrollments required within 8 days • Monitored through annual progress reports rather than My AmeriCorps system validations
National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHCs)	• NSOPW completion and State/FBI check initiation certified by checking two boxes • My AmeriCorps records the date on which the boxes were checked • Recorded date must be **on or before** member start date • Certification required for all members	• Completion and adjudication of all required checks certified by entering a date in the NSCHC Certification field • My AmeriCorps records the date entered in the field • Recorded date must be **before** member start date • Certification required for members ages 18+ as of the entered start date
Citizenship and SSN verification	SSN and citizenship status must be verified on or before member start date	SSN and citizenship status must be verified on or before member start date

Start date changes	• Can be made by grantee staff within the parameters outlined above
	• Changes outside these parameters require Administrative Review
	  ○ Will only be considered if a failure in AmeriCorps' technology platform or other circumstances prevent timely enrollment
		• Can be made by grantee staff within the parameters outlined above
		• Changes outside these parameters require Administrative Review
		  ○ Will only be considered if a failure in AmeriCorps' technology platform or other circumstances prevent timely SSN or citizenship verification

An individual is presumed to be an AmeriCorps member as of the start date reflected in the My AmeriCorps Portal. AmeriCorps expects member enrollments to be recorded in the My AmeriCorps Portal no later ***than eight (8) days*** *after the start date of the member. Compliance with this requirement will be assessed through Grantee Progress Reports and other monitoring actions. Individuals that are not fully enrolled in the My AmeriCorps Portal are not AmeriCorps members.*

System of Record

The system of record for an AmeriCorps member's National Service Trust information is eGRANTS. The My AmeriCorps Portal is the mechanism through which programs enter and update member records in eGRANTS including enrolling a member and recording an individual's start date. Programs are responsible for ensuring the data values they enter via the My AmeriCorps Portal are accurate and submitted within the required timeframes. AmeriCorps will rely on the information entered by programs via the My AmeriCorps Portal. The member's start of service date indicated on the Member Service Agreement/Contract should agree with the value entered into the My AmeriCorps Portal.

Programs must verify that individuals are eligible to serve based on the requirements specified in 45 CFR Chapter XXV. The system is set up so that:

1. An individual may not start service ***until AmeriCorps has automatically or manually verified an individual's Social Security Number and citizenship eligibility****.*

2. An individual may not start ***service until the program has conducted and adjudicated the results of the National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHCs) required for that individual and has entered and certified the date of this action in the My AmeriCorps Portal.***

3. After the completion of steps 1 and 2, above, ***programs must enter the members' start date, assignment, and term of service to complete the member enrollment in the National Service Trust through the My AmeriCorps Portal. This action should be taken no more than eight (8) days after the individual starts their term of service.***

Member Right to Appeal Ineligibility

Any member deemed ineligible because their Social Security Number or citizenship could not be verified has an absolute right to appeal to AmeriCorps. See Requesting Administrative Review below.

Start Date Changes

Although changes to an individual's start date after the eight-day enrollment window will negatively impact a program's compliance with the eight-day enrollment requirement, program staff are permitted to make such changes if (1) the revised start date is after the date the required NSCHCs for that individual were completed and adjudicated, and (2) the revised start date is on or after the date the individual's 3 Social Security Number and citizenship were automatically or manually verified. Any changes outside of these parameters require AmeriCorps review and approval through the Administrative Review process.

AmeriCorps will consider changes in member start dates if:

1. The member or program can document a failure of AmeriCorps' technology platform that prevented timely Social Security Number or citizenship verification; or

2. The member or program can demonstrate other circumstances that prevented timely Social Security Number or citizenship verification, such as a legal name change or natural disaster.

AmeriCorps will not consider changes in member start dates based on failure of a program to complete and adjudicate the required NSCHCs in a compliant and timely fashion. All grantees must comply with the requirement to complete and adjudicate NSCHCs prior to the member start date and are expected to certify this compliance in the My AmeriCorps Portal within eight (8) days of the member start date.

Requesting an Administrative Review of a Member's Enrollment or to Appeal SSN or Citizenship Ineligibility:

Grantees and AmeriCorps members have 30 days—from either 1) the date the enrollment action was completed, or 2) the date eligibility to enroll was denied by AmeriCorps—to request an Administrative Review to modify an enrollment record. AmeriCorps members or subgrantees must submit the request for Administrative Review through the grantee organization Grantees must request the Administrative Review in writing by emailing ASNAdministrativeReview@cns.gov. The request for an Administrative Review must include all information and supporting documentation needed for AmeriCorps to make a decision on changing the start date or reconsidering eligibility. At a minimum the information must include:

1. Member Name

2. NSPID

3. Grantee Organization

4. Program Name

5. Program Code

6. Program Year

7. Desired Modifications(s) (e.g., enrollment start date, SSN or Citizenship Status)

8. Justification for Making the Requested Change(s)

9. Requestor's Contact Information

AmeriCorps will consider requests submitted and provide a written determination as to whether changes can be made. If an Administrative Review Request requires the submission of Personally Identifiable Information (PII), please contact the AmeriCorps Hotline, and request a Secure File Transfer Link to transmit PII separately.

New NSCHC rules state that all checks must be completed the day before a member's start date. Sub-grantees must take the NSCHC Certification course annually before starting their AmeriCorps program. The course can be found here: https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/New%20NSCHC%20eCourse%20Now%20Available%21%20%28May%203%2C%202021%29.pdf

NSCHC TRAINING MANUAL: https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/05_01_21_NSCHCManual_OCRO.pdf

Note: You will need to maintain a hard copy of the Enrollment Form in the Members' files. If the document is not in the file, this will be considered a finding during monitoring visits.

Enrolling Members in My AmeriCorps Portal

1. Log in to eGrants (http://egrants.cns.gov).
2. Select "Portal Home" from the homepage.
3. Click "Invite Members" from the left menu.
4. Complete the information for the member. If inviting one member, click "Save". If inviting multiple members, click "Add Another" and then click "Save" after entering the final Member's information.

   Note: Members will receive an automated email prompting them to complete Parts I and II of the National Service Enrollment form. Please follow-up with Members and remind them to do this in a timely fashion. Their failure to do this may adversely impact the 30-day enrollment period.

5. Click "S&N Workbasket" on the Portal Home menu.
   a. If Members have completed Parts I and II of the online National Service Enrollment form, they will appear under the "Pending Enrollments" tab.
   b. If Members have not completed Parts I and II of the online National Service Enrollment form, they will appear under the "Pending Invitations" tab.
6. For Members who appear under the "Pending Invitations" tab, the program may complete Parts I and II of the online National Service Enrollment Form on their behalf. This information may be taken from the paper "National Service Enrollment Form"; provided the program has had Members complete the form.
7. Once Parts I and II of the online National Enrollment Form are completed and saved, Members will appear under the "Pending Enrollments" tab.
8. Under the "Pending Enrollments" tab, click on each members' name.
9. Certify each Member's enrollment by entering the following information:
   a. The Member's start date (date on which service commenced);
   b. The program title (this is typically pre-filled by the system);
   c. The service site location (selected from a dropdown menu provided the program has previously entered all service site locations into My AmeriCorps Portal, which is required);
   d. The applicable slot type.
10. Check the certification statement and click "Enroll Member".

Enrolling Members in OnCorps

1. Log in to OnCorps (http://ga.oncorpsreports.com) as a program director.
2. Under the "Manage Records" tab, select "Members".
3. Click the "Add New Member" button.
4. Enter all of the applicable Member information. Populate all required fields and be sure to enter the following:
   a. Contact information including a current email address for the Member.

b. The status of the Member (Enrolled).
c. The username and temporary password for the Member (Members will be prompted to change it upon the first login).
d. The slot type for the Member (i.e., full-time, half-time, etc.).
e. The start and end dates of the service term. (Note: If you enter the mid-term date, the system will notify you when mid-term reviews are past due.)
f. Confirmation that the Member has been enrolled in the My AmeriCorps Portal.
g. The site supervisor(s) who will approve the Members' timesheets.
h. Confirmation that the required Member documentation has been completed.
i. Click "Save" to enroll the Member.

OnCorps provides numerous webinars during the year. You are strongly advised to participate in those learning opportunities.

Updating Member Profiles in OnCorps

Any changes (i.e., email update, emergency contact, etc.) to a Member's profile can be done by going to "Manage Records" → "Members" → Identify the Member and click "Edit". Make the necessary changes and save the changes.

Member Slots

Converting from Less-Than-Full-Time to Full-Time: The change of less-than-full-time to full-time is discouraged because it can be very difficult to manage, unless done very early in the Member's term of service. State Commissions may authorize or approve such changes so long as their current budget can accommodate such changes. Keep in mind that a Member's minimum 1700 hours must be completed within 12 months of the Member's original start date. Also remember that Member slots are directly associated with the Trust.

Slot Conversions (Filled Slots): Circumstances may arise within a program that necessitates changing the term of service of a currently enrolled member. Note that once a Member is exited with a partial education award, the remaining portion of that education award is no longer available.

State Commissions may authorize or approve occasional changes of currently enrolled full-time Members to less than full-time members. Impact on a program's quality should be factored into the approval of such requests. Note that the Corporation will not cover healthcare or childcare for less than full-time Members.

It is **not allowable** to convert currently enrolled full-time Members to a less than full-time status simply to provide a less than full-time education award if the Member would otherwise be released for cause.

Slot Conversions (Unfilled Slots): As of November 13, 2006, programs are allowed to convert one full-time position to up to three quarter-time positions. All conversions must be Trust neutral (i.e., not change the total education award amounts allocated to the grant), are subject to availability of funds in the Trust, and must comply with all assumptions on which Trust continued solvency are predicated.

This policy allows AmeriCorps slots to be converted in accordance with the grant award but without regard to the limitation therein on increasing the number of slots in the program. Thus, when converting a slot to one requiring fewer hours, the grantee is not limited to a one-for-one slot conversion and may increase the number of Members correspondingly. However, the total number of MSYs and education award amounts allocated to the grant may not increase as a result of the slot conversion.

Grantees may also combine and convert less than full-time positions to full-time positions as long as such changes do not increase the total MSYs or education award amounts allocated to the grant.

Any requests for changes that fall outside of the parameters set forth above must receive written approval from the Corporation and concurrently from the State Commission.

Slot Refills: Eligible AmeriCorps State & National programs that have fully enrolled their awarded Member slots are allowed to replace any Member who terminates service before completing 30% of the term (effective May 17, 2007) provided that the Member who terminates is not eligible for and does not receive a pro-rated education award. Programs may not refill the same slot more than once.

Note: An AmeriCorps member may be released from completing a term of service:

1) For a compelling personal circumstance as determined by the program.
2) For cause (§2522.230).

As a fail-safe mechanism to ensure that corporate resources are available in the National Service Trust to finance any member's education award, the Corporation will suspend refiling if either:

- Total AmeriCorps enrollment reach 97% of awarded slots.
- The number of refills reaches 5% of awarded slots.

Grantees whose awards have special grant conditions under 45 CFR 2543.14 or 2541.120 are not eligible to refill positions. In order to be qualified to refill a slot, grantees will be evaluated on the basis of the outcomes of Inspector General Audits, site visits, and oversight by CNCS program and grants officers.

Slot Transfers to Other Sub-Grantees within Portfolio: The GCSV may, under certain circumstances, transfer unused slots from one sub-grantee to another. These transfers will be considered when they will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall AmeriCorps State grant portfolio. The following rules apply to slot transfers between sub-grantees:

- Slots may be transferred between formula sub-grantees.
- Slots may be transferred between competitive sub-grantees.
- Slots may NOT be transferred between formula and competitive grantees.
- Slots may NOT be transferred across grant type (fixed vs. reimbursable) or grant year.
- Slots eligible for refill may NOT be transferred.

It is important to note that the budget of the sub-grantee receiving the transferred slots must be adequate to support those slots due to the restriction on transfer of funds between sub-grantees.

Suspension

1. A program must suspend the service of an individual who faces an official charge of a violent felony (e.g., rape or homicide) or sale/distribution of a controlled substance.
2. A program must suspend the service of an individual who is convicted of possession of a controlled substance.
3. An individual may not receive a living allowance, other benefits, and may not accrue hours during a period of suspension under this provision.

Please note: CNCS requires a Member's status to be changed within 30 days.

Reinstatement

1. A program may reinstate an individual whose service was suspended if the individual is found not guilty or if the charge is dismissed.
2. A program may reinstate an individual whose service was suspended if the individual demonstrates the following:
    a. For an individual who has been convicted of a first offense of the possession of a controlled substance, the individual must have enrolled in a drug rehabilitation program;
    b. For an individual who has been convicted for more than one offense of a possession of a controlled substance, the individual must have successfully completed a drug rehabilitation program.

Transfers to Other AmeriCorps State or National Program

A State Commission may grant permission to transfer a member to another AmeriCorps State or National program for compelling personal circumstances. The following procedures are required:

1. Program A must first determine that a compelling personal circumstance warrants a transfer.
2. Prior to initiating a transfer, Program A must provide written confirmation to Program B that a valid compelling personal circumstance supports the transfer.

3. The member must apply to and be accepted by Program B, which must have an available slot in the incoming class. (This means the program is able to provide an entire term of member support costs and an education award.)
4. The Member must be able to finish his/her term of service within 12 months of their original start date.
5. Program B must approve the transfer in writing.
6. No funds can be transferred from Program A to Program B.
7. If Program A has already conducted the mid-term evaluation, the program will provide it to Program B. If Program A has not conducted the mid-term evaluation, then Program B will conduct it with consultation with Program A.
8. The transferred Member cannot be counted twice for purposes of enrollment and/or retention.
9. The slot that remains with Program A will revert to new/unfilled status regardless of the length of time the Member served.

Generally, Members may not transfer across different streams of service. For example, a Member may not transfer from an AmeriCorps State & National program to an AmeriCorps VISTA position or to AmeriCorps NCCC.

Term Limitations for AmeriCorps State and National

A Member may serve up to four terms of service in AmeriCorps State & National regardless of the type of terms. However, a Member may only receive the value of two full-time education awards. Terms served prior to October 1, 2009 (the effective date of the Act) do count towards the four-term limit.

Limitations for Streams of Service

4 terms – AmeriCorps State & National
5 terms – AmeriCorps VISTA
2 terms – AmeriCorps NCCC

Notice to Childcare and Healthcare Providers

The grantee must notify the Corporation's designated agents immediately in writing when a Member's status changes, such that it would affect eligibility for childcare and healthcare. Examples of changes in status are converting a full-time Member to a less than full-time Member, terminating or releasing Members from service, and suspending Members for cause for lengthy or indefinite time periods. Program directors should contact the AmeriCorps childcare providers on childcare-related changes and their health insurance providers about health insurance related changes.

Eligibility for a Second Term

A participant will only be eligible to serve a second or additional term of service if that individual has received satisfactory performance review(s) for any previous term(s) of service. Mere eligibility for a second or further term of service in no way guarantees a participant's selection or placement.

Participant Performance Review

For the purposes of determining a participant's eligibility for a second or additional term of service and/or for an AmeriCorps education award, each AmeriCorps program will evaluate the performance of a participant mid-term and upon completion of the term of service. The assessment requirements are described below.

Mid-Term and Final (End-of-Term) Evaluation

The minimum requirements for mid-term and final evaluation are to assess the following:

1. Whether the participant has completed the required number of hours;
2. Whether the participant has satisfactorily completed assignments, tasks, or projects;
3. Whether the participant has met any other performance criteria which had been clearly communicated both orally and in writing at the beginning of the term of service.

Sub-Grantees may determine the format and contents of their evaluation to meet their needs and the needs of their Members as long as the minimum requirements are in place.

Additional Notes on Members' Past Service, Evaluations, and Eligibility

- Programs should maintain written documentation that the Member received the mid-term and final evaluation as described in the regulations.
- Programs are not required to conduct mid-term evaluations for Members that serve less than half-time.
- It is important to ensure that a Member who served previously is eligible to serve in your program and reasonable effort should be made to gather that information.
- If the Member received an education award, you may assume the Member served satisfactorily in the previous term.
- If the Member was released for cause without receiving an education award and you do not check with program with which the Member formerly served, you run the risk of enrolling an ineligible Member. In this case, some or all of the costs associated with that Member can be disallowed.
- The My AmeriCorps Portal includes evidence of a Member's past service.

Member Exits

The grantee must ensure that each Member has sufficient opportunity to complete the required number of service hours to qualify for an education award. In order for a member to receive a post-service education award from the National Service Trust, the grantee must certify to the National Service Trust that the Member satisfactorily and successfully completed the term of service and is eligible to receive the education benefit. The grantee (and any individual or entity acting on behalf of the grantee) is responsible for the accuracy of the information certified on the end-of-term certification.

Should a program not be renewed, a Member who was scheduled to continue in a term of service may either be placed in another program, where feasible, or a Member may receive a pro-rated education award if the Member has completed at least 15% of the service hour requirement.

The program must exit members from eGrants and OnCorps within 30 days of the member's last day of service. Failure to do so will negatively impact your program's Risk Assessment score.

Exiting Members in My AmeriCorps Portal

1. Log in to eGrants (http://egrants.cns.gov)
2. Select "Portal Home" from the homepage.
3. Click "Manage Members" in the left menu
4. Select the applicable Program Year from the dropdown menu and click "Submit" to view the list of active members.
5. Click on the member's name. In the "Member Profile", select "Exit Member" from the Member Information menu.
6. The program may complete the online National Service Exit Form on the member's behalf. This information may be taken from the paper National Service Exit form; provided the program has had the member complete the form.
7. Once the certifications are completed and saved in the online National Service Exit Form, the program will be returned to the member's profile with a confirmation that "The exit form has been saved."
8. In the member's profile, click "Exit Member" again from the Member Information menu.
9. Complete the program portion of the online National Service Exit Form, including the following information:
    a. Number of hours the member served.
    b. The service completion date (last official day of service).
    c. Education award status (selected from the dropdown menu)
        i. For successful completion, select "Eligible for entire education award".
        ii. For compelling personal circumstances, select "Eligible for partial education award".
        iii. For unsuccessful completion or release for cause, select "Not eligible for education award (member did not complete service requirements)".
    d. Confirmation that the member served satisfactorily (Note: For members released for cause, selecting "no" will make a member ineligible to serve with AmeriCorps in the future. If the member is released for minor

disciplinary reasons, the program should still select “yes”. Contact the State Commission with any questions.

   e. Certifications of Service (all three prompts must be checked).

10. Click “Approve” to complete the member exit.

Note: If a member completed the member portion of the online National Service Exit Form in My AmeriCorps Portal, the member would appear under the “Pending Exits” tab. The program will then only need to complete the program portion of the online National Service Exit Form as described in Steps 9 and 10. If assistance is needed, click “Contact Help Desk” located at the bottom left hand corner of eGrants’ homepage.

Exiting Members From OnCorps

1. Log in to OnCorps (http://ga.oncorpsreports.com) as a Program Director
   a. Note: Make sure that all Member timesheets have been reviewed and approved in OnCorps prior to exiting the Member.
2. Under the Manage Records tab, select “Members”.
3. Click “Edit” for the Member being exited.
4. In the Member’s profile, update the status of the Member to “Exited = [reason]” from the dropdown menu.
5. Enter the Exit Date (last official day of service).
6. Enter the reason for early exit from the dropdown menu, if applicable.
7. Confirm that outstanding Member documentation has been completed (i.e., Exit Form, End of Term Evaluation).
8. Click “Save” to exit the Member.

Incomplete Term of Service

(Ref: § 2522.235): Is there a limit on the number of terms an individual may serve in an AmeriCorps State and National program?

- **General Limitation:** An individual may receive benefits described in § 2522.240 through §2522.250 for no more than four terms of service in an AmeriCorps State and National program, regardless of whether those terms were served on a full-, part-, or reduced part-time basis.
- **Early Release:** Except as provided in Paragraph(c) of this section, a term of service from which an individual is released for compelling personal circumstances or for cause counts as one of the terms of service for which an individual may receive the benefits described in § 2522.240 through §2522.250.
- **Release Prior to Serving 15 Percent of the Term**: If a person is released for reasons other than misconduct prior to completing 15 percent of a term of service, the term will not be considered one of the terms of service for which an individual may receive the benefits described in § 2522.240 through §2522.250.

Compelling Personal Circumstance vs. Cause

(Ref: § 2526.20): Is an AmeriCorps participant who does not complete an originally-approved term of service eligible to receive a pro-rated education award?

- **Compelling Personal Circumstances:** a participant in an approved AmeriCorps position who is released prior to completing an approved term of service for compelling personal circumstances in accordance with § 2522.230(a) is eligible for a pro-rated education award if the participant …
  - Performed satisfactorily prior to being granted a release for compelling personal circumstances; and
  - Completed at least 15% of the originally-approved term of service.
- **Release for Cause:** A participant who is released for cause prior to completing an originally-approved term of service is not eligible for any portion of an education award.

Compelling Personal Circumstances Defined

A compelling personal circumstance is an extraordinary circumstance beyond the Member's control which cannot be accommodated by a leave of absence, and which would prevent him/her from completing the term of service. Examples may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Injury, disability, or critical illness of the Member or of a family Member for whom he/she provides care;
- Relocation of spouse;
- AmeriCorps program shuts down;
- Military service obligations;

Non- Compelling Personal Circumstances

Compelling Personal Circumstances DO NOT include the following:

- Enrolling in school;
- Obtaining employment, unless moving from welfare to work or leaving a program that includes in its approved objectives the promotion of employment among participants;
- Dissatisfaction with the program.

The Member has the primary responsibility for demonstrating that personal compelling circumstances prevent continuing the term of service either temporarily or permanently. The Member must provide documentation as the basis for any determination to be made by the program. Documentation may include a letter from a health care provider, court, etc. The program has the responsibility to follow-up and verify any documentation provided by the Member.

Under what circumstances may a program determine that a compelling personal circumstance exists when a Member leaves service to start a job?

In general, a job is not considered a compelling personal circumstance. If a Member decides to leave to take a job, the Member would be exited for cause and would not be eligible for the education award.

The regulations and provisions contain a narrow exception to this general rule. Compelling personal circumstances may include leaving a program to obtain employment IF the Member is moving from welfare to work or is enrolled in a program "that includes in its approved objectives the promotion of employment among its Members." If a member is a welfare recipient and is able to obtain a job that will get him or her off welfare, the program may deem his or her early departure from a program as a compelling personal circumstance.

Similarly, if a program has an approved objective of promoting employment among its Members, the program could consider a Member's early departure from the program to take a job as a compelling personal circumstance. Without such an approved objective, a Member leaving to take a job must be released for cause. In all cases, it is the program's responsibility to make the determination and to document the decision.

Satisfactory Completion of Service

(Ref: § 2526.15): Upon what basis may an organization responsible for the supervision of a national service participant certify that the individual successfully completed a term of service?

1. An organization responsible for the supervision of an individual serving in an AmeriCorps State and National position must determine whether an individual successfully completed a term of service based upon an end-of-term evaluation conducted pursuant to § 2522.220(d).

2. An organization responsible for the supervision of an individual serving in a program other than AmeriCorps State and National must determine whether an individual successfully completed a term of service based upon an end-of-term evaluation that examines whether the individual satisfies all of the following conditions:
    a. Completed the required number of service hours for the term of service;
    b. Satisfactorily performed assignments, tasks, or projects; and
    c. Met any performance criteria as determined by the program and communicated to the member.

3. A certification by the organization responsible for the supervision of an individual that the individual did or did not successfully complete a term of service will be deemed to incorporate an end-of-term evaluation.

Member Files

Files must be maintained for every AmeriCorps Member serving in your program. These files should be kept in a secure, locked location which should also be fireproof and/or waterproof. Access to these files should be restricted only to those individuals who NEED access to them to perform their jobs associated with the program. All required CNCS documents are available on the CNCS website, and all documents required by the GCSV are available on the OnCorps resources page. Member files should include all documents listed on the Member File Checklist provided by the GCSV, those documents must be kept current during the duration of a Member's service term and should be grouped consistently with the checklist.

For your convenience, below is the most current file checklist. Please note that this list is subject to change as deemed necessary by GCSV staff. In the event of changes/revisions, the most recent copy will be posted to the OnCorps login page and can be accessed by clicking "Resources".

AmeriCorps Georgia

MEMBER FILE CHECKLIST

MEMBER NAME: ____

SLOT TYPE: FT___ RFT _____ HT____ RHT____ QT____ MT____

****ALL DOCUMENTS MUST BE ASSEMBLED IN EACH MEMBER'S FILE IN THE ORDER LISTED BELOW****

☒ SSN VERIFIED DOCUMENTATION **(Located in eGRANTS)**
☐ CITIZENSHIP VERIFIED DOCUMENTATION **(Located in eGRANTS)**
☐ ALTERNATIVE STATE OF RESIDENCE CHECK CLEARED DOCUMENTATION (If applicable) **(Provided by Truescreen)**
☐ FBI CHECK CLEARED DOCUMENTATION **(Provided by Fieldprint). Must be adjudicated in Fieldprint.**
☐ NSOPW CHECK CLEARED DOCUMENTATION **(Provided by Truescreen). Must be adjudicated in Truescreen.**
Note: Georgia participates in the National Finger File (NFF) program, therefore a GA State Check is not required.

MEMBER ELIGIBILITY AND ENROLLMENT

☐ National Service Trust Enrollment Form (Must be signed and dated by all on or before the Member start date)
☐ Member Application
☐ US Birth Certificate, US Passport, FS-240, FS-545, DS 1350, N-550, N-570, N-560, N-561, Green Card/Form I-551, or I-94 (Photocopied and clear) **(Specify which)**
☐ Signed Social Security Card **(Must be clear photocopy)**
☐ Government Issued Photo Identification **(Must be clear photocopy of valid Driver's License or Passport)**
☐ High School Diploma, Personal Statement that Member has attained a diploma, or is working toward GED completion **(Specify which)**
☐ Parental Consent Form **(If under 18)**
☐ W-4 Federal Tax Form
☐ G-4 State Tax Form
☐ Health Insurance Documentation or Documentation of Insurance Waiver **(Full-Time Members only)**
☐ Childcare Registration Documentation or Waiver **(Full-Time Members only)**
☐ Loan Forbearance Request Form or Waiver
☐ Emergency Information Sheet
☐ Member Service Agreement (MSA) **(Must be signed and dated by all parties on or before the member starts service)**
NOTE: MSA Template provided by GCSV will include the following required documents: Member Position Description, Drug-Free Workplace Acknowledgement, Civil Rights/EEOC Statement, Publicity Consent, and Member Background Check Consent.

EVALUATION AND EXIT

☐ National Service Trust Exit Form (Must be signed and dated)
☐ Mid-Term Evaluation
☐ End-Of-Term Evaluation
☐ Record of Disciplinary Actions, Suspensions, or Fines **(If applicable)**
☐ Compelling Personal Circumstances Documentation **(If applicable)**

****THIS FORM MUST BE INCLUDED IN EACH 2022-23PY MEMBER FILE ****

Member Timesheets

Member timesheets are a record of service, training, and fundraising hours as outlined by the AmeriCorps regulations. Hours served by a Member prior to signing the Member Contract may not be counted. This could cause the Member to not qualify for the Education Award. It is very important to accurately record hours served by an AmeriCorps Member to:

1) apply those hours toward his/her Education Award and serve as documentation;
2) effectively manage costs for your program;
3) accurately forecast budgets for future grant applications;
4) accurately submit reimbursement requests and;
5) meet CNCS requirements as a condition of receiving federal funds.

Therefore, it is very important that the appropriate training is provided to Members on how to submit their timesheets accurately and timely. This will ensure compliance with the requirements of the program to secure continued funding. Details of the Member Timesheet process/policy should be included in the Member Contract. It is possible that auditors may question the entire living allowance and education award earned by any Member if the Member does not meet requirements for a term of service; even if one hour short of term of service. The minimum number of required Member hours is determined by CNCS as follows:

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours
Full-Time (FT)	1700
Reduced Full Time (RFT)	1200
Half Time (HT)	900
Reduced Half Time (RHT)	675
Quarter Time (QT)	450
Minimum Time (MT)	300
AmeriCorps Affiliate (AT)	100

Manual Timesheets: AmeriCorps Member timesheets must clearly distinguish the number of hours an AmeriCorps Member accrues during a time period, while the Member is performing his/her duties. The original timesheets must be maintained in a file on-site. Member timesheet hours must add up to the aggregate number required to earn the education award for the term of service specific to that Member.

Sub-grantees with multiple sites must have a written monitoring plan included in the organization’s policies and procedures to document that Members are providing service at these sites as well.

On-site reviews of files have resulted in the following common findings:

- ✓ Not signed by the Site Supervisor and the Member;
- ✓ Service hours are not calculated correctly;
- ✓ Timesheets are missing in the file;

- ✓ Service, training, and fundraising hours are not separated out or hours exceed the limit. Remember: an individual can only participate in fundraising efforts specific to the service they are providing as a Member and;
- ✓ Timesheets do not support certification of hours for the Education Award.

Preventive measures that can be taken to maintain compliance are: providing clear and concise written Policies and Procedures, periodic sampling of files to review Member timesheets for accuracy, and formatting timesheets to align with the term the Member is required to serve (i.e., full-time, half-time, etc.).

Electronic Timesheets:
The Georgia Commission requires its AmeriCorps sub-grantees use OnCorps as their system of record with the understanding that it meets all of the same requirements outlined for the manual tracking of timesheets. This includes access restrictions, security, privacy, and retention of records. The following additional minimum standards must be met for electronic timekeeping systems:

- A written policy must be in effect establishing the use of electronic timekeeping system as the agency's system of record for AmeriCorps members.
- A secure, verifiable electronic signature system must 1) identify and authenticate a particular person as the source of the electronic signature; and 2) indicate such person's approval of the information contained in the electronic message.
- The system does not allow changes to the electronic record once appropriate electronic signatures have been applied unless there is a clear, auditable record of the revision(s).

The validity and integrity of the record must not be compromised. The electronic storage procedures and system must ensure the safe-keeping and security of records including: 1) unauthorized changes and erasures of records; 2) only authorized persons have access to records; 3) prevention of physical damage to records; 4) a system is in place for back-up and recovery of records and; 5) easy retrieval of records in a timely fashion. When used properly, OnCorps meets all of the timekeeping requirements detailed here.

Entering Hours in OnCorps

To enter hours in OnCorps, you must first log on to OnCorps by accessing their web site at http://ga.oncorpsreports.com/. The **TIME TRACKING** menu is where Members can enter and view their service hours. Members must enter hours into OnCorps at least monthly.

You may access OnCorps Tutorials by going to the OnCorps website and clicking on the "Help" menu.

Site Supervisor Guide to Approving Member Timesheets

The Home page displays system generated alerts about reports and records that require your attention. State commission staff can also place messages on this page. By clicking on the **Review** or **Update** buttons to the right of any notification, it will take you to the report or record on the site that requires attention. For most notifications, changing the item in the record or report that is generating the alert will remove the notification from the Home page. For notifications that do not require changing a record or report, clicking on the red button with an “X” on the right of the notification will remove it from your Home Page.

You may access OnCorps Tutorials by going to the OnCorps website and clicking on the “Help” menu.

Approving Member Timesheets

The “Approve Member Timesheets” report is designed to provide Supervisors an easy way to access all of the Member timesheets that have been submitted for their approval. All Member timesheets submitted but not yet approved will display in the “Submitted Timesheets” table at the bottom of the screen. Submitted timesheets can be filtered by either timesheet period (by using the ’Select a Period:’ drop down menu) or by a specific Member (by using the ‘Select an AmeriCorps Member’ drop down menu).

To approve a timesheet, click on the **Approve** button for that time period and you will be taken directly to the timesheet for review and approval or rejection. When a timesheet has been sent to multiple Supervisors, the table will display whether each Supervisor has approved the timesheet. In order for timesheets submitted to multiple Supervisors to be considered “approved”, all of the Supervisors must approve it in OnCorps.

A timesheet may still appear in the “Submitted Timesheets” table after it has been approved because the other Supervisors still need to approve it. If any of the Supervisors reject a timesheet, then it is sent back to the Member for revisions/corrections and will have to be approved again by all of the Supervisors responsible for approving the Member’s timesheet.

You may access OnCorps Tutorials by going to the OnCorps website and clicking on the “Help” menu.

Rejecting Member Timesheets

The “Reject Approved Member Timesheets” report is designed to give Supervisors an easy way to reject an already approved timesheet that may have been approved with an error in the Member's hours. Rejecting an approved timesheet notifies the Member that the timesheet is rejected and allows them to revise/correct the timesheet before resubmitting it to the Supervisor(s) for approval.

Approved timesheets can be filtered by either timesheet period (by using the ’Select a Period:’ drop down menu) or by a specific Member (by using the ‘Select an AmeriCorps

Member' drop down menu). Any approved timesheets that match your filter criteria will appear in the "Approved Timesheets" table at the bottom of the screen. To reject an approved timesheet, click on the **Reject** button for that timesheet and it will take you directly to the timesheet where you can select the reject option. Enter the reason for the rejection at the bottom of the timesheet. Click on the **Download** button next to approved timesheets to download a PDF version of that timesheet for your records.

Member Total Hours Year-to-Date

The Member Hours Year-To-Date table shows the status of all hours that have been entered into the Members' timesheets. The total hours entered into a timesheet by a Member includes Approved and Pending hours. Each column of the table is defined below.

Status/Hrs.: The number of hours a Member committed to serve.
Approved Hrs.: The total hours that have been approved by all Supervisors.
Pending Hrs.: The total hours entered into timesheets that have <u>not been</u> approved by Supervisors (includes hours on timesheets that are submitted for approval but have not been approved yet; and hours saved to the timesheets that have not yet been submitted to Supervisors).

Pre: Pre OnCorps Hours- hours that were approved using a different timekeeping system before Members began using OnCorps timesheet system for Fundraising, Training, and Service.

1, 2, 3, 4: Number of hours in each of the four possible subcategories of Training and Service hours that have been entered into OnCorps using the OnCorps timesheet system.

Tot: (Pre + 1, 2, 3, 4) for each type of hours (Fundraising, Training, and Service)

Avg/Wk. Target: The average number of hours per week a Member should serve to stay on track to meet his/her hours.

Avg/Wk. Current: The average number of hours per weeks a Member is currently serving to date to stay on track to meet his/her hours.

Weeks Left: The number of weeks remaining that a Member has to meet his/her hours.

Hours Left: The number of hours remaining that a Member has to meet his/her hours.

Avg/Wk. Needed: The average number of hours per week a Member needs to serve to stay on track to meet his/her hours.

Please note: Full-time Members' weekly hours needed should not exceed 45, and Half-time Members' weekly hours needed should not exceed 25.

Active Duty Members' Time/Hours

How should we handle time off for members serving in the Armed Forces Reserves?

Generally, the Reserves of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, the Army National Guard, and the Air National Guard require reservists to serve one weekend a month plus 12 to 15 days a year (hereafter referred to as the two-week active duty service). To the extent possible, grantees should seek to minimize the disruption in members' AmeriCorps service as a result of discharging responsibilities related to their reservist duties. If members have a choice of when to fulfill their annual two-week active duty requirement, they should do so when it will not disrupt their AmeriCorps service. In instances where the dates of active duty are inflexible and conflict with AmeriCorps service, members should be granted a leave of absence for the two-week period of active duty service in the Reserves.

Members may not receive time-off for additional Reserves-related service beyond the two-week active duty service. No AmeriCorps service credit is earned for the once-a-month weekend service in the Reserves. Grantees should credit members for AmeriCorps service hours during their two weeks of active duty service in the Reserves if it occurs during their AmeriCorps service. The member would receive credit for the number of hours he or she would have served during that period had there been no interruption. For example, if a full-time member is signed up to serve 30 hours of AmeriCorps service one week and 40 hours of AmeriCorps service on the following week, she or he would receive 70 hours of AmeriCorps service credit for the two weeks of active duty service regardless of the actual number of hours served in the Reserves.

Reservists in the U.S. Armed Forces receive compensation for their mandatory two weeks of active duty service. The compensation regulations governing the Army and Air National Guard may vary by state.

Staff Timesheets

All staff salaries and wages charged to the CNCS grant must be supported by signed time and attendance records, and well-documented to ensure accountability of those funds. Mishandling of the funds may require the sub-grantee to reimburse those funds back to the State Commission. Therefore, it is extremely important that you have a solid system in place to track staff time worked on the activity directly and indirectly related to the CNCS grant. It is also imperative that timesheets are maintained so that personnel costs remain visible for easier adjustments, supervisors find it less complicated to keep track of who worked what project and the hours spent, and that the sub-grantee remains in compliance.

Allocating CNCS funds and match requirements must be allowable, reasonable, and allocable for salaries, wages, and fringe benefits. Unallowable activities such as general advertising, public relations, demonstrations, lobbying, or fundraising (includes writing applications to CNCS) will not be reimbursed by the grant. Staff time must be consistent with policies and procedures and applied uniformly. Whether costs are direct or indirect, they must be ordinary and necessary for the operation of the grant. These costs must also be incurred specifically for the grant and treated consistently with other costs. This includes not shifting other federal funds to overcome the deficiency of the costs.

Regulatory Requirements

Regardless of whether timesheets are kept manually or electronically for staff, the timekeeping method is subject to the requirements of the federal costs principles applicable to your type of organization. The Code of Federal Regulation sets forth separate cost principles for educational institutions, government entities, and nonprofit organizations. It is important to note that the same standards for time reporting are applied to staff hours charged to the grant as either direct costs or grantee match. Your organization should review the applicable set of cost principles in its entirety. Below are some key highlights as they relate to timekeeping for different types of organizations:

- Educational Institutions, subject to 2 CFR 220, formerly OMB Circular A-21:
    - The payroll distribution system will be incorporated into the official records of the institution; reasonably reflect the activity for which the employee is compensated by the institution; and encompass both sponsored and all other activities on an integrated basis.
    - The distribution method must recognize after-the-fact confirmation by a responsible person so that costs distributed represent actual costs.
    - Examples of acceptable methods are detailed in the regulation.

- State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments, subject to 2 CFR 225, formerly OMB Circular A-87:
    - When an employee works solely on one Federal award, certifications of their activity must be prepared at least semi-annually.
    - Activity reports must reflect after-the-fact distribution of actual activity for direct charges to multiple awards or cost objectives.
    - Reports must account for total activity, be prepared at least monthly, and coincide with one or more pay periods.
    - Reports must be signed.
    - Budget estimates do not qualify as support but may be used for interim accounting purposes if review, reconciliation, and adjustment of estimates is performed at least quarterly.

- Nonprofit Organizations, subject to 2 CFR 230, formerly OMB Circular A-122:

- The distribution of salaries and wages to awards must be documented by personnel activity reports.
- Reports reflecting the distribution of activity of each employee must be maintained for all staff members whose compensation is charged, in whole or in part, directly to awards.
- Reports must reflect after-the-fact determination of the actual activity.
- Budget estimates do not qualify as support.
- Reports must be signed.
- Reports must account for total activity, be prepared at least monthly by non-universities, bi-monthly for Universities, and coincide with one or more pay periods.
- Salaries and wages used for cost matching must be supported in the same manner as those claimed for reimbursement.

Timekeeping Findings

The findings below are common audit findings from OIG audits of Corporation grants. The Corporation, through the Office of Grants Management or the Field Financial Management Center can provide assistance to you if your review of these findings indicates you need to strengthen your policies and procedures in a specific area. You should request that assistance through your State Commission Program Officer.

- Staff allocating time to more than one grant - not keeping timesheets that show actual time spent on each grant.
- Lack of proper timekeeping systems.
- No timesheets or activity reports maintained or retained.
- No reconciliation between estimates and actual time (governments).
- Non-compliance with OMB requirements.
- Salaries and wages charged to the grant:
    - On the basis of budgeted amounts, instead of actual after-the-fact time (not allowed for non-profits).
    - Based on estimates (not allowed for non-profits).
    - Unsigned or unapproved timesheets by employee or supervisors.
    - Staff percentage of time charged to 2 or more programs is greater than 100%.
    - Timesheet, sign-in/out sheets, and payroll do not match.
    - Signatures for employees and/or supervisors are not consistent.
- Multiple timesheets prepared at the same time.
- Frequent use of white-out, changes or additions.
- Executive Director directed employee to record hours worked when they had not.

Preventing Timesheet Pitfalls

1) Review your written timekeeping policies and procedures-
    a. Are they consistent with applicable OMB cost principles?
    b. If not, implement changes immediately.

2) Is staff following the timekeeping policies and procedures?
    a. Gather timesheets for all staff for current program year.
    b. Review timesheets to ensure timesheets are completed and approved/signed as required.

Notify your State Commission Program Officer to determine the appropriate process for corrective action. Once this process has been completed, review to decide if your internal process for timekeeping needs to be changed. If so, revise the written policies and procedures and implement staff training on proper procedures.

National Service Criminal History Checks

Under the **Serve America Act (SAA**), all grantees must conduct National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC) on participants and program employees in AmeriCorps, Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and any other programs funded by AmeriCorps under National Service laws. Failure to comply with the NSCHC requirements may result in cost disallowance and other consequences.

- National Service Criminal History check regulations have been in effect since November 2007. **AmeriCorps has published a new NSCHC regulation that were effective May 1, 2021**. All programs conduct three-part checks -- including FBI, statewide repository, and sex offender registry checks -- on all positions covered on the AmeriCorps grant.
- All employees, participants, and others who receive a salary, national service education award, living allowance, or stipend under CNCS grants, even if the activities don't involve service with vulnerable populations, must receive the checks prior to beginning employment or service.

{See 45 CFR §2540.200 through §2540.207 as well as the terms and conditions of AmeriCorps grants.}

Under the following circumstances, an individual will be deemed ineligible to receive funding from a CNCS grant:

- Anyone who refuses to consent to undergo CNCS required background checks is ineligible.
- Anyone who makes a false statement in connection with a program's inquiry concerning the individual's criminal history is ineligible.
- Anyone listed, or required to be listed, on a sex offender registry, is ineligible (November 23, 2007).
- Anyone convicted of murder as defined and described in 18 U.S.C. § 1111 is ineligible (October 1, 2009).

The NSCHC requirements describe the following three background checks:

- National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW)
    - Nationwide search from the U.S. Department of Justice
    - Name-based check utilizing public information
    - All "hits" on a person's name must be reviewed and cleared
    - Results from all states must be obtained

  - Must be completed before the start of hours
  - Must document with a screenshot or printout of results, and document that all "hits" have been cleared. Note: The reviewer must initial and date each photo printed out and place it in the member's file.
  - **GCSV requires sub-grantees to use Truescreen for NSOPW and State checks**.
- State Background Checks
  - Checks must be from official CNCS designated sources, which are listed at http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check
  - GCSV requires sub-grantees to use TruesDesignated sources for Georgia are the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the Georgia Crime Information Center
  - Checks for state of service and state of residence must be performed
  - Must be initiated before the start of hours
  - Must document date initiated, date cleared, results, source, and consideration of results
- FBI Checks
  - **GCSV requires sub-grantees to use Fieldprint for FBI/fingerprint-based checks**
  - Please reference the Appendix – Fieldprint Basics

Who Needs What Criminal History Checks?

Any person working in a covered position is subject to the NSCHC requirements. For these purposes, a covered position is defined as any position receiving a salary, stipend, living allowance, and/or education award from an AmeriCorps funded grant. This includes all members and program/grantee staff receiving funding from federal share, matching dollars, or any mixture thereof. This includes any individual performing activities described in the grant application. Social Innovation Fund and Volunteer Generation Fund contractors are considered covered when performing program activities.

The new regulation:
o Requires a three-part check for all covered individuals
o Requires all NSCHC check components to be complete before the start of work or service
o Exempts fixed amount grant staff and planning grants from NSCHC requirements
o Exempts grant staff fully covered by an indirect cost rate from NSCHC requirements
o Exempts individuals who are not yet 18 at the start of work or service from NSCHC requirements (if an individual turns 18 prior to a consecutive term, NSCHC is required)
o Extends the time period for which a grant recipient must re-check an individual after a break in service or employment with the same organization from 120-days to 180-days
o Includes an NSCHC Waiver process, to replace the Alternative Search Process.

New checks must be performed any time an individual moves from one sub-grantee to another, when there is a break in service exceeding 180 days, or when an individual move from a covered position without recurring access to vulnerable populations to a position with recurring access to vulnerable populations. Changing service site locations without a break in service greater than 180 days does not trigger the requirement for a new check.

Resources

For more information on NSCHC please visit the AmeriCorps Criminal History Checks page at https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check

The National Service Criminal History Check Manual Effective May 1, 2021, may be f

AmeriCorps Awardee guide to National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Enforcement of Cost-Based Disallowance *revised January 26, 2022*

NSCHC Frequently Asked Questions *revised April 1, 2022*

Key Notes:

- It is important to review the new rules
- GCSV requires sub-grantees to use AmeriCorps approved vendors Truescreen and Fieldprint
- An important change is that background checks must be completed and adjudicated no later than the day before a member or staff starts service or work on the grant.
- Program staff must take and pass NSCHC certification eCourse annually

NSCHC Steps Checklist

Follow these steps to clear individuals. Remember, staff members from your program must be cleared with the NSCHC before they can charge hours to your AmeriCorps grant.

✓ Verify identity through government-issued photo identification (maintain documentation)

✓ Get written consent from candidates to perform checks (maintain documentation)

✓ Document candidate’s understanding that his or her position is contingent on eligibility determined by the results of the NSCHC (maintain documentation)

✓ Select sources. When going through a vendor; make sure you are getting results from CNCS-approved sources (GCSV sub-grantees must useTruescreen and Fieldprint)

- ✓ Initiate and pay for additional check component(s). State(s) and/or FBI checks must be cleared and adjudicated the **day before** candidate begins work or service (maintain documentation)
- ✓ Document receipt date when check results arrive (maintain documentation)
- ✓ Provide opportunity to review finding, being mindful of Civil Rights laws and particularly when negative results surface
- ✓ Maintain results, while providing confidentiality

Member Benefits

AmeriCorps Members receive a wealth of benefits, including the satisfaction gained from the experience of serving and knowing that they are making a difference in the lives of others. Whether tutoring children at risk of failure, beautifying communities, building homes, feeding the hungry, teaching nutritional life-changing strategies, providing disaster relief, helping students to enroll and succeed in college, or helping to start a local health clinic, Members see the direct results of their service. As a result of the AmeriCorps experience, professional development takes shape and Members oftentimes gain experience leading to careers either in their chosen field or may lead to a change in planned career paths. In addition, lifelong friendships and relationships are oftentimes formed as a result of their AmeriCorps experience.

The living allowance is not a salary or a wage. It is a stipend or a federal benefit.

In addition to the aforementioned, AmeriCorps Members may also receive the following benefits:

- ➢ Living Allowance
- ➢ Education Award
- ➢ Loan Forbearance
- ➢ Healthcare Coverage
- ➢ Child Care Benefits

Living Allowance

The living allowance is not a salary or a wage. Members living allowances should not vary from one pay period to the other unless the Member's status has changed (i.e., full-time; half-time; quarter-time; minimum-time). Members cannot be penalized from the federal portion of their living allowance for showing up late or for missing days. If the Member receives a portion of the living allowance from other non-federal sources, and a penalty system is put in place, it is crucial that this system is explained and made an addendum to the Member Service Agreement. Otherwise, if the Member serves any portion of a pay period, then the Member **must** receive the living allowance for that entire period

You are allowed to establish safeguard policies to protect your program against paying Member living allowances to Members who exit early or who do not show up for service.

unless the program has some specific safeguard guidelines in place. In the event that the program does have specific policies in place, these rules, policies, and/or regulations must be a part of the Member Service Agreement in the form of an addendum. "The living allowance is designed to help Members meet the necessary living expenses incurred while participating in an AmeriCorps Program. Programs must not pay 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."[1] When reimbursement requests show fluctuations in Member living allowances, this is a red flag, and you **will** be contacted by your program officer before the request is processed unless an explanation is provided with the request.

You are allowed to establish policies to cover situations where Members exit early and serve for less than an acceptable period. Such policies should be attached to the Member Service Contract as an addendum. "You should establish a written policy that is reasonable. For 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."[2] It is recommended that you have your in-house human relations department or legal advisor review such policies to insure that you are not violating any laws or internal procedures.

Fines

If determined to be necessary for improvements in Member performance or attendance, the sub-grantee may impose a **reasonable** fine on Members for minor disciplinary problems consistent with the Member agreement. The fines may not be calculated on an hourly basis. For example, a Member who is an hour late **may not** be fined an hour's worth of living allowance. Instead, the sub-grantee should establish a written policy on fines, which is not linked to an hourly rate. Members must be notified in writing at or before the beginning of their term of service that a system is in place for fines. A reasonable schedule of fines must be provided to them and must be included in the Member Service Agreement and/or Member Handbook. A "fine" system cannot be developed mid-service and cannot be developed on an "as you go" basis.

If fines are imposed on members' living allowance,

- **it must be written in the MSA.**
- **Your program officer must approve the MSA.**
- **It must and cannot be taken from the federal funds.**

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[1] 2012 Financial and Grants Management Institute handout
[2] http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/AC_StateNational_FAQs.pdf

Programs may not provide living allowances to Members simply because a Member completed the minimum service hours prior to the end of the agreed upon term of service.

Programs should not provide the full living allowance to a Member simply because the Member completed their number of service hours before the end of the agreed-upon term of service. i.e., A Member completes 1700 hours in nine months, but the program runs for 11 months. The program may not pay the remaining two months of the living allowance as a lump sum to the Member. If the Member begins the program late, the program **may not** pay "catch up" amounts to the Member so that the Member may end at the same time as others. The intent of the AmeriCorps Living allowance is designed to help Members meet necessary living expenses incurred while participating in the AmeriCorps program. Members who complete service in an abbreviated time period may be depriving the service site(s) of important service it needs to produce the expected impact in the community it is serving.

NO CATCH-UP ALLOWANCES ALLOWED! Members who begin service late or complete hours early **may not** be provided the complete living allowance in that time period.

Members who begin service late or complete hours early **may not** be provided the complete living allowance in that time period. For example, if a Member begins an 11-month program a month late, the Member will receive 10/11th of the total living allowance. (Ex. If a normal full time member receives $1,100 each month for 11 months, a late starting member cannot receive $1,210 for ten months.) The only exception would be if the Member served an extra month longer than the Members who started on time.

Members may not receive living allowances during terms of suspension.

Situations where Members serve zero hours in a pay period should not be allowed. Members should be suspended if something prevents the Member from serving. Otherwise, the program must pay the Member the full living allowance. An addendum should be attached to the Member's service agreement outlining situations when the Member is unable to serve. Again, the agreement may also stipulate the minimum number of hours acceptable. Members may not receive living allowances during terms of suspension nor does the period of suspension count toward a Member's required service hours.

Information on the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award may be found here:

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award | AmeriCorps

Information on AmeriCorps Member benefits may be found here: Your benefits | AmeriCorps

Waiving the Living Allowance

- A Member may waive all or part of the payment of a living allowance if they believe their public assistance may be decreased or lost because of the living allowance.
- Even if a Member waives their right to receive a living allowance, it is possible depending on the specific public assistance rules, that the amount of the living allowance that the Member is eligible to receive will be deemed available.
- A Member who has waived the living allowance may revoke the waiver at any time and may begin receiving the living allowance.
- The Member may not receive any portion of the living allowance accrued during the waiver period.

Garnishments

Any type of garnishment of the federal portion of a Member's living allowance is not permitted due to issues of sovereign immunity. Sovereign immunity protects the property interests of the United States from suits to which it has been consented. The federal government has a continuing property interest in AmeriCorps grant funds until they are expended in accordance with the grant's terms. With respect to the living allowance, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has a property interest in the federal share of the Member's living allowance, until the AmeriCorps Member actually receives, and this property interest is protected by sovereign immunity. Only Congress may waive this immunity. Whether or not the non-federal portion of the living allowance is subject to garnishment is a state law issue. Because the Corporation is not a party to this action, and because it involves application of state law, programs should consult with their own local counsel. *Reference 42U.S.C.§12594*.

Member Living Allowances and Benefits Requirements (*45 CFR §2522.240 & §2522.250*):

- **Liability Insurance Coverage** – The sub-grantee is responsible for ensuring adequate general liability coverage for the organization, employees, and Members, including coverage of Members engaged in on- and off-site project activities.
- **FICA (Social Security and Medicare Taxes)** – Unless the sub-grantee obtains a ruling from the Social Security Administration or the Internal Revenue Service that specifically exempts its AmeriCorps Members from FICA requirements, the sub-grantee must pay FICA for any Member receiving a living allowance. The sub-grantee must withhold 7.65% from the Member's living allowance.
- **Income Taxes** – The sub-grantee must withhold Federal personal income taxes from the Member living allowance, requiring each Member to complete a W-4 form at the beginning of the term of service and providing a W-2 form at the close

of the tax year. The sub-grantee must comply with any applicable state or local tax requirements.

- **Worker's Compensation** – Some Georgia employers may be required to insure their workers' compensation obligations for AmeriCorps Members. Sub-grantees may consult the Workers' Compensation Law or contact the Georgia Department of Labor to determine worker's compensation requirements. If worker's compensation insurance is not required, Sub-grantees must obtain Occupational, Accidental, and Death and Dismemberment coverage for Members to cover in-service injury or incidents.

- **Unemployment Insurance** – The U.S. Department of Labor ruled on April 20, 1995, that federal unemployment compensation law **does not** require coverage for Members because no 'employer-employee' relationship exists. The sub-grantee may not charge the cost of unemployment insurance taxes to the grant unless mandated by law.

- **Family and Medical Leave** – The Corporation's Regulations at *45 CFR§2540.220* describe the circumstances under which AmeriCorps Members can take family and medical leave in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). However, family, and medical leave does not count toward the requisite service hours and Members may not receive a living allowance during this period. At the discretion of the sub-grantee, temporary leave may also be authorized for the reasons allowed under the FMLA to AmeriCorps Members who do not otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for FMLA leave as described in the regulations. If temporary leave is appropriate, sub-grantees have the flexibility to determine the duration of the absence for up to 12 weeks and may choose to continue providing health benefits to the Member during the period of absence.
  - The length of the leave must be based on two considerations:
    - The circumstances of the situation; and
    - The impact of the absence on the Member's service experience and on the overall program. If the disruption would seriously compromise the Member's service experience or the quality of the program as a whole, then the sub-grantee may offer the Member the option of rejoining the program in the next class or completely withdrawing from the program.

- **Federal Work Study –** Upon approval by the Corporation's Program Office, sub-grantees may enroll Federal Work Study students as AmeriCorps Members. The Corporation does not consider a wage under the Federal Work Study program to be a living allowance for purposes of the National and Community Service Act. The sub-grantee is not required to report such wages in the AmeriCorps grant.

Living Allowance Distribution Recap:

- Living allowances are to be paid in regular increments.
- If a Member serves all required hours and is permitted to conclude their term of service before the originally agreed upon end-of-term, the sub-grantee must not provide a lump sum payment to the Member.
- If a Member is selected after the program's start date, the sub-grantee must provide regular living allowance payments from the Member's start date and may not increase the Member's living allowance incremental payment or provide a lump sum to make up any missed payments.

Eli Segal Education Award

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

Upon successful completion of a term of service, Members are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, which may be used only to pay college costs or to repay student loans. Members may earn up to two awards and have seven years to use this benefit. Since the inception of AmeriCorps in 1994, more than 800,000 alumni have earned more than $2.4 billion in education awards.

The award, which was designed to encourage AmeriCorps alumni to seek postsecondary education opportunities, serves as a powerful recruitment tool for individuals to join AmeriCorps. Studies show that AmeriCorps alumni, with their commitment to service, also make excellent students. A growing number of higher education institutions, in order to encourage AmeriCorps alumni to enroll in their institutions, are "matching" the education award with scholarships and / or academic credits."[3]

To find a list of schools that match the Eli Segal Education Award, you may go to: http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-americorps-education-award/matching-institutions

If you know of an educational institution interested in matching the education award, you may refer them to the above link to learn of "Potential Ways To Match the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award". These institutions should contact: EdAwardMatch@cns.gov.

For more information on using the Segal Education Award, go to: Segal AmeriCorps Education Award | AmeriCorps

[3] http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/AmeriCorps/segal-AmeriCorps-education-award

Beginning with terms of service that were supported with funds from the current year, the amount of a full-time education award is equivalent to the maximum value of the Pell Grant for the award year in which the term of service is funded. Prior to this time, the amount of an education award had remained the same since the AmeriCorps program began. Because AmeriCorps State and National programs are funded on a different schedule than VISTA and NCCC, VISTA and NCCC Members will be eligible for the new amount sooner than AmeriCorps State and National Members.

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

Eligibility

The Member is eligible for a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award if they successfully complete their term of service in accordance with their Member service contract.

Limitations[4]

Currently, the maximum numbers of terms a Member may serve in each AmeriCorps program is as follows:

- 4 for AmeriCorps State and National
- 5 for VISTAs
- 2 for NCCC

Full-time, half-time, reduced half-time, quarter time, and minimum time terms of service each count as one term of service. Even though a Member may serve up to four terms of service in AmeriCorps State and National, regardless of the type of term, the Member may only receive the value of two full-time education awards.[5]

Generally, if a Member is released for cause before completing their term of service and do not receive an education award, that term of service counts as one of the terms. The Trust does not make payments to anyone other than qualified schools and loan holders. Direct the Member to see their financial aid counselor for information on how they handle disbursements and reimbursements.

If the Member withdraws from the school at which they have used the education award, the school may be required to refund the Trust. If any refund is owed, it is credited to the Member’s education award "account," and is subject to the award’s original expiration date (seven years from the date the award was earned).

[4] http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/AmeriCorps/segal-AmeriCorps-education-award
[5] http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/serveamerica/edaward.asp

Under certain circumstances, the Member may use the education award to study outside the U.S. For information, have the student contact the National Service Hotline at 1-800-942-2677.

The Member has seven years to use the education award from the date of completion of service. The award may be divided up into portions at different times, as long as it is for authorized expenditures within the specified time period. For example, a portion of it may be applied to existing qualified student loans, and the remainder may be saved to pay for authorized college costs a few years down the road.

Transfer of Education Awards

The Serve America Act allows for the transfer of AmeriCorps State and National and Silver Service education awards under certain conditions. Basically, the person who earned the award has to have been at least 55 years old when they began the term of service and the person to whom the award is transferred has to be the transferring individual's child, grandchild, or foster child.

To transfer an award, an individual must:

- have earned an education award in an AmeriCorps State and National or a Silver Scholar term of service program;
- have been at least 55 years of age before beginning the term of service for which the award is attached;
- have begun this term of service on or after October 1, 2009;
- transfer the award before the original expiration date;
- designate all or a portion of the unused award for the transfer; and
- complete the on-line forms authorizing the transfer, which includes providing information and certifying eligibility to make the transfer.

The transferee must use the transferred award within 10 years of the date the Member completed the term of service upon which the award is based (an extension of the period of use will not be granted solely because the recipient was not old enough to enroll in an institution of higher education or to incur qualified student loans within that 10-year period). The transferee must be a US citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien and is bound by all of the legal provisions and CNCS policies respecting the use of a Segal Education Award. The transferee may not receive more than the aggregate value of two full-time awards, including the transferred award amount.

Taxes

Remember, the IRS has determined that payments made from an education award are considered to be included in a Member's taxable income in the year the payment is made to the school or loan holder. Interest payments are also considered taxable. This increase in income could affect the Member's tax liability for that year. See the web page on tax implications for additional information: Education Award find out more | AmeriCorps

Loan Forbearance

Individuals who are serving in a term of service in an approved AmeriCorps position may be eligible to temporarily postpone the repayment of their qualified student loans through an action called loan forbearance. While the loan is in forbearance during their term of service, interest continues to accrue. However, if the Member successfully completes their term of service, the National Service Trust will pay all or a portion of the interest that accrued on the qualified student loans during their service period.

The Member can request their loan holder approves forbearance for the qualified student loans during the Member's service period. They may request the forbearance on-line through "My AmeriCorps". After they finish their term of service, they will be responsible for repaying the loan according to the terms of the loan.

The Corporation cannot approve or disapprove forbearance requests; it can only verify that the Member is in an approved national service position. Only the loan holder can determine the student loan's eligibility and approve a request for forbearance. If the loan is in default, it may not be eligible for forbearance. However, if the Member has loans that had gone into default before they began their national 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 can be paid. Please, visit the link below to sign in to request a loan forbearance.

https://my.americorps.gov/mp/login.do

Healthcare Coverage

With the exception of EAPs, Professional Corps, or Members covered under a collective bargaining agreement, the sub-grantee must provide or make available to Members serving a 1700-hour full-time term a basic health insurance plan. This must be offered at the time of the Members' acceptance into the program, if the Member is not otherwise covered by a health insurance policy that provides the minimum benefits as follows:

Minimum Benefits. When required to provide healthcare insurance coverage, the grantee may obtain healthcare from any provider. Coverage provided by the grantee must be provided for a period of no more than 364 days and cannot be renewed or extended beyond that period. Coverage must include the following minimum benefits:

a. Physician services for illness or injury
b. Hospital room and board
c. Emergency room
d. X-ray and laboratory
e. Prescription drugs
f. Limited mental/nervous disorders
g. Limited substance abuse coverage
h. An annual deductible of no more than $250 charges per member
i. No more than $1,000 total annual out-of-pocket per member

j. A 20% co-pay or a comparable fixed fee with the exception of a 50% co-pay for mental and substance abuse care
k. A maximum benefit of at least $50,000 per occurrence or cause

If as a result of participation, or if, during the term of service, a Member loses coverage through no deliberate act of their own, such as parental or spousal job loss, the program must provide the Member with a basic health insurance plan that meets the minimum requirements.

Health care benefits are for AmeriCorps Members only.

Health care benefits are for AmeriCorps Members only. Spousal or dependent benefits cannot be covered using Corporation funds.

When required to provide healthcare insurance coverage, the sub-grantee may obtain healthcare from any provider, as long as the policy provides the minimum benefits and is not excessive in cost.

Programs may provide health insurance to less than full time Members but are not required.

Programs may provide health insurance to less-than-full-time Members serving in a full-time capacity but are not required to do so. Programs must offer full-time Members health insurance. Those full time Members that decline MUST sign an insurance waiver.

Child Care Benefits

Pursuant to the regulations in *45CFR§§2522.250*, active full-time AmeriCorps State and National Members may be eligible to receive childcare benefits to pay all or part of their childcare costs. These childcare benefit payments are made directly to qualified childcare providers for childcare services provided to eligible children on behalf of eligible Members who need childcare services after the Member's term of service with AmeriCorps. Childcare benefit payments are not paid directly to AmeriCorps Members.

To be eligible to receive childcare subsidy, the AmeriCorps Member must meet the following requirements:

1. Must be an active full-time Member.
2. Must need childcare services in order to participate in the AmeriCorps program
3. Household income must not exceed the maximum amount under the Child Care & Develop Fund (CCDF) Block Grant rules established by the state or territory in which the childcare services are provided.
4. Must be a custodial parent or legal guardian of a child under the age of 13.
5. Child must be living with the Member.
6. Once the Member is approved and accepts the AmeriCorps CCP benefits, the Member must not be receiving childcare benefits for the same child from any other source.

The maximum amount of the monthly childcare benefit will be the lesser of the rate which the states and territories have determined to be the prevailing rate for the area in which the care is provided as determined by the state or territory in accordance with the CCDF Block Grant program, or the monthly rate charged by the childcare provider.

In order to apply for the AmeriCorps child Care Benefits Program (CCP), the Member must submit the following forms and supporting documentation:

1. A completed and signed AmeriCorps CCP application form.
2. Each childcare provider must complete an AmeriCorps Child Care Provider Information form.
3. Each childcare provider must complete an IRS Form W-9.
4. A completed ACH or EFT Authorization form for each childcare provider who would like to receive electronic payment of the childcare benefit instead of paper checks.
5. A copy of a birth certificate for each child under age 13 who require childcare services.
6. If the Member is not the biological parent, s/he must submit proof to show parental or guardian status. This includes legal guardianship, adoptive parent, and foster parent or stepparent.
7. Official documentation to verify total salaries and wages for all adult Members of the household, including
    a. 4 weeks of the most recent paycheck stubs,
    b. A copy of the most recent federal income tax return
    c. Proof of all other household income for all household Members including the following:
        i. Child support,
        ii. SSI
        iii. Other disability income
        iv. Retirement income
        v. Social security benefits
        vi. AFDC
        vii. TANF
        viii. Documentation for any other source(s) of income in accordance with the CCDF Block Grant program guidelines for the state or territory where the childcare services are provided.
    d. A copy of the current childcare provider license for each childcare provider or proof that they are licensed, regulated, or in compliance with the state or territory guidelines for an eligible childcare provider under the CCDF Block Grant program.

To obtain childcare forms, go to http://www.AmeriCorpschildcare.com/ where you will also find a complete list of all of the supporting documentation you need to provide. GAP Solutions Inc. developed an online application at https://www.AmeriCorpschildcare.com/Applynline/MemberApplication.aspx.

Appendix

1. **Fieldprint Basics**
2. **GCSV Policies**
3. **eGrants TTA Coaching PowerPoint Presentation**

Using Fieldprint as an FBI Channeler

A Guide for CNCS Grantees

Overview

In September 2015, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) executed a contract with Fieldprint, Inc., ("Fieldprint") to provide grantees with FBI fingerprint-based checks ("FBI checks"). A limited number of contractors like Fieldprint, called Channelers, are approved by the FBI to expedite requests for checks from grantees through the FBI's background check system. Service began in January 2016. The addition of Fieldprint's services means that all grantees and subgrantees (collectively, "grantees") will have a clear path to obtain timely FBI checks.

This document collects earlier guidance provided on the use of Fieldprint and provides additional instructions on using Fieldprint's services. It describes:

- The services available from Fieldprint
- Who should use Fieldprint
- How to use Fieldprint
- How the beginning of Channeler services will affect alternative search procedures and exemptions at CNCS.

NOTE: The criminal history check process required of all grantees of CNCS has up to four components:

- A nationwide check of the National Sex Offender Public Website
- State criminal history checks for the individual's state of residence **AND** state of work or service
- An FBI check.

Regardless of whether your program uses Fieldprint or another means to conduct an FBI check, you **MUST** still conduct a nationwide NSOPW check and, in appropriate circumstances, state checks in the individual's state of residence and state of service. Failure to do so will result in cost disallowance. Visit CNCS's Knowledge Network page on the criminal history check requirements for more information.

Table of Contents

A. Fieldprint Basics

1. **Who may use Fieldprint as a Channeler?**

Grantees may use Fieldprint to obtain FBI checks if the grantee cannot successfully receive this service from state repositories. This would include grantees that are operating in states that do not offer FBI checks or cannot provide them in a timely manner, or will not adjudicate the results, or grantees that recruit individuals from many different states such that dealing with many different state agencies is infeasible. In other words, if you're one of the many grantees that can obtain timely FBI checks through your state repository—keep using it! If not, use Fieldprint.

2. **Will using Fieldprint require an Alternative Search Procedure or rejection letter from a state repository?**

No. Grantees may establish an online account with Fieldprint to use its services without an approved Alternative Search Procedure or documentation of rejection from a state repository. The system will use organization's Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to confirm that it is an active grantee or subgrantee of CNCS. For more information, see this document's step-by-step instructions on establishing an account, on pg. 7.

3. **How will a grantee sign up for services with Fieldprint?**
Visit Fieldprint's CNCS-specific webpage and click on "Set Up an Account" to begin the process. This document contains detailed instructions on pg. 7. Fieldprint will also offer customer service for its web portal via a toll-free helpdesk that is available from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, at 877-614-4364 or customerservice@fieldprint.com.

4. **Who pays for the FBI checks obtained through Fieldprint?**
While this contract relies on CNCS's legal authority to allow Fieldprint to provide grantees with adjudicated FBI checks, grantees will work with and pay Fieldprint directly. Costs of FBI checks conducted through Fieldprint are allowable grant costs. As with any other component of the NSCHC process, grantees must pay for each check conducted on an individual seeking to work or serve within their program. Programs may ask a candidate to pay for checks conducted through Fieldprint as long as the program reimburses the applicant for the cost of conducting the check.

5. **How can a grantee pay for the FBI checks?**
Fieldprint will offer three payment options.

- A grantee can register a credit card with their account, which will be automatically charged with each check.
- Grantees can request that applicants pay for the checks initially, provided that they reimburse those individuals in a reasonable timeframe consistent with their own policies and procedures. (See Question #4, above.)
- Grantees that process more than 100 checks in a year may also establish an invoicing system with Fieldprint.

6. **How does an applicant get fingerprinted?**
After a grantee establishes an account, Fieldprint will provide that grantee with a "Fieldprint code," which is used to link and track individual requests to grantees. Grantees will then provide this code to applicants and direct them to a web site where applicants can establish an account and schedule an appointment online with a local fingerprint service provider. Fieldprint maintains partnerships with more than 1,100 service providers nationwide, which capture fingerprints electronically.

Applicants will schedule an appointment online, visit the fingerprint service provider, and receive an automatic notification when their check is complete. The grantee will receive a notification both when the applicant schedules an appointment and when results are received. Both the grantee and the applicant can review adjudications as soon as they are received via their online accounts. The process is slightly different for the small share of individuals that do not live within a reasonable distance of one of Fieldprint's local service providers. (See Question #7 below.)

This document contains step-by-step instructions on how to check your applicants through the system and how to get checked yourself, beginning on pgs. 11 and 13, respectively. Fieldprint's helpdesk is also available to support all users in this process.

7. **What if applicants don't live near one of Fieldprint's local service providers?**
In these uncommon situations, applicants would establish an account online with Fieldprint, and then receive information on other sites nearby that can capture fingerprints using paper cards. These are often law enforcement agencies. If the applicant selects a law enforcement agency, Fieldprint will mail a packet to the applicant with the information necessary for an individual to get their fingerprints taken at one of these locations, including the fingerprint card. The applicant would then mail this card to Fieldprint, using instructions provided in the information packet. Once Fieldprint receives the fingerprints, the rest of the process is identical to that experienced by other applicants, as described in Question #6 above. Due to the need for fingerprints to reach Fieldprint through the mail, these checks may take more time to complete. See the step-by-step instructions that begin on pg. 13, particularly Step 9, for more information.

8. **How much will one FBI check cost?**
When conducted through one of Fieldprint's local service providers (the process described in Question #6 above), each check will cost $30.25, inclusive of all taxes and fees. When fingerprints are collected by a site that is not one of Fieldprint's local service providers (the uncommon situation discussed in Question #7, above), the fingerprinting agency may charge a small additional fee for its services. This would be the case only when an applicant does not live near one of Fieldprint's local service providers. See the step-by-step instructions that begin on pg. 7 for more information.

9. **How do I know whether an applicant clears the FBI check?**
Applicants and grantees will receive a "Cleared" or "Not Cleared" recommendation from Fieldprint. A "Cleared" notification confirms that the FBI's records does not contain any information to indicate that the individual has been convicted of murder, crimes related to sex offenses, or crimes of neglect, cruelty, or endangerment. A "Not Cleared" indicates that criminal history record information was found that does not allow the issuance of a "Cleared" recommendation. See Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions for more information on how to interpret these results.

10. **NOTE:**
A "Cleared" recommendation does not provide any other information about an individual's FBI Criminal Record History Report, including the presence or absence of any other crimes. Individuals with convictions for crimes other than murder, sex offenses or offenses that involve neglect, cruelty, or endangerment (for example, fraud, DUI, larceny, or petty theft) will receive "Cleared" recommendations.

An FBI check alone is never enough to be compliant with the criminal history check requirements. Grantees must conduct the other required components of the criminal history check process on time to confirm eligibility and to avoid cost disallowance. See CNCS's Knowledge Network page on the criminal history check requirements for more information.

11. **What should I do if I want to know more about my applicant than just a "cleared" or "not cleared" determination?**

Grantees may supplement the checks required by the criminal history check regulations to obtain whatever additional information the grantee may need to screen applicants. For example, grantees may supplement the required checks with a check conducted by a commercial background check provider. These checks may not be used in lieu of the required criminal history check procedures without prior written approval from CNCS.

Organizations that articulate a sufficient business case for requiring more detailed criminal history record information from the FBI may still request approval to meet the FBI-check requirement by using the FBI Departmental Order process, which can provide detailed conviction information. CNCS will approve use of the Departmental Order process on a case-by-case basis though the alternative search procedure process. See the section of this document on alternative search procedures and exemptions, which begins on pg. 18, for more information.

12. **How long will it take to receive a recommendation?**

CNCS expects that the vast majority of checks conducted electronically will take no more than five business days from the date the fingerprints are captured. (See Question #7 for more information on checks when an individual does not live within a reasonable distance of an electronic fingerprinting site.)

13. **Will applicants have a challenge the factual accuracy of a result?**

Yes, applicants must have 30 calendar days to challenge the factual accuracy of a result. See Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions for information on how to complete this process.

B. Step-by-Step: Establishing an Account with Fieldprint

Your organization must establish an account with Fieldprint before it can conduct any checks. See Fieldprint Basics, beginning on pg. 3 of this document, for more information on the services Fieldprint can provide and what grantees should use those services. Follow the steps below to establish an account. CNCS strongly recommends that you read the entire process before you begin. You can print pages from Fieldprint's system for your records at any time by using your browser's printing capabilities.

1. **Gather the information you will need.** Have the following information available for easy reference when establishing your account. You will not be able to complete the process without this information.

   □ Your organization's legal name

   □ Your organization's address

   □ Your organization's phone number

   □ An estimate of the annual number of individuals you expect to check through this system. **This is an estimate only.** Provide your best estimate based on the

All about DUNS Numbers

What is a DUNS number?

A Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-digit identification number used by the federal government to identify organizations and branches of organizations. Every recipient of federal funding, including both prime and subgrantees, are required to have these numbers. See the Terms and Conditions of your CNCS award for more information.

Why do I need a DUNS number to use Fieldprint?

Fieldprint can only provide these checks to organizations that are conducting criminal history checks due to the requirements of CNCS and its authorizing legislation. A DUNS number allows Fieldprint to verify that your organization is eligible for these services.

How do I get a DUNS number? Does it cost anything? How long does it take?

First, verify that you don't already have one by speaking to your accounting or compliance office. After you've confirmed that you don't have one, follow these instructions from the Office of Management and Budget. Registering for a DUNS number is free and generally takes 510 minutes.

If Fieldprint is checking the DUNS number I provide against a list of approved numbers, how can I be sure I'm on the list?

If you are a prime grantee of CNCS, CNCS will provide your DUNS number to Fieldprint. No further action is necessary. Fieldprint will primarily use information from the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparencty Act Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) to verify subgrantees. CNCS's grant terms and conditions require prime grantees to provide FSRS information on all subgrants of $25,000 or more. That means that if you are a prime grantee and you have not already done so, you need to provide this information to FSRS to extend this service to your subgrantees. If this requirement does not apply to you (for example, if your subgrants are smaller than $25,000), contact CNCS at CHC@cns.gov for more information. If you are a subgrantee and you want to ensure you have access to this system, contact your prime grantee.

What happens if my number is not on the list?

If you provide a DUNS number that is not on Fieldprint's approved list, you will receive an email alerting you to this fact shortly after registration. First, check that you entered the number correctly using the information provided in the email. If there is a typo, call Fieldprint to correct it. If not, contact CNCS if you are a prime grantee or your granting organization if you are a subgrantee.

Need Help?

Review Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions. All additional questions about establishing an account and running checks should be directed to Fieldprint at 877-614-4364 or customerservice@fieldprint.com.

information you have available at the time you sign up for an account. There are no negative repercussions for an incorrect estimate.

- Your Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number. If you are a direct grantee of CNCS, you can find your DUNS number in your Notice of Grant Award. (See Figure 1, Box A). See the box on the prior page for more information on DUNS numbers and their role in this system.

- The Agreement Number and Performance Period End Date of your most recent grant from

  CNCS or a CNCS-funded organization. If you are a direct grantee of CNCS, your

  Agreement Number is a ten-character code made up of letters and numbers, such as “15ABCDE123”. Your Performance Period End Date is the date on which your grant ends, most often, though not always, three years after the date of the award. You can find both of these numbers on your Notice of Grant Award. (See Figure 1, Boxes B and C.) If you are a subgrantee of an organization other than CNCS, contact the granting organization. If you are yourself a prime grantee that makes awards to other organizations, contact Fieldprint Customer Service if you are unsure what to use.

Figure 1: A Sample Notice of Grant Award

Notice of Grant Award

Corporation for National and Community Servi
1201 New York Ave., N
Washington, DC 205
(202) 606-50

CNCS Program

Grantee
Service Organization
123 Street Road
Townsville, ST 12345

EIN: 123456789
DUNS: 123456789

Award Information
Agreement: 15ABCDE123
Amendment: 0
CFDA: 99.999

Project Period: 9/1/2015 – 8/31/2018
Budget Period: 9/1/2015 – 8/31/2018

Award Description
This award funds the approved program

Purp
The p... award is to assist the grantee in carrying out a national service program as authorized by the National and Communit Servi... 90, (as amended by the Serve America Act).

Funding I

Current Ye

	This Year		
Total Obligated by CNCS	$ X	$ X	$ X
Grantor's Unobligated Balance (Carryover)	$ X	$ X	$ X
Total Available	$ X	$ X	$ X
Total CNCS Funds Awarded to Date			$ X

Funding Source and Amount
2011—ABC1-A12-ABC-12345-1234 $X

Terms of Acceptance: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc malesuada, erat sit amet tempus lacinia, leo nulla viverra mauris, in tristique ex massa ut massa. Quisque dignissim placerat erat. Vivamus lobortis tortor pulvinar libero fringilla rutrum. Donec placerat, mauris sed auctor fermentum, felis ex pellentesque ipsum, in mollis augue arcu sed diam. Fusce quis metus viverra, ornare diam sit amet, sodale urna. Nam at dapibus purus. Donec in nisl in turpis ornare aliquet. Aenean ut tellus vehicula ante tempor convallis nec vel velit. Cras vel libero qui enim elementum ullamcorper nec ut ligula. Duis faucibus semper sapien sed condimentum. Nulla facilisi. Mauris nec consequat erat, sit amet sollicitudin urna.

Corporation for National and Community Service

Signature Date

Grant S. Manager, Senior Grants Officer
Name and Title

Awardee

Signature Date

I. Ron. Programs, Executive Director
Name and Title

This is an example of a CNCS Notice of Grant Award. It contains key information about your award, including your DUNS number (A), your Agreement Number (B), and your Performance Period End Date (C). If you are a direct grantee of CNCS, use this to find key information necessary to sign up to use Fieldprint. If you are a subgrantee, you may not have a document that looks like this. Consult with your granting organization to identify the right information. If you are a prime grantee and do not know what to provide to your subgrantees, contact Fieldprint Customer Service for more information.

□ The name, title, address, phone number, and email of the person who will be the primary contact for your account.

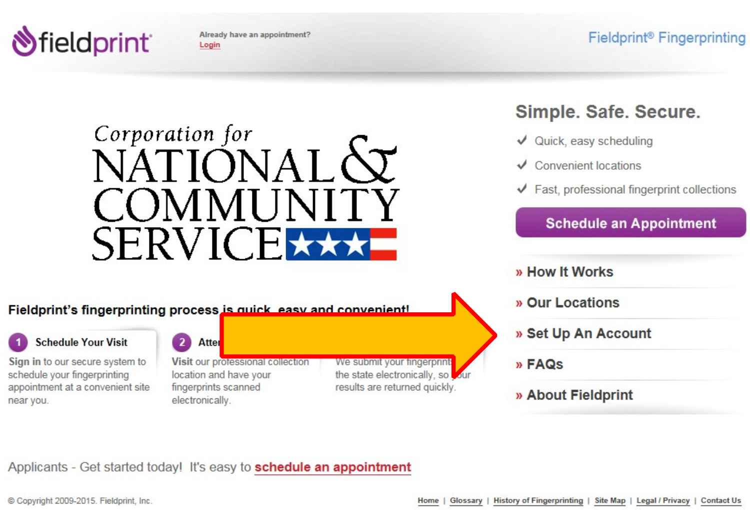
□ How you intend to pay for the checks. Fieldprint's system offers three payment options:

- You can pay for the checks directly using a MasterCard, American Express, Discover, or Visa credit card.
- You can have applicants pay for the checks when they schedule an appointment and reimburse them at a later date.
- You can setup an invoicing system if you expect to conduct more than 100 checks annually.

□ Your credit card information if you choose to pay for the checks directly.

2. **Go to www.fieldprintCNCS.com and click on "Set Up An Account."** (See Figure 2.)
3. **Click "Sign Up" on the next screen.**
4. **Follow the steps in the Fieldprint Fingerprinting Program Setup Wizard to provide the required information.** When entering this information, two specific questions require particular attention. Enter them carefully. Then, double- and triple-check them.

Figure 2: Click "Set Up An Account"



a. **Your DUNS number:** As described in the box on pg. 7, this number indicates to Fieldprint that your organization is eligible to receive these services. If you enter this number incorrectly, you will not be able to establish an account without calling Fieldprint directly to correct the error. If you have entered it correctly and still are not able to sign up for an account, contact CNCS if you are a prime grantee or your granting organization if you are a subgrantee.

b. **Performance Period End Date of your most recent grant supported by CNCS funds:** While entering this number incorrectly will not keep you out of the system, it may create additional administrative burdens later on. The system is designed to sunset

Need Help?
Review Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions. All additional questions about establishing an account and running checks should be directed to Fieldprint at 877-614-4364 or customerservice@fieldprint.com.

accounts as grants expire. Organizations that continue to work with CNCS will be able to renew them as their expiration date approaches. Entering this number incorrectly could make you renew your account earlier than necessary or require additional action to close your account when it is no longer needed.

5. **Before you complete the "General Information" screen, check all of the information you have provided carefully.**
6. **When you reach the Payment screen, choose "Applicant pays" if you will reimburse your applicants for the cost of each check. Choose "Provider pays" if you will pay directly. If you wish to use the invoicing option, call Fieldprint using the information in the box at the bottom of this page at this stage.** You will not be able to progress past this page without providing a payment method.
7. **After completing the Payment screen, you will automatically download Instructions and a Services Agreement. Please read these documents carefully.** Any questions should be directed to Fieldprint Customer Service. If you agree to the Services Agreement, provide the information requested on the screen. You must enter the date on which you are actually completing this screen to move forward. You cannot back-date or forward-date this agreement.
8. **Read the information on the confirmation screen and save it for your records.** In one-to-two business days, you will receive an email with more information, including your Fieldprint Code and information on logging into your client portal, where you can review the status and results of all your checks. When you receive this information, move on to Step 9.
9. **When you receive this email, save your Fieldprint Code somewhere easily accessible**. You will need to provide it to any individuals you direct to Fieldprint for an FBI check. Follow the instructions to create your password and log in to the client portal. If the DUNS number you provided was not on Fieldprint's list of approved organizations, you will be notified at this stage. See the box on pg. 7 for more information.
10. **You're all set!** You can start using Fieldprint to conduct checks right away. See the next section for information on how to have individuals get checked through Fieldprint.

Need Help?
Review Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions. All additional questions about establishing an account and running checks should be directed to Fieldprint at 877-614-4364 or customerservice@fieldprint.com.

C. Step-by-Step: How to Check Applicants Through Fieldprint

Follow these steps to help an individual receive an FBI check through Fieldprint. Although this system has been designed to be as intuitive as possible, individuals' comfort with online systems varies widely. Consider going through the process with your applicants if you have any concerns about their ability to navigate the system successfully. CNCS strongly recommends that you read the entire process before you begin. You can print pages from Fieldprint's system for your records at any time by using your browser's printing capabilities.

1. **Provide the following three things to the individuals you want to receive a check:**

    a. Your Fieldprint Code. See Steps 8-9 in the process for establishing an account (pg. 7) for more information.

    b. The portion of this document called "Step-by-Step: How to Receive an FBI Check through Fieldprint," beginning on pg. 13.

    c. The URL for Fieldprint's scheduling site: www.fieldprintCNCS.com

    d. Whether or not you will pay for the checks directly or require the applicant to pay and be reimbursed at a later date. See Step 6 in the process for establishing an account (pg. 7) for more information.

2. **Ask the individual to follow the steps in "How to Receive an FBI Check through Fieldprint**," the next section in this document, which begins on pg. 13. As they proceed, answer any questions that they may have. If you are working with any individuals that do not have an email address, see the box to the right. If the individual needs any extra assistance, walk through the process with them.

Assisting Applicants without Email Addresses

Fieldprint's system is designed to be entirely digital. That's why it is able to maintain and sustain high levels of speed and reliability. Consequently, it requires those receiving FBI checks to have access to an email address to create an account and see their results. If you're applicants don't have email addresses and you would still like to use the Channeler for FBI checks, you may have to help facilitate this process by working with them to establish an email account or providing them access to an email account created by your organization. CNCS encourages organizations that facilitate the process in this way to share their strategies, so that CNCS can help other organizations seeking to overcome the same challenge. Email your strategies, your successes, and your ongoing challenges to CHC@cns.gov.

3. You will receive an email notification in the system whenever an individual schedules an appointment. Save this notification for your records. **CNCS recommends that you save this document as evidence of initiation of an FBI check.** FBI checks must be initiated before an individual begins work or service on a CNCS-funded grant. For more information on initiation, see CNCS's FAQs on criminal history checks.

Need Help?

Review Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions. All additional questions about establishing an account and running checks should be directed to Fieldprint at 877-614-4364 or customerservice@fieldprint.com.

4. Remind individuals as their appointment approaches. Fieldprint will remind them as well, but as there is a cost for no-shows or appointments that are cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice, it is in your interest to remain aware of these appointments and ensure individuals actually attend the appointments they schedule.

5. You will receive an email when an individual's check is complete. In most cases, this should not take more than three business days. Log in to your client portal to see the results of the check.

6. Contact the individual to inform them of the results of the check. The individual will be able to see these results as well, but you should always contact them to confirm receipt and that the results are identical.

a. **If the individual cleared the check**, save the results to document their clearance. Use this document as evidence that the individual has cleared this check. Note that CNCS requires criminal history checks with up to four components: a nationwide check of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSPOW), state criminal history checks for the individual's state of residence and state of work or service, and an FBI check. Regardless of whether your program uses Fieldprint or another means to conduct an FBI check, you **MUST** still conduct a nationwide NSOPW check and, in appropriate circumstances, state checks in the individual's state of residence and state of service. Failure to do so will result in cost disallowance.

b. **If the individual did not clear the check**, save the results and view Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions for more information. **This does not necessarily mean that you should reject this applicant.** There are several different reasons why an individual might receive this result. For example, FBI records are sometimes incomplete. If an individual's record contains a charge for a disqualifying offense without indicating how that case has ended, they will receive a "Not Cleared" recommendation, even though the charges may have been dropped. **It is essential to gather more information before excluding an individual on the basis of a "Not Cleared" recommendation through Fieldprint.**

7. You can log into your client portal at any time to view the status of any individuals who have used your Fieldprint Code. Results will be available for three years from the date of the check.

Need Help?
Review Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions. All additional questions should be directed to Fieldprint at 877-6144364 or customerservice@fieldprint.com.

D. How to Receive an FBI Check through Fieldprint

1. **Gather the information you will need.** You will need all of the documents and information below to successfully schedule an appointment. Gather this information before beginning the process to ensure it goes smoothly.

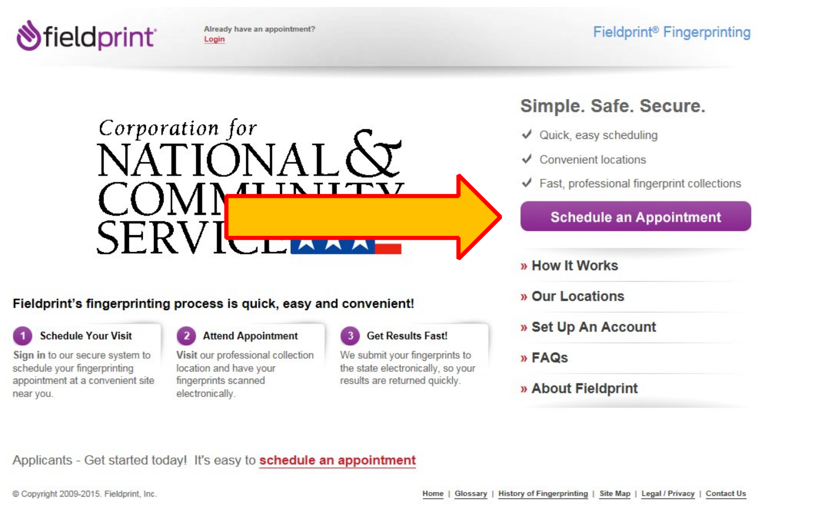
   - ◻ **Your Fieldprint Code:** This is a code unique to the organization that is asking you to receive a check. Contact them to obtain this code if they have not provided it already.
   - ◻ **Two forms of identification:** You will need to have these with you when you go to your appointment. See Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions for acceptable forms of identification. This may differ from the identification that the organization that requested you undergo this check used to verify your identity earlier in the process.
   - ◻ **All of the following information**, which is required by the FBI to run a fingerprint based check:
     - ◻ Name
     - ◻ Alias (if any)
     - ◻ Country of Citizenship
     - ◻ Social Security Number
     - ◻ Date of Birth
     - ◻ City and State of Birth
     - ◻ Sex/Gender
     - ◻ Race
     - ◻ Height
     - ◻ Weight
     - ◻ Eye Color
     - ◻ Hair Color
     - ◻ Home Address
     - ◻ Phone Number

Need Help?
Review Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions. All additional questions should be directed to Fieldprint at 877-6144364 or customerservice@fieldprint.com.

□ Email Address: If you do not have an email address, contact you're the organization that is asking you to receive this check for assistance.

2. **Go to www.fieldprintCNCS.com and click "Schedule an Appointment".** (See Figure 3.)

Figure 3:"Schedule an Appointment"



3. **Create an account**. Provide your email address and click "Sign Up."

4. **Create a password and answer the security questions.** Note the password rules. You will need this password to access your results, so be sure to either memorize it or save it in a safe place. If you forget this password, Fieldprint will use the security questions to help you access your account. A security question should be something that you will easily remember and only you know. Some common examples include "What was the name of your first pet?" "Where did you have your first kiss?" or "What was the last name of your third grade teacher?"

5. **Enter your Fieldprint Code.** This code is provided to you by the organization that is asking you to receive this check.

6. **Provide all of the personal information requested.** This information is required by the FBI to run a fingerprint-based check. Learn more about how Fieldprint keeps this information safe by reviewing their privacy policy. The specific categories for demographic information, including Race and Gender, refer to specific codes used in the FBI's fingerprint check process. CNCS does not control the choices available for these questions. Contact Fieldprint at 1-877-614-4364 or customerservice@fieldprint.com if you have any questions about the choices provided. **Check each screen carefully for errors before you move on.**

7. **Read the release carefully.** If you agree to these terms, click "I agree" and provide your name and the date. You must provide the date that you are actually reviewing the information to move forward. You cannot back-date or forward-date the release.

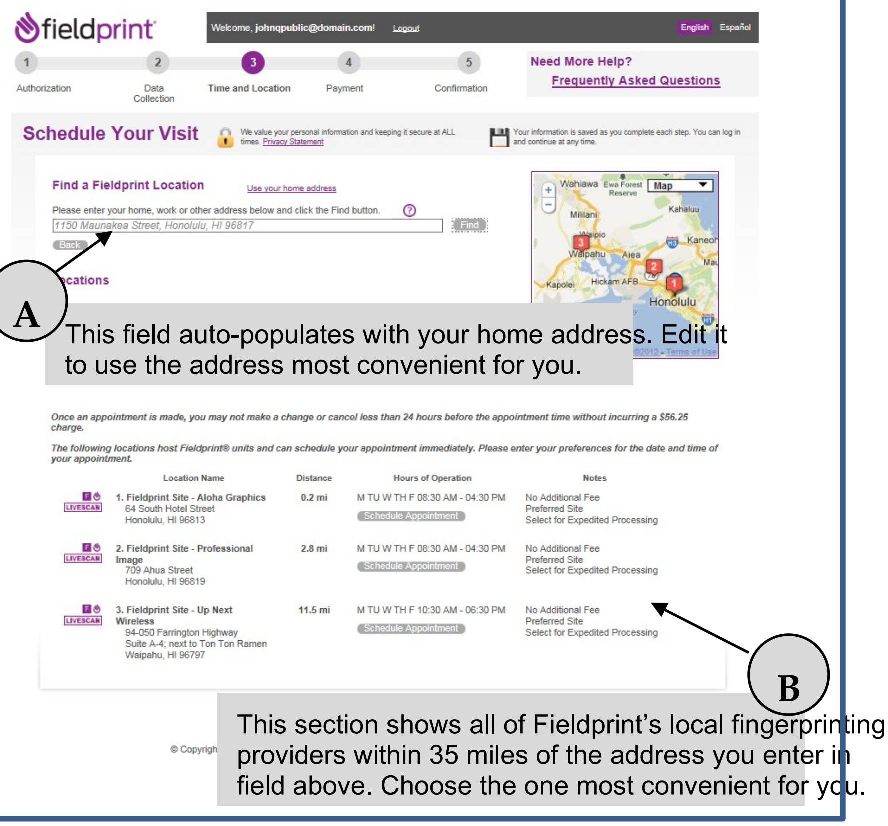
8. **Read the Privacy Act Notice carefully.** If you agree to these terms, click "I agree" and provide your name and date. You cannot back-date or forward-date your acknowledgement of this document.

Need Help?
Review Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions. All additional questions should be directed to Fieldprint at 877-6144364 or customerservice@fieldprint.com.

January 22, 2016

9. **Review your local fingerprinting sites.** The next screen shows you all of Fieldprint's fingerprinting partners within 35 miles of the home address you entered earlier. If you wish to use a different address to find locations, you can enter it in the box provided. (See Figure 4, Box A.) Depending on the address you use, you will have one of two options at this stage:

Figure 4: Local Fingerprinting Sites



- □ **If you live within 35 miles of one of Fieldprint's fingerprinting providers,** you can choose the one that you would like to visit by clicking "Schedule Appointment." You can choose any location that's convenient for you. (See Figure 4, Box B.) Then, move on to Step 10.

- □ **If you do not live within 35 miles of one of Fieldprint's fingerprinting providers**, you will instead see a combination of Fieldprint sites that are farther away and other local organizations that can also take fingerprints, often law enforcement agencies. (See Figure 4, next page.) At this stage, you should contact your selecting organization before you move on, to let them know which you would prefer. Organizations that are not Fieldprint providers may charge an additional fee for their services. Choose the organization that's most convenient to you. If you choose a site that is not a Fieldprint provider, Fieldprint will then mail you further information about how to get fingerprinted. If you fall into this category, after selecting where you will be fingerprinted, wait for the information Fieldprint will send and follow those instructions. When the results of your check arrive, resume following this document at Step 14.

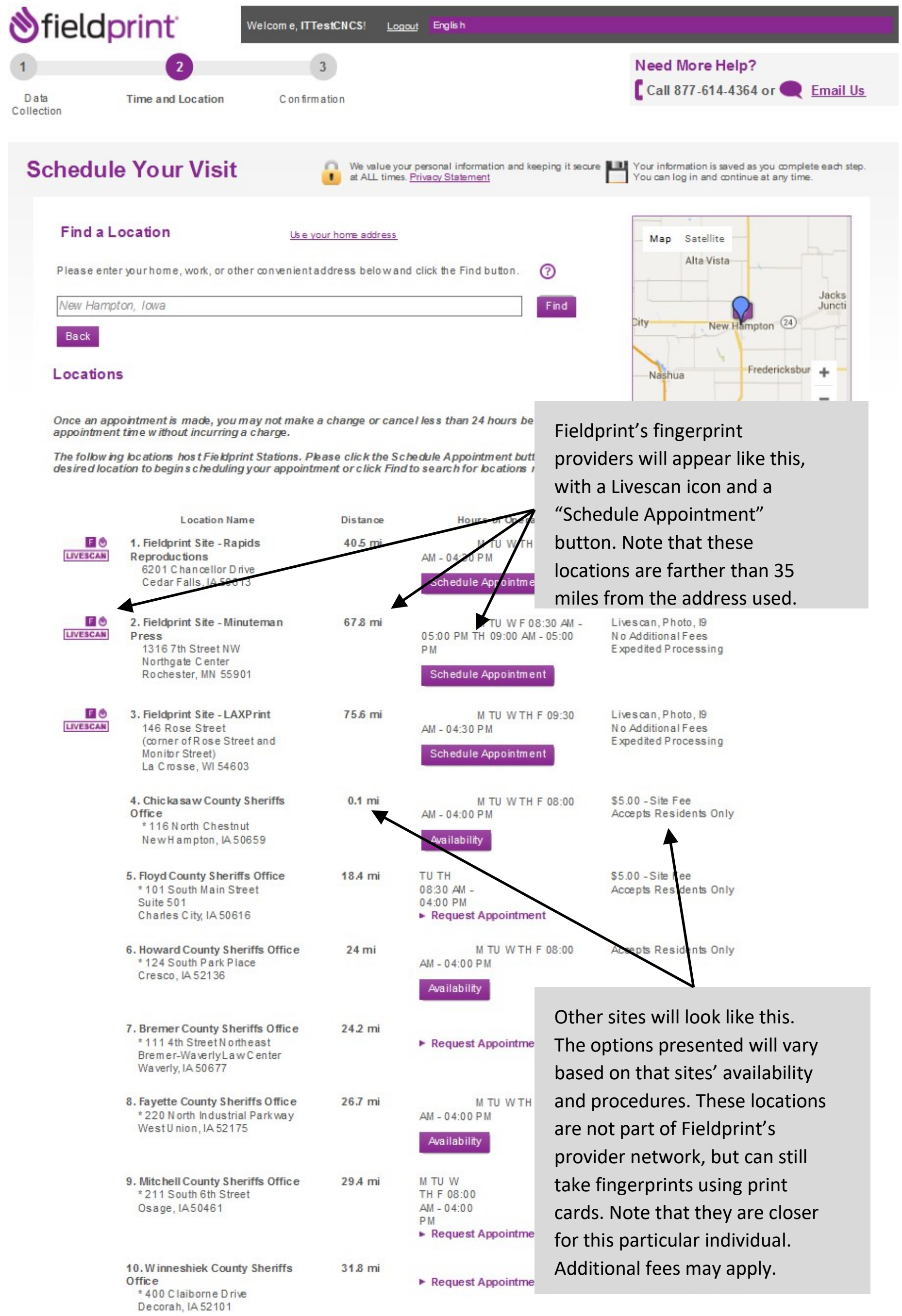
Need Help?
Review Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions. All additional questions should be directed to Fieldprint at 877-6144364 or customerservice@fieldprint.com.

10. Choose your time. Use the drop-down menus to choose the available time that works best for you. You will only see times that are available. Choose the one that works best for you and click on "Schedule".

11. Review your appointment and, if the information is correct, click "Continue" Be sure to confirm this information at this stage, because if you do not arrive at your scheduled time or you cancel in less than 24 hours, the organization that asked you to receive the check will be charged.

12. Review the confirmation screen and print it so that you can bring it to your appointment. Pay particular attention to the documents that you are required to bring to your appointment.

Figure 5: No Providers within 35 Miles



On the day of your appointment, go to the location you chose. You should bring:

□ Your printed appointment confirmation

□ Two forms of identification, as described on your appointment confirmation.

Frequently Asked Question

13. **You will receive an email notification when your check is complete. Login to the system using the password you created in Step 4.** Fieldprint may email you an additional PIN before accessing your results for security purposes.

    a. If you cleared the check, follow the instructions of your selecting organization. They should inform you of any outstanding items or required next steps. Save your clearance for your records.

    b. If you did not clear the check, review Fieldprint's Frequently Asked Questions for more information about why this may have occurred, what you can expect going forward, and your next steps. **This does not necessarily mean that you are ineligible for work or service.** There are several different reasons why you might receive this result. For example, FBI records are sometimes incomplete. If your record contains a charge for a disqualifying offense without indicating how that case has ended, you will receive a "Not Cleared" recommendation, even though the charges may have been dropped. **Review the FAQs thoroughly and contact your selecting organization immediately. You have 30 days to take action if you want to demonstrate your eligibility.** Save the recommendation for your records.

E. The Impact of Channeling Services on Alternative Search Procedures and Exemptions

1. What will happen with the FBI Channeler Exemption that CNCS released on April 1, 2015?

In March 2015, the FBI limited grantees' ability to obtain FBI Departmental Order (DO) checks using a Channeler, which disrupted the operations of a number of grantees. In response, on April 1, 2015, CNCS issued a temporary exemption ONLY for grantees that relied on an FBI Channeler to obtain FBI DO checks and could not continue to do so. This temporary exemption was set to expire on December 31, 2015.

CNCS has extended this exemption until March 31, 2016, to allow grantees a smooth transition to Fieldprint's services. Grantees that rely on this exemption must be prepared to obtain FBI checks by this date, either using Fieldprint or by another means. CNCS **strongly** encourages grantees to transition to Fieldprint well in advance of March 31, 2016, to avoid any unexpected challenges or disruption to their programs.

When this exemption expires on March 31, 2016, grantees are responsible for conducting all required components of the criminal history checks on individuals in covered positions who begin work or service after March 31, 2016. Failure to conduct all the required components will result in cost disallowance.

2. Are grantees required to conduct FBI checks on individuals who did not receive an FBI check due to the April 1, 2015, Channeler exemption?

No, though grantees are encouraged to do so for participants or staff that are expected to continue working or serving for any duration. The costs of such checks are allowable grant costs.

3. My organization received an exemption from FBI checks from CNCS, based on the fact that we were unable to obtain these checks through the state repository. Is that exemption still valid?

All exemptions that CNCS has provided are valid until the expiration date noted on the exemption itself, but they are not likely to be renewed or extended. Review the decision letter that you received to verify this expiration date. Once your exemption expires, you will be required to obtain an FBI check, either through Fieldprint or another means. CNCS **strongly** encourages grantees to transition to Fieldprint well in advance the expiration date of their exemption to avoid any unexpected challenges or disruption to their programs. Once your exemption expires, you will be responsible for conducting all required components of the criminal history check process on individuals in covered positions who begin work or service after the expiration date. Failure to conduct all the required components will result in cost disallowance.

4. **Will CNCS renew these exemptions in the future, or issue new exemptions based on denial from a state repository?**

Probably not. CNCS anticipates nearly all of its grantees will now be able to obtain an FBI check, either through Fieldprint or their state repository. Any new request would have to demonstrate that an organization cannot obtain an FBI check from either source.

5. **My organization has used an exemption from FBI checks in the past based on a denial from a state repository. We intend to use Fieldprint going forward. Are we required to conduct FBI checks on individuals who did not receive an FBI check at their start of work or service based on this exemption?**

No, though grantees are encouraged to do so for participants or staff that are expected to continue working or serving for any duration. The costs of such checks are allowable grant costs.

6. **Our organization has not budgeted for FBI checks, as we have utilized an exemption in the past. What are our options?**

There may be options for your program if you did not originally budget the costs for conducting FBI checks because you had an exemption from CNCS in the past. If you would like to discuss these options, please contact your CNCS Grants Officer.

7. **My organization has used a pre-approved ASP issued by CNCS to conduct FBI checks through the Departmental Orders process, based on a rejection letter from the state repository. May we continue to use this process?**

Based on the barriers programs faced in obtaining timely FBI checks, CNCS had authorized programs to use the FBI Departmental Order (DO) process instead. We permitted programs denied access to the FBI check through their state repository to obtain a DO from the FBI without obtaining written permission from CNCS in advance through our alternative search procedure (ASP) process. This is referred to as a “pre-approved” ASP and is available to view on CNCS’ Knowledge Network page on the criminal history check requirements.

This pre-approved ASP will be revoked on March 31, 2016. If a grantee wishes to use the DO process after that date, it must submit an alternative search procedure request with a detailed explanation of why it needs to conduct the FBI check through the DO method, instead of through Fieldprint.

8. **My organization received approval to use the Departmental Orders process for FBI checks via an ASP. Can I continue to use this process?**

Separate from the blanket DO approval, certain grantees requested and received CNCS-approved ASPs to use the FBI DO process. Organizations that have received an ASP decision authorizing use of Departmental Orders (DO) may continue to use that process.

CNCS **strongly** encourages grantees to reassess whether they could obtain FBI checks using Fieldprint instead of relying on the DO process. Fieldprint will be able to process most FBI checks within five business days, whereas the DO process is presently taking 11-13 weeks. No CNCS approval is required for an organization with an ASP for DO checks to switch to using Fieldprint.

GCSV POLICIES

Policy #1: Reimbursement Requests

Established: September 5, 2014

Revised: December 3, 2015

It is the policy of the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism that all programs/sub-grantees adhere to the following guidelines when submitting requests for reimbursements:

IN GENERAL:

1. Disbursement of awarded grants funds will not be made in advance; with the exception of fixed amount grants.
2. Each of the Grantee's reimbursement requests must include at least one month of program expenses.
3. Reimbursement requests must be submitted on a monthly basis or, at the least, every two months.
4. Failure to submit reimbursement requests in a timely fashion will result in the receipt of a "Letter of Non-Compliance" and copies of such correspondence will be sent to all parties signing the grant agreement. Three letters of non-compliance, for any incidents of non-compliance, may result in termination of the grant.
5. GCSV reserves the exclusive right to terminate the grant agreement if requests for reimbursement are more than two months delinquent.
6. Reimbursement requests for any AmeriCorps Member living allowances must be accompanied by rosters indicating the name and stipend amount (both for the current period and program period to date) of each AmeriCorps Member included in the requests.
7. Reimbursement requests for any program staff claimed on the grant must be accompanied by payroll ledgers and/or payroll registers. If calculations do not match those calculations from the original approved budget, an explanation must be provided and a breakdown of the calculations must be included with the request.
8. Any items claimed on the PER, whether on the CNCS side or the Grantee In-Kind side, must have accompanying documentation. If documentation is not provided, the sub-grantee may be required to remove the item(s) from the PER and will not be able to claim it for reimbursement.
9. A COMPLETE REIMBURSMENT REQUEST CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING:
    1. **Accurate PER in OnCorps**
    2. **Signed "Request for Reimbursement"**
    3. **Backup documentation**
    4. **PER Workbook**
10. When submitting reimbursement requests, programs must copy Kimberly DuPree (Financial Grants Administrator) in addition to their assigned program officer.

HISTORY/JUSTIFICATION:

In the past, there was no written policy/ies for submitting requests for reimbursement. As a result, programs reimbursement requests are seriously backlogged. This backlog could affect utilizing federal funds granted by the Corporation for National and Community Service. It also affects effectively implementing projects in Georgia's communities and neighborhoods.

Policy #2: Competitive Applicants

Established: October 1, 2014

Revised: November 10, 2014 (Quantified numbers 4 and 5 below)

It is the policy of the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism (GCSV) that applicants interested in submitting applications for competitive grants are selected ‘by invitation only’. These decisions are made by GCSV staff and board members.

IN GENERAL:

To be considered for competitive grants, programs must possess the following criteria:

1. Programs must have been in the GVSC funding portfolio for a minimum of three years.
2. Program staff~~,~~ having direct responsibility to the oversight and success of the AmeriCorps program~~,~~ must have been in their position for a period of typically three years and have demonstrated the ability to successfully oversee an AmeriCorps program.
3. Programs must have no outstanding compliance issues.
4. Programs must have a 90% or above recruitment rate.
5. Programs must have a 90% or above retention rate unless extenuating circumstances prevailed.
6. Programs must demonstrate positive and substantial impact in their communities and/or neighborhoods.
7. Member enrollment must be timely as described by AmeriCorps rules and regulations.
8. Member exits must be performed in a timely fashion as described by AmeriCorps rules and regulations.
9. Program directors must respond to commission staff in a timely manner (within 2 working days).
10. All reports must be submitted in a timely manner (on or before due dates).
11. Only programs that score low on risk assessments will be considered.

HISTORY/JUSTIFICATION:

Given that one of the benefits of competitive applicants is that they can expand their programs, the GCSV will select which programs will be sent forth to the Corporation for National and Community Service for competitive consideration.

Policy #3: Weapons Regulations

Established: August 27, 2015

Revised:

It is the policy of the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism that all programs/sub-grantees adhere to the following guidelines with regards to AmeriCorps Members and any persons receiving AmeriCorps funding in the form of compensation:

BACKGROUND

The Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism (GCSV) is an arm of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, (DCA), an agency within the executive branch of state government. DCA has prescribed rules in place for the use and possession of firearms which can be found at Chapter 5, General Conduct, Section 9 of its Standards of Conduct policy.

The State's new Safe Carry Protections Act which went into effect on July 1, 2014, expanded the places where gun owners with licenses to carry are allowed to bring a concealed weapon. Although the legislation substantially altered prior law regarding the carrying and possession of firearms, it does permit government employers and entities to adopt and enforce policies prohibiting their employees or representatives from carrying or possessing weapons in the workplace. Consequently, DCA has created a specific policy related to the possession of firearms.

GCSV WEAPONS POLICY

AmeriCorps Members may not carry or conceal weapons of any type including but not limited to guns, bows and arrows, explosives, fireworks, slingshots, fishing spears or any device that discharges projectiles by any means while serving and receiving monetary compensation from the Corporation for National and Community Service and the GCSV.

The GCSV has adopted DCA's policy which prohibits employees or representatives from carrying firearms or other weapons while engaging in activities related to their employment, and/or having firearms or other weapons on premises related to their employment.

Anyone connected with GCSV is therefore prohibited from carrying firearms or other weapons while engaging in activities related to service with GCSV.

Policy #4: Slot Conversions

Established: December 2, 2015

Revised:

Circumstances may arise within a program that necessitates changing the term of service of a currently enrolled Member. Note that once a Member is exited with a partial education award, the remaining portion of that education award is no longer available.

This policy is based on "AmeriCorps State and National Policy Frequently Asked Questions"[i] as follows:

C. 86. Under what circumstances may state commissions or parent organizations approve conversion of a filled slot?
State Commissions and parent organizations may approve occasional changes of currently enrolled members to lesser-term slots. Impact on program quality should be factored into approval of requests. The Corporation will not cover health care or childcare costs for less than full-time members.

It is not allowed to transfer currently enrolled members to a lesser-term status simply to provide a pro-rated education award if the member would otherwise be released for cause. It is also not allowed to convert a slot to a lesser-term slot at the end of a member's term of service in order to award a pro-rated education award when the member has not completed the hours required by their original term.

Changing less than full-time members to a greater slot type is discouraged because it is very difficult to manage, unless done very early in the member's term of service. State commissions and parent organizations may authorize or approve such changes so long as their current budget can accommodate such changes. Keep in mind that a member's minimum 1700 hours must be completed within 12 months of the member's original start date.

D. 4. How do I change slot types and transfer slots?
Revised AmeriCorps State and National Approvals for Slot Conversion, Slot Release 3 of the My AmeriCorps Portal makes concrete several policy changes designed to devolve authority and responsibility to grantees and afford state commissions additional flexibility in managing their portfolios.

Changing less than full-time members to a greater slot type is discouraged. State commissions and parent organizations may approve such a change as long as their current budget can accommodate the change.

Programs will continue to be allowed to convert a full-time position to up to three quarter-time positions. All conversions will be Trust neutral, are subject to availability of funds in the Trust, and will comply with all assumptions on which Trust prudence and continued solvency are predicated. The total number of MSYs and education award amounts in the grant may not increase as a result of the slot conversion.

For example:
1 full-time member position (1 MSY) may be converted into 2 half-time slots (2 x .5 members = 1 MSY).

1 full-time member position may not be converted into 4 quarter-time positions as the education awards would total more than the original (4 X .2646); in this example, the maximum number of allowable quarter-time positions would be 3.

It is the policy of the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism that all programs/sub-grantees adhere to the following guidelines when submitting requests for slot conversions:

IN GENERAL:

1. Programs are discouraged from requesting slot conversions after 60 days into their program year.
2. Members' minimum hours must be completed in a maximum of 12 months of the member's original start date.
3. Members' minimum hours should be completed before the start of the new program year in the event the program is funded for an additional year.
4. Converting lesser-term slots to greater-term slots is discouraged and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
5. As stated in the AmeriCorps policies above, occupied slots may not be converted to a lesser term for the purpose of awarding the member a pro-rated education award.
6. Slots may only be converted by the appropriate representative at the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism (GCSV).

HISTORY/JUSTIFICATION:

This is the first policy of this type written for the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism. A number of programs have requested slot conversions near the end of the program year; giving the appearance that slots are being converted for the purpose of the members receiving prorated awards. This activity is prohibited.

Policy #5: Meals

Established: December 3, 2015

Revised: April 4, 2022

Receipts are required for meal expenses. The Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism follows rules as set forth by the Georgia State Accounting Office which are as follows:

STATE OF GEORGIA MEAL ALLOWANCES[ii]

Please go to https://sao.georgia.gov/travel/state-travel-policy to view most recent mileage rates and per diem.

IN GENERAL:

1. In addition to receipts, programs must provide sign-in sheets and agendas when meals are associated with trainings and meetings.
2. Programs must utilize the PER Workbook to provide any additional descriptions or explanations associated with the meals.
3. Programs will not be reimbursed for alcoholic beverages.
4. In general, meals may cost any amount but the GCSV will only reimburse the program up to the amounts outlined above, per person, per day.

HISTORY/JUSTIFICATION:

This is the first policy of this type written for the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism.

Revisions:

Policy revised in April 2022 to insert link for most recent travel regulations.

[i] http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/upload/policy%20FAQs%207.31.14%20final.pdf
[i]

http://sao.georgia.gov/sites/sao.georgia.gov/files/related_files/site_page/SOG%20Meal%20Allowances%202014.pdf
[ii]

Policy #6: FBI Background Checks

Established: January 4, 2016

Revised: **April 4, 2022 – In light of any language below, Georgia Serves requires all sub-grantees use both Fieldprint and True Screen for official background checks on all AmeriCorps Members and budgeted staff. Checks must be completed and adjudicated the day before an individual begins work or service on the grant.**

It is the policy of the GCSV that sub-grantees will obtain CNCS compliant FBI checks, as described in the National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) requirements and accompanying CNCS guidance, for all applicable individuals serving or working in positions defined as "covered positions" by CNCS.

IN GENERAL:

The following requirements apply to all GCSV sub-grantees for FBI criminal history checks:

1. Unless eligible for one of the exceptions described herein, sub-grantees are required to use the AmeriCorps approved FBI Channeler (Fieldprint) to obtain FBI clearance for AmeriCorps members and staff members in covered positions for NSCHC purposes.
2. If a sub-grantee has obtained written approval from the GBI to receive FBI criminal history check results directly from the state repository, then these results may be used in lieu of clearance from the CNCS approved FBI Channeler. Only certain types of organizations, as described in the Official Code of Georgia (OCGA), may receive such approval.
3. If a sub-grantee has received written approval from CNCS, through the GCSV, to use an Alternative Search Procedure (ASP) for FBI criminal history checks, then the results obtained in accordance with such ASP may be used in lieu of clearance from the CNCS approved FBI Channeler.
4. CNCS may issue one or more "Blanket" ASPs, which are applicable to all grantees without prior written approval from CNCS. Sub-grantees meeting the specific criteria for one of the Blanket ASPs may use the FBI criminal history results obtained in accordance with such Blanket ASP in lieu of clearance from the CNCS approved FBI Channeler. Blanket ASPs may be issued on a time-limited basis by CNCS. It is the responsibility of the sub-grantee to ensure that applicable blanket ASPs are valid at the time of use, and that the sub-grantee meets all of the specific requirements set forth by CNCS to qualify for a Blanket ASP.
5. Use of the Departmental Order (DO) process for obtaining FBI criminal history checks will no longer be acceptable for NSCHC purposes after March 31, 2016. Sub-grantees may only use the DO process for FBI checks after March 31, 2016 if such use is in accordance with an ASP approved in writing by CNCS, through the GCSV. FBI checks obtained through the DO process after March 31, 2016 without an approved ASP will be considered non-compliant for NSCHC purposes.
6. In addition to the requirements of this policy, sub-grantee FBI checks are expected to comply with all applicable regulation and guidance from CNCS or any other authority duly authorized to issue such regulation or guidance. It is the responsibility of the sub-grantee to ensure that FBI checks conducted for NSCHC purposes are compliant.

HISTORY/JUSTIFICATION:

FBI criminal history checks have been a challenge for GCSV sub-grantees in the past. CNCS has designated the GBI as the state repository in Georgia, to be used for both Georgia state checks and FBI checks. The GBI, however, will only release FBI check results to certain types of organizations described in the OCGA. Many GCSV sub-grantees do not meet the statutory requirements to receive these results. A Blanket ASP has allowed CNCS grantees to use the DO process to obtain results directly from the FBI, but this Blanket ASP requires a written denial from the state repository to be kept in each grantee’s files. GCSV conversations with the GBI have revealed that it will not issue denial letters to individual organizations requesting FBI background check information if the organization does not qualify to receive such information. This disqualifies GCSV sub-grantees for the Blanket ASP authorizing the DO process. The Blanket ASP authorizing use of the DO process expires on March 31, 2016. CNCS now has an agreement with an FBI Channeler organization to provide FBI background clearance letters that will be compliant with the NSCHC requirements. The agreement becomes effective in January 2016. It is the opinion of the GCSV that the CNCS approved FBI Channeler should be the primary source of FBI clearance for all sub-grantees, unless the sub-grantee qualifies for one of the exceptions described herein. This will ensure that all sub-grantee FBI checks are compliant with the NSCHC requirements set forth by CNCS.

Policy #7: Mileage

Established: January 1, 2018

Revised: New Mileage Rates for Calendar Year 2018

Revised: April 4, 2022,

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) follows rules as set forth by the Georgia State Accounting Office which can be found here: http://sao.georgia.gov/press-releases/2016-01-04/mileage-rate-decrease-calendar-year-2016. GCSV staff is located within DCA and must follow the same rules as its state agency and therefore its grantees must adhere to these same policies.

STATE OF GEORGIA MILEAGE ALLOWANCE

The GSA (General Services Administration) announced the following rates for calendar year 2016.

Mode of Travel	Rate
Automobile	$0.54 per mile
Motorcycle	$0.51 per mile
Airplane	$1.17 per mile

IN GENERAL:

1. Grantees will not be reimbursed for the cost of gas, only mileage.
2. Grantees must utilize the PER Workbook to provide any additional descriptions or explanations associated with trips.
3. Grantees must provide the exact address of both their home domicile, the destination and the purpose of the trip.
4. Grantees must provide appropriate documentation such as agendas, registrations, etc.

HISTORY/JUSTIFICATION:

This is the first policy of this type written for the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism.

Policy #8: Average Required Match vs. Average Budgeted Match

Established: May 23, 2019

Revised:

It is the policy of the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism that all programs/sub-grantees adhere to the following guidelines in meeting match requirements:

IN GENERAL:
Cost Reimbursement Sub-Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. Grantees have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as the minimum match of 24% for the first three years, and the increasing minimums in years thereafter, are maintained as stated in 45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90. The acceptable sources of matching funds are federal, state, local, and/or private sector funds in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements.[ii]
A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR §2521.60 and below: [ii]

AmeriCorps Funding Year	1,2,3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Grantee Share Requirements	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

AVERAGE BUDGETED MATCH:
To the extent that the match in the Sub-Grantees' approved budget exceeds required match levels under paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, any failure to provide the amount above your regulatory match but below your budgeted match will be considered as a measure of past performance in subsequent grant competitions.[iii] If the budgeted match is not met during the first quarter of the program year, the program is responsible to submit a plan of action to their assigned Program Officer to discuss how the program plans to meet the budgeted match. Failure to meet the plan of action set forth will result in a letter of non-compliance to the program, documented on the program's Risk Assessment and reported to the GCSV Board which may affect future funding decisions.

HISTORY/JUSTIFICATION:
In the past, there was no written policy regarding match. Programs were informed verbally that in cases where budgeted match was greater than regulatory match that they would be held to the higher match and that the greater budgeted match would become the regulatory match. A failure to meet the average required match will affect future funding decisions.

Policy #9: NSCHC Requirements

See Policy #6

Established: July 14, 2020

Revised:

It is the policy of the GCSV that sub-grantees will maintain compliance with CNCS requirements as follows:

All employees, participants, and others who receive a salary, national service education award, living allowance, or stipend under Corporation grants, even if the activities don't involve service with vulnerable populations, must conduct checks prior to beginning employment or service.

The statutory requirement at 42 U.S.C. § 12645g is supplemented by regulatory requirements at 45 CFR §2540.200 through §2540.207 (updated in 2012) as well as the terms and conditions of grants. A grantee or subgrantee's inability to demonstrate that a check was conducted in any aspect of the required criminal history checks will likely result in cost disallowance.

It is further the policy of the GCSV that all sub-grantees utilize vendors as designated by CNCS, namely Truescreen and Fieldprint to constitute compliant checks for Georgia.

IN GENERAL:

HISTORY/JUSTIFICATION:

Policy #10: Alternative Compliance Visits During Pandemic

Established: September 10, 2020

It is the policy of the GCSV that all sub-grantees receive in-person compliance visits on an annual basis except for during times of a Global or State-Wide Pandemic:

In order to protect all employees, program staff and the general public, it is not advised to conduct in-person compliance visits during this time of COVID-19 or during any other time when it is considered unsafe to come into contact with other individuals. Below are some options to consider when conducting compliance visits:

- OPTION 1: Sub-Grantees who consistently have no findings during compliance visits, whose files typically meet the requirements of the file checklist provided, and who have low risk assessment scores may be allowed to self-certify that their files meet the requirements of the file checklist. The checklist has been revised with a self-certification statement that the sub-grantee may sign, and the program officer should include this form in the file in lieu of a full compliance visit report. See "FY20 Member File Check List – Self-Certification" form.

For Sub-Grantees who have had issues related to files and do not meet the requirements as stated above: The program officer may select a sampling of 15% of the files if the program has ten or more members. If issues are discovered during the check, the program officer should expand the scope of the number of files. If the program has ten members or less, the program officer should check 100% of files. The sub-grantee and the program officer will negotiate other means of checking the files other than in-person. Some options are as follows:

- OPTION 2: Using technology such as ZOOM or TEAMS to collaboratively view files. It is recommended that the program officer not record confidential information such as birth certificates, social security cards or driver licenses. They may use the compliance visit form to record that they viewed the documents just as they would if the visit was in-person.

- OPTION 3: Another option would be to have the program copy the file and send it to the program officer using a secure method such as Gmail. With the assistance of DCA's IT Department, it was found that Gmail may be encrypted to send confidential information. The GCSV IS NOT MANDATING that organizations establish a Gmail account. This is simply an offering to send confidential information if they so choose to. Other secure methods may be explored by the program officer and the program.

Again, travel during the time of COVID-19 is NOT RECOMMENDED AS AN OPTION. However, if travel should take place, travelers should follow the guidelines as set forth by the CDC. You may read those guidelines here as well as guidance on face coverings here.

IN GENERAL:
In general, the GCSV will follow the recommendations of the Corporation and perform compliance visits in person and check 100% of the files. This policy is only to be used in times of emergencies such as pandemics.

HISTORY/JUSTIFICATION: There is no prior written policy to this one of this nature. The justification for this policy is to restrict travel during times of a pandemic and to protect the health of both GCSV staff, program staff and the public.

Policy #11: Computer Purchases and other electronic supplies

Established: April 26, 2022

Revised:

It is the policy of the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism that all programs/sub-grantees (including planning grantees) adhere to the following guidelines when building budgets:

IN GENERAL:

1. All supplies related to technology should be charged to the Grantee Share side of the budget.

2. All calculations must be clear and broken down to the simplest level to show quantity, cost per unit, and frequency if necessary.

3. Explanations must be provided to show purpose and to demonstrate how line items are necessary to support the AmeriCorps program.

4. When requesting reimbursement, mere invoices will not be accepted. The invoice must show that payment has been made. Receipts and/or automatic payments/withdrawals may be acceptable.

HISTORY/JUSTIFICATION:

NA

DESK AUDIT

AmeriCorps Georgia

2021-2022
GEORGIA COMMISSION FOR SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM
DESK REVIEW / APPROVAL FORM for GRANT REIMBURSEMENTS

Program Information	Grantee Name:			
	Reporting Category (Check One):	☐20AFH	☐20AFH Planning Grant	☐21FXH
	Month of Request:			
	Amount Requested:			

		Y	N	Comments
Fiscal Review	Was required match met? (Required ______%)	☐	☐	YTD Actual ______%
	Was budgeted match met? (Budgeted ______%)	☐	☐	
	Are all sections within budget?	☐	☐	
	Required back-up received & reconciled?	☐	☐	
	Number of staff on budget			
	Number of staff on the PER			
	Does the request for reimbursement align with the staff allocated in the approved budget/budget narrative?	☐	☐	
Programmatic Review	Quarterly PM reporting is timely?	☐	☐	
	PM reporting is original? *(no copy/paste of previous)*	☐	☐	
	PM progress is acceptable?	☐	☐	
	Are the following reports timely and acceptable:			
	GPR in OnCorps?	☐	☐	
	Volunteer report submitted?	☐	☐	
	Successes / Challenges reported?	☐	☐	
Compliance Review	Are member time sheets current?	☐	☐	
	Does the request include a Member payroll list?	☐	☐	
	Are member hours on track for completion? *(< 45 hrs/wk FT; 25 hrs/wk PT)*	☐	☐	
	Do outstanding hours exceed 200? (awaiting approval)	☐	☐	
	# of members enrolled in eGrants			
	# of active members in OnCorps			
	# of members on the PER Workbook			
	Are the number of members enrolled in eGrants, OnCorps and on this request equal? If not, explain.	☐	☐	
	Does the payroll documentation match the number and names of members in eGrants and OnCorps?	☐	☐	
	Does this request for reimbursement include a Member Healthcare roster? If no, please explain.	☐	☐	
	Date of last site visit:	/	/	
	Unresolved issues from site visit?	☐	☐	
	Unresolved member management issues?	☐	☐	
	Other unresolved compliance issues?	☐	☐	

Signature	Program Officer Approval	Date:	Signature:	

If holding this request, notify the program appropriately and complete a "Desk Review Issue Resolution Form".

2021-2022 Desk Review Form Tuesday, August 17, 2021 Linda Thompson