



**AmeriCorps**  
Connecticut

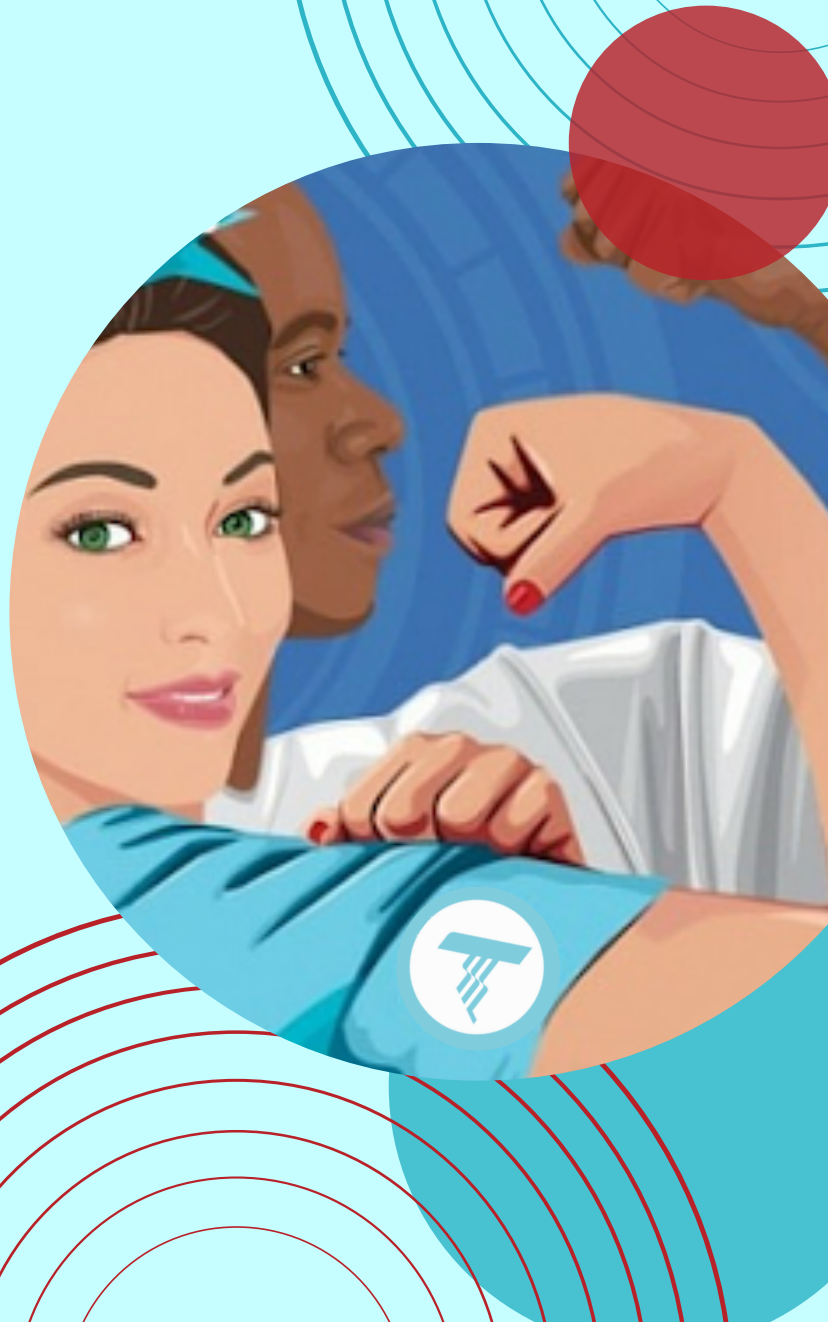


**Serve**  
**Connecticut**  
Connecticut Commission on Community Service

# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

## A note from Serve Connecticut:

This manual is designed to help AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Directors and their respective support staff and organizational leadership effectively stand up and manage a compliant and high performing AmeriCorps program. Program Directors should refer to this manual often throughout the lifecycle of their AmeriCorps grant.





## Content Links

### How to Use This Manual

- Purpose
- Format
- Updates and Program Notification
- Requesting Help and Providing Feedback

### Program Director Manual Change Log

### AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links

- Program Management Forms
- Compliance Monitoring and Reporting Forms
- Budget and Financial Forms
- Performance Measurement and Evaluation Forms

### Grant Agreement

- Understanding Your Grant Agreement
- Program Amendments to Your Grant Agreement
  - Program Staffing Amendments
  - Performance Measure Amendments

### AmeriCorps Program Staff

- Program Staffing Structure
- National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC)
- Tracking Staff Time
- AmeriCorps Prohibited, Unallowable and Restricted Activities

### Program Environment

- Establishing a Positive Program Environment
- Developing a Program Work Plan
- Prioritizing Member Wellbeing and Mental Health

### AmeriCorps Host/Service Sites

- Host/Service Site Selection
- Host/Service Site Agreement
- Host/Service Site Entry in eGrants
- Host/Service Site Management and Monitoring
- Host/Service Site Guidance

### Public Relations

- Creating Your AmeriCorps Program's Public Image
- AmeriCorps Program Identity
- AmeriCorps Logo Use Requirements
- AmeriCorps Program Webpage
- AmeriCorps Member Gear
- AmeriCorps "Lingo"
- Getting Connected through Media
- Media Releases
- Member Elevator Speech

### Program Monitoring and Compliance

- Why Serve Connecticut Performs Compliance Monitoring
- Compliance Monitoring Structure and Process
- Compliance Monitoring Timeline
- Systems and Deliverables Monitoring
- Systems and Deliverables Submission
- Enhanced Monitoring
- Enhanced Monitoring Part A: Desk Review
- Enhanced Monitoring Part B: Compliance Site Visits
- Deadline Extensions and Rescheduling Site Visit Dates
- Unannounced Compliance Monitoring

### AmeriCorps Program Performance

- Performance Measure Reporting
- Deadline Extensions
- Performance Measure Changes
- Performance Measure Data Quality Monitoring

### AmeriCorps Evaluation

- Serve Connecticut Evaluation Requirements

### Days of Service Reporting Requirements

- Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) National Day of Service



## **AmeriCorps Program Staff Training and Support**

- Serve Connecticut Training and Technical Assistance
- Serve Connecticut Training Requirements
  - Strong Start Program Orientation
  - AmeriCorps Launch
  - In the Loop Program Director Convenings
  - Spring Program Training
  - ASC National Service Training Conference
  - AmeriCorps Connecticut Member Trainings
- AmeriCorps Training Requirements
  - National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) eCourse
  - Effective Federal Grants Management eCourse
- Serve Connecticut Training Inventory

## **Community Development and Outreach**

- Commitment to Service and Volunteerism
- Days of Service and Events
  - National Day of Remembrance
  - Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) National Day of Service
  - Global Youth Service Day
  - Points of Light Conference
  - Make a Difference Day
  - AmeriCorps Week
  - ASC National Service Training Conference
- Volunteer Engagement
- AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities and Volunteers
- Strategies for Volunteer Engagement

## **Disability Inclusion**

- Disability Inclusion Requirements
- Defining Disability
- Reasonable Accommodation
- Disability Accommodation Funding Assistance

## **Member Recruitment and Selection**

- AmeriCorps Member Eligibility Requirements
- AmeriCorps Member Suitability or Additional Qualifications
- My AmeriCorps Portal - A Recruitment Requirement
- Public Notice of Nondiscrimination
- AmeriCorps Member Recruitment Plan Development
- AmeriCorps Member Selection Process
- Interviewing AmeriCorps Member Candidates
- Interviewing Dos and Don'ts
- Reasonable Accommodations Considerations during Selection
- Selecting Members

## **AmeriCorps Member Files**

- Establishing a Member File System
- AmeriCorps Member Application
- Member Service Agreement
- AmeriCorps Member Enrollment
  - My.AmeriCorps.gov and eGrants
  - AmeriCorps Member Pre-Enrollment and Enrollment
  - AmeriCorps Member Enrollment 8-Day Completion Requirement
  - AmeriCorps Member Exit 30-Day Completion Requirement
  - Member Exit Survey Completion
- Proof of Citizenship and Age
- National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Documentation
- Proof of Education
- Member Performance Evaluations
- Health Care Insurance Enrollment or Waiver
- Childcare Assistance Enrollment or Waiver
- Media Release Form
- Tutoring Program Requirements
- Protecting AmeriCorps Member File Content: Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Management



## Conducting Compliant National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC)

- AmeriCorps NSCHC Manual
- AmeriCorps Connecticut NSCHC Overview
- Avoiding Penalties for NSCHC Noncompliance

## Managing AmeriCorps Members

- AmeriCorps Members Are NOT Employees
- Setting Guardrails: AmeriCorps Prohibited and Unallowable Activities
- Member In-Service Documentation Management
  - Member Timesheets
  - Member Teleservice Policy and Documentation
  - Alternative Service Activities
  - Documenting Supervisory Activities and Actions
  - Member Performance Evaluation
- Effective Communication
- Supporting Your Team

## Developing Your AmeriCorps Members

- AmeriCorps 80/20 Member Training Rule
- Member Training Design
- Required Member Trainings to Support a Service Year
- AmeriCorps Member Orientation
- Retention of AmeriCorps Members

## AmeriCorps Member Benefits

- Member Living Allowance
- Member Federal Benefit Eligibility
- Health Care Insurance
- Child Care Assistance
- Eli Segal Education Award

## Member Exits and Status Change Management

### Members Leaving Service

- Compelling Personal Circumstances (CPC) Cause
- No Automatic Disqualification If Released for Cause
- Temporary Leave, Healthcare and Benefits Notice to Childcare Benefit Administrator and Providers
- Compelling Personal Circumstance for Pregnancy/Childbirth
- Time Off for Members Serving in the Armed Forces Reserves

Exception: Jury Duty is NOT a Break in Service  
AmeriCorps Member Injury or Death

## Understanding Financial Management

Internal Controls: Setting Your Program Up for Success

## AmeriCorps Program Budget

- Knowing Your Program Budget
- Accounting System Requirements
- Budget Modification
  - Budget Changes That Require Prior Approval
  - AmeriCorps Connecticut Budget Modification Request Process
- Administrative/Indirect Costs
- Program/Direct Costs
- Match Requirement
- Program Fundraising Restrictions
- Program Income
- No-Cost Extension

## AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Financial Reporting

- Financial Reporting Requirements
- Records Retention and Auditing
- Program Close Outs
- Financial Reporting Deliverables and Deadlines
- Deadline Extensions





## **Serve Connecticut Policies**

- Commission-Program Communications
- Program Reporting
- OnCorps Reports Portal
- AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities
- AmeriCorps Unallowable Activities
- Fundraising Restrictions
- Drug-Free Workplace Requirements
- Member Pre-Enrollment and Position Posting
- Acceptable Identification for AmeriCorps
- AmeriCorps Member Eligibility Requirements
- Member Retention and Enrollment Rates
- Member Exit and Suspension
- Updating Member Status Changes in  
My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants
- Grievance Procedures
- AmeriCorps Branding
- Attendance "Charge Back"
- Commission Staff Attendance at Member Events
- No-Cost Extensions
- AmeriCorps Member Position Modification

## **Program Resources**

- Program Year Ramp Up Checklist
- AmeriCorps Program Staff Core Competencies
- Recruitment Strategy Questions to Consider
- Seven Sins of Supervision
- Acceptable and Unacceptable Language in a  
Service Environment



## How to Use This Manual

### Purpose

This Manual is designed to help AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Directors and their respective support staff and organizational leadership effectively stand up and manage a compliant and high performing AmeriCorps program. Program Directors should refer to this manual often throughout the lifecycle of their AmeriCorps grant.

### Format

The Manual includes several features to help the user find the information they need:

- **Content Link Pages:** The Manual features Content Links pages that will take you directly to the topic for which you are seeking information.
- **"Back to Content Links" Navigation Button:** Each page of the Manual features a "Back to Content Links" button in the top right corner that will return you to the first Content Links page.
- **Quick Reference Resource Side Bar:** Each page of the Manual features a side bar on the right side of the page that includes links to guiding regulations, terms and conditions, and other resources.

### Updates and Program Notification

The Manual is designed and housed in the online design platform, Canva. Serve Connecticut staff will update this Manual as necessary over time. Examples of updates are to adapt to changes in AmeriCorps or Serve Connecticut policies or procedures, add helpful resources, or correct content and/or outdated or broken links.

Serve Connecticut staff will document the date and nature of changes made to this Manual on its **Change Log** page and notify AmeriCorps Connecticut programs of those major or substantive changes that are likely to impact to program management.

### PDF Version Available

Serve Connecticut provides this cloud-based version of its AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual to ensure that AmeriCorps Connecticut program staff have access to the most current version of Commission guidance with all changes updated in real time. That said, programs may also access a **PDF version** available in Serve Connecticut Basecamp for download and printing.

### Requesting Help and Providing Feedback

Feedback from AmeriCorps Connecticut program staff on the content, design, and function of this Manual is welcome. Please use this **AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual Feedback Form** to share with Serve Connecticut staff any suggested corrections, clarifications, content additions or resource additions you would like to see. You can also use this form to request assistance with using this Manual.



## Program Director Manual Change Log

Serve Connecticut staff will log the date and nature of any updates made to this document here.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Update</b>
8.8.23	Manual published; effective 2023-2024 program year.
8.15.23	Added Truescreen 5-year limit policy reference to online records access to <b>Conducting Compliant National Service Criminal History Checks</b> .
8.22.23	Added link to <i>Crucial Conversations: Mental Health Resources to Aid AmeriCorps Connecticut Programs in Supporting AmeriCorps Members</i> to <b>Program Environment</b> . Moved Member Elevator Speech to <b>Public Relations</b> .
9.1.23	Activated <i>Risk-Based Monitoring Tool I - Systems &amp; Deliverables</i> form link in <b>AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Form Links</b> section.
10.18.23	Activated <i>Risk-Based Monitoring Tool II - Enhanced Monitoring</i> form link in <b>AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Form Links</b> section.
10.27.23	Added <i>Connecting &amp; Collaborating as AmeriCorps Programs</i> infographic link to <b>Supporting Your Team</b> subsection.
11.2.23	Added <i>AmeriCorps Member Death or Injury</i> article to <b>Member Exits and Status Change Management</b> section; added <i>AmeriCorps Member Incident Report</i> form link to <b>AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Form Links</b> section.
11.7.23	Added <b>Member Position Modification Policy</b> ; added <i>Member Position Modification Form</i> form link to <b>AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Form Links</b> section.
1.8.24	Added <i>Alternative Service Activities</i> guidance to <b>Managing AmeriCorps Members</b> subsection.
3.21.24	Added <i>Program Amendment Notification/Approval Request Form</i> to <b>AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links</b> . Made clarifying edits to <b>Program Amendments to Your Grant Agreement</b> and <b>Budget Modification</b> sections; added <b>Policy: AmeriCorps Program and Budget Amendment</b> .
5.15.24	Updated <b>Program Year Ramp Up Checklist</b> resource and <b>Enhanced Monitoring Part A: Desk Review</b> to reflect change in NSCHC documentation collection deadline.
7.23.24	Added link to fillable/printable version of <b>Program Year Ramp Up Checklist</b> .
8.29.24	Updated <b>AmeriCorps Training Requirements</b> to include new mandatory AmeriCorps State and National Policies and Fraud Awareness eCourses; replaced NSCHC Compliance and Financial Grants Management completion certification forms available in <b>AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links</b> with a <i>Mandatory AmeriCorps eCourse Certifications</i> form where all ecourse certifications can be submitted.
9.27.24	Added the <b>Grantee Reporting &amp; Monitoring Schedule</b> infographic to the Resources section.
9.27.24	Updated the <b>NSCHC-at-a-Glance</b> infographic to reflect AmeriCorps November 30, 2024 transition from Fieldprint to Truescreen as the approved vendor platform for conducting member and staff FBI fingerprint checks.
9.27.24	Added the <b>AmeriCorps Gift Card</b> policy to the Policy section.

**END**



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[← BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## **Date**

2.20.25

## **Update**

Updated Manual to reflect AmeriCorps policy changes associated with January 2025 Executive Orders compliance: Updated links to **FY2024 AmeriCorps State and National Specific Terms and Conditions** and **FY2025 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions** on all Resources sidebars; updated **AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities** policy; updated the link to the **AmeriCorps Nondiscrimination Policy**; updated **AmeriCorps Connecticut member training requirements**.

**END**



## AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links

The following is a consolidated list of links to online forms Serve Connecticut uses to collect data from and manage requests by AmeriCorps Connecticut programs. Please click the link titles to access these forms. *(Please notify Serve Connecticut staff if you encounter a broken link so it can be reset.)*

**Important:** The descriptions provided on these pages are provided to enable programs to locate a needed form with ease. These descriptions do not provide comprehensive guidance on how to use these forms, nor do the descriptions include any restrictions or contingencies that may apply to the forms' use. Please be sure to review both the forms themselves and all relevant guidance -- regulations, terms and conditions, best practices -- provided via this Program Director Manual to ensure correct form usage.

### Program Management Forms

#### Program Profile Update

- Due annually by July 15. Programs use this form to update logos, program descriptions and contact information for Serve Connecticut publication.

#### Program Amendment Notification/Approval Request Form

- As necessary. Programs use this form to notify the Commission of amendments the program seeks to make to the awarded grant agreement that relate to changes in program operation, objectives, scopes or goals.

#### Program Staff Transition Update Form

- As necessary. Programs use this form to notify the Commission of incoming or outgoing program and site staff; the form also functions to notify the Commission of any platform access changes required associate with staff onboarding or exiting.

#### Program Staff Mailing List Update Form

- As necessary. Programs use this form to provide the Commission with the best shipping addresses for program and site staff as relates to distribution of training and/or AmeriCorps branded materials.

#### AmeriCorps Member Incident Report Form

- As necessary. Programs use this form to update the Commission in the event of injury or death incurred by an AmeriCorps member during their service contract period.

#### Member Position Modification Form

- As necessary. Programs use this form to advise and/or request approval of the Commission on intended modifications to AmeriCorps member positions, for example member slot conversion.

### Compliance Monitoring and Reporting Forms

#### Serve Connecticut Risk-Based Monitoring Tool Part I: Systems and Deliverables

- Due annually on October 31. All programs use this form to submit their grant agreement required policies and procedures, which must be updated to the current service year.

#### Serve Connecticut Risk-Based Monitoring Tool Part II: Enhanced Monitoring

- Due as required on January 31. Selected programs use this form to submit operational documentation to demonstrate compliance with all AmeriCorps, Connecticut, and program regulations, policies and procedures.

#### Mandatory AmeriCorps eCourse Certifications

- Due annually. Programs use this form to update the Commission on program compliance with the federal AmeriCorps requirement that a minimum of one program staff have an unexpired certificate of completion of the four eCourses AmeriCorps requires: AmeriCorps State & National Policies & Procedures, Fraud Awareness, Financial Grants Management and NSCHC Compliance.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service Pre-Event Report Form

- Due annually in mid-December. Programs use this form to provide the Commission with information about planned Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service activities.

## Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service Post-Event Report Form

- Due annually in late January. Programs use this form to report to the Commission on key metrics associated with their executed Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service activities.

## Budget and Financial Forms

### Budget Modification Pre-Approval Request Form

- As necessary. Programs use this form to request a modification to their awarded program budget that meets one or more minimum thresholds described in the Program Director Manual.

### No-Cost Extension Request Form

- As necessary. Programs use this form to request a no-cost extension on their awarded grant contract term to accommodate an AmeriCorps member's completion of service hours.

### Match Waiver Request Form

- As necessary. Programs use this form to request a waiver to their requirement to meet the statutory match requirement associated with their awarded grant.

### Disability Accommodation Assistance Request Form

- As necessary. Programs use this form to request reimbursement for costs associated with providing disability accommodation AmeriCorps members serving with their program.

## Performance Measurement and Evaluation Forms

### Performance Measure Amendment Request Form

- As necessary. Programs use this form to request to make mid-year adjustments to their grant-approved performance measurement targets and/or methods.

### Performance Measure Data Quality Review

- Upon request. Programs use this form to submit performance measure instruments and raw data associated with performance measure targets for Commission data quality monitoring.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Grant Agreement

### Understanding Your Grant Agreement

The grant agreement (also referred to as a grantee contract or memorandum of agreement) is a legally binding contract that establishes your program's relationship with Serve Connecticut, the Connecticut Commission on Community Service via its fiduciary agency, the Connecticut Office of Higher Education. A new grant agreement is signed each year, after your program has been approved for new or continued AmeriCorps funding. It is the most essential document for your AmeriCorps program. It includes the approved budget, total awarded Member Service Years (MSYs) and outlines rules, regulations, and key requirements (deliverables) for the program year. Program Directors and other key staff persons should become familiar with the full grant agreement.

The deliverables contained within your grant agreement list the major reporting requirements for the current program year. The list provides a brief description of each item and includes to which Commission staff the report is to be submitted. Commission staff will provide further details and guidance during Program Director trainings or through e-mail and phone conversations. However, the deliverables are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all Serve Connecticut and AmeriCorps requirements. As stated in the grant agreement, there may be additional requirements set forth by the Serve Connecticut or AmeriCorps at any time during the program year. Program Directors are responsible for meeting all requirements. Should you have questions about the grant agreement please contact your Serve Connecticut Program Officer.

### Program Amendments to Your Grant Agreement

Program amendments are defined as mid-year program changes (direct or indirect) that alter the operation, scope, objectives or goals of the program -- whether or not they involve budgetary changes. Program amendments must be reported to the Serve Connecticut in using a **Program Amendment Notification/Approval Request** form; certain amendments require prior approval from Serve Connecticut and AmeriCorps, the agency, per stipulations in **2 CFR 200.308 and 2 CFR 200.407**. Programs should not consider any request granted until written notification is provided.

**Program Staffing Transition:** Programs experiencing turnover, extended absence or time reduction in a management or supervisory staff position must notify Serve Connecticut. In the event of a temporary staff transition due to medical leave, sabbatical, or other reason, the program should send an email to the program's Serve Connecticut Program Officer indicating the duration of the absence and the individual who will be serving as the program's alternative contact. A **Program Staff Transition Update Form** must be submitted to alert Serve Connecticut staff of the need to add or remove incoming or exiting program staff to or from Commission communications platforms (i.e., email distribution lists, the Online Learning Center, Basecamp, OnCorps Reports, etc.). Any notification of a staffing change should be received by Serve Connecticut within 10 days of the expected change.

**Performance Measure Changes:** Performance measure amendments can include changes to performance data targets, beneficiary characteristics, performance measurement tools or processes, etc. Any program considering making changes that will impact their grant-approved performance measures should consult with their Serve

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

**Program Directors ... Make sure your entire program support team (fiscal, human resources, data, member supervisors, etc.) has read your grantee agreement. Be transparent about expectations so everyone is rowing the boat in the same direction!**



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

Connecticut Program Officer well in advance. A **Performance Measure Amendment Request Form** must be submitted to request a program performance measure amendment. The request must be received before the end of the second quarter of the program year to be considered.

**Program Budget Changes:** See **Budget Modification** for more information regarding requirements related to modifying an awarded AmeriCorps program budget.

[← BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

**Program Directors ...**  
**Make sure your entire program support team** (*fiscal, human resources, data, member supervisors, etc.*) **has read your grantee agreement. Be transparent about expectations so everyone is rowing the boat in the same direction!**



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## AmeriCorps Program Staff

### Program Staffing Structure

An AmeriCorps program is a large and complex endeavor, and requires strong staffing capacity to bring to fruition. In recognition of this, Serve Connecticut requires AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to engage a minimum of two full-time equivalent positions -- a program director and support staff -- to manage the many and diverse grant activities that make an AmeriCorps program happen.

A typical AmeriCorps program staffing structure involves a program director who handles administrative oversight of the program and a member manager who handles recruitment, placement, and oversight of AmeriCorps members. Additional support staffing -- either directly or indirectly funded by the grant -- can include fiscal management, human resources support, data management and evaluation, and clerical support. It takes a village!

Hiring and retaining the right people for these roles is of critical importance. A helpful resource for AmeriCorps grantees and programs building a strong program implementation team is the [AmeriCorps Program Core Competencies](#) overview.

### National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC)

Any AmeriCorps program staff whose salaries are included in the Personnel Costs section of a cost-reimbursement grant must have cleared, adjudicated **National Service Criminal History Checks** on file prior to charging any time/salary to the AmeriCorps grant. Noncompliance will subject the AmeriCorps program to cost-disallowance.

### Tracking Staff Time

AmeriCorps Connecticut cost-reimbursement programs are required to track personnel time alignment with budgeted salary allocations as well as to document compliance with NSCHC requirements and AmeriCorps Prohibited, unallowable and restricted activities. AmeriCorps requires that the accounting system used is able to track personnel time by hour, not by percentages alone. See [Knowing Your Program Budget](#) in this Manual.

### AmeriCorps Prohibited, Unallowable and Restricted Activities

Any program staff associated with direct implementation of the AmeriCorps program must understand and comply with all federal requirements included in **AmeriCorps Prohibited, unallowable** and **restricted** activities.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)



## Program Environment

### Establishing a Positive Program Environment

Establishing a positive, professional program environment is a critical investment in the quality of your program's relationship with its AmeriCorps members, its partner and host sites, its beneficiaries, and its other community stakeholders. Fostering a program environment that results in a gratifying service experience for your AmeriCorps members will impact how they serve program participants and will resonate in the brand or image your program presents to your community, your funders, and the AmeriCorps service network at large.

In creating this positive environment, give consideration to the physical location(s) in which your members will be conducting their service. The Program Director's office should be a safe, professional and confidential place for individuals to communicate openly; it as well as any common space utilized by AmeriCorps members should proudly reflect the AmeriCorps brand. Training and meeting spaces should also be safe places for attendees. Finally, it is imperative that the program environment be unattached to religious, political and other conflicting practices.

Consider also the strong role that timely and respectful communication plays in building relationships. Email and phone inquiries from all relevant parties, including Serve Connecticut, should be treated in a professional manner. Please be mindful that there may be situations when the Commission needs to contact staff for information that requires a timely response. Therefore, when the Program Director is out of the office to attend a conference or is away from the program for a number of days, it is important to establish an out-of-office (autoreply) e-mail and voice mail message. The message should reflect contact information of the staff covering program duties and a time when the Program Director will return to the office.

### Developing a Program Work Plan

A solid AmeriCorps program work plan should be developed and updated annually to drive program actions. Included in a strong work plan are the following items:

- A vision, mission statement, and clear program objectives that is understand and can be articulated clearly by program staff and AmeriCorps members.
- An organizational chart and clear staff roles that ensure all work associated with running the program is assigned to an accountable position.
- Professional development goals to ensure the program can recruit and retain well-trained, passionate, invested staff members.
- A well-thought-out annual calendar that includes Serve Connecticut deadlines, trainings, and events for the 12-month grant period, as well as a plan for how the calendar is maintained, updated and distributed.
- Clear and thorough host site agreements with all host sites that ensure host site staff understand what deliverables they are responsible for and what deliverables they can count on program staff to provide.

### Prioritizing Member Wellbeing and Mental Health

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are encouraged to refer to **Crucial Conversations: Mental Health Resources to Aid AmeriCorps Connecticut Programs in AmeriCorps Member Support** for more information on creating a service environment that prioritizes member wellbeing.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)





## AmeriCorps Host/Service Sites

### Host/Service Site Selection

Depending on your AmeriCorps program model, your program may or may not require placement of AmeriCorps members at one or more external host or service sites to deliver the program's intervention to its target population. AmeriCorps host or service sites often include schools, health centers, food banks, nonprofits, agencies, municipalities etc. that provide direct service to members of the community.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are responsible for establishing, maintaining, and monitoring partnerships with the AmeriCorps host/service sites they engage. Host/service sites should be best positioned to reach the target audience of your project; they should also demonstrate capacity to support -- and investment in supporting -- your AmeriCorps members in achieving compliant and successful service terms.

In some AmeriCorps program models, host/service sites are embedded in a network the grantee organization leads or is a member. In other program models, the program needs to build formal connections between their grantee organization and disassociated host/service sites. In some cases this involves the grantee organization conducting outreach to and cultivating relationships with target communities organizations. In other cases, the grantee organization solicits applications from organizations that meet certain placement criteria and then selects the host/service sites that best meet their needs from that applicant pool.

Regardless of the means of host/service site selection, the ultimate goal must be establishing sites that will best support AmeriCorps member retention and access to the intended beneficiaries of your program.

### Host/Service Site Agreement

Once your AmeriCorps program has selected your host/service site(s), it is imperative to establish and codify mutual expectations and responsibilities of both the AmeriCorps program and the host/service site(s) to ensure a strong working partnership throughout the service year. AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are required to develop a Host/Service Site Agreement. Much of the terms of the Host/Service Site Agreement will be customized to the needs and circumstances of the AmeriCorps program model of your project. However, all Host/Service Site Agreements are required to clearly articulate roles and responsibilities for both the program and the host/service site, to include assurances that no AmeriCorps Prohibited or unallowable activities will be engaged in by AmeriCorps members and/or using AmeriCorps funding, to comply with AmeriCorps branding requirements.

### Host/Service Site Entry in eGrants

At the start of the service year, AmeriCorps Connecticut programs must enter in eGrants all host/service sites at which AmeriCorps members will be placed prior to enrolling AmeriCorps members. This is because the system requires a host/service site to be selected in order to process an AmeriCorps member enrollment. Host/service site placements can be changed in the system mid-year if necessary. However, an AmeriCorps member cannot be enrolled and active in the eGrants system without a host/service site placement.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Host/Service Site Management and Monitoring

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are responsible for maintaining a strong working relationship with its host/service site(s) throughout the service year, as well as for monitoring host/service sites for compliance with Host/Service Site Agreement terms and AmeriCorps rules and regulations. Program staff should set up systems to ensure strong performance in the following areas:

- **Host/service site leadership and staff are oriented to all terms of the Host/Service Site Agreement** as well as in best practices for supporting (and supervising, if applicable) AmeriCorps members in their unique national service roles.
- **AmeriCorps program staff maintain open communication with host/service site supervisors to ensure they are supported in their roles.** It is worth noting that host/service site supervisors are often individuals with existing roles in their organizations who are taking on an additional responsibility in supporting and/or supervising your AmeriCorps member. Sometimes, they were not involved in the decision-making that led to their receiving this added responsibility. Your consideration of their time, energy, and feedback is critical to facilitating a good experience for the AmeriCorps member(s) placed with them and to the retention of that host/service site in subsequent program years.
- **AmeriCorps program staff monitor host/service site compliance with host/service site terms and AmeriCorps rules and regulations.** Depending on the AmeriCorps program model, host/service sites can have full or partial involvement in implementing a number of compliance activities for which your AmeriCorps program is ultimately responsible. For example, some host/service sites are responsible for compliance-related duties like interviewing AmeriCorps members, conducting National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) processes, enrolling AmeriCorps members in eGrants, assigning AmeriCorps members tasks, managing member timesheets, and conducting performance measure data collection. It is essential that your program build monitoring host/service site activities at regular intervals into your program oversight plan to ensure host/service sites across the board are meeting program standards.
- **AmeriCorps programs should have a policy in place for termination of a relationship with a host/service site** should their participation in the program not meet compliance standards and/or program needs.

## Host/Service Site Guidance

For more information on how to effectively manage host/service site relationships and ensure host/service site compliance, refer to this **Partner Site Relationship Resource** and the most recent *Risk-Based Monitoring Tool I - Systems & Deliverables* available in the **AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links** section of this Manual.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Public Relations

### Creating Your AmeriCorps Program's Public Image

Establishing a strong AmeriCorps program identity is extremely important to the sustainability and growth of your program. Public relations activities build and promote your AmeriCorps program's image, increasing community awareness of and support for your program's mission and activities.

### AmeriCorps Program Identity

Promoting your AmeriCorps program creates awareness of your involvement in the community. As an AmeriCorps Connecticut program you belong to a large national network.

As a subgrantee of Serve Connecticut and recipient of federal AmeriCorps State funds, all AmeriCorps program promotion must follow the guidelines documented in the program's grant agreement and stipulated in the most recently updated AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions.

Serve Connecticut requires and monitors the following of AmeriCorps Connecticut Programs:

- Assure that **"AmeriCorps Serve Here" signage** featuring the AmeriCorps logo is visible at every operational and host site at with the program's AmeriCorps member serves.
- Assure that the following **acknowledgment and disclaimer** appears in any external report or publication of material based upon work supported by this award: *This material is based upon work supported by AmeriCorps. Opinions or points of view expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of or a position that is endorsed by AmeriCorps.*
- Assure that Program Directors and other AmeriCorps program management staff have **business cards** with the program's logo co-branded with the AmeriCorps Connecticut logo in a manner compliant with AmeriCorps branding standards.
- Assure that Program Directors and other AmeriCorps program management staff have a **professional email address** from the program's legal applicant web domain. Free email sources such as @gmail.com, @hotmail.com, etc. are prohibited.
- Assure that Program Directors and other AmeriCorps program management staff use a **branded email signature** indicating that they are staff of "[Program Name], an AmeriCorps program."
- Assure that the program's **web page** links to the AmeriCorps website for recruitment and advertising.
- Assure that all program promotions and information feature the **program's logo co-branded with the AmeriCorps Connecticut logo** in a manner compliant with AmeriCorps branding standards.

### AmeriCorps Logo Use Requirements

**AmeriCorps Connecticut program web pages must display and link the following three logos on the landing page for their AmeriCorps Connecticut program and link each of them to the corresponding URL:**

- AmeriCorps Connecticut logo (URL: <http://AmeriCorps.gov>)
- Serve Connecticut logo (URL: <http://servect.org>)
- AmeriCorps logo (URL: <https://americorps.gov/join>)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### AmeriCorps Branding Guidance

[AmeriCorps Branding Guidelines](#)  
[AmeriCorps Communications Resources](#)

### Serve Connecticut Branding T/A

[Serve Connecticut AmeriCorps Rebranding Training](#)

### Serve Connecticut Online

[Office of Higher Education](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Commission](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Website](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Facebook](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Instagram](#)  
[Serve Connecticut LinkedIn](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Twitter](#)

### AmeriCorps Online

[AmeriCorps Website](#)  
[AmeriCorps Service Join Link](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

AmeriCorps, the agency, provides resources for program promotion on their website's Communications Resources page, including guidance on:

- AmeriCorps Branding Standards (includes detailed instruction on use of the AmeriCorps logo and standards/requirements for co-branding your AmeriCorps program's logo with the AmeriCorps Connecticut logo)
- AmeriCorps logos
- AmeriCorps branded member gear
- AmeriCorps branded photos

Programs are advised to reach out to their Serve Connecticut Program Officer with questions about program branding requirements or to request assistance with creating of a co-branded program/AmeriCorps Connecticut logo.

## AmeriCorps Program Webpage

Each AmeriCorps Connecticut program's legal applicant website must have a landing page specifically devoted to its awarded AmeriCorps Connecticut program. The tab, button or link that leads to the program's landing page must either feature the AmeriCorps Connecticut logo or include a statement that identifies it as an AmeriCorps program.

The AmeriCorps program landing page must feature information on the program's mission, updated news about the program, and the current status of AmeriCorps member recruitment efforts (i.e., "now recruiting for fall [year]"). The landing page should be engaging and promote multiple avenues to connect to the program, including links to social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.

When developing a program landing page, it can also be helpful to utilize key words for search engine optimization (SEO). For example, if someone is searching online for an AmeriCorps programs in Hartford, their search should display your program at the top of the search list if key words have been used effectively.

## AmeriCorps Member Gear

AmeriCorps member gear is a requirement of all AmeriCorps grants. **AmeriCorps members must wear their program's official AmeriCorps gear during all service hours - in-person or remote -- whether participating in designated program activities or in community service activities.**

At minimum, AmeriCorps member gear must display the AmeriCorps logo; use of an AmeriCorps Connecticut logo is preferred.

AmeriCorps programs can purchase "generic" AmeriCorps logo gear for AmeriCorps members from AmeriCorps sponsored vendors; these items display only the AmeriCorps logo.

AmeriCorps programs may also elect to design and purchase their own customized AmeriCorps member gear with their program name and the AmeriCorps Connecticut logo co-branded on these items in a manner compliant with AmeriCorps branding standards.

AmeriCorps member gear can consist of garments such as t-shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, vests and/or accessories to be worn on or over other clothing, such as lanyards, buttons/pins, hats, etc.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### AmeriCorps Branding Guidance

[AmeriCorps Branding Guidelines](#)  
[AmeriCorps Communications Resources](#)

### Serve Connecticut Branding T/A

[Serve Connecticut AmeriCorps Rebranding Training](#)

### Serve Connecticut Online

[Office of Higher Education](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Commission](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Website](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Facebook](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Instagram](#)  
[Serve Connecticut LinkedIn](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Twitter](#)

### AmeriCorps Online

[AmeriCorps Website](#)  
[AmeriCorps Service Join Link](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

AmeriCorps programs should select gear that is appropriate to the kind of service an AmeriCorps member will be doing and to the environment in which the member will be serving. For example, an AmeriCorps-logoed t-shirt would be appropriate for an AmeriCorps member serving out of doors during the summer, where an AmeriCorps-logoed lanyard or pin might be more appropriate for an AmeriCorps member who needs to dress business casual in an office environment.

The AmeriCorps program should also carefully consider the mix of gear types and the quantity of each gear item it provides to each AmeriCorps member. For example, providing two t-shirts to each member will permit a member to have a clean t-shirt to wear for service while the other t-shirt is in the wash. And, providing both an AmeriCorps logoed garment and an AmeriCorps logoed lanyard will provide the member with flexibility to dress appropriately for different service and community environments.

## AmeriCorps "Lingo"

Training must be provided by programs to AmeriCorps members during member orientation about the use of the AmeriCorps identity during their term of service. **AmeriCorps member and host site trainings must include how participants are referred to as "AmeriCorps members," that they "serve" (not work) at "X" location, and that they are a part of the "AmeriCorps national service network."** See also [Member Elevator Speech](#) guidance.

When speaking or writing about your program's activities, AmeriCorps program staff and members should always use the phrases, "an AmeriCorps program" or a member of "the AmeriCorps national service network".

## Getting Connected through Media

Social and traditional media are other important tools to increase understanding about and build support for your program within the community.

Serve Connecticut encourages all AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to prioritize developing the quality and frequency of your **social media** presence as your program matures. A strategy programs may find helpful is to focus first on fully developing a social media platform with which you are most comfortable, i.e., Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, or a blog. Once that platform is fully running, then your program can turn to another platform that will enhance your brand. Serve Connecticut does not mandate use of social media. However, it is our experience that robust AmeriCorps programs have a robust social media presence. Serve Connecticut encourages all AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to engage with Commission social media profiles.

AmeriCorps provides information regarding program promotion via most media, including newspapers, magazines, television, radio, internet/websites and newsletters. Guidance can be found at AmeriCorps' website under Communication Resources.

One of the most important elements of public relations is **promoting service days and other program events**. AmeriCorps Week is a good example of when an AmeriCorps program should capitalize on the AmeriCorps brand to generate awareness of its activities in the community and its connection to the national service network. Media material including service day logos, public service announcements, fact sheets, flyers, and visuals, can be found at AmeriCorps' website under Communication Resources.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### AmeriCorps Branding Guidance

[AmeriCorps Branding Guidelines](#)  
[AmeriCorps Communications Resources](#)

### Serve Connecticut Branding T/A

[Serve Connecticut AmeriCorps Rebranding Training](#)

### Serve Connecticut Online

[Office of Higher Education](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Commission](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Website](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Facebook](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Instagram](#)  
[Serve Connecticut LinkedIn](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Twitter](#)

### AmeriCorps Online

[AmeriCorps Website](#)  
[AmeriCorps Service Join Link](#)







# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

**Press releases** are an effective way to inform the community and potential funders of your program's achievements and how you are making a difference in the community, highlight your program's awards/recognitions, and announce program events.

## Press releases about AmeriCorps Connecticut programs must include the following language:

*[Program] is an AmeriCorps Connecticut program funded by Serve Connecticut, the Connecticut Commission on Community Service. Serve Connecticut administers AmeriCorps State funding in Connecticut; AmeriCorps State funding is provided by the federal agency, AmeriCorps. Serve Connecticut strengthens communities through national service resources, community engagement and volunteerism. The Commission consists of a Governor-appointed Commission Board supported by staff. Serve Connecticut is housed in the Connecticut Office of Higher Education. Please visit [www.servect.org](http://www.servect.org) and [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov) for more information.*

## Media Releases

AmeriCorps programs must abide by the conditions outlined in AmeriCorps Terms & Conditions regarding gaining permission to use names and images of individuals featured in program media and publications. **At the beginning of the program year, each AmeriCorps member should sign a media release form granting your program the right to use their name and image in media and information.** Media releases should also be signed by any volunteers or beneficiaries featured in photos or named in publications/social media; media releases should be signed by parents or guardians of any minors (under 18).

## Member Elevator Speech

Your program staff team and your AmeriCorps members should be prepared with and practice delivering an "elevator speech" to describe your AmeriCorps program and their individual roles in supporting its mission. An elevator speech is a brief description lasting 15 to 30 seconds of the "who, what, where, when and how" of your AmeriCorps program.

**Elevator Speech:** My name is Pat Juarez and I am an AmeriCorps member serving with Student Help AmeriCorps in Hartford, CT. I am one of 20 Student Help AmeriCorps members who are serving in middle schools throughout the greater Hartford region. We mentor middle school students who have been identified as chronically tardy to or absent from school to help them catch up with missed schoolwork, increase their attendance, and improve their academic performance. Our vision is that helping middle school students improve their school attendance will increase their likelihood of ultimately graduating from high school.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### AmeriCorps Branding Guidance

[AmeriCorps Branding Guidelines](#)  
[AmeriCorps Communications Resources](#)

### Serve Connecticut Branding T/A

[Serve Connecticut AmeriCorps Rebranding Training](#)

### Serve Connecticut Online

[Office of Higher Education](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Commission](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Website](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Facebook](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Instagram](#)  
[Serve Connecticut LinkedIn](#)  
[Serve Connecticut Twitter](#)

### AmeriCorps Online

[AmeriCorps Website](#)  
[AmeriCorps Service Join Link](#)





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Program Monitoring and Compliance

### Why Serve Connecticut Performs Compliance Monitoring

AmeriCorps program strength and sustainability depend on three crucial elements: 1) compliance with applicable laws and policies governing the funding that makes the program possible, and 2) fiscal stewardship that safeguards the investments of federal, state, and local resources that support the program, and 3) performance that provides achievable and meaningful AmeriCorps service experiences for members resulting in documented impact for program beneficiaries.

Serve Connecticut aims to facilitate strong AmeriCorps Connecticut programs by providing training and technical assistance that supports funding applicants and awardees in understanding and implementing compliance requirements and program implementation best practices. Serve Connecticut also confirms that AmeriCorps Connecticut program compliance requirement and performance goals are met by engaging awarded grantees in comprehensive compliance monitoring and reporting activities throughout the lifecycle of the grant.

Serve Connecticut conducts the following activities to monitor AmeriCorps Connecticut program compliance:

- **Systems & Deliverables** Monitoring
- **Enhanced Monitoring** (Desk Review & On-Site)

Serve Connecticut conducts the following activities to collect AmeriCorps Connecticut program performance data:

- Mid-Year & Year-End **Grantee Progress Report** on Performance Measures and Member Recruitment/Retention
- Performance Measurement **Data Collection Plan** Collection & Implementation Monitoring
- **AmeriCorps Evaluation** Activities Monitoring
- **Great Stories & AmeriCorps Branded Photo** Collection

More information regarding Serve Connecticut fiscal reporting is provided in the budget and finance related section of this Program Manual.

### Compliance Monitoring Structure and Process

As a state funding partner and prime grantee of federal funder AmeriCorps, the agency, Serve Connecticut is responsible for ensuring that AmeriCorps Connecticut subgrantee programs and their affiliated host sites act in compliance with obligations stipulated in AmeriCorps Connecticut grant agreements. Information gathered about AmeriCorps Connecticut program operations and performance through compliance monitoring supports the Commission's ability to make funding decisions, mitigate risk associated with granted funds, and guide technical assistance and training initiatives in support of program success. AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are required to participate in a comprehensive program compliance monitoring process that involves two components: Systems & Deliverables Monitoring and Enhanced Monitoring.

**Program Capacity:** Program submission of Systems and Deliverables provides Serve Connecticut with a means of ensuring AmeriCorps Connecticut subgrantees have policies and procedures in place to manage the many moving parts associated with running an AmeriCorps program. These documents are also critical to a program's ability to remain operational in the event of transition, i.e., staff turnover, new organizational leadership, etc.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

**Program Implementation:** Program submission of **Enhanced Monitoring Part A: Desk Review** documents provides Serve Connecticut with a means of confirming that a program’s policies and procedures are strong, are being adhered to and are successful in maintaining compliance. Desk Review documents are generally related to AmeriCorps member management and program operations:

- Member management monitoring will require that each program is able to submit aligned sets of AmeriCorps member data and a number of required desk review documents included in each member file.
- Program operations monitoring will require that each program is able to submit desk review documents associated with non-member related systems.

Program participation in Program submission of **Enhanced Monitoring Part B: Compliance Site Visits** provides the Commission with additional evidence to gauge program implementation success through activities including stakeholder interviews (AmeriCorps members, program staff, service site supervisors), operating and service/host site assessment, and AmeriCorps member service observation.

## Compliance Monitoring Timeline

The following table maps out a typical Serve Connecticut compliance monitoring cycle. Note: The schedule and means of implementation described in the table are indicative of typical Commission practice, but are subject to change to accommodate unforeseen challenges. For example, during the COVID-19 Pandemic State of Emergency, all compliance monitoring activities were adjusted to remote implementation.

Date	Late Summer/Early Fall	October 31	January 31	Spring
<b>Monitoring Activity</b>	Strong Start Program Orientation	Systems & Deliverables Due	Enhanced Monitoring Part A: Desk Review Documents Due	Enhanced Monitoring Part B: In-Person Compliance Site Visits Conducted
<b>Audience</b>	All Programs	All Programs	Select Programs	Select Programs
<b>Frequency</b>	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual
<b>Description</b>	Staff of awarded AmeriCorps Connecticut programs attend an orientation provided by Serve Connecticut to prepare them for a new program year.	All AmeriCorps Connecticut programs develop and/or update for the new program year written procedures (Systems) and blank forms/templates (Deliverables) they use to implement their programs.	Select AmeriCorps Connecticut programs, i.e., programs eligible for Enhanced Monitoring*, collect, retain and prepare program, member and fiscal management documentation for remote desk review.  Note: All programs must collect and retain program, member and fiscal documentation of grant activities regardless of eligibility for Enhanced Monitoring.	Select AmeriCorps Connecticut programs, i.e., programs eligible for Enhanced Monitoring*, 1) work with Serve Connecticut staff to schedule and 2) prepare program staff, host site staff, and AmeriCorps members for an in-person compliance site visit.
<b>Action</b>	Compliance monitoring requirements are reviewed by Serve Connecticut staff for AmeriCorps Connecticut programs.	Systems & Deliverables are submitted by AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to Serve Connecticut via secure online platform on or before the date above.	Desk Review documents are submitted by AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to Serve Connecticut via secure online platform on or before the date above.	In-person compliance site visits conducted by Serve Connecticut staff and hosted by AmeriCorps Connecticut program operating sites as well as host/service sites; interviews are conducted with AmeriCorps program staff, host/service site supervisors, and members.

\*Eligibility criteria for Enhanced Monitoring are described in the *AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Manual*.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Systems and Deliverables Monitoring

**Systems:** Systems are detailed instructions that prescribe procedures for essential operations associated with your AmeriCorps program. Serve Connecticut requires AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to develop and update annually the following essential AmeriCorps program systems:

- Member Recruitment
- Member Pre-Enrollment & Enrollment
- In-Service/Post-Service Member Documentation
- Member Training & Development
- Member Support & Safety
- Member Supervision & Discipline
- Member Timesheets & Hours Monitoring
- Host Site Recruitment & Coordination
- AmeriCorps Branding & Program Promotion
- Program Budget & Financial Management
- Program Succession & Sustainability

These systems are the minimum guidance your AmeriCorps Connecticut program should have in place to effectively manage the many administrative duties associated with successfully running an AmeriCorps program. While the Commission encourages AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to build out their operational guidance beyond the systems above, these systems are the only systems to which Commission compliance monitoring requirements and assessment apply.

Each program system should include detailed procedural guidance for program staff organized into the following five elements:

Element	Description	Strong examples of these elements feature:
<b>Objective</b>	The end goal of each system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A one- to three-sentence summary of intended outcomes for the system.</li> <li>• Clear alignment with and commitment to meeting applicable AmeriCorps and Serve Connecticut compliance requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Frequency</b>	How often various key duties will be performed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequency targets for each specific task or activity described in the system. For example, reviewing time sheets might happen on a biweekly basis while conducting member service hour process reviews using timesheets might happen monthly.</li> <li>• Use of concrete terms such as "daily", "weekly", "monthly", "quarterly", etc., as opposed to vague terms like "ongoing."</li> <li>• Use the term "as necessary" to describe the frequency of nonroutine, episodic activities, such as administering discipline as part of a member's supervision.</li> </ul>
<b>Mode</b>	A step-by-step process for achieving that end goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear and exact alignment with AmeriCorps and Serve Connecticut compliance requirements.</li> <li>• Detailed, step-by-step instructions for staff to follow to ensure each task is achieved.</li> <li>• Logical organization for clarity, generally in the order each step must happen.</li> <li>• Helpfully titled subsections to aid the reader in finding the information they need.</li> <li>• Quick links to helpful forms, instructions, and other resources as relevant.</li> </ul>
<b>Distribution</b>	How the process will be documented and how that documentation will be retained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed instructions as to how to document system task completion correctly and consistently to assure adherence to AmeriCorps and Serve Connecticut compliance requirements.</li> <li>• Attached/embedded learning aids providing examples of properly completed/maintained documentation.</li> <li>• Clear guidance on how and where documentation is to be stored as well as documentation access permissions and procedures for program and organizational staff.</li> <li>• Personal Identifying Information policies and procedures regarding AmeriCorps member, program staff, and/or program beneficiary data (as applicable) that align with AmeriCorps requirements.</li> <li>• Quick links to helpful forms, instructions, and other resources as relevant.</li> </ul>
<b>Position(s) Responsible</b>	Assignment of responsibility for system components to appropriate program staff positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear assignments to position(s) responsible for each system task.</li> <li>• Clear divisions of tasks among responsible positions, including direct and indirect oversight. Example: A Site Supervisor collects and validates member timesheets while a Program Director reviews, approves, and enters timesheet data into a member timekeeping database.</li> <li>• Use of position titles (Program Director, Member Manager, Site Supervisor, etc.), not individual staff names. <i>Note:</i> Program staff position descriptions should align with responsibilities assigned to them in each system.</li> </ul>

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)







# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Critically, each program system should meet compliance standards illustrated in Serve Connecticut’s *Risk-Based Monitoring Tool Part 1 – Systems & Deliverables*, which is updated annually to reflect updates to governing regulatory and policy guidance and provided to programs.

**Deliverables:** Certain systems may have one or more deliverables associated with them. Deliverables can include template documents, blank forms (electronic or hard-copy), and policy attachments which are used to support certain components of a system. For example, the Member Recruitment system has as an associated deliverable a Member Position Description, as an AmeriCorps program uses a Member Position Description to promote a service opportunity and engage with a potential AmeriCorps member candidate.

Each deliverable should meet compliance standards illustrated in Serve Connecticut’s *Risk-Based Monitoring Tool Part 1 – Systems & Deliverables*, which is updated annually to reflect updates to governing regulatory and policy guidance. Recommended AmeriCorps outlines of certain deliverables can be found at the AmeriCorps Official Guidance web page.

Term	Definition	Examples
<b>System</b>	The written procedure a program uses to effectively manage a process integral to the AmeriCorps program model.  AmeriCorps programs submit their systems annually to Serve Connecticut for review to meet their Grant Agreement obligations around compliance oversight. Submissions are conducted via secure online portal.  Systems are due October 31 annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member Recruitment System</li> <li>Member Training &amp; Development System</li> <li>Member Timekeeping System</li> <li>Etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Deliverable</b>	Template documents, blank forms (electronic or hard-copy), and policy attachments that are used to support certain component of each system.  AmeriCorps programs submit these deliverables with their systems to Serve Connecticut for review annually to meet their Grant Agreement obligations around compliance oversight. Submissions are conducted via secure online portal.  Deliverables are due October 31 annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member Contract Template</li> <li>Grievance Policy</li> <li>Member Performance Evaluation Form</li> <li>NSCHC Member Consent Form</li> <li>Etc.</li> </ul>

## Systems and Deliverables Submission

All program systems and associated deliverables are submitted for Serve Connecticut review no later than **October 31** annually. These documents are submitted using a secure online portal. Programs will have an opportunity to respond to Commission feedback on their submissions prior to issuance of a final systems and deliverables compliance and quality scoring report.

For more information on how systems and deliverables are submitted to Serve Connecticut, how systems and deliverables are assessed and scored, how programs can respond to preliminary findings, and how final compliance reports are completed, please review Serve Connecticut’s *Risk-Based Monitoring Tool Part 1 – Systems & Deliverables*.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)







[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Enhanced Monitoring

Serve Connecticut performs enhanced monitoring on a subsection of AmeriCorps Connecticut programs each year. Serve Connecticut makes determinations annually as to which AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are eligible for enhanced monitoring based on the following criteria:

- Program is in its first year of a grant cycle
- Program demonstrated prior monitoring findings
- Program demonstrates concerns regarding prohibited and unallowable activities
- Program maintained less than 70% recruitment and/or retention
- Program has newly hired primary staff member or changes in key program staff
- Program has significantly increased their grant
- Program has significantly changed its performance measures
- Program has fallen significantly short in reaching their performance measures
- Program has repeatedly failed to comply with Commission policies (i.e., reporting deadlines, attendance, etc.)
- Program demonstrates a need for additional support
- Program requests additional support

Enhanced monitoring is conducted in two phases: **desk review** and **compliance site visits**. Serve Connecticut may require a selected AmeriCorps Connecticut program to participate in both phases, one phase, or portions of one or both phases depending on the nature of the specific need for enhanced monitoring. AmeriCorps Connecticut programs in the first year of a grant cycle are generally required to participate in both phases of enhanced monitoring.

Serve Connecticut reserves the discretion to modify enhanced monitoring activities on a case-by-case basis to best serve the interests of the Commission and individual AmeriCorps programs; a rationale for any modification is documented by the Commission.

## Enhanced Monitoring Part A: Desk Review

AmeriCorps programs are required to document financial, program and AmeriCorps member management activities throughout each three-year grant cycle. Serve Connecticut conducts a remote desk review process on each AmeriCorps Connecticut program at least once in each three-year grant cycle. This desk review process is intended to confirm that the AmeriCorps program is conducting financial, program and member documentation correctly and that grant activities are allowable, compliant and aligned with the awarded grant proposal. *Note:* AmeriCorps Connecticut grantee organizations are required to maintain this documentation per federal law as stipulated in the grant agreement for three years after grant cycle close; further, this documentation is subject to review by Serve Connecticut, AmeriCorps, the agency, and the AmeriCorps Office of Inspector General until the documentation retention term expires.

The documentation AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are required to submit for remote desk review and the criteria the documentation must meet are described in Serve Connecticut's **Risk-Based Monitoring Tool Part II - Enhanced Monitoring**, which is updated annually to reflect updates to governing regulatory and policy guidance.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Term	Definition	Examples
<b>Desk Review Document</b>	Electronic or hard-copy source documentation of program activities.  AmeriCorps programs eligible for Enhanced Monitoring submit these documents upon Serve Connecticut request. Submissions are conducted via secure online portal.  Desk Review Documents are due January 31 annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed/signed Member Contracts</li> <li>Verified Criminal History Checks</li> <li>Completed/signed Member Time Sheets</li> <li>Signed Member Disciplinary Memos</li> <li>Member Training Sign-In Logs</li> <li>Receipts for Purchase</li> <li>Etc.</li> </ul>

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

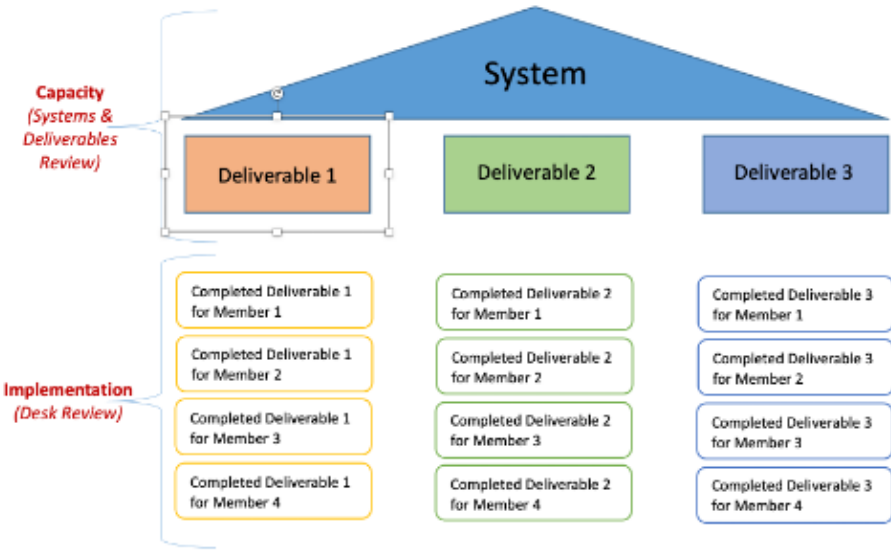
- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



**Desk Review Submission:** National Service Criminal History Check documentation for enrolled AmeriCorps members is submitted for Serve Connecticut desk review no later than **October 31** annually; remaining program and member management documentation is due no later than **January 31** annually. These documents are submitted using a secure online portal. Programs will have an opportunity to respond to Commission feedback on their submissions prior to issuance of a final enhanced compliance monitoring report.

For more information on how desk review documentation is submitted to Serve Connecticut, how documentation is assessed and scored, how programs can respond to preliminary findings, and how final compliance reports are completed, please review Serve Connecticut's *Serve Connecticut's Risk-Based Monitoring Tool Part II - Enhanced Monitoring*.

## Enhanced Monitoring Part B: Compliance Site Visits

Compliance site visits are performed on AmeriCorps Connecticut programs selected for enhanced monitoring. Serve Connecticut conducts compliance site visits to each AmeriCorps Connecticut program at least once in each three-year grant cycle. This site visit process is intended to confirm that the AmeriCorps program grant activities are allowable, compliant and aligned with the awarded grant proposal, and that all involved stakeholders demonstrate comprehension of and commitment to meeting grant requirements and the program mission. Serve Connecticut works with AmeriCorps Connecticut programs selected for enhanced monitoring to schedule and prepare for compliance site visits after the January 31 remote desk review submission deadline. Compliance site visits are **typically scheduled in the spring**, but can occur at other times depending on factors including AmeriCorps member service terms, inclement weather, etc.

An infographic providing an overview of AmeriCorps Connecticut reporting and compliance monitoring deadlines and deliverables can be accessed at this [Grantee Reporting & Monitor Schedule](#) link.



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Compliance site visits are generally conducted in approximately 4-6 hours and include the following components:

- **Operating site** assessment
- **Host/service site(s)** assessment
- **AmeriCorps member service observation**
- **Interviews:** AmeriCorps members, host/service site supervisor(s), program staff

AmeriCorps Connecticut program staff are expected to work with Serve Connecticut commission staff to schedule a mutually amenable date and ensure that during the compliance site visit all requested/scheduled parties are present, all operating and host/service sites are prepared, and appropriate private meeting space(s) is available to confidentially conduct stakeholder interviews.

Serve Connecticut will include feedback generated from a compliance site visit in the preliminary and final enhanced monitoring reports provided to the AmeriCorps program. The program will be able to respond to feedback during the enhanced monitoring clarification period. If it is determined that your program has significant compliance issues or requests additional assistance, Serve Connecticut may schedule additional site visits. Note: No individual AmeriCorps members will be identified in Commission feedback; any data gathered from AmeriCorps member interviews will be anonymized and incorporated into general observations.

## Deadline Extensions and Rescheduling Site Visit Dates

Serve Connecticut provides extended notice of deadlines and site visits associated with its compliance monitoring activities; as such, it is expected that AmeriCorps Connecticut programs will meet all submission and participation requirements as prescribed. However, should an AmeriCorps Connecticut program have concerns about its ability to meet a Commission monitoring deadline or encounter an unresolvable conflict with a scheduled compliance site visit, the program should contact Serve Connecticut staff with as much advance notice as possible to discuss potential flexibilities.

## Unannounced Compliance Monitoring

In cases of grave concern about AmeriCorps Connecticut program compliance and/or performance, Serve Connecticut may conduct unannounced compliance monitoring activities. An AmeriCorps Connecticut program's failure to comply with Serve Connecticut compliance monitoring requests/requirements in these - or any - circumstances can result in adverse actions to the program.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## AmeriCorps Program Performance

### Performance Measure Reporting

AmeriCorps programs are required to demonstrate and develop evidence of effectiveness to ensure that federal and local resources – with emphasis on AmeriCorps member service hours – are invested in efforts that will have a positive impact on communities served. To support this requirement, AmeriCorps Connecticut programs participate in regular reporting on performance measure progress and in impact evaluation activities.

Performance measurement is the systematic, ongoing tracking of your program’s success in meeting output and outcome targets as set in your awarded grant proposal. In other words, performance measurement is one method of gauging your program’s yearly progress on addressing its defined community need.

Serve Connecticut utilizes the **OnCorps Reports** portal at <https://ct.oncorpsreports.com> to administer AmeriCorps Connecticut program performance reporting requirements. Each program is provided with a link and login instructions to access the portal at the start of the program year. See **Serve Connecticut’s OnCorps Reports Policy** for more information.

AmeriCorps Connecticut performance reporting involves the following requirements:

#### Performance Measures Only & Data Collection Plan

*Due October 15*

In the OnCorps Reports portal, AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are responsible for inputting performance measure descriptions and output/outcome targets into the OnCorps Reports Portal for use in subsequent Grantee Progress Reports. This data comes directly from and should align with the program’s Performance Measure Module in its approved grant application. Serve Connecticut staff reviews submissions for this alignment and may request clarifications and corrections as necessary. Additionally, programs must submit a detailed Data Collection plan that describes how data on performance measures will be gathered, validated, analyzed, reported on and maintained by the program.

#### Grantee Progress Reports (GPR)

- *Mid-Year GPR Due April 15*
- *Year-End GPR Due October 15*

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs submit via the OnCorps Reports portal data on progress on performance measure targets as well as demographic information, great stories about AmeriCorps member activities, and AmeriCorps-branded photos of AmeriCorps members in service. Serve Connecticut staff reviews submissions and may request clarifications and corrections as necessary. Additionally, programs will be asked to submit with their Mid-Year GPRs samples of data collection instruments, raw data and analysis tools for Commission monitoring and feedback.

For more information on AmeriCorps Performance Measures, visit **AmeriCorps’ Performance Measurement Core Curriculum** or search for the version of the **AmeriCorps Performance Measure Instructions** that corresponds to the funding year associated with the grant, available on the **AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant** webpage.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)

An infographic providing an overview of AmeriCorps Connecticut reporting and compliance monitoring deadlines and deliverables can be accessed at this [Grantee Reporting & Monitor Schedule](#) link.



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Deadline Extensions

Serve Connecticut provides extended notice of deadlines and requirements associated with its performance reporting activities; as such, it is expected that AmeriCorps Connecticut programs will meet all submission requirements as prescribed. However, should an AmeriCorps Connecticut program have concerns about its ability to meet a Commission reporting deadline, the program should contact Serve Connecticut staff with as much advance notice to discuss potential flexibilities. Missed or late submissions without Commission notification can result in adverse action for the program.

## Performance Measure Changes

If you are considering adjusting your program's performance measures mid-year, please consult with the Commission as early as possible. All **mid-year Performance Measure amendment requests** must be received by a Serve Connecticut program officer **no later than February 28** to be considered. AmeriCorps Connecticut programs may submit an **AmeriCorps Performance Measure Request Form** to launch the amendment process.

## Performance Measure Data Quality Monitoring

Serve Connecticut requires AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to submit for review and feedback a data quality plan that details the tools they are using to assess each Performance Measure output and outcome associated with their awarded grant. This plan describes who at each AmeriCorps Connecticut program is responsible for data collection and how that process is managed, who is responsible for data entry and how that process is managed, who is responsible for data maintenance and how that process is managed, and finally who is responsible for data analysis and how that process is managed.

Twice a year, subgrantees are required to follow up on this data quality plan submission by reporting if there have been any significant errors or missing data or if any changes have been made to the data quality plan.

A minimum of once in a three-year grant cycle, AmeriCorps Connecticut programs must submit to Serve Connecticut upon request raw samples of each stage of their data quality plan (i.e., completed tools, evidence of data verification, evidence AmeriCorps State Progress Report of correct entry, etc.) for desk review. Commission staff provide post-review feedback to the program. In cases where submissions raise strong concern about a program's data quality, Serve Connecticut staff may perform a site visit to extend review.

Data quality review elements include:

- Performance Measure Module from awarded grant application for program year reviewed
- Data Collection Plan submitted by program for program year reviewed
- Blank/Template Measurement Instrument associated with each performance measure output and outcome
- Sampling of raw data collection (Size/format/content TBD based on Performance Measure Module and Data Collection Plan)
- Documentation of data analysis (Size/format/content TBD based on Performance Measure Module and Data Collection Plan)
- Documentation supporting calculation of reported performance measure output and outcome progress

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

Review occurs as part of the clarification period associated with the program's Mid-Year Grantee Progress Report on Performance Measures. Mid-Year GPRs are due April 15 annually; commission staff review and clarification processing of Mid-Year GPRs occurs in the months following submission. Commission feedback is provided to the program in support of submission of the Year-End GPR due October 15 annually.

Serve Connecticut staff review all documentation review elements for each subgrantee, looking for program adherence to its data collection plan; the success of the data collection plan in generating valid data; and the verifiability of the performance measure data submitted. If the review process affirms subgrantee success in implementation of a sound data collection plan, approval is provided to the subgrantee with response on their Mid-Year GPR submission. If the review process does not affirm subgrantee success in implementation of a sound data collection plan, feedback is provided to the subgrantee with response on their Mid-Year GPR submission. Feedback could include: clarification requests, corrective action requirements, best practice recommendations, further review. Additional follow-up might include referrals to or provision of training, technical assistance and other resources.

More information on specific submission requirements can be found in the most current version **Performance Measure Data Quality Review Form** available at the **AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links** section of this Manual.

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## AmeriCorps Evaluation

### Serve Connecticut Evaluation Requirements

In addition to annual measurement of program progress on performance targets, all AmeriCorps Connecticut programs – competitive and formula – are also required to conduct an evaluation process to assess evidence of intervention impact.

AmeriCorps breaks the evaluation development and implementation process into three components timed to occur over the cycle of three AmeriCorps grant periods of three years each. The evaluation process is a helpful tool developing improvements to your program that may improve impact and enhance future funding applications.

For more detailed information about evaluation designs and planning, see the infographic provided and visit [AmeriCorps Evaluation Resources](#).

### AMERICORPS EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS CFR §§ 2522.500-.540, .700-.740

The purpose of AmeriCorps evaluation requirements is to strengthen your AmeriCorps program by fostering continuous improvement, as well as to help identify best practices and models that merit replication and programmatic weaknesses that need attention.\* § 2522.500

Evaluation Requirements for Funding Cycles of the Same AmeriCorps Project		
Two AmeriCorps projects are considered to be the same if there is no meaningful difference identifiable between the two projects based on a comparison of the following characteristics, among others: a) the objectives and priorities of the projects; b) the nature of the services provided; c) the program staff, participants, and volunteers involved; d) the geographic locations in which the services are provided; e) the populations served; and f) the proposed community partnerships. § 2522.340		
Grant Cycle	Evaluation Deliverable Due w/ Application	Evaluation Activities During Grant Cycle
First Cycle (Years 1, 2, 3)	New Application: No evaluation narrative or email attachment required.	Build strong data collection practices and being evaluation planning process.
Second Cycle (Years 4, 5, 6)	Recomplete Application: Evaluation plan narrative required.	Evaluation plan approved by AmeriCorps (competitive) or CCCS (formula). Program completes planned evaluation as approved during three-year period.
Third Cycle (Years 7, 8, 9) and all subsequent three-year grant cycles	Recomplete Application: Both evaluation report email attachment from most recent completed grant cycle and evaluation plan narrative for upcoming grant cycle required.	Evaluation report assessed as part of the grant application review process. Evaluation plan approved by AmeriCorps (competitive) or CCCS (formula). Program completes planned evaluation as approved during three-year period.

**Evaluation Method Requirements Based on AmeriCorps Grant Type & Size**  
Internal evaluation is performed in-house by the subgrantee (i.e., by staff from the subgrantee's own organization or other stakeholders, such as board members, partners, or volunteer affiliates) without the use of an independent external evaluator. Independent evaluation uses an external evaluator with no formal or personal relationship with or stake in the administration, management, or finances of the subgrantee or of the program being evaluated. Grant size is calculated as the average yearly CNCS (federal share) funding received by the program during the grant cycle in which the evaluation is conducted, including adjustment for any increases or decreases in continuation year funding.

Grant Type	Grant Size	Evaluation Method Minimum Requirements
Cost-Reimbursement	< \$500,000/year	Internal Evaluation
	≥ \$500,000/year	Independent (External) Evaluation
Full-Cost Fixed Amount (Cost/MSY >\$800)	< \$500,000/year	Internal Evaluation
	≥ \$500,000/year	Independent (External) Evaluation
EAP	N/A	Internal Evaluation

AmeriCorps evaluation uses scientifically-based research methods to assess the effectiveness of programs by comparing impact outcomes for individuals receiving a service or participating in a program to impact outcomes for similar individuals not receiving a service or not participating in a program and establishing a causal relationship between a program and a desired (or undesired) program outcome. § 2522.700

#### Acceptable Evaluation Methodologies

**Impact Evaluation:** Capable of assessing causal relationship between program activities and outcomes. Requires control group or statistically matched comparison group. Includes randomized controlled trials (RCT) and/or quasi-experimental designs (QED).

**Outcome Evaluation:** Non-experimental assessment of program outcomes. Includes either pre-/post-assessment with no comparison group or comparison groups that are not statistically matched.

**Process Evaluation:** Assesses how a program is implemented.

#### All AmeriCorps program evaluations must meet the following requirements:

- Evaluate significant, not necessarily primary, service activity(ies)
- Cover at least one year of AmeriCorps-funded activity for the same project (i.e., activities that take place during one program year, not necessarily 12 months)
- Include site(s) supported under the Commission subgrant (evaluations of site(s) supported under a different legal grant do not meet the evaluation requirement even if it is the same program model)
- Align with the approved evaluation plan
- Produce a report that adequately describes the evaluation conducted, including introduction, description of design/methods, and section on findings and results

#### Evaluation Resources Online

**AmeriCorps Evaluation Guidance**  
<https://americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/evaluation-resources>

Serve Connecticut evaluation policies for AmeriCorps Formula subgrantees are aligned with AmeriCorps evaluation policies. AmeriCorps Connecticut subgrantees seeking to waive evaluation requirements via Alternative Evaluation Approach (AEA) must consult with this Commission.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)







[← BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Days of Service Reporting Requirement

### Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) National Day of Service

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are enthusiastically encouraged to participate in and promote all national service days of service and commemorations. However, Serve Connecticut only requires as a term of the AmeriCorps Connecticut grant agreement that AmeriCorps Connecticut programs participate in Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) National Day of Service.

Programs, organizations and individuals nationwide celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a "day on, not a day off" by engaging youth, neighbors, partners, and businesses in service projects that promote Dr. King's legacy of service.

**All AmeriCorps Connecticut programs must participate** in this nationwide effort by implementing a **service project in celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**. The designed service project must include all AmeriCorps staff and members; member time should be counted toward their direct services hours accrual. AmeriCorps Connecticut programs may collaborate with each other and/or with community partners to develop and/or implement service projects.

**MLK Day of Service Guidance** is provided by AmeriCorps, the agency, to assist programs in participating in and planning an effective MLK Day service project. Your program can sign up to be a Martin Luther King, Jr., National Day of Service Champion with AmeriCorps; Champions receive invitations to webinars and early access to national marketing materials which can be helpful in your planning and promotion.

Serve Connecticut requires AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to **submit two reports** to the Commission on MLK Day of Service activities: a **pre-service project report in December** to report on preparation/planning for the service project, and a **post-service report in late January** to report on results of the service project. Serve Connecticut staff will provide you with guidance on service project and reporting expectations in the fall of the program year. Reports are submitted via secure online portal. See the **AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links** page in this Manual for links to the most up-to-date versions of these reports.

*Note:* January comes quickly when you're in the midst of building an AmeriCorps program's momentum! Begin your MLK Day of Service planning early, finding or developing creative ways for your staff and your AmeriCorps members to mark this important day with a meaningful national service activity.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)

An infographic providing an overview of AmeriCorps Connecticut reporting and compliance monitoring deadlines and deliverables can be accessed at this [Grantee Reporting & Monitor Schedule](#) link.



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## AmeriCorps Program Staff Training and Support

### Serve Connecticut Training and Technical Assistance

Serve Connecticut is committed to facilitating AmeriCorps Connecticut program access to relevant high-quality training and technical assistance in support of successful program compliance and implementation.

The Commission strives to meet AmeriCorps agency priorities to enhance program capacities to successfully administer AmeriCorps grants, improve programmatic quality of national service programs, advance program capacities to measure results, and provide outreach and support to rural and underserved communities.

Additionally, the Commission strives to invest in the people who make AmeriCorps Connecticut programs happen, providing high-quality professional development trainings and other opportunities to AmeriCorps Connecticut program staff, site supervisors and AmeriCorps members. Serve Connecticut enthusiastically encourages AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to make the most of the learning, networking, and thought-partnering these various opportunities can provide.

Serve Connecticut provides programs with a calendar of trainings and events for AmeriCorps program directors, support staff, site supervisors and AmeriCorps members to attend as appropriate throughout the program year, as well as timely notification of any other relevant opportunities and requirements as they occur.

A typical AmeriCorps Connecticut program year includes the following opportunities, which may be in-person, virtual, or hybrid in nature as determined by Commission staff:

- **Strong Start Program Orientation** – Summer/Early Fall
- **AmeriCorps Launch** – October/November
- **In the Loop Program Director Convenings** – Monthly, First Wednesdays (all virtual)
- **Spring Program Training** – April
- America's Service Commissions (ASC) **National Service Training** – May/June

Serve Connecticut also provides AmeriCorps Connecticut programs an assortment of on-demand virtual learning opportunities, online access to resources and job aids, and technical assistance support.

Additionally, Serve Connecticut's Director of Training and Communications can provide guidance to programs seeking support in designing their own staff and AmeriCorps member training needs.

### Serve Connecticut Training Requirements

**AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Staff:** Serve Connecticut invests federal and state resources into providing high quality, customized, relevant programmatic, professional and personal development experiences for AmeriCorps Connecticut program staff, site supervisors and members. As such, we require AmeriCorps Connecticut program participation in all training events as prescribed in each event's registration guidance. The specific AmeriCorps Connecticut program audiences typically required to attend each Serve Connecticut training event are as follows, but are subject to modification as determined by training content:

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

- **Strong Start Program Orientation** – Program Directors, Member Managers, Site Supervisors (staff/on budget)
- **AmeriCorps Launch** – AmeriCorps Members, Program Directors, Member Managers, Site Supervisors (staff/on budget)
- **In the Loop Program Director Convenings** – Program Directors (other staff welcome at program director discretion)
- **Spring Program Training** – Program Directors, Member Managers, Site Supervisors (staff/on budget)
- America’s Service Commissions (ASC) **National Service Training** – Program Directors (other staff welcome at program director discretion)

Large-scale training events that involve engagement of external trainers, venue rental, and meals represent a significant Commission investment of federal and state monies. As such, AmeriCorps Connecticut programs that do not meet participation requirements in these events due to unexcused absences are subject to **Serve Connecticut’s Attendance Chargeback Policy**. Further, lack of engagement in Commission training events of any kind can also adversely affect future funding decisions regarding the program. Advance communication with Commission staff if your AmeriCorps Connecticut program has a scheduling conflict with a required training event is expected

**AmeriCorps Connecticut Members:** In addition to AmeriCorps Connecticut member attendance at the Commission’s annual AmeriCorps Launch event, Serve Connecticut also requires AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to ensure that their AmeriCorps member corps receive substantive and relevant training in the following content areas:

- Conflict Resolution
- Disability Accommodation
- Sexual Harassment
- Leadership/Team Building
- Civic Engagement

It is at the discretion of each AmeriCorps Connecticut program as to how these topics are covered; meaning that the training content and delivery mode must align with and support the service activities in which the program’s AmeriCorps member corps will engage. For example, members serving in an elementary school setting may need to learn different conflict resolution techniques than members serving in a nonprofit office setting as direct service providers to adults.

Serve Connecticut monitors AmeriCorps Connecticut programs for compliance with the AmeriCorps member training requirements, ensuring that each training topic is covered and that all corps members participate.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



## AmeriCorps Training Requirements

AmeriCorps, the agency, requires all AmeriCorps State and National prime grantees and subgrantees to complete four AmeriCorps-developed e-courses annually:

- AmeriCorps **National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC)** eCourse
- AmeriCorps **Effective Federal Grants Management** eCourse
- AmeriCorps **State and National Policies and Procedures** eCourse
- AmeriCorps **Fraud Awareness** eCourse

In all cases, at minimum one AmeriCorps Connecticut staff person - the program director - must complete each e-course, achieve and retain on file a certificate of completion from each e-course. AmeriCorps eCourses, as well as other on-demand virtual resources, are available on the **AmeriCorps Litmos Training Portal**, which requires users to have a log in account.

Additional relevant program staff should also maintain annual certification in each ecourse. For example, member managers and/or site supervisors who conduct all or part of the staff or AmeriCorps criminal history check process should complete the NSCHC ecourse. Fiscal and grant management staff should complete the federal grants management ecourse.

All **ecourse certificates of completion** earned by AmeriCorps Connecticut program staff **must be submitted to the Commission** for confirmation and documentation retention using the *Mandatory AmeriCorps eCourse Certification* form found on the **AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links** page of this Manual.

## Serve Connecticut Training Inventory

Serve Connecticut is proud to have worked with countless high quality external training providers as well as to have generated a number of creative and engaging in-house trainings over the years.

Through our frequently updated **AmeriCorps Connecticut Training Inventory** housed on our Serve Connecticut Basecamp platform, AmeriCorps Connecticut programs can access a complete history of trainings provided by Serve Connecticut since 2016.

Sortable by topic, title and/or trainer, the *AmeriCorps Connecticut Training Inventory* will tell you how to access a wide array of previously delivered training materials - including slide decks, video recordings, infographics, job aids, and more - as well as information on trainers and training summaries.

Training topic categories include program management and compliance; budgeting and fiscal management; AmeriCorps member management; AmeriCorps branding, promotion and social media; performance measurement and evaluation; and professional development for AmeriCorps members.

The Training Inventory can be a great resource for onboarding new AmeriCorps program staff, orienting colleagues to requirements and best practices of your AmeriCorps program, providing AmeriCorps member support, and more. It can also provide inspiration for your program's internal training and technical assistance programming.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Community Development & Outreach

### Commitment to Service and Volunteerism

A primary goal of Serve Connecticut is to strengthen and develop communities in Connecticut and throughout the nation by engaging Connecticut residents in service and volunteerism.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs play a pivotal role in advancing that strategy by engaging volunteers, participating in national days of service, hosting community events, and supporting the resulting collaborations and partnerships can advance a program's impact on target community needs.

### Days of Service and Events

Annually, there are many events celebrated across the National Service network. Each occasion is an opportunity to spotlight your program's impact while fulfilling programmatic needs. Some examples of what can be achieved during these events are raising AmeriCorps member morale and esprit de corps; inspiring Connecticut residents; recruiting new AmeriCorps members, volunteers, and community champions/partners; and expanding your program's reach in communities.

Below are some national service and volunteerism related events to add to your calendar; also be sure to review your program's grant agreement for events in which AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are required to participate and report on.

#### National Day of Remembrance

*September 11 - Annually*

**National Day of Remembrance** provides a positive and forward-looking way for Americans and others to forever honor and remember the victims, survivors, and the many that rose in service in response to the 9/11 tragedy, including first responders, recovery workers, volunteers, public safety officers and members of our military.

#### Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) National Day of Service

*Third Monday in January - Annually*

**Note:** AmeriCorps Connecticut program staff and AmeriCorps members are required to participate. Learn more by visiting the **MLK Day of Service Reporting** section of this Manual. The purpose of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service is to mobilize Americans to observe this holiday as "day on, not off" ... a time to gather people to serve others and encourage participants to make a long-term commitment to service. AmeriCorps, the agency, is responsible for promoting this day as a day of service to honor the life and teachings of Martin Luther King, Jr.

#### Global Youth Service Day

*Last Weekend in April - Annually*

Global Youth Service Day is an annual event that highlights and celebrates the contributions of youth to their communities through volunteer service. During **Global Youth Service Day**, youth around the world organize community service projects to address the needs of their local communities to be recognized for their contributions to be a part of a global youth service movement.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Points of Light Conference

June - Annually

The **Points of Light Conference** is a gathering for people from across the country who are passionate about civic engagement. With more than 50 educational workshops, inspirational leadership discussions and opportunities to connect with peers, this conference offers something for every champion of social good.

## Make a Difference Day

Fourth Saturday in October - Annually

**Make a Difference Day** was created by USA Weekend magazine and is the most encompassing national day of helping others. Held annually on the fourth Saturday of October, millions of Americans are rallied into a day of action to help change the world.

## AmeriCorps Week

Second Week in March - Annually

The purpose of **AmeriCorps Week** is to raise consciousness about the meaning of AmeriCorps service and its impact on AmeriCorps members and American communities.

## National Service Training Conference

May/June - Annually

**Note:** AmeriCorps Connecticut program staff are required to participate. Learn more by visiting the **Serve Connecticut Training Requirements** section of this Manual.

A **National Service Training Conference** is convened annually by America's Service Commissions (ASC) to provide training and networking opportunities for state service commissions and national service program staff. All streams of national service are also encouraged and welcome to attend, including but not limited to AmeriCorps State/National, Senior Corps, State Service Commissions, AmeriCorps VISTA, Volunteer Generation Fund, Tribal Grantees, and AmeriCorps NCCC.

## Volunteer Engagement

Volunteers are a key component to building a stronger community and AmeriCorps programs are strongly encouraged to build volunteer engagement into your program activities as appropriate. Volunteers in AmeriCorps programs are viewed as individuals who can expand the capacity and reach of your service opportunity's ability to address identified community needs. For example, volunteers can promote your program to increase networking opportunities, sponsorships and partnerships. They can also add to the pool of skills, expertise and talents on which your AmeriCorps program can draw to maximize community impact.

Volunteer engagement oversight is the responsibility of the AmeriCorps program director. While volunteer engagement tasks may be delegated to other staff and/or AmeriCorps members, program directors are responsible for integrating volunteers into a service environment where everyone is supported. The key to creating this environment is clear communication throughout the volunteer recruitment and retention process.



## AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities and Volunteers

Volunteers for your AmeriCorps program should never be engaged in **AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities** while performing volunteer service on your program's behalf. If your program requires AmeriCorps members to engage volunteers, be sure that both the members and the volunteers are trained in avoiding Prohibited Activities and that the activities engaged in by volunteers are documented as compliant.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)







## Strategies for Volunteer Engagement

Whether your AmeriCorps program has a volunteer engagement target built into its awarded program design or determines that volunteer engagement would be a strong ancillary strategy to enhance program capacity, the work of volunteer engagement requires planning and vigilance to support strong volunteer recruitment and retention results.

### Preparing to Engage Volunteers

- Your program should know why they are engaging volunteers. What kinds of support are the volunteers going to be providing to the program? How do they support your program's mission?
- Your program should be able to clearly articulate the activities in which the volunteers will engage.
- Your program should identify any traits/qualities/experience/skills volunteers would need to have to be effective in the volunteer role.
- Your program should identify and plan to deliver on any training needs volunteers might need to be successful in the volunteer role.
- Your program should establish clear distinctions between volunteer and AmeriCorps member roles; volunteers are not AmeriCorps members bound by the guidelines of a member contract and should not be treated as such.
- Depending on the nature of your program, AmeriCorps members (under the supervision of their program director) may have volunteer management responsibilities. If so, your program should instruct members on how to direct volunteers to ensure effective member-driven volunteer management.

### Recruiting Volunteers

- Your program should provide prospective volunteers with a clear and accurate volunteer role description that includes detailed information on role rationale, duties, time commitment, training requirements, etc.
- Your program should implement a volunteer interview process that both assesses a prospective volunteer's fit for the role as well as their main reason, or "why," for volunteering. If they are engaged, this "why" should be honored throughout their time with your program.
- In the course of recruiting for AmeriCorps member positions, you may encounter candidates who are not the right fit to be part of your member corps; however, these individuals may be good candidates for volunteering with your service program. Your program should embed a system of volunteer referral in your AmeriCorps member recruitment process to capture these individuals who may be assets to your mission but who cannot commit to AmeriCorps service.

### Retaining Volunteers

- A service environment with a team atmosphere creates a positive, fun, and united service and volunteer experience for everyone. Your program director's connection, support and supervision should be consistently delivered across the AmeriCorps member corps and volunteer pool with an aim to make each individual feel like they are an integral part of the team.
- Your program should have strategies to thank its AmeriCorps members and volunteers for their service to your mission periodically.
- Retention refers to the volunteer's adherence to the initial role agreement. If a volunteer is asked to commit 4 hours a week for a six-month period, and the volunteer leaves after 6 months, it can be said that the retention was successful.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



## Disability Inclusion

### Disability Inclusion Requirements

Serve Connecticut enthusiastically encourages individuals of all abilities and backgrounds to participate in Connecticut national service programs.

Any program receiving federal funds is required to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. To be in compliance with federal law, all AmeriCorps programs must prohibit any form of discrimination against persons with disabilities in recruitment and service. A qualified individual with a disability must not, solely due to his/her disability, be excluded from, denied benefits of, or subjected to discrimination by the services, programming, or activities of an AmeriCorps program.

### Defining Disability

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, defines a person with a disability as an individual who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one of more major life activities. Major life activities refer to anything an average person can do with little or no difficulty. Major life activities include but are not limited to caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, sitting, standing, lifting, reaching, sleeping and mental/emotional processes such as thinking, concentrating and interacting with others. The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) adds to this list the operation of major bodily functions such as the immune system, normal cell growth and the endocrine system as major life activities that are subject to impairment and legally covered under the definition of disability.

### Reasonable Accommodation

A reasonable accommodation is any adjustment or modification in a service position that enables a qualified person with a disability to receive an equitable service opportunity and/or experience. Any program receiving federal funding has a legal obligation to provide reasonable accommodations. Examples of reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- Modifying an application process, an interview, or a test.
- Modifying a service site to making existing facilities accessible to and usable by an individual with a disability (e.g. distraction reduction or clutter removal).
- Modifying a policy or procedure.
- Modifying training materials or supervisory methods.
- Restructuring a position, including:
  - Adjusting how or when an essential function is completed.
  - Dividing, exchanging, reassigning, or eliminating marginal functions.
  - Allowing a fellow member or volunteer to assist an individual.
  - Reassigning an individual to a vacant service position.
  - Providing flexible work schedules or leave policies.
  - Providing or modifying equipment, assistive technology, or auxiliary aids and services.
- Ensuring all program activities are held in accessible locations.

More helpful guidance around disability inclusion and reasonable accommodations can be accessed at [AmeriCorps Disability and Accessibility](#) and [Ask JAN](#), the Job Accommodation Network.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Disability Accommodation Funding Assistance

Disability accommodation assistance funding is offered to all AmeriCorps State and National programs by AmeriCorps, the agency, on a first-come, first-served approval basis until federally budgeted funding is spent. These cost-reimbursement funds are designed to offset program costs sometimes associated with providing reasonable accommodations to AmeriCorps members.

To apply for these funds, AmeriCorps Connecticut programs can submit a Serve Connecticut **Disability Accommodation Reimbursement Request Form** to Serve Connecticut.

Requests may be submitted to Serve Connecticut at any time during the funding year, but **must be submitted no later than August 1** to be considered. *Example:* For an expense incurred during the 2024–2025 program year, a request form would have to be received by Serve Connecticut by August 1, 2025. The form is available in the **AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links** section of this Manual.

Serve Connecticut will review requests and submit them to AmeriCorps, the agency, for consideration. If approved, AmeriCorps provides the awarded reimbursement payment to the Commission and the Commission then disburses the funds to the program.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



## Member Recruitment and Selection

### AmeriCorps Member Eligibility Requirements

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are responsible for proactively recruiting AmeriCorps members to conduct program activities by contributing their knowledge, experience, and skills to meet community needs. Programs are responsible for ensuring that AmeriCorps members are both eligible to serve per federal AmeriCorps regulations and qualified to serve based on program-defined suitability requirements.

Understanding the federally defined eligibility requirements individuals must meet to serve as AmeriCorps members is essential to recruiting the right applicants.

To be eligible to serve, an AmeriCorps member candidate must be someone:

- Who has been **selected by a recipient** or subrecipient to serve in an approved national service position;
- Who is a **U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or lawful permanent resident alien** of the United States;
- Who is **at least 17 years of age** at the commencement of service unless the member is out of school and enrolled in a full-time, year-round youth corps or full-time summer program as defined in the NCSA [42 U.S.C. § 12572 (a)(3)(B)(x)], in which case he or she must be between the ages of 16 and 25, inclusive; and
- Who has **received a high school diploma or its equivalent**, agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent (unless this requirement is waived based on an individual education assessment conducted by the program) and the individual did not drop out of an elementary or secondary school to enroll in the program, or is enrolled in an institution of higher education on an ability-to-benefit basis and is considered eligible for funds under 20 U.S.C. § 1091 (See Section IX.B.).

Programs should refer to the most recently updated AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions for a complete listing of eligibility requirements for AmeriCorps members.

### AmeriCorps Member Suitability or Additional Qualifications

Over and above meeting minimum eligibility requirements as set forth in federal law, AmeriCorps members must also meet suitability requirements as defined by individual AmeriCorps program needs. Depending on the nature of the service activities for which the AmeriCorps member will be responsible, there may be other suitability requirements your program needs to set to ensure candidates most likely to be able to meet program needs will apply. For example, there may be minimum education credentials, field of study preferences, experience levels in relevant sectors, or other criteria that would best position an AmeriCorps member to perform the service described in your program's AmeriCorps member position description.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## My AmeriCorps Portal – A Recruitment Requirement

The **My AmeriCorps Portal** is an online member management system supported by AmeriCorps, the agency, and connected to the AmeriCorps eGrants grants management platform. Among many functions, the My AmeriCorps Portal platform gives AmeriCorps programs the opportunity to promote their service opportunities to potential national service participants across the country free of charge.

AmeriCorps requires that all AmeriCorps State and National programs – including AmeriCorps Connecticut programs – post all AmeriCorps member position descriptions for which they are actively recruiting by creating Service Opportunity Listings on [www.My.AmeriCorps.gov](http://www.My.AmeriCorps.gov) via the eGrants portal.

These service position postings must not suggest any violation of AmeriCorps or Serve Connecticut nondiscrimination policies or **AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities**.

More information regarding this requirement can be found in Serve Connecticut's **Updating Member Status Changes in My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants** Policy and AmeriCorps' official guidance on **Service Opportunity Listings**.

## Public Notice of Nondiscrimination

Serve Connecticut affirms and abides by nondiscrimination law in the State of Connecticut and **nondiscrimination policy** set forth by AmeriCorps.

As stated in AmeriCorps Civil Rights and Non-Harassment Policy, “AmeriCorps will not tolerate any harassment that may include slurs and other verbal or physical conduct that relates to an individual’s sex, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other legally-protected status when such behavior has the purpose or effect of interfering with job performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Examples of harassing conduct include, but are not limited to: explicit or implicit demands for sexual favors; pressure to engage in a romantic relationship or for dates; deliberate touching of another person without consent, leaning over or cornering a person; repeated offensive teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions; unwanted letters, emails, or phone calls; distribution or display of offensive materials; offensive looks or gestures based on a person’s sex, race, ethnicity, or religious baiting; physical assault or other threatening behavior; and demeaning, debasing, or abusive comments or other actions that intimidate and are based on a person’s protected status.

Service members and volunteers who wish to file a discrimination complaint may do so by sending an email message to [eo@americorps.gov](mailto:eo@americorps.gov) or by leaving a voice message on the Civil Rights Hotline at 1-202-606-3461. Calls to the hotline will be returned within 24 hours.

For more information regarding the discrimination complaint process, employees, service members, and volunteers may contact [eo@americorps.gov](mailto:eo@americorps.gov).”

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





## AmeriCorps Member Recruitment Plan Development

Since each AmeriCorps program is different, an individualized recruitment plan is necessary to recruit members who are avid about service and ensure member retention. Your program may find creating a recruitment plan a useful tool in your AmeriCorps member recruitment strategy. First develop list of strategies that would best generate inquiries from suitable and qualified AmeriCorps member candidates. Then review your calendar leading up to your program's anticipate member start date as well as your budget for recruitment. Select those strategies that fit both your timeline and your budget, as well as your program's staffing capacity, and develop a step-by-step plan. Regardless of the chosen strategies, your program's process should include planning, revision when necessary, and commitment to the intended recruitment goals.

Serve Connecticut strongly encourages AmeriCorps State programs to commit their final recruitment plans in writing. Creating a typed document allows your recruitment plan to serve as a reference point that can be easily accessed, shared, and modified if necessary.

Refer to **Questions to Consider When Planning a Recruitment Strategy** for a list of questions designed to aid in developing a recruitment plan.

Additional resources on AmeriCorps member recruitment strategy are available by:

- Visiting **Serve Connecticut's Basecamp** online learning portal's Resource Center Recruitment and Training folders for resources, trainings, and more.
- Searching AmeriCorps trainings available on the agency's **Litmos online training portal**.
- Visiting **AmeriCorps' Communications Resources** page for recruitment materials, press kits, and more.
- Visiting Service Year Alliance's website for free resources like their **Recruitment Best Practices** tool kit.

## AmeriCorps Member Selection Process

Once your program has implemented your recruitment plan and received AmeriCorps member candidate applications for review, the member selection process begins. In approaching the selection process, it is important to understand and be able to explain what AmeriCorps is and the goals of your specific AmeriCorps program to prospective members, and how your program's member selection criteria and means of testing for those criteria relate to ensuring the best member matches.

For example, Program X, a third-grade literacy program, has two tests for member match in their selection process: an interview and a multiple-choice test. Program X should provide applicants with context for these selection process elements, i.e., that the multiple-choice test is a ten-minute test designed to assess a prospective member's ability to read, comprehend, and answer questions on a third-grade reading level. Providing this additional information to prospective members – a specific time length expectation and general idea of content – allows them to estimate the level of mental exertion necessary to participate in the application process. If an applicant is still interested, he/she can determine if a reasonable accommodation for the test is needed and then decide whether or not he/she should like to request one.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Program Directors must ensure each applicant understands that, if selected, he/she will:

- Be an AmeriCorps member who is a national service participant that has committed to a specific term of service on behalf of your service project.
- Not be an employee of your organization who receives wages for hours worked.
- Be subject to and protected by a Member Contract/ Service Agreement throughout the course of their service term.

Note: Some member benefits vary from program to program. Consult your program's grant agreement and/or Serve Connecticut staff for clarification. For general information on all AmeriCorps State benefits see the Member Benefits section.

An opportune time to present an applicant with information concerning your program's selection process is during contact to schedule an interview.

## Interviewing AmeriCorps Member Candidates

A strong AmeriCorps member recruitment plan will generate a sizable pool of candidates. However, not all of those candidates will be a good fit for your program. Many factors can contribute to a poor candidate-service position match; examples include but are not limited to:

- Member skill, education and/or experience shortfalls or disconnects.
- Member logistical considerations such as scheduling conflicts, commute challenges, etc.
- Lack of candidate understanding of the unique nature of the AmeriCorps service opportunity when they applied: that it is service, not a job with a wage; that it is a limited term opportunity, not an indefinite position; that it offers a modest stipend, not a salary, etc.
- Lack of candidate interest.

To filter the most promising candidates among your program's candidate pool, it is recommended that you employ a multi-phase interview process.

### Phase One - Expectation Setting:

Your first conversation with a member candidate should focus on explaining the service opportunity, including the parameters of the commitment AmeriCorps requires, the benefits an enrollment member can earn, the mission of the program and the nature of the service activity (i.e., the position description).

The purpose of this conversation is to minimize as much as possible any points of confusion the candidate may have about what they would be committing to if selected and enrolled. Often this conversation requires a brief meeting - 30-45 minutes - and can be conducted on the phone, virtually, or in-person depending on logistics and participant preferences.

Conducting these expectation setting - or "screening" interviews as they are sometimes called - allows you to eliminate from further consideration candidates who are not interested in or are not a good fit for your program.

### Phase Two - Mission Match:

Subsequent interviews with those member candidates who passed the expectation setting phase will be more in-depth explorations of alignment between applicant interests, goals, skills, and experience and program mission, service activities, and performance targets.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

**TIP: Not everyone interviewed will be a good fit for your program, but they may be a great fit for another program. Keep collaboration with other programs in mind when interviewing member candidates! Make referrals when appropriate.**



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Depending on your applicant-to-corps size ratio, you may have to implement two or more rounds of interviews to make final decisions between promising candidates.

These mission match interviews should be given adequate time for a robust mutual exploration of alignment between the applicant and the program. Additionally, interview settings should facilitate applicant comfort and conversational ease. While it is optimal to conduct at least the first mission match interview round in person, circumstances may make a virtual meeting or phone call a necessary or better option (i.e., the candidate lives in another state, the candidate is experiencing temporary transportation challenges, etc.).

Your program's goal is to generate a list of more strong candidates than you need to fill available member positions in your program's corps. In other words, if you are seeking to fill 10 member positions, you should try to conclude the interview process with 12-15 strong candidates to whom you would feel comfortable extending an offer of service engagement. Even at this stage in the member selection process, a candidate can elect to withdraw from consideration or ghost. They may receive a different offer for a service opportunity or employment, get accepted into an education program, or simply lose interest. So, it is helpful to over-recruit for your available positions should you make a strong candidate an offer and they decline.

## Interview Dos and Don'ts

AmeriCorps program staff should be cognizant throughout the selection process – but especially when conducting member candidate interviews – of the following **key considerations**:

- Anything that is asked, requested, required, or done for one applicant must be asked, requested, required, or done for all applicants.
- An interview should uphold the right for all individuals to be evaluated based on merit and potential.
- The criteria used for assessing the strength of all individuals should be clear, objective, and consistently applied to all individuals.

The following are **best practices** associated with strong member candidate interviewing:

- Interview in facilities or using virtual media that are accessible to everyone.
- Interview in private confidential spaces.
- Use the service position description as a guide/reference.
- Use the same list of interview questions for all interviewees.
- Record interviewee responses; this can help to make impartial comparisons between applicants when deciding selections for membership. Note: Be sure to attain permission from the interview subject.
- Ask about education, experience, skills, licenses and/or certificates that are relevant to the service position.
- Be clear about the essential functions and expectations of a service opportunity.
- Be willing to consider alternative ways an essential function, marginal function or task can be performed.
- Focus on what an interviewee can contribute to the needs of your service program and target community.
- Focus on what an interviewee can gain from participating in your program's service opportunity.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





The following best practices around **interview etiquette** should be observed:

- Be respectful and courteous to all interviewees.
- Greet all interviewees with a handshake, even if they may have short arms, use a prosthetic, are blind, etc. If a handshake is not possible or seems inappropriate, please exercise personal judgment to provide a suitable gesture/expression that can be perceived and interpreted by your interviewee as an equitable greeting.
- Face the person being interviewed.
- Provide an interviewee your undivided attention.
- Maintain eye contact with the interviewee, even if they are blind, using an interpreter, etc.
- Use appropriate language, e.g. use the term “disability” instead of “handicap”. If you are ever in doubt of the proper term or language, ask the interviewee and/or refer to the interviewee by their name.
- Use “person first” language; people are human beings first and foremost, e.g. using the term “a person with a disability” instead of “a disabled person.”

Among **interview don'ts**, program staff must:

- Not make assumptions about an interviewee's abilities.
- Not make assumptions about the type of accommodations an interviewee may need.
- Not make medical inquiries, even if an illness or disability was disclosed by the interviewee. Note: Medical inquiries and/or requests for medical documentation can only occur after an applicant is officially offered a service opportunity.
- Not allow the disclosure of a disability during an interview to be used as a factor in the consideration of your selection decision.
- Not ask direct or indirect questions related to the existence, nature, severity, or cause of an illness or disability, including questions concerning past attendance and leave from work related to illness or disability.
- Not ask personal questions related to an interviewee's marital, family and financial status.
- Not inquire about an interviewee's non-professional affiliations, i.e., clubs, social organizations, union membership, etc.
- Not ask race-related questions.
- Not make biological sex related assumptions about an interviewee's abilities.

Note: When an interviewee reveals information that is illegal for an interviewer to ask, inappropriate, and/or information of which you would rather not be aware, program staff should always redirect the conversation back to an appropriate topic. Further, information of this nature should not be noted nor serve as a factor in your selection decision.

## Reasonable Accommodations Considerations during Selection

Programs and activities must be accessible to persons with disabilities, and the AmeriCorps program must provide reasonable accommodation for the known mental or physical disabilities of otherwise qualified members, service recipients, applicants, and staff. AmeriCorps Connecticut program staff should communicate reasonable accommodation rights to all current staff (and the larger agency, if applicable) prior to starting the member recruitment process.

All AmeriCorps member candidate selections and project assignments must be made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation. As such, inquiries about the need for reasonable accommodation related to a national service opportunity should take place after a member candidate has been offered an AmeriCorps position with your program.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

That said, throughout the recruitment process, all applicants should be informed about their reasonable accommodation rights, including their right to request a reasonable accommodation at any time during the selection process for any portion of the selection process.

If an applicant discusses, discloses, and/or requests a reasonable accommodation unrelated to the selection process, program staff should not discuss, inquire about, or use this information when selecting members. To address this potential situation a program staff can redirect the conversation. For example, one could say: "Thank you. I appreciate the fact that you felt comfortable enough to express X information. Here at Y service project, we encourage the participation of every individual with the skills and abilities to execute the responsibilities of this service opportunity and we will provide the accommodations necessary to ensure inclusive participation."

Also, program staff can briefly explain the program's accommodation process. Prohibiting disability, illness, and medical information questions (or discussions) prior to the official offer of a position helps to prevent an interviewer from being perceived as having offered or denied a service position to an applicant based on the applicant's disability/illness/medical history. (For examples of interview questions an interviewer can and cannot ask, please refer to Interview Questions: Dos and Don'ts.)

Once selection decisions have been made and the applicant is offered a service opportunity, then a confidential conversation can occur concerning the best way to accommodate the member.

See the Disability Inclusion section of this Manual for more information regarding AmeriCorps requirements, the range of actions that could constitute providing reasonable accommodations, and how to access financial assistance to offset costs related to providing reasonable accommodations for an AmeriCorps member should they require an expenditure by your program.

## Selecting Members

AmeriCorps member candidate selection is an important factor in the successful implementation of your AmeriCorps program.

- Offering corps member positions to well matched candidates will make your program stronger; offering corps member positions to poorly matched candidates will make it weaker.
- Using sound, targeted recruitment strategies and promoting your program's requirements, benefits, and mission clearly will increase a selected candidate's likelihood of accepting your offer; less effort in either or both of these areas will reduce candidates' comfort with making the kind of commitment AmeriCorps service requires.
- Ensuring your program regularly engages with AmeriCorps member candidates between the time of their offer acceptances and their service start dates increases the likelihood that selected candidates will officially enroll and begin service with your program; failing to engage with a selected candidate during that time can open the door for a candidate to rescind their offer acceptance or even "ghost" your program, i.e., stop communication with no explanation.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

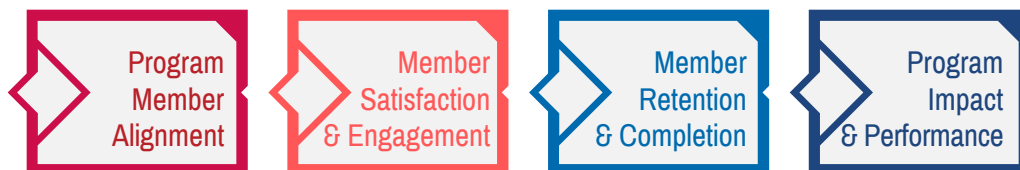
- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Establishing and fostering a connection between the needs, wants, and desires of selected AmeriCorps members to the activities and aspirations of their service opportunities is not only important in terms of matching a candidate to a service opportunity; it is key to facilitating a member's acceptance of your program's position offer and their continued satisfaction with the mission, day-to-day responsibilities, and the personal and professional development in which they engage during their service term. Member satisfaction and fulfillment during service translate into member retention for the duration of their service commitment. And, successfully completed service terms by engaged AmeriCorps members produce strong program performance and impact!



Although each individual AmeriCorps member candidate is uniquely motivated by different sources of fulfillment, clearly promoting your service positions as opportunities for enrolled members to experience typical elements of member fulfillment (the ability to make a difference, opportunities to learn and grow, inclusion in a movement greater than oneself, a means of challenging oneself to rise to a commitment, recognition for unique contributions to a meaningful effort, etc.) – and then *delivering* on those promises – can enhance your program's AmeriCorps member offer acceptances and retention.

If your AmeriCorps program's recruitment and selection process is implemented well, the members you choose and ask to serve with your program will have successfully demonstrated interests that relate closely to the goals and activities of your service position – and those selected candidates will be optimistic that committing to an AmeriCorps service term with your program will nourish their fulfillment goals in a meaningful way.

See Serve Connecticut's [AmeriCorps Member Enrollment & Retention Policy](#) for more information.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





## AmeriCorps Member Files

### Establishing a Member File System

After you have completed selection of a corps of individuals to serve with your AmeriCorps program, the member enrollment process begins by establishing member files.

The organization and maintenance of AmeriCorps member files is perhaps the most essential administrative function performed by AmeriCorps program staff. The documents maintained in these files ensure that your AmeriCorps program can prove that the AmeriCorps members you select are eligible for their service positions at the time of enrollment; this eligibility must be documented in order for your AmeriCorps members to receive member benefits throughout and after their term of service. An incomplete AmeriCorps member file is a noncompliant AmeriCorps member file; a noncompliant AmeriCorps member file can adversely impact an AmeriCorps members' access to their living allowance, health insurance, childcare assistance, and education award.

Per AmeriCorps statute, all required AmeriCorps member documentation must be retained by your program (i.e., the grantee organization) for a minimum of three years after the close of the three-year grant with which the documentation is associated, as required by 45 CFR§2541.420. It is imperative that this documentation is kept in a safe and secure location with limited access granted only to essential program staff persons. If a current or former AmeriCorps member submits a written request to view the contents of their file, they must be permitted to do so until the required document retention term expires.

Your program should develop and utilize an **AmeriCorps Member File Checklist** for each individual member file to ensure that all necessary documentation is collected, completed, and present in the file. Your program can request from members and retain additional member documentation in an AmeriCorps member file depending on the needs of your program; however, only AmeriCorps- and Serve Connecticut-required deliverables will be monitored for compliance. Serve Connecticut's *Risk-Based Monitoring Tool II - Enhanced Monitoring* can provide a basic framework for a Member File Checklist; the most recent version can be accessed in the [AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links](#) section of this Manual.

A program may store member files electronically and use electronic signatures if the program can ensure that the validity and integrity of the record and its signatures are maintained. For required criteria electronic documentation and filing systems must meet, see the most recent *AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions* available at the [AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant](#) webpage.

### AmeriCorps Member Application

The application submitted by an AmeriCorps member to apply for your program's AmeriCorps position must be included in the member's file. Your program may elect to use the member application that is submitted through the My.AmeriCorps.gov portal as your program's official application of record. Or, your program may design its own member application customized to your program's application in-take needs. Regardless, each member application should be signed and dated by the member candidate at the time of their application. Member applications that are missing a signature and/or date are not compliant. Applications submitted via the My.AmeriCorps.gov portal include compliant electronic dating and signature capacities.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





## Member Service Agreement

An AmeriCorps member must have a signed member service agreement (or member contract) in place with your AmeriCorps program prior to starting service, i.e., earning service hours toward their term. A member service agreement serves as a legally enforceable agreement between your organization and the person to whom you've offered the AmeriCorps service position.

A compliant member service agreement will include the following deliverables:

- **Term of service:** The member's service start date must be the same as the member's enrollment date as certified in the My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants portal and the first day of service on the member's service hour timesheet; the service end date is determined by the program's need. For example, a program serving a school might set June 30 as a service end date for its members to ensure the school year is covered.
- **Member signature:** The member signature must be dated, and that date must be on or before the member's service start date.
- **Program staff signature:** The program staff signature must be dated on or before the member's service start date; a copy of the fully executed (signed by both parties) member service agreement must be provided to the member
- **Member position description:** This should be the same position description that your program posted in the My.AmeriCorps.gov portal to recruit candidates.
- The **minimum number of service hours** (as required by statute) and other requirements (as developed by the program) necessary to successfully complete the term of service and to be eligible for the education award. Note: AmeriCorps members complete their service term when both of the following are true: 1) they have served the minimum number of hours associated with their member position and 2) the member service end date has occurred and/or the program's activities have concluded. An AmeriCorps member has not successfully completed a service term if they have completed the minimum number of service hours but have not met the program's terms for service completion as articulated in the member service agreement.
- The **amount of the education award** the member may receive upon successful completion of the term of service.
- **Standards of conduct** as developed by the program.
- A verbatim listing (i.e., using the exact same language) of **AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities** prescribed in federal regulations at 45 CFR 2520.65.
- A verbatim listing (i.e., using the exact same language) of **AmeriCorps unallowable nonduplication and nondisplacement activities** prescribed in federal regulations at 45 CFR 2540.100.
- Requirements under the **Drug-Free Workplace Act** as prescribed in U.S. Code 41 U.S.C. 701 et seq.
- **Nondiscrimination and civil rights requirements**, complaint procedures, and rights of beneficiaries.
- **Member suspension and termination rules**, including specific circumstances under which a member may be released for cause.
- **Grievance procedures** as prescribed by 45 CFR 2540.230.
- Other requirements as established by the grantee.

Your organization is responsible for finalizing the contents of the member service agreement and obtaining the necessary signatures prior to each AmeriCorps member's start of service.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

AmeriCorps, the agency, provides a Member Service Agreement Outline as guidance for programs in development of their own agreements; keep in mind that you must tailor your member service agreement to suit the specific needs of your program while ensuring that applicable AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions are met. Find the Terms and Conditions applicable to the program year at [AmeriCorps' Manage Your Grant](#) page.

## AmeriCorps Member Enrollment

### My.AmeriCorps.gov & eGrants

My.AmeriCorps.gov is the member-serving online portal where national service applicants search for service opportunities, apply for service opportunities, and, upon selection by a program, pre-enroll for their service term.

eGrants is the program-serving online portal where national service grantee programs enroll selected AmeriCorps members at the start of their service terms, document member enrollment status changes (i.e., suspensions and exits), and certify a member's successful completion of a service term and eligibility for receipt of their Eli Segal Education Award for disbursement by the National Service Trust.

These two platforms intersect when an AmeriCorps program invites a selected applicant to shift their status in the system from applicant to enrolled AmeriCorps member.

### AmeriCorps Member Pre-Enrollment and Enrollment

AmeriCorps requires that all AmeriCorps members enroll and exit themselves online using the My.AmeriCorps.gov portal. This means that a selected AmeriCorps member candidate must be pre-enrolled in My.AmeriCorps.gov prior to starting service with your program.

Pre-enrollment means:

- Your AmeriCorps program has invited the member applicant to join your program in the eGrants portal, which the applicant receives in the My.AmeriCorps.gov portal.
- The applicant has accepted your invitation in the portal and provided pre-enrollment information that triggers an automated social security and citizenship verification process by the Social Security Administration.

The program is able to complete the AmeriCorps member enrollment process once it has:

- certified receipt of citizenship and SSA verifications for the member applicant from the National Service Trust;
- completed and documented staff verification of a complete **NSCHC** process, including cleared National Sex Offender Registry, name-based state of service, name-based state of residence, and FBI fingerprint criminal history checks on the member applicant;
- and officially enrolls the member in eGrants, enabling the member to serve hours toward their service year, documentation of which will be available to them in My.AmeriCorps.gov upon exit from service.

If during the pre-enrollment process, a member applicant's social security number or citizenship cannot be verified automatically by the Social Security Administration, programs will be required to submit the applicant's verification documentation to the AmeriCorps Hotline for "manual" review. AmeriCorps agency staff will review the submitted documentation and update the applicant's status in the My.AmeriCorps.gov portal to "Manually Verified." This verification documentation and a record of status change should be kept in the member's file.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Detailed requirements and instructions are available in the Serve Connecticut's **Member Pre-Enrollment & Enrollment in eGrants Policy**. For more information on the national service citizenship and SSA verification process visit the **AmeriCorps State and National Member Enrollment Policy**. Find the *AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions* applicable to the program year at **AmeriCorps' Manage Your Grant** page.

## AmeriCorps Member Enrollment 8-Day Completion Requirement

A program must complete the enrollment process for an AmeriCorps member no later than eight (8) calendar days after the member's first day of service. In other words, if a member starts service attending a September 10 program orientation, the program must officially enroll the member (document the September 10 member start date) in My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants on or before September 18.

The AmeriCorps member start date a program certifies to in the My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants portal should be the same as:

- the effective service start date indicated on the member service agreement, and
- the service start date indicated on the member's first service timesheet.

Detailed requirements and instructions are available in the Serve Connecticut's **Member Pre-Enrollment & Enrollment in eGrants Policy**.

## AmeriCorps Member Exit 30-day Completion Requirement

As stated previously, AmeriCorps requires that all AmeriCorps members exit themselves from service online using the My.AmeriCorps.gov portal.

The AmeriCorps member exit process via My AmeriCorps must be completed no later than 30 calendar days after the member's last day of service (the final day on which they serve hours on behalf of your program as documented on their final service timesheet). In other words, if a member's last date of service occurs May 1, the program must officially exit the member (document the May 1 member exit date) in My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants on or before May 31.

- The member must be directed to begin the exit process by completing the Member Exit form in My.AmeriCorps.gov. Once initiated, program staff completes the member's exit certification in the eGrants portal.
- It is the program's responsibility to ensure that this process takes place within the required timeframe. To ensure that the process is handled efficiently and no communication errors create an obstacle, many programs elect to build the member exit process into an in-person or live virtual member exit interview where 1) this process is completed at one time and 2) other post-service topics are reviewed.
- The 30-day exit completion requirement applies whether or not the member successfully completed their full term of service. If a member is exited early for personal compelling circumstances or cause, the exit process is the same.
- If an AmeriCorps member leaves service early and does not participate in the member exit process via My.AmeriCorps.gov, a program may exit the member in eGrants without the member's participation. However, the program must document all unsuccessful attempts (unanswered emails, voicemails, etc.) to get the member to complete their own Member Exit form before doing so.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

Program adherence to enrollment and exit deadlines is strictly monitored both by Serve Connecticut and AmeriCorps in the eGrants portal. Programs are expected to prioritize compliance with this requirement highly, as lack of compliance can adversely impact both the AmeriCorps programs in terms of grant standing as well as AmeriCorps members in terms of potential delay in accessing their Eli Segal Education Award in a timely manner.

It is good practice for your program to have a written policy and procedure for how the program will handle meeting AmeriCorps member enrollment and exit deadlines in compliance as well as how the program will manage the timeline when members do not follow instructions.

## Member Exit Survey Completion

Programs are asked to encourage AmeriCorps members to complete the optional, supplemental Member Exit Survey that accompanies the required Member Exit form they are required to complete in My.AmeriCorps.gov. The Member Exit Survey collects important data regarding a member's service experience; greater response rates to this survey improve the quality of the data on which AmeriCorps, the agency, bases member-related decision-making. Members should be urged to complete this survey regardless of the timing and/or circumstances of their service exit; all AmeriCorps member experiences and feedback are valued and can provide important information for improvement of national service.

## Proof of Citizenship and Age

AmeriCorps program staff must document and retain verification that program staff reviewed the citizenship documents of all selected applicants candidates prior to their enrollment as AmeriCorps members. This process must be done in addition to the My.AmeriCorps.gov citizenship and SSA verification process and is intended to ensure that programs have confirmed that selected member candidates meet the minimum age of service and are U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, or lawful permanent resident aliens as articulated in the applicable *AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions* available at the **AmeriCorps' Manage Your Grant** page. Programs may elect to retain a photocopy/scan of the candidate's identification documents, but it is not required. A list of acceptable documentation is available at **Acceptable Identification for AmeriCorps**.

Note: Any AmeriCorps member under 18 years of age on the first date of their service term must also have a signed and dated **Parental Consent Form** on file.

## National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Documentation

AmeriCorps programs must obtain, adjudicate and retain confirmation documentation of each AmeriCorps member's clearance to serve via a National Service Criminal History Check process.

In its most basic form, the NSCHC process consists of three parts, which must be completed as part of the pre-enrollment process before the member's first date of service:

- Name-based National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) check
- Name-based checks of both the member's state of service and state of residence
- Fingerprint-based FBI check

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





## Compliant NSCHC Member File Record Components

A compliant NSCHC record in a member file consists of the following elements:

- All required components (NSOPW, State(s), and FBI) were **completed and on file** (45 CFR §2540.204);
- All required components (NSOPW, State(s), and FBI) were **conducted on time** (45 CFR §2540.205);
- All required components (NSOPW, State(s), and FBI) were **conducted through sources authorized by AmeriCorps** (45 CFR §2540.204);
- **NSOPW is complete** (all States, Territories, and participating Indian Tribes were reporting when the search was performed) (45 CFR §2540.204);
- **First and Last Name on name-based checks match** the name as reflected in grant recipient policy and procedures;
- NSOPW, State(s), FBI **checks reviewed and an eligibility determination documented** by the grantee (adjudicated) (45 CFR §2540.205);
- **Documentation of consent from the candidate** to conduct State and FBI checks and share results (45 CFR §2540.206);
- Documentation that notice is provided to individual that **the national service position is contingent upon the organization's review** of the individual's NSCHC component results, if any (45 CFR §2540.206);
- Documentation that the program complies with the requirement to provide a **reasonable opportunity for the individual to review and challenge** the factual accuracy of the result before action is taken to exclude the candidate from the position (45 CFR §2540.206);
- Documentation that the **candidate is eligible to serve/work** if a vendor check's adjudication recommendation does not endorse the candidate for service (45 CFR §2540.205).

See [How to Conduct Compliant National Service Criminal History Checks](#) in this Manual for more guidance on this topic.

## Proof of Education

AmeriCorps programs are responsible for ensuring an AmeriCorps member is eligible to earn and use the Segal Education Award benefit they earn from successfully completing a full term of AmeriCorps service. As such, the program must document verification that a member has a high school diploma or GED (45 CFR §2522.200).

If an enrolling member states that they have completed high school or has earned a high school equivalency, the program is strongly encouraged to obtain a copy of their diploma, GED or official high school or college transcript as documented proof of education. However, if a program is unable to obtain said documentation after unsuccessful attempts, the member's own certification in the My.AmeriCorps.gov portal is sufficient. In this instance, a copy/scan of the completed Member Enrollment Form or copy/scan of the My.AmeriCorps.gov screenshot should be maintained in the file.

AmeriCorps members who have not yet obtained a GED or diploma at the time of enrollment can complete GED classes during their term of service or agree to complete GED classes/obtain a diploma prior to using the award. These members need to complete a GED/Diploma Agreement Letter that states that they will obtain a GED/diploma and dictates the estimated date of completion.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[← BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Member Performance Evaluations

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are required to provide substantive and meaningful performance evaluations for all AmeriCorps members in support of the member's professional growth and the program's performance.

Part-time members must receive at least one end-of-term performance evaluation. Full-time members must receive both a mid-term and an end-of-term performance evaluation. The format of the performance evaluation is determined by each individual program based on the kind of service activities in which the member is engaged and the nature of the coaching and supervision the program want to provide the member.

Regardless of the format chosen, all AmeriCorps member performance evaluations must be reviewed and signed by the AmeriCorps member as well as their assigned site supervisor and/or program director. Member performance evaluations that are unsigned by either or both parties are not compliant.

For more information about Member Performance Evaluations, see the **AmeriCorps Member Supervision** section of this Manual.

## Health Care Insurance Enrollment or Waiver

AmeriCorps programs engaging full-time (1700-hour) AmeriCorps members must document in the member file that all full-time members have health care insurance coverage.

This documentation can be one of the following:

- Proof of the individual member's enrollment in the program's health care insurance program as required in the program's awarded AmeriCorps funding budget.
- A waiver signed by the member attesting to their coverage under another health care insurance policy (i.e., their parent/guardian policy, their own policy, etc.); this waiver must be accompanied by current copies of the member's health insurance cards.

For more information on health care insurance requirements, see the **AmeriCorps Member Benefits** section of this Manual and the most recent *AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions* available at the **AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant** webpage.

## Childcare Assistance Enrollment or Waiver

AmeriCorps programs engaging full-time (1700-hour) AmeriCorps members must document in the member file that all full-time members have been offered childcare assistance to accommodate their national service hours. This documentation can be one of the following:

- A waiver signed by the member attesting that they do not wish to use childcare benefits.
- Proof of member enrollment in the AmeriCorps agency's approved childcare assistance vendor, GAP Solutions. Refer to a **GAP Solutions Childcare Assistance Presentation for Serve Connecticut** for information on how a member in need of childcare assistance can apply. AmeriCorps members should apply for childcare assistance at [americorpschildcare.com](http://americorpschildcare.com).

For more information on childcare assistance requirements, see the **AmeriCorps Member Benefits** section of this Manual see the most recent *AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions* available at the **AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant** webpage.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





## Media Release Form

Programs must obtain the prior written consent from all members before using their names, images, or other identifying information in press, photographs, or videos for publicity, promotional or other purposes per the most recently updated *AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions* available at the [AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant](#) webpage.

## Tutoring Program Requirements

All programs that engage members as tutors must comply with 45 CFR§2522.900- 950. Applicable documentation should be included in the member file.

## Protecting AmeriCorps Member File Content: Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Management

AmeriCorps programs need to be prepared for potential breaches of Personally Identifiable Information or PII. Federal guidance defines PII as any information about an individual including but not limited to financial transactions, medical history, education history, criminal history, employment history and any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as their name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, biometric records, or any other personal information which is linked or linkable to an individual.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs must ensure that they have procedures in place to prevent, prepare for and respond to breaches of PII. As an AmeriCorps funding recipient that creates, collects, uses, processes, stores, maintains, disseminates, discloses, and/or disposes of PII within the scope of that grant award, your program must establish procedures to prepare for and respond to a potential breach of PII, including a plan to provide notice to Serve Connecticut immediately upon suspicion or knowledge of a breach of PII.

For more information on PII requirements, see the most recent *AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions* available at the [AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant](#) webpage.

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Conducting Compliant National Service Criminal History Checks

### AmeriCorps NSCHC Manual

AmeriCorps, the agency, provides an **National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Manual**, access to its annually required NSCHC Certification eCourse, links to AmeriCorps NSCHC regulations, links to setting up AmeriCorps-approved Fieldprint and Truescreen vendor accounts, and more on its **NSCHC Resources** webpage.

### AmeriCorps Connecticut NSCHC Overview

This infographic provides a helpful overview of Serve Connecticut NSCHC requirements and can be exported to PDF and printed from this **NSCHC-at-a-Glance Infographic** link.

**NSCHC AT-A-GLANCE**  
Budgeting for National Service Criminal History Checks as an AmeriCorps Connecticut Applicant

Three-part National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) clearances for a) any individual whose role is listed in the personnel section of the AmeriCorps program budget and b) all enrolled AmeriCorps members must be completed and verified prior to those individuals starting work or service. The following information is intended to provide a quick-reference support guide and should not be regarded as comprehensive, stand-alone guidance. Applicants can visit the [AmeriCorps National Service Criminal History Check](#) landing page for additional information.

	<b>NSOPW</b>	<b>State Checks</b>	<b>FBI Check</b>
<b>Basic description of criminal history check element</b>	Use of the staff or member applicant's name as verified on photo government ID to confirm the individual is not on the National Sex Offender Registry.	Use of the staff or member applicant's name as verified on photo government ID to confirm the individual has not been convicted of murder per records in both their state of residence and their state of service (CT).	Use of the staff or member applicant's fingerprints to confirm the individual has not been convicted of murder per FBI records.
<b>Cost if using AmeriCorps-approved vendor</b>	<b>Truescreen \$7.50pp</b>	<b>Truescreen</b> Varies by state; Serve Connecticut recommends programs budget <b>\$19.50pp</b>	<b>Fieldprint until 11/29/24</b> <b>Truescreen after 11/30/24</b> As of 11/29/24* results are processed in Truescreen platform; however, fingerprints are conducted at Fieldprint sites. <b>\$28.75pp</b>
<b>Cost without use of vendor; program staff conducts check elements in-house</b>	Free <a href="http://www.nsopw.gov">www.nsopw.gov</a>	Varies by state. As of 2021, <b>Connecticut is a National Fingerprint File (NFF)</b> state and, as such, AmeriCorps-approved vendor FBI check results meet <b>state of service</b> requirements.	Serve Connecticut requires use of AmeriCorps-approved vendor at \$28.75pp due to CT DESPP restrictions on what entities have clearance to adjudicate DESPP-generated results.
<b>Notes</b>	Serve Connecticut recommends conducting a free NSOPW search early in the member candidate vetting process, even if it duplicates a Truescreen NSOPW search conducted after member selection. Prior consent is not required as this information is public.	<b>State of service</b> is Connecticut; <b>state of residence</b> is wherever the applicant lists their permanent address on their application. If a staff or member candidate resides outside of Connecticut, a check from their origin state must be conducted.	Connecticut is one of 26 states that participate in <b>NFF</b> . Fieldprint fingerprint results will meet <b>state of residence</b> requirements in any of those 26 states. See <i>p.25 of the AmeriCorps NSCHC Manual</i>

\*See AmeriCorps National Service Criminal History Check Approved Vendor Transition 2024 FAQs

**IMPORTANT!** The NSCHC process is designed to ensure that AmeriCorps program staff and AmeriCorps members meet **minimum eligibility requirements** to participate in national service. In addition, AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are expected to develop clear policies around their individual programs' **suitability criteria** for staff and AmeriCorps members over and above eligibility criteria as well as procedures for how to screen for and make determinations on candidate suitability.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)

Please note that **Truescreen and Fieldprint both limit access to online criminal history check results.**

Truescreen will retain online records for five (5) years and Fieldprint for seven (7). It is the grantee's responsibility to maintain NSCHC documentation for three (3) years after the close of a three-year grant cycle.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs must have systems in place to ensure this requirement is met when access to vendor records expires.





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Avoiding Penalties for NSCHC Noncompliance

National Service Criminal History Check compliance is a critical area for your AmeriCorps Connecticut program to focus on where compliance is concerned. Administrative errors made in processing and documenting your member corps' NSCHC clearances can lead to substantial cost-disallowance for your program, even if those AmeriCorps members have clear criminal histories and meet service eligibility requirements.

**To avoid financial penalties for noncompliance**, Serve Connecticut strongly recommends the following practices to AmeriCorps Connecticut programs where developing and implementing the NSCHC process are concerned:

- Ensure that all program staff and site supervisors who conduct a portion or all of the NSCHC process maintain current **certification in the AmeriCorps NSCHC Certification eCourse**.
- Ensure that all program staff and site supervisors who conduct a portion or all of the NSCHC process have **read and utilize the AmeriCorps NSCHC Manual**.
- Develop a **step-by-step written policy and procedure** for program staff and site supervisors to adhere to in processing member NSCHC clearances; this process should align with requirements in the AmeriCorps regulations and the NSCHC Manual.
- Be sure to build a program year calendar that provides a generous amount of **lead time for completing the NSCHC process** prior to your member corps' service start date and orientation activities; delays can occur in receiving criminal history results and, sometimes, to accommodate a member candidate's right to appeal adverse criminal history results if received.
- Develop and keep in each member file an **NSCHC component checklist** to ensure no steps are missed and all steps are completed on time.
- Embed into your program management activities **periodic AmeriCorps member file audits by multiple appropriate staff** to ensure all NSCHC components are documented correctly in each member file – both during and after the process is complete. Mistakes, omissions and misplaced documentation are more likely to be caught if more than one individual reviews member file content.
- **Use AmeriCorps-approved criminal history check vendors** – Fieldprint and Truescreen; the AmeriCorps agency's monitoring and auditing results document a higher rate of compliance and lower-rates of cost disallowance among AmeriCorps programs that use these vendors to conduct their NSCHC checks.
  - **Serve Connecticut requires AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to use Truescreen** to conduct FBI fingerprint checks for AmeriCorps program staff and members; this policy is due to Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) rules prohibiting non-agency entities from adjudicating service/employment-related FBI records.
  - **Serve Connecticut strongly recommends AmeriCorps Connecticut programs use Truescreen** to conduct name-base state of service and state of residence checks, as well as National Sex Offender Website (NSOPW) checks.
  - Serve Connecticut also strongly recommends that AmeriCorps Connecticut programs also **conduct free NSOPW checks** by going directly to the national registry website **early in the member applicant screening process** to determine whether promising candidates are prohibited from service due to mandated inclusion in the registry. The NSOPW registry is public information and therefore no prior consent is required to search the candidate's name.
- **Reach out to Serve Connecticut staff with your NSCHC questions**; we prefer to partner with you up front in ensuring you are conducting your NSCHC processes correctly than to enforce federally mandated penalties after an error has been discovered.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

For more information on penalties related to NSCHC noncompliance, refer to **Awardee Guide to National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Enforcement of Cost-Based Disallowance**.





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Managing AmeriCorps Members

### AmeriCorps Members Are NOT Employees

AmeriCorps members are neither volunteers for nor employees of your AmeriCorps program or your grantee organization. As national service participants, an AmeriCorps member's relationship with your AmeriCorps program is specialized; as such, the methods your program uses to support and supervise your AmeriCorps members must be customized to their unique status.

AmeriCorps, the agency, provides a number of helpful resources to support your program in the area of **AmeriCorps member management requirements**.

AmeriCorps members are restricted to participating only in activities specified in your program's approved grant application, i.e., the duties outlined in your program's member service agreement. As such, AmeriCorps member supervisors (program staff and site supervisors) share a responsibility to support members in focusing on activities that promote their development – as effective members of your program's corps, as experienced future AmeriCorps alumni, and as citizens of their local and national communities.

Setting an appropriate and constructive tone, explaining your expectations, and providing consistent, reliable guidance as an AmeriCorps supervisor are keys to member success, which will in turn drive member retention and program success.

A best practice management style for supervising AmeriCorps members combines coaching, directing, supporting and delegating rather than creating a dictatorial atmosphere. Program Directors should ask the following questions in order to create a positive supervising experience:

- How do I help members understand what is supposed to be done and how to do it?
- What additional training might the members need that I cannot provide?
- How do I consider the needs of members – not just at the beginning of service, but in month six when their enthusiasm dips and at the end of service when move on to their next chapter?
- What can I do to inspire members to commit to a life of service?

### Setting Guardrails: AmeriCorps Prohibited and Unallowable Activities

AmeriCorps programs should ensure that their AmeriCorps members understand and are empowered to avoid or decline participation in AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities and unallowable activities as well as to limit restricted activities. Programs should train AmeriCorps members, site supervisors, and other key service site partners in these requirements to minimize the risk of a member being asked to violate these rules. Further, the member should be trained in how to self-advocate and seek support from program staff if their refusal to participate in a prohibited or unallowable activity is being met with resistance by individuals associated with the grantee organization and/or a service site. See the **AmeriCorps Prohibited, Unallowable** and **Restricted Activities** sections in this Manual.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Member In-Service Documentation Management

A major component of AmeriCorps member supervision is ensuring that all required member service documentation is collected, reviewed, and properly stored.

### Member Service Timesheets

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs must employ and maintain an AmeriCorps member timesheet system to ensure that each member's earned service hours are documented. Member timesheets are a critical tool in ensuring that AmeriCorps members who are eligible receive all member benefits to which they are entitled during and after their service term, i.e., member living allowance, Eli Segal Education Award, health care insurance, childcare assistance, etc.

Member timesheet systems may be paper-based or electronic, but they must adhere to requirements stipulated in the most recent AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions available at the AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant webpage. Programs can also refer to a **Member Timesheet Outline** provided by AmeriCorps, the agency.

In addition to tracking member service hours, AmeriCorps programs must ensure and document AmeriCorps member service hours are allotted as required:

- **Training:** A full AmeriCorps member corps may not spend more than 20% of their aggregate service hours in training. Note: Aggregate means that one or more individual members may spend more than 20% of their total service hours in training, however, the average amount of training hours for the whole enrolled corps can not exceed 20% of total hours.
- **Fundraising:** An individual AmeriCorps member may not spend more than 10% of their total individual service hours on allowable fundraising activities. In other words, no individual member may spend more than 10% of their service hours participating in fundraising.
- **Direct Service:** The remainder of member service hours must be spent on "direct service," meaning duties and activities included in the member position description and community service activities. Training and fundraising activities should support your AmeriCorps member corps in providing optimal direct benefit to your program's beneficiaries.

Member timesheets are required to allow AmeriCorps members to attribute or code their hours to these three areas, and program or site supervisors are required to verify those distributions.

### Member Teleservice Policy and Documentation

AmeriCorps is primarily a direct service program, meaning that AmeriCorps members serve in person in communities to help improve the lives of program beneficiaries. That said, among a broad spectrum of impacts the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic had on our society, the expansion of teleservice by AmeriCorps members was one. Serve Connecticut requires AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to adhere to the **AmeriCorps State and National Teleservice Policy** and the **AmeriCorps State and National Guidance - Teleservice Exceptions**. AmeriCorps Connecticut programs with Serve Connecticut-approved teleservice policies must ensure that all teleservice hours reported in member timesheets meet policy-required criteria.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)

In times of dire community need, such as disaster or public health emergencies, AmeriCorps members are encouraged to respond. An AmeriCorps program should reach out to Serve Connecticut to request approval for any **Alternative Service Activities** (i.e., service activities not included in approved grant activities) before allowing any corps member to divert their hours from approved grant activities to crisis response. Approval from AmeriCorps, the agency, may also be required.



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[← BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)

AmeriCorps Connecticut program members are permitted to teleserve if AmeriCorps policy guidance is followed and the program assures the following measures are in place:

- Teleservice is either built in to the program model in the awarded grant application or the program has determined that certain member service activities can be performed to equal effect and benefit through teleservice.
- Members receive written authorization of teleservice in advance from authorized program staff.
- Expectations of communication requirements between supervisors and teleserving members are made clear.
- The program monitors member and member supervision activities against the increased risk of time and attendance abuse associated with teleservice.
- Appropriate supervision is provided to members, including validation of the activities to be performed.
- Documentation and verification of hours claimed is thorough and compliant with AmeriCorps requirements.

It is a best practice to first investigate the feasibility of the member to perform teleservice from their home workspace, for example access to reliable internet, possession of or access to technology (program-provided or personal), etc. Then establish a request form or process to document the procedures above.

Further, the program should consider updating its insurance coverage to address legal liability attribution (for the grantee or teleserving member) for incidents that occur during teleservice.

Programs should be aware that their staff may be subject to legal sanctions for erroneously certifying that AmeriCorps members have sufficient valid service hours to complete their terms of service. In addition, there are legal penalties for knowingly submitting false claims to the government.

Please note the following prohibitions on how AmeriCorps members may serve:

- Remote service is NOT permitted under the AmeriCorps State and National program. Remote service is defined as an arrangement in which an AmeriCorps State and National member is not located within the commuting area of the geographic community where the service is to occur and is not expected to be physically present at the service site and/or community events.
- Virtual service sites are NOT permitted under the AmeriCorps State and National Program. Virtual service sites refer to organizations that do not have a physical location.

## Documenting Supervisory Activities and Actions

All supervisory meetings, correspondence, and disciplinary actions, if applicable, must be a) prescribed by program policies and procedures and b) documented and retained for legal creditability purposes. Remember that your AmeriCorps program is funded under a federal grant, and that as such, those policies and procedures are subject to review. See the most recent *Serve Connecticut Risk-Based Monitoring Tool I - Systems & Deliverables* available in the [AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links](#) section of this Manual.

All supervisory documentation must be kept in a safe and secure location to maintain confidentiality.





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Every AmeriCorps program supervisor has their own unique style, system, set of tools and techniques for managing documentation requirements associated with AmeriCorps programs. Management plans, checklists, calendar alerts, and other tools are just some of the means available to you to adapt to your own program needs and individual or team work style.

## Member Performance Evaluation

AmeriCorps member performance evaluations are formal documents that record a mutual supervisor-member process designed to clarify member duties, provide constructive feedback, improve member performance and foster member growth. Careful implementation and documentation of member performance evaluations is critical, as the associated required documentation impacts AmeriCorps member retention, re-enrollment and/or termination processes.

AmeriCorps member supervisors should complete a formal member evaluation form and provide it to the member ahead of a scheduled evaluation meeting held at a mutually convenient time. Members should have an opportunity to review the document and should be invited to them to prepare any questions, concerns, or issues they would like to address during the evaluation meeting. During the evaluation meeting, the supervisor and member should review and discuss evaluation scoring and feedback, modifying or clarifying scoring or feedback together as necessary. Final ratings and amendments should be documented on a joint form, and should reflect a shared process of agreeing on the member's strengths and opportunities for growth as well as an action plan to improve performance and foster professional growth.

To meet grant requirements and to ensure that member performance evaluation results were derived from a mutual supervisor-member process, all parties must sign and date the final evaluation document. Two copies must be made of the completed and signed forms: one provided to the AmeriCorps member and one provided to the member's supervisor. The original signed member performance evaluation should be retained in the AmeriCorps member file.

Part-time AmeriCorps members must receive at least one end-of-term performance evaluation. Full-time AmeriCorps members must receive both a mid-term and an end-of-term performance evaluation.

- **Midterm Performance Evaluation:** A quality midterm evaluation provides an opportunity for members to get a sense of where they are demonstrating strengths, to discuss where opportunities for improvement or growth exist, and to fine-tune goals and expectations for the last half of the service year in support of member and program success.
- **End-of-Term Performance Evaluation:** A quality end of term evaluation will provide the same opportunities as a midterm evaluation. However, the end products of evaluation and discussion are to support the continued growth of members after service as they move on to their next chapters, and to inform planning of your program's next service year through use of member feedback on their experiences.

The format of the performance evaluation is determined by each individual program based on the kind of service activities in which the member is engaged and the nature of the coaching and supervision the program want to provide the member. Note that your first

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

formal evaluation with an AmeriCorps member may be the first time that the member has ever received constructive criticism in a professional setting; consideration of this is important in determining how to deliver your evaluation feedback.

Remember also that supervision doesn't begin and end with required formal evaluations. Programs are strongly encouraged to design a system of supervision that builds in "checkpoints" along the way for members to ensure that they are on course in their service tasks and goals. These checkpoints can include formal and informal check-in meetings, ongoing information discussions, written reports, etc.

Setting up a mechanism for regular member reporting (quarterly prior to submissions of Grantee Progress Reports, weekly reflections submitted with timesheets, etc.) can be an excellent way for a supervisor to maintain awareness of a member's service engagement and performance status. Further, information provided by members can inform program Grantee Progress Reports.

Serve Connecticut and other AmeriCorps Connecticut programs can provide examples of AmeriCorps member evaluation instruments and processes. Your program may also elect to adapt the employee evaluation tool your grantee organization uses for its staff evaluation process; any tool used should be assessed and customized if necessary to align with the unique national service role and needs of your program's AmeriCorps members.

[← BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



## Effective Communication

An AmeriCorps program's success in supervising AmeriCorps members -- and volunteers -- depends heavily on strong, professional communication. Respect is at the very core of strong, professional communication; demonstrating respect in communication with all individuals associated with your program -- members, volunteers, staff, direct service recipients, community partners, funders, etc. -- will create an environment where AmeriCorps members are empowered to develop strong, professional communication styles of their own that will serve both your program and themselves in their future endeavors.

Setting clear, thoughtful communication ground rules and standards for staff, members, and volunteers associated with your program and sharing those expectations with all parties at the outset of the service year will facilitate smooth, successful member supervision and support going forward. These ground rules should apply to all forms of communication, whether written or verbal, virtual or face-to-face, including meetings, service logs, e-mails, reports, conference calls, phone conversations, social media, instant messaging/texting, etc.

Some examples of ground rules to consider include:

- What is the best or only acceptable means for a member to communicate an absence or tardiness to a supervisor?
- What are the rules around cell phone use during meetings?
- What are organizational policies around social media use?
- What greeting should a member use when answering the phone while representing your organization? Should members be trained in how to hold and transfer calls smoothly?
- What are organizational policies around safe and hostile language in the workplace? Are there policies members should understand around boundaries?

It is important to acknowledge that even in organizations that create highly professional, positive communication environments, miscommunication, missteps, and conflict can occur. Correction and conflict mediation can be difficult but necessary aspects of supervising. When dealing with supervision challenges, remember that not all conflict is negative and confrontation can be managed positively and have positive results if professional, constructive communication ground rules are set and followed.

In addition to the **Seven Sins of Supervision** to be found in the appendix of this Manual, the following tips may prove helpful if challenges arise:

- **Catch it early.** If you let it slide the first time, the person will expect you to continue to let it slide.
- **Do it privately.** Embarrassing people in front of others is relationship sabotage. Avoid it.
- **Ask before you tell.** Make sure the person understands what they did, or did not do, and is clear about their responsibility. "Do you understand what time you're supposed to arrive?" "Do you know why it is important to be here at that time?"
- **Get them to commit.** "Can you be on time in the future?"
- **Ask how you can assist.** "What can I do to help you be on time?"
- **Review expectations.** Make sure they know the consequences of not being able to keep their word.
- **Document everything!** You might even consider a written contract, which the employee (member) signs, that goes into his or her file.
- **Set standards.** Have a very clearly defined process, stated in your handbook, for dealing with issues like this.
- **Don't take it personally.** This one is tough for many supervisors because we're "people oriented" and don't like "disciplining" people. But it is your job.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)

- **Catch them in the act of doing right!** Most importantly, when the member does something right, notice it and reward them! This is vital, because whether we are dealing with youth or adults, we tend to spend far more time trying to change negative behavior than we do reinforcing positive behavior. Turn that around. It is much more effective to emphasize the positive in order to minimize the negative.
- **Celebrate with your team.** Thank them often and in a variety of ways. (i.e., recognize birthdays, surprise them with a card "just because," bring a pizza to a group meeting). The more members and volunteers like, trust, and respect you, the easier it is to address challenges.

(Source: M. Morrow)

## Supporting Your Team

Serve Connecticut does not mitigate internal conflicts with AmeriCorps members, AmeriCorps program staff, and/or AmeriCorps program volunteers. We do not hire or discipline members or program staff. However, we may provide assistance should your program encounter compelling challenges by directing you to resources. Serve Connecticut may provide staff supervisory training when appropriate and upon request.

In addition, we highly recommend AmeriCorps Connecticut programs develop supportive relationships with other AmeriCorps Connecticut programs and share best practices. The process of supervising a wide range of personalities can be stressful and having the ability to express concerns to AmeriCorps Connecticut portfolio colleagues can be beneficial. Please be aware that it is not proper for the Commission, as a funder of your program, to become involved with conversations between programs.

Visit [Connecting & Collaborating as AmeriCorps Programs](#) for more information about how program staff can develop relationships with other programs.



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Developing Your AmeriCorps Members

### AmeriCorps 80/20 Member Training Rule

The AmeriCorps “80/20 rule” specifies that up to 20% of the total service hours of an AmeriCorps member corps should be spent 1) preparing those members to succeed in service and 2) enriching their personal and professional development.

Much of an AmeriCorps member’s development can be provided through trainings that educate members on a variety of topics and provide them with the tools necessary to be successful during their service. Trainings also provide opportunities to connect to members on both professional and personal levels.

Training is a process, not an event. It begins long before participants show up and continues until results are seen in member performance and program impact. Well-trained members provide high quality, high impact service and increase the value of the AmeriCorps program to its community.

- In trainings, members can learn more about the community they are serving and what national service entails.
- Training helps members develop skills in areas that they might not have been introduced to prior to AmeriCorps -- effective communication, conflict resolution, team building, leadership, CPR/first aid, outdoor education, volunteer development, resource mobilization, partnership development, etc.
- Training can also broaden attitudes and perspectives and increase a member’s sense of empowerment, civic values and service ethic.
- Lastly, trainings can promote member retention and a lifelong engagement in service.

### Member Training Design

It is mandatory that each program maintain a member training and development system. This system must meet minimum requirements in the areas of training content, structure, evaluation, and documentation. See the *Serve Connecticut Risk-Based Monitoring Tool Part I - Systems and Deliverables* and *Part II - Enhanced Monitoring* available in the **AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Forms** section of this Manual.

The structure, style, and content of your member training design should be mindful of your program’s needs, your members’ needs, and be tailored to the fact that your members are adult learners. The space you use for training, the learning environment you create, the trainer/facilitator selected, the training goal takeaways, the learning styles of your audience, and the training tone engaged will all leave an impact on participants. All trainings must be inclusive and, of course, be within the means of your program’s budget.

Each member training should be planned thoughtfully well in advance of delivery. The planning process must determine:

- **Who:** Who will facilitate/conduct the training? Who will be in the audience?
- **What:** What are the training goals, outcomes and/or learning objectives? What materials/tools will be necessary to conduct the training?
- **Where:** Where will the training take place?
- **When:** When will the training take place?
- **How:** How will the training be evaluated?

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

AmeriCorps member trainings should be robust and engaging. Any trainings delivered to meet Serve Connecticut training requirements listed below must include the following elements:

- Sign-in sheet/attendance log
- Agenda
- Game/ice breaker
- Opener (topic-related activity to create buy in)
- Learning objective
- Skills area (learning content)
- Energizer (refresher of material)
- Reflection activity
- Closer (activity to end training)

## Required Member Trainings to Support a Service Year

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are responsible for ensuring that members are provided the following Serve Connecticut-required training content during the program year.

- **Orientation** (See *AmeriCorps Member Orientation* below.)
- **Sexual Harassment & Ethics**
- **Disability Accommodation**
- **Teamwork & Leadership**
- **Conflict Resolution**
- **Civic Engagement**

Serve Connecticut monitors programs to ensure that the program includes the above trainings in their program year calendar, that the trainings are delivered as prescribed, and that all AmeriCorps members attended the trainings.

In addition, the following trainings are highly recommended for relevance to member development:

- **Wellness, Self-Care and Stress Management:** Preparing individuals for the demands of and stressors that can result from service.
- **Life Skills/Money Management:** Some members will be challenged by living on a limited stipend during their service term and will need best practices for budgeting and smart spending.
- **Basic First Aid/CPR:** The American Red Cross can help provide a local trainer to prepare members for emergencies.
- **Life after AmeriCorps/Career-Building:** AmeriCorps members can benefit from learning how to present their national service activities and learning as part of the experience that will bring value to their next employment, educational, or service endeavor and beyond. Support your members' post-service ambitions by training them on how to create a portfolio including resume development, cover letter writing and interviewing.

## AmeriCorps Member Orientation

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are required by Serve Connecticut to conduct a minimum one-week AmeriCorps member orientation at the start of the program year. Orientation is the first training that educates your program's members on a variety of topics and provides them with the necessary tools to be successful during their service. Orientation is an opportunity to be creative and build teamwork through a wide range of activities and strategies. In your role as Program Director as a supervisor and mentor, orientation is an opportunity to express your expectations to members in a professional, yet fun and engaging way.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Incorporating former AmeriCorps members who served with the program in the orientation is a great way to build new member buy-in. You can also bring in additional expertise and experience to add interest and networking opportunities for members, having organization staff, partner and service site organization staff, and other experts share knowledge and best practices.

Orientation must cover the following topics:

- Your AmeriCorps program mission, theory of change and performance measure targets.
- Your organization's/legal applicant's background including history, culture, mission, etc.
- An overview of AmeriCorps programs including AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps Seniors, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps NCCC.
- An overview of Serve Connecticut's role at the state level and relationship to your program.
- AmeriCorps members rights and responsibilities.
- Your AmeriCorps program code of conduct.
- Requirements under the Drug-Free Workplace Act (41 U.S.C. 701 et seq.).
- Progressive disciplinary procedures.
- Suspension and termination policies.
- Grievance procedures.
- Sexual harassment and other non-discrimination issues.
- Member benefits.
- A tour of the agency and program host sites.
- Inspiration: Service is inspiring, and understanding the role that inspiration plays can help make the year a success.
- A reflection on each member's reasons for choosing service.
- Member self-assessment: A process that allows you to understand the skills sets and challenges of each member and also allows members to set goals for their development.
- Service site orientation.
- Orientation to community at large.
- AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities listed in the applicable AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions. *Note:* When orienting AmeriCorps members and program/service site staff about AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities, helping them to understand the reason for their existence can provide important context that will support your program in recognizing and avoiding mistakes. AmeriCorps legislation was and continues to be celebrated for its success in garnering bi-partisan support among lawmakers, largely due to agreement on specific activities in which AmeriCorps members will not engage. Committing -- as AmeriCorps programs and as AmeriCorps members -- to uphold this agreement is a critical contribution to ensuring continued federal support for the important resource AmeriCorps provides to the country through national service programming.

## Retention of AmeriCorps Members

Retaining all of the AmeriCorps members you enroll until they each complete their service terms successfully is a required term of your AmeriCorps program grant. Without a full corps of fulfilled and engaged AmeriCorps members, your program will be challenged in meeting the performance measure targets it set for its primary activities and will not have as profound an impact on the community.

AmeriCorps members stay in service because being part of an AmeriCorps member corps is fun, they feel valued, and they look forward to showing up every day. AmeriCorps members leave service when it is no longer fun, they do not feel valued, and they dread showing up each day. It really is that simple.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Retention of an AmeriCorps member begins in the interview process -- where you accurately describe the member role and assess whether the member candidate is a correct fit for that role and your program. Programs should be honest and up front with potential members about the commitment needs of their AmeriCorps program. Otherwise, retention for your program will be challenging and both the member and program staff may feel misled.

AmeriCorps member retention is also positively or negatively impacted by how well or poorly other elements of member management are conducted; service site placement, orientation, training, supervision, performance evaluation and recognition all offer opportunities to enhance or weaken a member's continued buy-in to their service.

At the start of service, ask the member what their motivations for serving are -- and then honor the time they give and contributions they make to your program throughout the service year. When members feel valued, they are more likely to continue serving and more likely to share their positive experiences with others who may be interested in service.

Data collection through assessments and evaluations are essential to provide information about your program's retention patterns. Conducting surveys and collecting written stories from members, during and after their service, will provide insight about member experiences that will help you to keep member retention rates high.

For more information, see the [AmeriCorps Connecticut Enrollment and Retention Rates Policy](#) in this Manual.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## AmeriCorps Member Benefits

### Member Living Allowance

All full-time AmeriCorps members must be provided with a member living allowance, sometimes called a member stipend. Though not required, AmeriCorps programs also have the option to provide a member living allowance to part-time AmeriCorps members. Member living allowances for your program's member corps are defined in your awarded grant application budget, which is a term of your grant agreement.

All living allowances must be provided within the confines of the minimum and maximum amounts prescribed by AmeriCorps; these amounts are updated annually and can be found in the **Serve Connecticut Notice of Funding Opportunity** associated with the grant year during which the member is serving.

Note that per AmeriCorps policy, "the agency, an applicant, or a grantee can define the AmeriCorps State and National AmeriCorps member living allowance as the living allowance that a program is paying a member. No other member benefits are required to be included in a program's calculation to determine the living allowance amount or whether the program is compliant with the maximum living allowance amount." In other words, additional program determined benefits such as member housing, transportation passes, or other supports that a program might offer to incentivize enrollment and retention and/or facilitate a member's service do not need to be considered in determining whether the member living allowance conforms to prescribed minimum and maximum thresholds.

AmeriCorps members are not employees and an AmeriCorps living allowance is not a wage.

- Member living allowances are not calculated based upon the number of hours served during each pay period; instead they must be dispersed to members in equal amounts throughout their term of service.
- So long as an AmeriCorps member is enrolled and has in-service status in My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants, they must receive the living allowance listed in their member service agreement in equal increments throughout the program year. AmeriCorps programs can define the length of a pay period and how regularly frequency living allowance disbursements are made. If a member is released early for any circumstance, including a personal and compelling circumstance, they may not receive a lump sum of the remaining balance of their living allowance.
- As member living allowances are deemed taxable income, your program is responsible for ensuring that required deductions are taken for federal and state income taxes and FICA (Social Security and Medicare taxes).

To document and verify that members are completing their service hours, accurate timesheets that are properly signed and approved must be processed for each pay period. Timesheets are to be maintained in a safe and secure location -- physical or electronic -- in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps regulations. For more information, see the **Member In-Service Documentation Management** section of this Manual.

### Member Federal Benefit Eligibility

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 provides that living allowances, earnings, and payments to participants in AmeriCorps State and National programs "shall not be considered income for the purposes of determining eligibility for and the amount of income

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

transfer and in-kind aid furnished under any federal or federally-assisted program based on need, other than as provided under the Social Security Act (SSA).” Additionally, under the Heroes Earnings and Relief Tax (HEART) Act of 2008, the Social Security Administration will ignore an individual’s receipt of AmeriCorps benefits for purposes of Social Security Insurance (SSI) eligibility. The Heart Act excludes “any benefit (whether cash or in-kind)” and so covers the member living allowance, health insurance, childcare assistance and the education award (and related interest payments).

Note: If your members will be provided a living allowance while receiving/applying for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), federal work-study, or SSI benefits, they may be impacted by the above statements. For more information, refer to the most recent *AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions* are available at the **AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant** webpage.

## Health Care Insurance

AmeriCorps programs must provide, or make available, health care insurance to AmeriCorps members serving a 1,700-hour, full-time term who are not otherwise covered by a health care policy at the time the member begins his/her term of service. Programs must also provide, or make available, health care insurance to members serving a 1,700-hour, full-time term who lose coverage during their term of service as a result of service or through no deliberate act of their own. AmeriCorps funding may not be used to cover health care costs for dependent coverage.

Less-than-full-time members who are serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period of time are eligible for health care benefits. Programs may provide health insurance to less-than-full-time members serving in a full-time capacity, but they are not required to do so. For purposes of this provision, a member is serving in a full-time capacity when his/her regular term of service will involve performing service on a normal full-time schedule for a period of six weeks or more. For example, a member serving a 300-hour summer service term at 40 hours per week for 7.5 weeks is eligible for health care insurance coverage. A member may be serving in a full-time capacity without regard to whether his/her agreed term of service will result in a full-time Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.

For more information, refer to the most recent *AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions* are available at the **AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant** webpage.

## Child Care Assistance

AmeriCorps programs must provide child care assistance to full-time AmeriCorps members who need child care in order to participate in their service term. A member is considered to need child care in order to participate in the program if he or she:

- Is the parent or legal guardian of, or is acting in loco parentis for, a child under 13 who resides with the member;
- Has a family income that does not exceed 75 percent of the Connecticut’s median income for a family of the same size;
- At the time of acceptance into the program, is not currently receiving childcare assistance from another source, including a parent or guardian, which would continue to be provided while the member serves in the program; and
- Certifies that they need childcare in order to participate in the program.

Refer to a **GAP Solutions Childcare Assistance Presentation for Serve Connecticut** for information on how a member in need of childcare assistance can apply. AmeriCorps members should apply for childcare assistance at [americorpschildcare.com](http://americorpschildcare.com).

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

For more information regarding AmeriCorps requirements and limitations on the AmeriCorps child care assistance benefit, refer to the most recent *AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions* are available at the [AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant](#) webpage.

## Eli Segal Education Award

AmeriCorps members are eligible upon successful completion of their terms of service to receive an Eli Segal Education Award. The award is not paid out of an AmeriCorps program's budget; it is paid to the AmeriCorps member upon their use of the award directly by the federal entity, the National Service Trust. The amount of the award received is aligned with the member's minimum service hours. Current award amounts are provided on [AmeriCorps' Education Award](#) webpage.

AmeriCorps members who are exited early from service for compelling personal circumstances and have served a minimum of 15% of the service hours to which they committed in their member service agreement are eligible for a prorated education award.

AmeriCorps members who have earned a full or partial Eli Segal Education Award have up to seven years after the completion of service to make use of it; the award is considered taxable income in the year that it is used.

The education award can be used to pay education expenses. Members can use their education award to pay current educational expenses at eligible schools and at certain GI Bill-approved educational programs for veterans. Eligible schools are higher educational institutions, both domestic and foreign, that currently participate in the Department of Education's Title IV student aid programs. This category includes most post-secondary colleges, universities, and technical schools.

The education award can be used to repay qualified student loans, i.e., loans backed by the federal government under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (except PLUS Loans to parents of students), loans under Titles VII or VIII of the Public Service Health Act, and loans made by a state agency, including state institutions of higher education. Additionally, members may be eligible to have the repayment of their qualified student loans postponed while serving; this postponement is called forbearance. While interest may continue to accrue during a member's service, if they successfully complete the term of service the National Service Trust will pay all or a portion of the qualified loan's interest that accrued during the member's term.

The Serve America Act allows the transfer of education awards earned by an AmeriCorps member who successfully completes a term of service in AmeriCorps State and National programs to family under specific conditions.

For more information on how to orient and support your AmeriCorps members around eligibility for and allowable uses of the Eli Segal Education Award, visit the [AmeriCorps Eli Segal Education Award](#) webpage.

Additional information can be found in federal AmeriCorps regulations related to [Eli Segal Education Award Eligibility and Distribution](#).

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Gift Cards as AmeriCorps Member Benefits

While 2 CFR Part 200 does not prohibit the use of gift cards, AmeriCorps State and National limits the allowability of gift cards to defray participant support costs that do not include the AmeriCorps living allowance. When used appropriately, gift cards can help to remove socioeconomic or other barriers that may otherwise prevent participants from accessing and benefiting from federally assisted projects or programs. However, gift cards must be used in a very limited and judicious manner, and recipients must have adequate internal controls to manage their purchase and use.

Gift cards may be an allowable award cost under very limited circumstances. Gift cards may not be used to cover costs such as those related to AmeriCorps State and National member living allowances, employees, consultants, contractors, and honorariums. Those costs may be allowable under the grant but are not allowable to be paid using gift cards. Nor may gift cards be used for unallowable costs, such as alcohol (see 2 CFR §200.423).

There is a risk of fraud, waste, and abuse when converting grant funds into gift cards because of the difficulty in tracking and monitoring their use. Use of gift cards for grant award costs must be carefully controlled and there must be strong oversight of gift card use through written policies and internal controls.

For more information on rules and policy/procedural recommendations on how to compliantly use gift cards, see the [AmeriCorps Gift Card Policy](#).

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



## Member Exits and Status Change Management

### Members Leaving Service

The goal of an AmeriCorps Connecticut program is to recruit and retain a full corps of AmeriCorps members to implement the mission defined in the program's awarded funding application. However, circumstances can arise during the course of a program year that require a program to temporarily suspend or permanently exit an AmeriCorps member from service. Refer to Serve Connecticut's **Updating Member Status Changes in My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants Policy** and the most updated *AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions* available at the **AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant** webpage for detailed guidance on how to address the following scenarios.

AmeriCorps programs may release an AmeriCorps member from participation in service -- i.e., temporarily suspend or permanently exit the member -- for two reasons: (a) for **compelling personal circumstances**; and (b) for **cause**. See 45 CFR § 2522.230 for requirements.

Whether the reason for the release amounts to circumstances beyond the member's control is determined by the program, consistent with the criteria listed in 45 CFR § 2522.230(a). Failure to follow the requirements set forth in regulation (e.g., releasing an individual for a non-compelling personal circumstance, such as when the individual is leaving to go to school) is considered noncompliance with award requirements and may result in disallowed costs and other remedies for non-compliance. The AmeriCorps program should retain the documentation supporting its determination that release for compelling personal circumstances is warranted.

**No Automatic Disqualification if Released for Cause:** A release for cause covers all circumstances in which a member does not successfully complete his/her term of service for reasons other than compelling personal circumstances. Therefore, it is possible for a member to receive a satisfactory performance review and be released for cause. For example, a member who is released for cause from a first term because they have decided to take a job offer, but who has otherwise performed well in their service role, would not be disqualified from enrolling for a subsequent term as long as the individual received a satisfactory performance evaluation for the first period of service.

**Temporary Leave, Healthcare, and Benefits.** If temporary leave from the member's service term is appropriate, programs have the flexibility to determine the duration of the absence and may choose to continue providing health or other benefits to the member during the period of absence. The member may be suspended (via compelling personal circumstances) during the period of temporary leave. If suspended, the member may not receive a living allowance.

**Notice to Childcare Benefit Administrator and Providers.** The program must notify the childcare assistance provider, GAP Solutions, in writing within five business days after a member's status changes in a manner that affects the member's eligibility for childcare. After five days, the program will be liable for any erroneous payments made to a childcare provider for an AmeriCorps member ineligible to receive AmeriCorps childcare benefits, i.e., a member who no longer needs childcare to facilitate participation in service hours. Visit [americorpschildcare.com](http://americorpschildcare.com).

**Compelling Personal Circumstance for Pregnancy/Childbirth:** Pregnancy and/or childbirth could be determined by the grantee to be compelling personal circumstances if the member requests it.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

**Time off for Members Serving in the Armed Forces Reserves.** Generally, the Reserve Components 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 (inactive duty/Drill) plus 12 to 15 days a year (hereafter referred to as the two-week active duty service). To the extent possible, AmeriCorps programs 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.

## Exception: Jury Duty is NOT a Break in Service

**Jury Duty.** The grantee must allow AmeriCorps members to serve on a jury without being penalized for doing so. During the time AmeriCorps members serve as jurors, they should continue to receive credit for their normal service hours, a living allowance, healthcare coverage and, if applicable, childcare coverage regardless of any reimbursements for incidental expenses received from the court.

## AmeriCorps Member Injury or Death

The *Terms and Conditions for AmeriCorps State and National Grants* Section IV.J. states the following requirement of all AmeriCorps State and National Programs:

*Member Death or Injury. The recipient must immediately report any member deaths or serious injuries to the designated AmeriCorps Portfolio Manager.*

In support of this requirement, Serve Connecticut requires as part of its risk-based compliance monitoring process that AmeriCorps Connecticut programs establish a *Member Support and Safety System* that describes "all activities related to ensuring AmeriCorps member satisfaction and engagement with their national service experience as well as those activities that support member safety, wellness, and emergency management."

Among the elements required in this system is a description of how "in the case of member injury or death, [...] the program will notify in a timely manner Serve Connecticut."

To notify Serve Connecticut, AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are asked to use the secure *AmeriCorps Member Incident Report* form available in the **AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Forms** section of this Manual.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Understanding Financial Management

### Internal Controls: Setting Your Program up for Success

AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Directors are ultimately responsible for the overall administration of their AmeriCorps program. Effective financial management is essential to the success of that program. The negative impact of ineffective financial management can range from bad publicity to major audit findings leading to funding being delayed, withheld or having to be repaid. Program Directors are expected to take an active role in understanding and monitoring the financial systems that enable their AmeriCorps program to run.

Program Directors and financial managers should be familiar with the financial components of their AmeriCorps program's grant agreement. This agreement outlines the approved budget and budget narrative, as well as key financial and programmatic reporting requirements. The parameters set forth there will provide much of the information needed to establish systems and policies at the program level.

Having accurate information, supporting documentation, an efficient accounting system, cash management and budgetary internal controls in place will help as you work to establish and maintain a high-quality AmeriCorps program.

Having good internal controls means:

- Documented policies and procedures
- Adequate review process for financial reports and budgets
- Adequate cash management procedures (e.g., monthly bank reconciliations)
- Physical safeguarding of assets
- System to track member and employee activities
- System to follow-up on problems identified to ensure resolution

Documented policies and procedures include:

- Master calendar of all grant reporting deadlines
- System to communicate effectively between staff
- Tickler for grant file outlining programmatic requirements
- Tickler for financial components of grant to ensure compliance
- Cross training notes for daily, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and annual duties in case of turnover

The following resources may be helpful in helping you ensure your financial management systems and practices will contribute to the compliance and sustainability of your AmeriCorps program:

- Training: [Putting Internal Controls into Practice](#)
- Training: [Common Grants Management Pitfalls](#)
- Book: [Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government](#), i.e., the "Green Book"
- Book: [Financial Strategy for Public Managers](#)

AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Directors must notify Serve Connecticut of any potential and/or realized financial problems that may occur at any point during the service year.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



## AmeriCorps Program Budget

### Knowing Your Program Budget

Your AmeriCorps program budget as approved in your grant agreement is the blueprint that will help your organization meet its goals and objectives and ensure that match requirements are met. It is the responsibility of the program to review and compare the budget to actual expenses, assure that any necessary budget changes are properly approved and verify that any movements between line items fall within the guidance provided in the most recently updated *AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions* available on the **AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant** webpage.

### Accounting System Requirements

As such it is crucial to have a reliable and accurate accounting system that will enable you to keep track of the program's financial progress. Your program organization's accounting system must be capable of:

- Distinguishing grant vs. non-grant expenditures
- Identifying costs by program year
- Identifying costs by budget category
- Differentiating between direct program costs and indirect/administrative costs
- Accounting for each award/grant separately
- Maintaining federal/non-federal matching funds separately from grant funds
- Recording in-kind contributions as both revenue and expense
- Allowing management to easily obtain financial reports at both the summary and detailed levels
- Correlating to financial reports submitted to Serve Connecticut and AmeriCorps

### Budget Modification

If your program encounters unexpected decreased or increased expenses in various line items, a budget modification may be necessary. Budget modifications occur when there is a:

- Shift of funds from one budget category to another
- Shift of funds from one section to another
- Reduction of the grantee share (match)

AmeriCorps, the agency, acknowledges that budget revisions are sometimes unavoidable and may be required more than once in a program year. Thus, programs may move funds between line items without Serve Connecticut or AmeriCorps agency approval if the cumulative amount moved is less than 10% of the total grant amount, as long as the transfer is in compliance with all applicable standards and requirements articulated in the grant agreement and/or AmeriCorps regulations (**2 CFR 200.308 and 2 CFR 200.407**). Example: A program that has a \$100,000 total budget may move a cumulative total of up to \$9,999.99 between line items without Serve Connecticut or AmeriCorps agency approval as long as the transfer is in compliance with all other applicable standards and requirements.

In addition to variances over 10% of the total approved budget, budget changes that require Commission (and in certain cases AmeriCorps) approval include significant changes to the budget design including but not limited to member training or support costs, expenses not included in the original approved budget, changes to personnel staff compensation, new member types and living allowance schedule, equipment or real property.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## AmeriCorps Connecticut Budget Modification Request Process

Programs should not consider budget modification requests approved until they are formally documented as approved in the OnCorps Reports Portal. Additional guidance is available in the Budget Modification Pre-Approval Form linked below.

- The program submits a preliminary request via the **Budget Modification Pre-Approval Form** available in the **AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links** section of this Manual.
- Serve Connecticut staff will review the request. Clarification may be required.
- If the preliminary request is approved, the program will be directed to transfer the approved budget modification to the Serve Connecticut OnCorps Reports Portal. Note: AmeriCorps Competitive programs may require an additional layer of approval from AmeriCorps, the agency, prior to this step. Serve Connecticut will advise the program if this additional step is necessary.
- Serve Connecticut will officially approve the budget modification in the OnCorps Reports Portal, at which point the program can implement the approved changes.

## Administrative/Indirect Costs

Administrative -- or indirect -- costs are general or centralized expenses incurred for the overall administration of an organization receiving AmeriCorps funds. These costs may include costs incurred for common or joint objectives within the organization that are not readily identifiable with a particular project or cost objective. However, administrative costs do not include costs specific to the AmeriCorps program.

Typical indirect costs include:

- Accounting, financial, contracting or general legal services
- General liability insurance that protects the organization (not solely related to a program)
- Director and officer insurance
- Audits
- General and administrative salaries and wages

All programs select one of two options for calculating their administrative cost rate at the time of grant application or continuation request. For organizations that have an established indirect cost rate for federal awards (IDC), administrative costs refer to those costs that are included in the organization's indirect cost rate agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the organization's overall operation and are further described in **Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars (also called Omniscircular, Supercircular, or Uniform Guidance) A-21, A-87, and A-122**. If your organization is using an established IDC, there is also a 5% cap on the total federal share that can be applied to administrative costs.

For organizations that used the AmeriCorps Fixed Percentage method, the program may charge (for administrative costs) a fixed 5% of the total AmeriCorps funds expended. Under this method, the grantee share of administrative costs can be no more than 10% of the total direct costs for the program. The limitations for use of AmeriCorps funds on administrative costs are described in 45 CFR § 2540.110. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance, now consolidated in **2 CFR Parts 200 and 2205** apply to AmeriCorps award and grants management processes. To maintain a record of each AmeriCorps program's chosen method of claiming indirect costs, AmeriCorps has established a feature in eGrants for funding recipients to record the method which that your organization will be using to apply your indirect costs to all AmeriCorps awards.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

**AmeriCorps programs must record the indirect cost rate method and rates which you will be using on your awards using step-by-step instructions on How to Enter Indirect Cost Rate in eGrants.**





## Program/Direct Costs

Program or direct costs are those expenses directly related to a program or project, including their operations and objectives. Program costs include but are not limited to:

- Costs attributable to members including living allowances, insurance payments, and expenses for training and travel.
- Costs (including salary, benefits, training, and travel) attributable to staff who recruit, train, place, support, coordinate, or supervise members.
- Costs (including salary, benefits, training, travel) attributable to staff who develop materials used in member recruitment, training, placement, support, or supervision.
- Costs for independent evaluations and internal evaluations to the extent that the evaluations cover only the funded program or project.
- Costs, excluding those already covered in an organization's indirect cost rate, attributable to staff that work in direct program or project support, operational, or oversight capacities, including but not limited to support staff whose functions directly support program or project activities and staff who coordinate and facilitate single or multi-site program and project activities.
- Space, facility, and communications costs for program or project operations and other costs that primarily support program or project operations, excluding those costs that are already covered by an organization's indirect cost rate.
- Other allowable costs, excluding those costs that are already covered by an organization's indirect cost rate, specifically approved by the Corporation as directly attributable to a program or project.

## Match Requirement

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs must provide and account for the matching funds approved in their awarded application budgets. Programs must report program collection of cash and in-kind match on a quarterly basis via the Commission's OnCorps Reporting Portal. By the end of each grant year, the grantee must have collected match funding that meets both the statutory minimum match percentage associated with the program's years in operation and the budgeted match even if it exceeds the statutory minimum. Programs that do not meet the match proposed in the grant application can be subject to suspension of funds, grant termination or recovery of funds by the Serve Connecticut.

AmeriCorps statutory match minimums are as follows:

- Grant cycle 1/funding years 1-3: 24% minimum
- Grant cycle 2/funding years 4-6: 26% minimum
- Grant cycle 3/funding year 7-9: 28% minimum
- Grant cycle 4/funding year 10 and beyond: 30% minimum

## Program Fundraising Restrictions

According to OMB Uniform Guidance, programs cannot charge the cost of "organized fundraising" or expenses incurred "solely to raise capital or obtain contributions" to the AmeriCorps grant. Any staff person supported by the AmeriCorps program is also covered under the OMB Uniform Guidance and thus may not participate in these activities while charging time to the AmeriCorps grant. All staff should have clear time records that

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





detail and distinguish the time they spend on these and other activities. AmeriCorps members are not, typically, permitted to support their organizations with major fundraising efforts. They can, however, do some fundraising activities, as long as they do not spend more than 10% of their total individual service hours commitment on such activities. This must also be reflected and clearly distinguished from other activities in the member time records. Acceptable fundraising activities are outlined in 45 CFR§2520.40.

## Program Income

Some programs will have activities that generate income. Program income includes revenue from fees for services performed, from the use or rental of real or personal property acquired with grant funds, from the sale of commodities or items fabricated under a grant agreement, and from payments of principal and interest on loans made with grant funds. Program income should be used toward matching funds (grantee share). For details on the use of program income, please refer to 45 CFR§2541.250.

## No-Cost Extension

A no-cost extension occurs when a subgrantee's budget end date is changed to an agreed upon later date without any increase to the grant budget. No additional funds are granted. No-cost extensions may be an appropriate tool for a program to use in the event that an AmeriCorps member or members have need extra time beyond the contract end date to complete a service term. Restrictions and conditions apply, and AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are required to make every effort to support members in completing their service terms within the one-year contract window. Please refer to Serve Connecticut's **No-Cost Extension Policy** for more information.

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Financial Reporting

### Financial Reporting Requirements

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are required to provide timely, accurate, and complete financial reports to Serve Connecticut for the duration of their funding relationship with the Commission. Program Directors are ultimately responsible for ensuring that all deadlines are met, data is reviewed and reconciled for accuracy prior to submission, and all pertinent information for the reporting period is included.

The AmeriCorps program's accounting system should be designed to meet all reporting requirements. Reports should reflect information that comes directly from the accounting system, and proper supporting documentation should be maintained in files that reflect the activities included each submitted report.

Cost-reimbursement grant programs and fixed amount grant programs have different financial reporting requirements and deliverables. However, they are both subject to the same accountability regarding budget management, reporting timeliness and accuracy, and documentation retention.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs conduct all financial reporting and funding disbursement requests via Serve Connecticut's OnCorps Reports Portal. **Financial reporting deliverables and deadlines** are provided on the next page for both cost-reimbursement and fixed amount grant programs.

### Record Retention and Auditing

All financial records, supporting documents, member files and other records pertaining to the AmeriCorps Connecticut grant award must be maintained for at least three (3) years from the date of commission approval of the program's final financial report submission to Serve Connecticut. This means that, for a typical three-year AmeriCorps grant cycle, all grant records should be maintained for a minimum of six (6) years from the start of initial the grant award period. For further details and information on exceptions to this rule, please see 45 CFR §2543.53.

Review of your AmeriCorps Connecticut program's financial and program records may be performed during a program audit in accordance with OMB Uniform Guidance. Programs may be audited by Serve Connecticut, the federal AmeriCorps agency or an independent agency. It is the responsibility of the AmeriCorps Connecticut program to follow up on and correct any findings and identified weaknesses within the time period determined by the auditors.

### Program Close Outs

When an AmeriCorps Connecticut program grant ends, Serve Connecticut will provide the program with grant close out instructions. Per federal requirements, the program is required to submit deliverables to the Commission at that time to document the grant's end.

AmeriCorps Connecticut program grant close out documentation must be received within 45 days of the close of each three-year grant cycle and includes the following deliverables:

- A hardcopy of Final Federal Financial Report for the consecutive years covered by the AmeriCorps grant, certified by the program's chief financial officer.
- A hardcopy of sub-grantee certification that all sub-grants (if any) are closed.
- A list of remaining supplies and equipment purchased under the grant with a current market value of \$5,000 or more.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Financial Reporting Deliverables and Deadlines:

Category	Submission	Description	Deadline(s)
Financial: Cost-Reimbursement	Budget	In OnCorps Reports, AmeriCorps Connecticut cost-reimbursement programs are responsible for inputting budget line items for use in reporting and funding disbursement. This data comes directly from and should align with the program's Budget Module in its approved grant application. Serve Connecticut staff will review submissions for this alignment and request clarifications and corrections as necessary.	No later than the 15 <sup>th</sup> of the month after the program start Date 8/1 start date due 8/15 9/1 start date due 9/15 10/1 start date due 10/15
	Periodic Expense Report (PER) & Reimbursement Request	AmeriCorps Connecticut cost-reimbursement programs submit Periodic Expense Reports via OnCorps Reports on a monthly basis. This form automatically calculates a program's AmeriCorps funding request for expenses incurred during the month reported. Serve Connecticut staff will review submissions and request clarifications and corrections as necessary.	15 <sup>th</sup> Monthly (reporting period = previous month) First due based on start date: 8/1 = 1 <sup>st</sup> PER Due 9/15 9/1 = 1 <sup>st</sup> PER Due 10/15 10/1 = 1 <sup>st</sup> PER Due 11/15
	Aggregate Financial Report (AFR)	AmeriCorps Connecticut cost-reimbursement programs submit Aggregate Financial Reports via OnCorps Reports by selecting and combining previously approved Periodic Expense Reports from the reporting quarter. Serve Connecticut staff will review submissions and request clarifications and corrections as necessary.	Quarterly January 15 (7/1-9/30) April 15 (10/1-12/31) July 15 (1/1-3/31) October 15 (4/1-6/30)
	Program Income Report	AmeriCorps Connecticut cost-reimbursement programs submit Program Income Reports via OnCorps Reports that track in-kind and cash revenue collected toward their program's match funding obligation. Serve Connecticut staff will review submissions and request clarifications and corrections as necessary.	Quarterly January 15 (7/1-9/30) April 15 (10/1-12/31) July 15 (1/1-3/31) October 15 (4/1-6/30)
	Budget Modifications	AmeriCorps Connecticut cost-reimbursement programs may submit budget modifications via OnCorps Reports as necessary per requirements included in the <i>AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual</i> . Serve Connecticut staff will review submissions for approval and request clarifications and corrections as necessary.	As necessary
Financial: Fixed Amount	Fixed Amount Grant Invoices for Funding Disbursement	AmeriCorps Connecticut fixed amount programs submit Fixed Amount Grant Invoices via OnCorps Reports. AmeriCorps Connecticut programs enter each member's hours served into a Standard Timesheet for each pay period. On a quarterly basis, staff will use the OnCorps Timesheet Batching function to combine all member timesheets from the relevant reporting period. These batched timesheets are then used to generate a Fixed Amount Grant Invoice that requests funding disbursement for total hours served by members during the quarter.	Quarterly* October 15 (7/1-9/30) January 15 (10/1-12/31) April 15 (1/1-3/31) July 15 (4/1-6/30)  *IMPORTANT: Programs are advised to enter member hours into Standard Timesheets on an ongoing basis to better meet these quarterly deadlines.

## Deadline Extensions

Serve Connecticut provides extended notice of deadlines and requirements associated with its financial reporting activities; as such, it is expected that AmeriCorps Connecticut programs will meet all submission requirements as prescribed. However, should an AmeriCorps Connecticut program have concerns about its ability to meet a Commission reporting deadline, the program should contact Serve Connecticut staff with as much advance notice to discuss potential flexibilities. **Grant disbursement requests will not be processed unless all financial reporting deadlines have been met and all reports have been approved.** Missed or late submissions without Commission notification can result in adverse action for the program. Programs that do not submit timely, accurate, and complete financial reports per the requirements of their grant agreement may be subject to suspension of funds, grant termination or recovery of funds by Serve Connecticut.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# Policies





## Policy: Commission-Program Communications

Serve Connecticut recognizes the AmeriCorps Program Director as the primary point of contact for its AmeriCorps grants.

Although individual organizations may assign different job titles to this individual, for the purposes of this policy and as stipulated in the grantee agreement, Serve Connecticut defines the “AmeriCorps Program Director” as the individual whose role is to run the awarded AmeriCorps grant.

Serve Connecticut will address all operational communication (conducted via phone, email, mail) regarding the AmeriCorps grant to the AmeriCorps Program Director.

Should grantee organization staff other than the AmeriCorps Program Director need to be advised of Serve Connecticut communications, it is the responsibility of the AmeriCorps Program Director to forward Serve Connecticut communications to the appropriate staff internally (i.e., forwarding an email regarding financial reporting to the organization’s finance director).

Serve Connecticut expects that the AmeriCorps Program Director will be the individual who follows up with other program staff on any required internal action and then responds directly to Serve Connecticut communications.

Serve Connecticut may occasionally include other grantee organization leadership or staff in other kinds of non-operational communications as appropriate (i.e. invitations to statewide events, training/technical assistance, AmeriCorps awareness and opportunities, etc.). However, all operational AmeriCorps program communication with Serve Connecticut must funnel through the AmeriCorps Program Director.

This policy helps to ensure clear communication between Serve Connecticut and the AmeriCorps program by preventing confusion caused by multiple streams of information exchanged between multiple staff.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





## Policy: Program Reporting

AmeriCorps Connecticut program reporting deadline and deliverable requirements to Serve Connecticut are included in the grantee agreement. By signing the grant agreement, the grantee organization acknowledges receipt of the due dates for all required reports. Serve Connecticut reporting deadlines are designed to ensure enough lead time for programs to provide any clarifications and/or correct any errors associated with a given report before the Commission is required in advance of the Commission's AmeriCorps agency reporting deadlines.

Serve Connecticut staff will monitor the compliance of all AmeriCorps Connecticut grantee reporting. All reporting will be reviewed for accuracy and content. Appropriate feedback will be provided in writing. Responses will be required if necessary.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs that submit reports after the submission date without prior approval will be subject to the following disciplinary process:

- **First Offense:** Serve Connecticut will notify the Program Director in writing and make arrangements for immediate submission of the report. The offense will be officially documented in the program file.
- **Second Offense:** Serve Connecticut will notify in writing the legal entity for grantee organization and/or the supervisor in charge of the Program Director, with copy to the Program Director. The program file will be documented and a copy of the notification retained. Notification will include consequences such as suspension/reduction of grant funding, as determined by Serve Connecticut staff.
- **Third Offense:** A third offense will be considered with great severity. A corrective action plan will be required from the program in order to receive continued funding. The correction action plan will be shared with all Commission members and Commission staff, the legal applicant's board of directors and program staff. Non-adherence to the corrective action plan will result in termination of the program.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: OnCorps Reports Portal

Serve Connecticut utilizes the OnCorps Reports Portal (<https://ct.uncorpsreports.com>) to administer AmeriCorps Connecticut program financial and performance reporting requirements.

AmeriCorps Connecticut program staff are responsible for the following:

- Participating in OnCorps-provided trainings, reviewing OnCorps-provided resources to support fluency in use of the platform, and utilizing OnCorps Help for technical support in platform use.
- Adhering to all Commission-issued reporting submission and clarification response deadlines.
- Ensuring that all program, staff, service site, and member information housed in the Serve Connecticut OnCorps Reports portal is current and updated as necessary when changes occur.

AmeriCorps Connecticut program directors must have OnCorps log-in credentials on behalf of their program; additional program or grantee organization staff (fiscal, evaluation, etc.) may also have reporting access in OnCorps upon request by the program director to Serve Connecticut.

## Other OnCorps Reports Functions

### Member Hours

Serve Connecticut does not mandate that all AmeriCorps Connecticut programs use OnCorps Reports for managing member timesheets. However, if programs do use OnCorps for this function and have individual accounts with OnCorps Reports for that purpose, their existing log-in will sync with the Commission's OnCorps system.

NOTE: Whether or not their members submit timesheets in OnCorps Reports, fixed amount subgrantee programs must enter member hours served into OnCorps timesheets and batch those member timesheets in order to produce Fixed Amount Grant Invoices. See documentation schedule for more information.

### Program Year Calendar

As of the 2023-2024 program year, Serve Connecticut maintains its program year calendar of record in the Serve Connecticut Basecamp Calendar (no longer in OnCorps Reports); the calendar includes reporting and compliance deadlines, trainings and events, and other AmeriCorps and national service-related dates. AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are expected to align their program calendars with the Serve Connecticut program year calendar of record.

### Directories & Reports

OnCorps Reports offers program directors the opportunity to manage updates to contact changes in program staffing, service sites, and membership, and can produce directories and other useful reports based on data provided. OnCorps Reports Help offers a user-friendly menu of PDF guidance and video tutorials, as well as a responsive Helpdesk.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



## Policy: AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities

**AmeriCorps Connecticut grantee organizations, program staff, service site leadership and supervisors, members and volunteers should be trained in how to identify and avoid the following activities, which are not permitted uses for federal AmeriCorps resources or projects that receive that assistance.** While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or AmeriCorps, staff and members may not engage in the following activities (see 45 CFR § 2520.65):

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

In addition to the above activities, the below activities are additionally prohibited:

- **Census Activities.** AmeriCorps members and volunteers associated with AmeriCorps grants may not engage in census activities during service hours. Being a census taker during service hours is categorically prohibited. Census-related activities (e.g., promotion of the Census, education about the importance of the Census) do not align with AmeriCorps State and National objectives. What members and volunteers do on their own time is up to them, consistent with program policies about outside employment and activities.
- **Election and Polling Activities.** AmeriCorps member may not provide services for election or polling locations or in support of such activities. AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above.

Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non- AmeriCorps funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing engaging in any of the above activities on their personal time. All locations where members serve should post a list of the prohibited activities, when possible.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: AmeriCorps Unallowable Activities

**AmeriCorps Connecticut grantee organizations, program staff, service site leadership and supervisors, members and volunteers should be trained in how to identify and avoid the following activities, which are not permitted uses for federal AmeriCorps resources or projects that receive that assistance. (See 45 CFR § 2540.100)**

**Supplantation.** AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to replace State and local public funds that had been used to support programs of the type eligible to receive Corporation support. For any given program, this condition will be satisfied if the aggregate non-Federal public expenditure for that program in the fiscal year that support is to be provided is not less than the previous fiscal year.

**Religious use.** AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to provide religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in any form of proselytization.

**Political activity.** AmeriCorps assistance may not be used by program participants or staff to assist, promote, or deter union organizing; or finance, directly or indirectly, any activity designed to influence the outcome of a Federal, State or local election to public office.

**Contracts or collective bargaining agreements.** AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.

**Nonduplication.** AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless the requirements of the Nondisplacement section below are met, AmeriCorps assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.

### **Nondisplacement.**

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

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: Fundraising Restrictions

**AmeriCorps Connecticut grantee organizations, program staff, service site leadership and supervisors, members and volunteers should be trained in how to identify and avoid the following activities, which are not permitted uses for federal AmeriCorps resources or projects that receive that assistance. (See 45 CFR § 2520.40 and 2520.45.)**

(a) AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of an AmeriCorps program's service activities.

(b) Examples of fundraising activities AmeriCorps members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read;
- (2) Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers;
- (3) Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals;
- (4) Securing financial resources from the community to assist in launching or expanding a program that provides social services to the members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the members of a community-based organization;
- (5) Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current members.

(c) AmeriCorps members may not:

- (1) Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment;
- (2) Write a grant application to the Corporation or to any other Federal agency.

An AmeriCorps member may spend no more than ten percent of his or her originally agreed-upon term of service, as reflected in the member enrollment in the National Service Trust, performing fundraising activities, as described above.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





## Policy: Drug-Free Workplace Requirements

AmeriCorps Connecticut grantee organizations, program staff, service site leadership and supervisors, members and volunteers should be trained expectations related to federal requirements associated with projects that receive AmeriCorps assistance. (See 41 U.S. Code 701 et.seq.)

### Drug-Free Workplace Requirements

#### (1) Requirement for persons other than individuals

No person, other than an individual, shall be considered a responsible source, under the meaning of such term as defined in section 403(8) of this title, for the purposes of being awarded a contract for the procurement of any property or services of a value greater than the simplified acquisition threshold (as defined in section 403(11) of this title) by any Federal agency, other than a contract for the procurement of commercial items (as defined in section 403(12) of this title), unless such person agrees to provide a drug-free workplace by-

- (A) publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the person's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition;
- (B) establishing a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about-
  - (i) the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
  - (ii) the person's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
  - (iii) any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
  - (iv) the penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations;
- (C) making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of such contract be given a copy of the statement required by subparagraph (A);
- (D) notifying the employee in the statement required by subparagraph (A), that as a condition of employment on such contract, the employee will-
  - (i) abide by the terms of the statement; and
  - (ii) notify the employer of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than 5 days after such conviction;
- (E) notifying the contracting agency within 10 days after receiving notice under subparagraph (D)(ii) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction;
- (F) imposing a sanction on, or requiring the satisfactory participation in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program by, any employee who is so convicted, as required by section 703 of this title; and
- (G) making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of subparagraphs (A), (B), (C), (D), (E), and (F).

#### (2) Requirement for individuals

No Federal agency shall enter into a contract with an individual unless such individual agrees that the individual will not engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance in the performance of the contract.

### Suspension, Termination, or Debarment of Contractor

#### (1) Grounds for suspension, termination, or debarment

Each contract awarded by a Federal agency shall be subject to suspension of payments under the contract or termination of the contract, or both, and the contractor thereunder or the individual who entered the contract with the Federal agency, as applicable, shall be subject to suspension or debarment in accordance with the requirements of this section if the head of the agency determines that-

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

- (A) the contractor violates the requirements of subparagraph (A), (B), (C), (D), (E), or (F) of subsection (a)(1) of this section; or
- (B) such a number of employees of such contractor have been convicted of violations of criminal drug statutes for violations occurring in the workplace as to indicate that the contractor has failed to make a good faith effort to provide a drug-free workplace as required by subsection (a) of this section.

## (2) Conduct of suspension, termination, and debarment proceedings

- (A) If a contracting officer determines, in writing, that cause for suspension of payments, termination, or suspension or debarment exists, an appropriate action shall be initiated by a contracting officer of the agency, to be conducted by the agency concerned in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation and applicable agency procedures.
- (B) The Federal Acquisition Regulation shall be revised to include rules for conducting suspension and debarment proceedings under this subsection, including rules providing notice, opportunity to respond in writing or in person, and such other procedures as may be necessary to provide a full and fair proceeding to a contractor or individual in such proceeding.

## (3) Effect of debarment

Upon issuance of any final decision under this subsection requiring debarment of a contractor or individual, such contractor or individual shall be ineligible for award of any contract by any Federal agency, and for participation in any future procurement by any Federal agency, for a period specified in the decision, not to exceed 5 years.

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: Member Pre-Enrollment and Position Posting

Serve Connecticut has always highly encouraged the use of the My AmeriCorps Portal, [www.My.AmeriCorps.gov](http://www.My.AmeriCorps.gov), as a part of an AmeriCorps Connecticut program's member position promotion and recruitment strategy.

Effective as of the 2018–2019 program year, AmeriCorps, the agency, requires that AmeriCorps programs must post all member position descriptions for which they are recruiting in the My AmeriCorps Portal by creating "Service Opportunity Listings" on [www.My.AmeriCorps.gov](http://www.My.AmeriCorps.gov).

A centralized recruitment platform will be helpful with AmeriCorps State and National recruitment because all potential AmeriCorps applicants will be able to view all service opportunities in one location.

Additional resources about creating Service Opportunity Listings and use of the online recruitment system can be found at:

See [2018.02 AmeriCorps State and National - Changes in the Enrollment Process to Facilitate SSN and Citizenship Verification and Promote Criminal History Check Compliance](#) and the [AmeriCorps Member Position Description Outline](#).

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



## Policy: Acceptable Identification for AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps does not require programs to make and retain copies of the actual documents used to confirm AmeriCorps member eligibility as long as the program has a consistent practice of identifying the documents that were reviewed and maintains a record of the review. A consistent practice for documenting eligibility should:

- Identify the specific original document reviewed.
- Identify the eligibility criterion or criteria that the document confirms.
- Include any identification number for the document reviewed.
- Include the signature of the reviewer confirming the review and the date of the review.

### National Service Criminal History Check

The program should document that the following acceptable form(s) of government-issued photo identification cards were reviewed for each staff and AmeriCorps member to conduct name-based criminal history checks with either a photocopy of the identification or an official record of review:

- state drivers' license
- non-driver photo ID issued by states' Departments of Motor Vehicles (including IDNYC, an ID issued through a New York City program)
- federally-issued photo IDs, including official passports or a Native American Tribal ID from a federally-recognized tribal government
- Certificate of naturalization
- Certificate of citizenship
- Government employee photo ID (city, county, state or federal)
- US military or military dependent photo ID
- US Permanent resident card/alien registration receipt card (Green Card)
- Employment authorization document card
- Trusted traveler IDs (including valid Global Entry, FAST, SENTRI, and NEXUS cards)
- DOD common access cards

### Citizenship

The program should document that the following acceptable form(s) of government-issued photo identification cards were reviewed for each AmeriCorps member to establish his/her citizenship status with either a photocopy of the identification or an official record of review. Note: Form I-9, used to document eligibility for employment, is not sufficient to document citizenship.

The following are acceptable forms of certifying status as a U.S. citizen or national:

- Birth certificate showing that the individual was born in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, or the Northern Mariana Islands
- United States passport
- Report of birth abroad of a U.S. Citizen (FS-240) issued by the State Department
- Certificate of birth-foreign service (FS 545) issued by the State Department
- Certification of report of birth (DS-1350) issued by the State Department
- Certificate of naturalization (Form N-550 or N-570) issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service
- Certificate of citizenship (Form N-560 or N-561) issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service

The following are acceptable forms of certifying status as a lawful permanent resident alien of the United States:

- Permanent Resident Card, INS Form I-551
- Alien Registration Receipt Card, INS Form I-551
- Passport indicating that the INS has approved it as temporary evidence of lawful admission for permanent residence
- Departure Record (INS Form I-94) indicating that the INS has approved it as temporary evidence of lawful admission for permanent residence

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

Secondary documentation of citizenship or immigration status. If primary documentation is not available, the program must obtain written approval from AmeriCorps, the agency, that other documentation is sufficient to demonstrate the individual's status as a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or lawful permanent resident alien. Should this apply to a member of your program, please contact Serve Connecticut staff for more information.

## Proof of Age

Birth certificates, driver's licenses, and passports are examples of documents that confirm a member is old enough to serve. In some cases, the same document, such as a birth certificate issued by one of the states, can be used to confirm both age and citizenship.

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: AmeriCorps Member Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to serve, an AmeriCorps member must be someone:

- Who has been selected by a recipient or subrecipient to serve in an approved national service position;
- Who is a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States;
- Who is at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service unless the member is out of school and enrolled in a full-time, year-round youth corps or full-time summer program as defined in the NCSA [42 U.S.C. § 12572 (a)(3)(B)(x)], in which case he or she must be between the ages of 16 and 25, inclusive; and
- Who has received a high school diploma or its equivalent, agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent (unless this requirement is waived based on an individual education assessment conducted by the program) and the individual did not drop out of an elementary or secondary school to enroll in the program, or is enrolled in an institution of higher education on an ability-to-benefit basis and is considered eligible for funds under 20 U.S.C. § 1091 (See Section IX.B.).

### Individuals Deemed Ineligible Due to National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC)

Under the regulation and statute, an individual is ineligible to serve or work on an AmeriCorps grant if they:

- refuse to consent to NSCHC;
- make a false statement in connection with NSCHC; are registered, or are required to be registered, on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; or
- have been convicted of murder, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 1111.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: Member Retention and Enrollment Rates

### Enrollment Rate

An AmeriCorps program's member enrollment rate is calculated by dividing the number of member positions filled by the number of member positions awarded. This calculation is tracked automatically in the My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants portal as your program officially enrolls AmeriCorps members in the platform.

AmeriCorps, the agency, requires 100% enrollment rates as a measure of grant compliance. However, Serve Connecticut understands that programs may encounter some difficulty in having an enrollment rate of 100%. As such, the Commission has created a policy for all AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to meet minimum standards:

- Year 1: Programs that are beginning their first year of operating an AmeriCorps grant must meet a 95% enrollment rate.
- Year 2: Programs that are operating in the second year of their AmeriCorps grant must meet a 97% enrollment rate.
- Year 3+: Programs that are operating in the third year or more of their AmeriCorps grant must meet a 100% enrollment rate.

Failure to meet the above guidelines will adversely affect the program's risk level and may reduce the amount of grant allocation in future years. Serve Connecticut reserves the right to recommend a smaller amount of AmeriCorps members in a grantee's continuation or recompetitve application for funding based on their prior member enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. Serve Connecticut will work closely with programs to ensure that goals are met by identifying training and technical assistance if necessary.

### Retention Rate

An AmeriCorps program's member retention rate is calculated by dividing the number of members who exit the program successfully with either a full education award or a partial/prorated education award by the number of members enrolled. This calculation is tracked automatically in the My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants portal as your program officially enrolls AmeriCorps members in the platform.

AmeriCorps, the agency, requires 85% retention rates as a measure of grant compliance. However, effective May 1, 2018, AmeriCorps State and National (ASN) changed the threshold for member retention. Grantees with at least 85% member retention will be assessed as having met AmeriCorps programmatic expectations. The decision to change the retention rate is intended to reduce administrative burden and provide a more realistic retention benchmark.

Serve Connecticut expects AmeriCorps Connecticut programs to strive to exceed this 85% member retention rate, as an AmeriCorps program with a full complement of engaged corps members has a stronger foundation for delivering the intervention described in its awarded grant application at the scope proposed. With that in mind, we appreciate the work done by AmeriCorps programs related to member retention to ensure rates are as high as possible, and make available to programs training, technical assistance, and other resources to support healthy member retention.

- Year 1: Programs that are beginning their first year of operating an AmeriCorps grant should strive to meet a 90% retention rate.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

- Year 2: Programs that are operating in the second year of their AmeriCorps grant should strive to meet a 95% retention rate.
- Year 3+: Programs that are operating in the third year or more of their AmeriCorps grant should strive to meet a 100% retention rate.

Low enrollment and retention percentages may be used to determine a program's risk designation and may be taken into consideration when determining funding decisions that could result in the loss of funding. Serve Connecticut will take any written and documented retention difficulties into consideration when monitoring a program and/or reviewing an application. Programs that recruit members from underserved communities and at-risk youth are strongly encouraged to outline their retention difficulties in their application (and subsequent continuation applications).

[← BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: Member Exit and Suspension

Per CFR 45 2522.230, an AmeriCorps program may release a participant from completing a term of service for compelling personal circumstances, as determined by the program, or for cause.

### (a) Release for compelling personal circumstances.

(1) An AmeriCorps program may release a participant upon a determination by the program, consistent with the criteria listed in paragraphs (a)(6) and (a)(7) of this section, that the participant is unable to complete the term of service because of compelling personal circumstances, if the participant has otherwise performed satisfactorily and has completed at least fifteen percent of the agreed term of service.

(2) A participant who is released for compelling personal circumstances and who completes at least 15 percent of the required term of service is eligible for a pro-rated education award.

(3) The program must document the basis for any determination that compelling personal circumstances prevent a participant from completing a term of service.

(4) Compelling personal circumstances include:

(i) Those that are beyond the participant's control, such as, but not limited to:

(A) A participant's disability or serious illness;

(B) Disability, serious illness, or death of a participant's family member if this makes completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible; or

(C) Conditions attributable to the program or otherwise unforeseeable and beyond the participant's control, such as a natural disaster, a strike, relocation of a spouse, or the nonrenewal or premature closing of a project or program, that make completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible;

(ii) Those that the Corporation (AmeriCorps, the agency), has for public policy reasons, determined as such, including:

(A) Military service obligations;

(B) Acceptance by a participant of an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work; or

(C) Acceptance of an employment opportunity by a participant serving in a program that includes in its approved objectives the promotion of employment among its participants.

(5) Compelling personal circumstances do not include leaving a program:

(i) To enroll in school;

(ii) To obtain employment, other than in moving from welfare to work or in leaving a program that includes in its approved objectives the promotion of employment among its participants; or

(iii) Because of dissatisfaction with the program.

(6) As an alternative to releasing a participant, an AmeriCorps\*State/National program may, after determining that compelling personal circumstances exist, suspend the participant's term of service for up to two years (or longer if approved by the Corporation based on extenuating circumstances) to allow the participant to complete service with the same or similar AmeriCorps program at a later time.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## (b) Release for cause.

- (1) A release for cause encompasses any circumstances other than compelling personal circumstances that warrant an individual's release from completing a term of service.
- (2) AmeriCorps programs must release for cause any participant who is convicted of a felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance during a term of service.
- (3) A participant who is released for cause may not receive any portion of the AmeriCorps education award or any other payment from the National Service Trust.
- (4) An individual who is released for cause must disclose that fact in any subsequent applications to participate in an AmeriCorps program. Failure to do so disqualifies the individual for an education award, regardless of whether the individual completes a term of service.
- (5) An AmeriCorps\*State/National participant released for cause may contest the program's decision by filing a grievance. Pending the resolution of a grievance procedure filed by an individual to contest a determination by a program to release the individual for cause, the individual's service is considered to be suspended. For this type of grievance, a program may not—while the grievance is pending or as part of its resolution—provide a participant with federally-funded benefits (including payments from the National Service Trust) beyond those attributable to service actually performed, without the program receiving written approval from the Corporation.
- (6) An individual's eligibility for a subsequent term of service in AmeriCorps will not be affected by release for cause from a prior term of service so long as the individual received a satisfactory end-of-term performance review as described in § 2522.220(c)(2) for the period served in the prior term.
- (7) Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, a term of service from which an individual is released for cause counts as one of the terms of service described in § 2522.235 for which an individual may receive the benefits described in §§ 2522.240 through 2522.250.

## (c) Suspended service.

- (1) A program must suspend the service of an individual who faces an official charge of a violent felony (e.g., rape, homicide) or sale or 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 or other benefits, and may not accrue service hours, during a period of suspension under this provision.

## (d) Reinstatement.

- (1) A program may reinstate an individual whose service was suspended under paragraph (c) (1) of this section if the individual is found not guilty or if the charge is dismissed.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)







(2) A program may reinstate an individual whose service was suspended under paragraph (c) (2) of this section only if the individual demonstrates the following:

- (i) 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;
- (ii) For an individual who has been convicted for more than one offense of the possession of a controlled substance, the individual must have successfully completed a drug rehabilitation program.

**(e) Release prior to serving 15 percent of a term of service.**

If a participant 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 described in § 2522.220(b) for which an individual may receive the benefits described in §§ 2522.240 through 2522.250.

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: Updating Member Status Changes in My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants

The My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants portal is member service term management tool used throughout AmeriCorps service year by AmeriCorps Connecticut programs. All information entered in The My.AmeriCorps.gov/eGrants portal about an AmeriCorps member should match information contained within the corresponding AmeriCorps member file. When changes occur to an AmeriCorps member's service status during the course of a service year, those changes should be documented in both locations.

During the program year there may be cause to change the status of a member's term of service. Program Directors are responsible for notifying the Corporation's National Service Trust via eGrants/My.AmeriCorps.gov within 30 days of a member's completion of, suspension from, or release from, a term of service.

Here is some service status jargon with which Program Directors should become familiar:

**In-Service:** After enrollment is complete in My AmeriCorps, a member's status is listed as "in-service." This indicates that the member is actively completing their service hours as required. Members will remain in-service until an authorized party makes a change through that system.

**Member Leave:** Members are not employees and thus are not entitled to the traditional sense of what most would consider vacation, holiday or sick time. However, all programs should plan accordingly and design their programs to accommodate "member leave" – occasions when members must be absent from service. The number of days of leave permitted will vary with each program. Members must adhere to the policies of their specific service sites. Program Directors should establish a clear system for members to make and document a leave request and explain those procedures to members as early as possible. Members should not record zero hours of service during any allowance pay period. Note: Unless the member is suspended (see below), the member must still receive their normal living allowance. See the AmeriCorps Member Benefits Section LINK of this Manual.

**Suspension:** Suspension is defined as any extended period during which the member is not serving, accumulating service hours or receiving AmeriCorps benefits. Suspension can be used as both a disciplinary action against a member who has violated the terms of their member agreement (as outlined in the grievance procedure and member contract) and a means to address extenuating circumstances in the life of member who has otherwise performed satisfactorily. Under personal and compelling circumstances (as determined by the Program Director and/or Site Supervisor), a member may be suspended for up to two years from the date of suspension. It is advised that Program Directors document the rationale behind a member suspension, and retain it within the member's secured file.

**Exit:** AmeriCorps members can be exited for two reasons: (1) They successfully completed their term of service. 2) They did/could not satisfy program requirements and were released from service. Programs must provide members with sufficient opportunity to complete their terms of service. They must also notify the National Service Trust via the My AmeriCorps Portal within 30 days of a member's end of service. Members should be urged to complete the optional Member Exit Survey that accompanies the Member Exit Form regardless of whether they exit service at completion or before.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

**Refill Positions:** If a member is exited without an education award prior to completing 30% of their term, that member's position is eligible to be refilled. Positions where a member was exited for personal and compelling circumstances may not be refilled. Also, programs may not refill the same position more than once. To ensure that Corporation resources are available in the National Service Trust, CCCS will not permit refilling of any position if either: total program enrollment reaches 97% of the awarded positions; or the number of position refills reaches 5% of the awarded positions.

**Position Conversion:** Circumstances may arise within a program that necessitate 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 not available for use. All position conversions must be completed via the eGrants/My.AmeriCorps.gov portal

- Full-time members: Serve Connecticut may authorize or approve occasional changes of currently enrolled full-time members to less than full-time members. Impact on program quality should be factored into approval of requests. AmeriCorps will not cover health care or childcare costs for less than full-time members. It is not allowable to transfer currently enrolled full-time members to a less than full-time status simply to provide a less than full-time education award.
- Less than full-time members. Changing less than full-time members to full-time is discouraged, as it is very difficult to manage, unless done very early in the member's term of service. Serve Connecticut may authorize or approve such changes so long as their current budget can accommodate the changes. Keep in mind that a full-time member's minimum 1,700 hours must be completed within 12 months of the member's original start date.

For detailed guidance, AmeriCorps programs should refer to the most recent *AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions* available at the [AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant](#) webpage.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



## Policy: Grievance Procedures

Per 45 CFR 2540.230, state and local applicants that receive assistance from the Corporation (i.e., AmeriCorps, the agency) must establish and maintain a procedure for the filing and adjudication of grievances from participants, labor organizations, and other interested individuals concerning programs that receive assistance from the Corporation. A grievance procedure may include dispute resolution programs such as mediation, facilitation, assisted negotiation and neutral evaluation. If the grievance alleges fraud or criminal activity, it must immediately be brought to the attention of the Corporation's inspector general.

### (a) Alternative dispute resolution.

(1) The aggrieved party may seek resolution through alternative means of dispute resolution such as mediation or facilitation. Dispute resolution proceedings must be initiated within 45 calendar days from the date of the alleged occurrence. At the initial session of the dispute resolution proceedings, the party must be advised in writing of his or her right to file a grievance and right to arbitration. If the matter is resolved, and a written agreement is reached, the party will agree to forego filing a grievance in the matter under consideration.

(2) If mediation, facilitation, or other dispute resolution processes are selected, the process must be aided by a neutral party who, with respect to an issue in controversy, functions specifically to aid the parties in resolving the matter through a mutually achieved and acceptable written agreement. The neutral party may not compel a resolution. Proceedings before the neutral party must be informal, and the rules of evidence will not apply. With the exception of a written and agreed upon dispute resolution agreement, the proceeding must be confidential.

### (b) Grievance procedure for unresolved complaints.

If the matter is not resolved within 30 calendar days from the date the informal dispute resolution process began, the neutral party must again inform the aggrieving party of his or her right to file a formal grievance. In the event an aggrieving party files a grievance, the neutral may not participate in the formal complaint process. In addition, no communication or proceedings of the informal dispute resolution process may be referred to or introduced into evidence at the grievance and arbitration hearing. Any decision by the neutral party is advisory and is not binding unless both parties agree.

### (c) Time limitations.

Except for a grievance that alleges fraud or criminal activity, a grievance must be made no later than one year after the date of the alleged occurrence. If a hearing is held on a grievance, it must be conducted no later than 30 calendar days after the filing of such grievance. A decision on any such grievance must be made no later than 60 calendar days after the filing of the grievance.

### (d) Arbitration.

(1) *Arbitrator* –

- (i) Joint selection by parties. If there is an adverse decision against the party who filed the grievance, or 60 calendar days after the filing of a grievance no decision has been reached, the filing party may submit the grievance to binding arbitration before a qualified arbitrator who is jointly selected and independent of the interested parties.
- (ii) Appointment by Corporation. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator within 15 calendar days after receiving a request from one of the grievance parties, the Corporations Chief Executive Officer will appoint an arbitrator from a list of qualified arbitrators.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## (2) Time Limits –

(i) Proceedings. An arbitration proceeding must be held no later than 45 calendar days after the request for arbitration, or, if the arbitrator is appointed by the Chief Executive Officer, the proceeding must occur no later than 30 calendar days after the arbitrator's appointment.

(ii) Decision. A decision must be made by the arbitrator no later than 30 calendar days after the date the arbitration proceeding begins.

## (3) The cost –

The cost of the arbitration proceeding must be divided evenly between the parties to the arbitration. If, however, a participant, labor organization, or other interested individual prevails under a binding arbitration proceeding, the State or local applicant that is a party to the grievance must pay the total cost of the proceeding and the attorney's fees of the prevailing party.

## (e) Suspension of placement.

If a grievance is filed regarding a proposed placement of a participant in a program that receives assistance under this chapter, such placement must not be made unless the placement is consistent with the resolution of the grievance.

## (f) Remedies.

Remedies for a grievance filed under a procedure established by a recipient of Corporation assistance may include—

(1) Prohibition of a placement of a participant; and

(2) In grievance cases where there is a violation of nonduplication or nondisplacement requirements and the employer of the displaced employee is the recipient of Corporation assistance—

(i) Reinstatement of the employee to the position he or she held prior to the displacement;

(ii) Payment of lost wages and benefits;

(iii) Re-establishment of other relevant terms, conditions and privileges of employment; and

(iv) Any other equitable relief that is necessary to correct any violation of the nonduplication or nondisplacement requirements or to make the displaced employee whole.

## (g) Suspension or termination of assistance.

The Corporation may suspend or terminate payments for assistance under this chapter.

## (h) Effect of noncompliance with arbitration.

A suit to enforce arbitration awards may be brought in any Federal district court having jurisdiction over the parties without regard to the amount in controversy or the parties' citizenship.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





## Policy: AmeriCorps Branding Policy

In an effort to reinforce the branding of the AmeriCorps network and all its applications, special attention is being paid to ensuring all AmeriCorps Connecticut programs consistently promote their AmeriCorps identification.

Serve Connecticut employs a search-engine alert system to monitor AmeriCorps Connecticut press, media, recruitment and Information for identification with the AmeriCorps brand.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs should refer to the following section of the grantee agreement.

Part VI. Special Terms and Conditions:

- The Grantee shall identify the program as an AmeriCorps program and members as AmeriCorps members.
- All partnership agreements, MOU/MOA, Host Site Agreements, etc. related to the AmeriCorps program must explicitly state that the program is “an AmeriCorps program” and AmeriCorps members are the resource being provided.
- AmeriCorps is a registered service mark of the Corporation on National and Community Service (CNCS), d/b/a AmeriCorps. CNCS provides a camera-ready logo. All grantee websites shall clearly state that they are an AmeriCorps grantee and shall prominently display the AmeriCorps logo.
- Grantees shall use the AmeriCorps name and logo on service gear and public materials such as stationery, application forms, recruitment brochures, on-line position postings or other recruitment materials, orientation materials, member curriculum materials, signs, banners, press releases and Information related to their AmeriCorps program in accordance with CNCS requirements.

If a communication piece does not include “AmeriCorps” and/or the AmeriCorps logo, a penalty of \$1,000 will be levied against the AmeriCorps grant. The program director and legal applicant will be notified of each occurrence within thirty (30) days of the aberrant publication or media article.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: Attendance "Charge Back"

Serve Connecticut sponsors in-person and virtual events that require AmeriCorps program staff and member attendance and participation as stipulated in the grantee agreement.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are required to review their grantee agreement annually for specific event attendance requirements as they pertain to AmeriCorps program staff and AmeriCorps members.

To efficiently manage expenditures for trainings and special events, Serve Connecticut maintains an Attendance "Charge Back" policy.

In the event of a) unexcused absences and/or b) unregistered/unreserved participation by program staff or members in the above described activities, Serve Connecticut reserves the right to assess the program a fee in the amount of the event cost per person. An invoice for any fees incurred will be provided to the program within thirty (30) days of the event.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent version of both the [AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions \(GTC\)](#) and the [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions \(ASNTC\)](#).

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## **Policy: Commission Staff Attendance at Member Events**

Due to the numerous requests to attend end-of-year events hosted by AmeriCorps Connecticut programs, Serve Connecticut promotes the following policy to ensure efficiency and appropriate coverage for all AmeriCorps member recognition and/or graduation events.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are asked to send one (1) invitation to the Commission office for the event. It should be addressed to the Executive Director. Invitations must be received as early as possible, but no less than 30 days prior to the date of the event. It must also include level of expected participation (e.g. attendance only, provide remarks, participate on the dais, etc.).

The invitation should be addressed to:

Jacqueline M. Lucier, Executive Director  
Connecticut Commission on Community Service  
Connecticut Office of Higher Education  
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 707  
Hartford, Connecticut 06103  
jacqueline.lucier@ct.gov

The Executive Director will RSVP to the request and indicate who will represent the Commission at the event. Upon invitation acceptance, any updates, additional information, etc. should be sent to the attention of the Serve Connecticut staff member(s) who will represent the Commission at the event.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: No-Cost Extensions

A no-cost extension occurs when a subgrantee's budget end date is changed to an agreed upon later date without any increase to the grant budget. No additional funds are granted.

The subgrantee should complete the **No-Cost Extension Request Form** found in the **AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Form Links** section of this Manual and submit requested information for consideration to Serve Connecticut at least 30 days prior to the original budget period end date. A request that is received less than 30 days from the budget period end date will be automatically denied.

Programs may not enter into commitments with members, contractors, or other individuals or organizations that would cause costs to be incurred beyond the budget period end date prior to receiving Commission approval. If the no-cost extension request is due to a program design change, the change must be approved by the Commission prior to submitting the request for a no-cost extension.

Subgrantees should be in contact with the Commission as soon as the potential need to request a no-cost extension is identified. Preliminary discussions of no-cost extension requests are not considered official requests and will not be reviewed for approval until the No-Cost Extension Form has been submitted to the Commission office with signatures. Once all requested documentation is submitted and received by the Commission, it will be thoroughly reviewed.

Submission of a No-Cost Extension Form is not a guarantee that the request will be approved.

The Commission has a prime grant budget period end date with AmeriCorps, the agency. If a subgrantee's requested new end date will take the Commission beyond our prime grant budget period end date with AmeriCorps then the request must be approved by AmeriCorps after it has been approved by the Commission. In this case, if the Commission approves the request, the Commission's approval will be conditional pending AmeriCorps' approval. If AmeriCorps denies the extension of the Commission's prime budget period, then the subgrantee's request will subsequently also be denied even if the Commission provided preliminary approval.

A request for a no-cost extension after the subgrantee's budget period end date has passed will not be approved under any circumstances.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: AmeriCorps Member Position Modification

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs are encouraged to make strategic decisions in support of compliant AmeriCorps recruitment and strong program implementation, and may find changing AmeriCorps member positions in the ways outlined below useful tools in that effort.

According to Section VI: Changes in Member Positions of the *Terms and Conditions for AmeriCorps State and National Grants*, the following rules apply to modifying AmeriCorps member positions.

### Changes that Require AmeriCorps Approval

Circumstances may arise within a program that necessitate changing the type of unfilled AmeriCorps member positions awarded to a recipient or subrecipient, or 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 not available for use.

The following changes require written approval from Serve Connecticut and AmeriCorps' Office of Grant Administration:

- A change in the number of member service year (MSY) positions in the award; and
- A change in the funding level of the award.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs seeking this kind of modification should submit a **Budget Modification Pre-Approval Form** to request prior approval.

### Member Slot Conversion: Changing Types of Unfilled Member Positions

Subrecipients may change the type of member positions awarded to their program if: The change does not increase the total MSYs authorized in the Notice of Grant Award (e.g. one half-time position cannot be changed to one full-time position); and The change does not result in an increase in the aggregate value of the education award.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs seeking this kind of modification should submit a **Member Position Modification Form** to advise the Commission of the intent to make this change and confirm no impact to awarded MSYs or education award value.

Upon Commission notification, changes in the above types of member positions may be made by the AmeriCorps Connecticut directly in the My AmeriCorps Portal (eGrants).

### Changing a Term of Service for an Enrolled Member

Changes in terms of service for enrolled members may not result in an increased number of MSYs for the program.

Full-time: Serve Connecticut may authorize or approve occasional changes of currently enrolled full-time members to less than full-time members. Impact on program quality should be factored into approval of such requests.

- AmeriCorps-provided or funded healthcare or childcare costs are not available for less than full-time members unless they are serving in a full-time capacity (see section VIII.D. and E.).
- Recipients and subrecipients may not transfer currently enrolled full-time members to a less than full-time status simply to provide the member a less than full-time education award.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: AmeriCorps Program and Budget Amendment

As a prime grantee and funding partner of AmeriCorps, the agency, Serve Connecticut is bound by the following. The Commission's program and budget modification request and approval policies for subgrantees align with the requirements stipulated below.

**2 CFR 200.308** Revision of budget and program plans.

(a) The approved budget for the Federal award summarizes the financial aspects of the project or program as approved during the Federal award process. It may include either the Federal and non-Federal share (see definition for Federal share in [§ 200.1](#)) or only the Federal share, depending upon Federal awarding agency requirements. The budget and program plans include considerations for performance and program evaluation purposes whenever required in accordance with the terms and conditions of the award.

(b) Recipients are required to report deviations from budget or project scope or objective, and request prior approvals from Federal awarding agencies for budget and program plan revisions, in accordance with this section.

(c) For non-construction Federal awards, recipients must request prior approvals from Federal awarding agencies for the following program or budget-related reasons:

- (1) Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring prior written approval).
- (2) Change in a key person specified in the application or the Federal award.
- (3) The disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project, by the approved project director or principal investigator.
- (4) The inclusion, unless waived by the Federal awarding agency, of costs that require prior approval in accordance with [subpart E of this part](#) as applicable.
- (5) The transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs to other categories of expense.
- (6) Unless described in the application and funded in the approved Federal awards, the subawarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a Federal award, including fixed amount subawards as described in [§ 200.333](#). This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment or general support services.
- (7) Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-Federal entity.
- (8) The need arises for additional Federal funds to complete the project.

(d) No other prior approval requirements for specific items may be imposed unless an exception has been approved by OMB. See also [§§ 200.102](#) and [200.407](#).

(e) Except for requirements listed in [paragraphs \(c\)\(1\) through \(8\)](#) of this section, the Federal awarding agency is authorized, at its option, to waive other cost-related and administrative prior written approvals contained in [subparts D and E of this part](#). Such waivers may include authorizing recipients to do any one or more of the following:

- (1) Incur project costs 90 calendar days before the Federal awarding agency makes the Federal award. Expenses more than 90 calendar days pre-award require prior approval of the Federal awarding agency. All costs incurred before the Federal awarding agency makes the Federal award are at the recipient's risk (i.e., the Federal awarding agency is not required to reimburse such costs if for any reason the recipient does not receive a Federal

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





award or if the Federal award is less than anticipated and inadequate to cover such costs). See also [§ 200.458](#).

(2) Initiate a one-time extension of the period of performance by up to 12 months unless one or more of the conditions outlined in [paragraphs \(e\)\(2\)\(i\) through \(iii\)](#) of this section apply. For one-time extensions, the recipient must notify the Federal awarding agency in writing with the supporting reasons and revised period of performance at least 10 calendar days before the end of the period of performance specified in the Federal award. This one-time extension must not be exercised merely for the purpose of using unobligated balances. Extensions require explicit prior Federal awarding agency approval when:

- (i) The terms and conditions of the Federal award prohibit the extension.
- (ii) The extension requires additional Federal funds.
- (iii) The extension involves any change in the approved objectives or scope of the project.

(3) Carry forward unobligated balances to subsequent budget periods.

(4) For Federal awards that support research, unless the Federal awarding agency provides otherwise in the Federal award or in the Federal awarding agency's regulations, the prior approval requirements described in this [paragraph \(e\)](#) are automatically waived (i.e., recipients need not obtain such prior approvals) unless one of the conditions included in [paragraph \(e\)\(2\)](#) of this section applies.

(f) The Federal awarding agency may, at its option, restrict the transfer of funds among direct cost categories or programs, functions and activities for Federal awards in which the Federal share of the project exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold and the cumulative amount of such transfers exceeds or is expected to exceed 10 percent of the total budget as last approved by the Federal awarding agency. The Federal awarding agency cannot permit a transfer that would cause any Federal appropriation to be used for purposes other than those consistent with the appropriation.

(g) All other changes to non-construction budgets, except for the changes described in [paragraph \(c\)](#) of this section, do not require prior approval (see also [§ 200.407](#)).

(h) For construction Federal awards, the recipient must request prior written approval promptly from the Federal awarding agency for budget revisions whenever [paragraph \(h\)\(1\), \(2\), or \(3\)](#) of this section applies:

(1) The revision results from changes in the scope or the objective of the project or program.

(2) The need arises for additional Federal funds to complete the project.

(3) A revision is desired which involves specific costs for which prior written approval requirements may be imposed consistent with applicable OMB cost principles listed in subpart E.

(4) No other prior approval requirements for budget revisions may be imposed unless an exception has been approved by OMB.

(5) When a Federal awarding agency makes a Federal award that provides support for construction and non-construction work, the Federal awarding agency may require the recipient to obtain prior approval from the Federal awarding agency before making any fund or budget transfers between the two types of work supported.

(i) When requesting approval for budget revisions, the recipient must use the same format for budget information that was used in the application, unless the Federal awarding agency indicates a letter of request suffices.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



(j) Within 30 calendar days from the date of receipt of the request for budget revisions, the Federal awarding agency must review the request and notify the recipient whether the budget revisions have been approved. If the revision is still under consideration at the end of 30 calendar days, the Federal awarding agency must inform the recipient in writing of the date when the recipient may expect the decision.

**2 CFR 200.407** Prior written approval (prior approval).

Under any given Federal award, the reasonableness and allocability of certain items of costs may be difficult to determine. In order to avoid subsequent disallowance or dispute based on unreasonableness or nonallocability, the non-Federal entity may seek the prior written approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs or the Federal awarding agency in advance of the incurrence of special or unusual costs. Prior written approval should include the timeframe or scope of the agreement. The absence of prior written approval on any element of cost will not, in itself, affect the reasonableness or allocability of that element, unless prior approval is specifically required for allowability as described under certain circumstances in the following sections of this part:

- (a) § 200.201 Use of grant agreements (including fixed amount awards), cooperative agreements, and contracts, paragraph (b)(5);
- (b) § 200.306 Cost sharing or matching;
- (c) § 200.307 Program income;
- (d) § 200.308 Revision of budget and program plans;
- (e) § 200.311 Real property;
- (f) § 200.313 Equipment;
- (g) § 200.333 Fixed amount subawards;
- (h) § 200.413 Direct costs, paragraph (c);
- (i) § 200.430 Compensation—personal services, paragraph (h);
- (j) § 200.431 Compensation—fringe benefits;
- (k) § 200.438 Entertainment costs;
- (l) § 200.439 Equipment and other capital expenditures;
- (m) § 200.440 Exchange rates;
- (n) § 200.441 Fines, penalties, damages and other settlements;
- (o) § 200.442 Fund raising and investment management costs;
- (p) § 200.445 Goods or services for personal use;
- (q) § 200.447 Insurance and indemnification;
- (r) § 200.454 Memberships, subscriptions, and professional activity costs, paragraph (c);
- (s) § 200.455 Organization costs;
- (t) § 200.456 Participant support costs;
- (u) § 200.458 Pre-award costs;
- (v) § 200.462 Rearrangement and reconversion costs;
- (w) § 200.467 Selling and marketing costs;
- (x) § 200.470 Taxes (including Value Added Tax); and
- (y) § 200.475 Travel costs.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

Less than Full-time: AmeriCorps and Serve Connecticut discourage changing less than full-time members to full-time because it is very difficult to manage, unless done very early in the member's term of service. State Commissions are permitted to authorize or approve such changes so long as their current budget can accommodate such changes. Programs must keep in mind that a member's minimum 1700 hours must be completed within 12 months of the member's original start date.

AmeriCorps Connecticut programs seeking this kind of modification should submit a **Member Position Modification Form** to request prior approval.

## Refilling Member Positions: Enrolling a New Member in a Vacated Member Position

With the exception of recipients whose awards have special conditions under 2 CFR § 200.208 or 200.339, AmeriCorps State and National programs that have fully enrolled their awarded member positions are allowed to replace any member who terminates service before completing 30 percent of his/her term provided that the member who is terminated is not eligible for and does not receive a pro-rated education award. Programs may not refill the same member position more than once.

As a fail-safe mechanism to ensure that resources are available in the National Service Trust to finance all earned education awards, AmeriCorps will suspend refilling if either:

- Total AmeriCorps enrollment reaches 97 percent of awarded member positions; or
- The number of refills reaches five percent of awarded member positions.

Refilled member positions may not be transferred between operating sites\*. Refilled member positions may not be combined with unfilled member positions.

No prior Commission approval is required to refill a member position provided the above conditions are met. Serve Connecticut can monitor program member position refill activity via eGrants.

*\*Operating sites are not to be confused with service or host sites. Operating sites are state-based programmatic headquarters of national direct AmeriCorps projects that operate in more than one state. This prohibition does not apply to single-state AmeriCorps projects as the grantee organization is the sole operating site in a single-state AmeriCorps project.*

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Policy: AmeriCorps Gift Card Policy

This guidance identifies the limited circumstances for which AmeriCorps State and National funds may be used to acquire gift and pre-paid cards and the minimum administrative requirements to incur such costs on an award.

### Background

A gift or pre-paid card (hereafter, gift card) is a type of card with a specific monetary value. Some gift cards may be used at specific businesses and others may be redeemed widely. 2 CFR Part 200 does not prohibit the use of gift cards. However, gift cards must be used in a very limited and judicious manner, and recipients must have adequate internal controls to manage their purchase and use.

AmeriCorps State and National limits the allowability of gift cards to defray participant support costs that do not include the AmeriCorps living allowance. In some circumstances, gift cards can be easier to distribute than issuing cash or vouchers. Because of the challenges with tracking and monitoring their use, there is a high risk of fraud, waste, and abuse associated with gift cards.

When used appropriately, gift cards can help to remove socioeconomic or other barriers that may otherwise prevent participants from accessing and benefiting from federally assisted projects or programs.

### Policy

Gift cards may be an allowable award cost under very limited circumstances. Gift cards may not be used to cover costs such as those related to AmeriCorps State and National member living allowances, employees, consultants, contractors, and honorariums. Those costs may be allowable under the grant but are not allowable to be paid using gift cards. Nor may gift cards be used for unallowable costs, such as alcohol (see 2 CFR §200.423).

There is a risk of fraud, waste, and abuse when converting grant funds into gift cards because of the difficulty in tracking and monitoring their use. Use of gift cards for grant award costs must be carefully controlled and there must be strong oversight of gift card use through written policies and internal controls.

Limitations on use of gift cards:

- Grantees should have a gift card policy in place that describes the circumstances under which gift cards can be purchased. This could be included in the member agreement.
- Gift card purchasing and approval duties should be segregated (the purchaser should not be the authorizer).
- Gift cards should be issued in limited quantities based on the number of cards that are necessary at that time.
- AmeriCorps State and National recommends that the value of individual cards not exceed \$100.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Internal Controls

Recipients must have a written gift card policy to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. The policy must:

- describe the circumstances under which the gift cards can be purchased;
- ensure purchasing and approval duties are segregated (the purchaser should not be the authorizer);
- document the purchase of gift cards in the general ledger;
- ensure that gift cards are stored securely, as if they were cash;
- require a log of distribution of gift cards that includes the recipient's name and amount of gift card; and
- require notification to the participant of the purpose of the gift card.

Gift cards should not be purchased in excess of immediate needs. AmeriCorps State and National award funds cannot be used to cover the cost of undistributed or expired gift cards. Undistributed or expired gift cards may not be charged to the AmeriCorps State and National award.

## Gift Card Purchase Policy Recommendations

- Outline the circumstances under which gift cards may be purchased including the purchase approval process (typically the entity's procurement process);
- Ensure purchases made with gift cards are consistent with what costs are allowable under the grant award;
- Address common questions in your organization's policy regarding allowable/unallowable costs. For example, purchases with gift card by individuals and online purchases may be permitted if the cost is allowable; and
- Place limits on the maximum amount of gift cards that can be in possession at any given time.

## Gift Card Storage and Custody Policy Recommendations

- Designate a gift card custodian and back-up custodian. The custodian is responsible for gift card purchasing, security, dispensing to entity staff, tracking (serial numbers and denominations) and replenishing; and
- Store gift cards in a secure location such as a locked file cabinet with controlled access to the key and limit access to the gift card custodians.

## Gift Card Issuance Policy Recommendations

- Requests should include the reason for using a gift card instead of in-kind supplies or services;
- Describe what costs are typically allowable and under what circumstances. For example, medicine, baby supplies, clothing, food, transportation, gasoline, car repairs, household expenses and other urgent and short-term needs;
- Describe what costs are typically unallowable. For example, cigarettes, alcohol, resale or cashing out; and
- Maintain a record for each authorization.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Gift Card Accounting Policy Recommendations

- Determine the process for reconciling gift card documents. For example, how is the client acknowledgement form matched to the appropriate paperwork approving the gift card; and
- Provide guidance for how to handle lost or stolen gift cards.

## Gift Card Use Policy Recommendations

- Require that the gift card recipient signs a document describing the dollar value of each gift card received, and acknowledging they understand and will abide by the allowable and unallowable cost guidance received.
- AmeriCorps State and National encourages policies that support gift card recipient empowerment and self-sufficiency and does not require AmeriCorps State and National-funded organizations to have gift card recipient submit itemized receipts. A gift card recipient's written acknowledgement of the gift card's allowable uses is sufficient in most cases; and
- Ensure documentation with any personally identifying information (PII) is treated in accordance with the entity's policies protecting confidentiality.

Source: AmeriCorps State and National Policy Memo August 16, 2024; issued by Sonali Nijhawan, AmeriCorps State and National and Jill Graham, Office of Grant Administration

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



# Resources



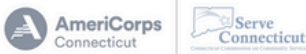


# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resource: Program Year Ramp Up Check List

This checklist is intended to help AmeriCorps Connecticut programs anticipate and keep pace with program year start-up activities related to funding disbursement, training, reporting, and compliance monitoring via Serve Connecticut. This document does not represent comprehensive instructions on any task and AmeriCorps program staff members are encouraged to refer to their own program systems, AmeriCorps governing documents, the AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual, Serve Connecticut Online Training Center and Basecamp resources, and technical assistance as necessary from Serve Connecticut staff to confirm compliance requirements and procedural best practices.



### Program Year Ramp Up Checklist

This checklist is intended to help AmeriCorps Connecticut programs anticipate and keep pace with program year start-up activities related to funding disbursement, training, reporting, and compliance monitoring via Serve Connecticut. This document *does not* represent comprehensive instructions on any task and AmeriCorps program staff members are encouraged to refer to their own program systems, AmeriCorps governing documents, the *AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual*, Serve Connecticut Online Training Center and Basecamp resources, and technical assistance as necessary from Serve Connecticut staff to confirm compliance requirements and procedural best practices.

Done	Ideal Timeframe/ Due Date	Item	Notes
	Due: TBD Upon Distribution	Grantee Contract/Agreement	<b>All programs</b> complete grantee contract and associated supplementary forms and return for execution. Instructions to be provided by Serve Connecticut upon distribution.
	Spring/Summer	eGrants/MyAmeriCorps.gov: Position Description	<b>All programs</b> submit service listing in the My.AmeriCorps.gov portal to facilitate member recruitment and enrollment. <b>New programs</b> work with Commission to set up account/complete this task upon award.
	July	OnCorps: Program Year Account Set Up	<b>Returning programs</b> copy program record from previous year and update program and program staff information. <b>New programs</b> work with Commission to set up account/complete this task upon award.
	July	Basecamp: Program Year Calendar Review	<b>All programs</b> review Serve Connecticut program year calendar-of-record as entered in Basecamp for all trainings, events, service days, deadlines, and other notable dates. <b>New programs</b> work with Commission to set up account/complete this task upon award.
	July	Jotform: Program Staff Transition Form URL Link provided in Program Director Manual.	<b>All programs</b> submit names/contact information of program staff who require user access to various Serve Connecticut platforms (i.e., Hub compliance data entry, Serve Connecticut Online Learning Center, OnCorps performance/financial data reporting, Basecamp notifications and resource access, etc.). <b>New programs</b> work with Commission to set up account/complete this task upon award. <i>Use link provided; no log in credentials necessary.</i>
	July	Jotform: Program Profile Update Form URL Link provided in Program Director Manual.	<b>Returning programs</b> update program description and JPEG logo as appears on the Serve Connecticut website. <b>New programs</b> submit program description and JPEG logo using other program's descriptions as found at the above link as examples upon award. <i>Use link provided; no log in credentials necessary.</i>
	Due: TBD	Online Registration: Strong Start Program Orientation	<b>All program staff members</b> (program directors, member managers, other administrative staff, and on-staff site supervisors) register to participate in mandatory orientation activities. Invitation and registration instructions to be provided by Serve Connecticut.
	Due: 15 days after Program Contract Start Date (SD) • 8.1 (SD) due 8.15 • 9.1 (SD) due 9.15 • 10.1 (SD) due 10.15	OnCorps: Budget Entry	<b>Cost-reimbursement programs</b> submit for approval. Budget must be approved to submit your program's first Periodic Expense Report (PER) on the 15 <sup>th</sup> of the month after your Program Contract Start Date (i.e., September 15 for a program that starts August 1).
	Due: Before Member Start Date	eGrants: Member PRE-Enrollment & Service Location Entry	<b>All programs</b> perform the following four verifications of each enrolling member in eGrants: Social Security Number retrieval, citizenship status verification, NSOPW check completion, and FBI fingerprint/name-based state criminal history check initiation. <b>All programs</b> enter the service location(s) at which each enrolling member will serve in eGrants.
	Due: No later than 8 days after Member Start Date	eGrants: Member Enrollment	<b>All programs</b> complete each eligible member's online enrollment in eGrants. <i>Note: Do not wait until Day 8 of the acceptable time range to do this; technical delays can result in disallowed service hours!</i>
	Due: October 15	OnCorps: Performance Measure Entry	<b>All programs</b> submit for approval. Performance Measures must be approved to submit your program's mid-year Grantee Progress Report (GPR) April 15.
	Due: October 31	Jotform: Systems and Deliverables URL Link provided in Program Director Manual.	<b>Returning programs</b> update previously submitted systems/deliverables as necessary for approval. <b>New and selected programs</b> upload all systems/deliverables for approval and National Service Criminal History Check documentation for all currently enrolled AmeriCorps members.
	Due: January 31	Jotform: Enhanced Monitoring Desk Review Documentation URL Link provided in Program Director Manual.	<b>New and selected programs</b> upload all member, program, and financial management documentation for approval. Serve Connecticut will notify in the fall all programs to which this process applies. <i>Best Practice Note:</i> Do not wait until January to upload member management documentation. Upload member file documents in an ongoing manner as they are collected from members from program start through January 31.

Updated 05.2024

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



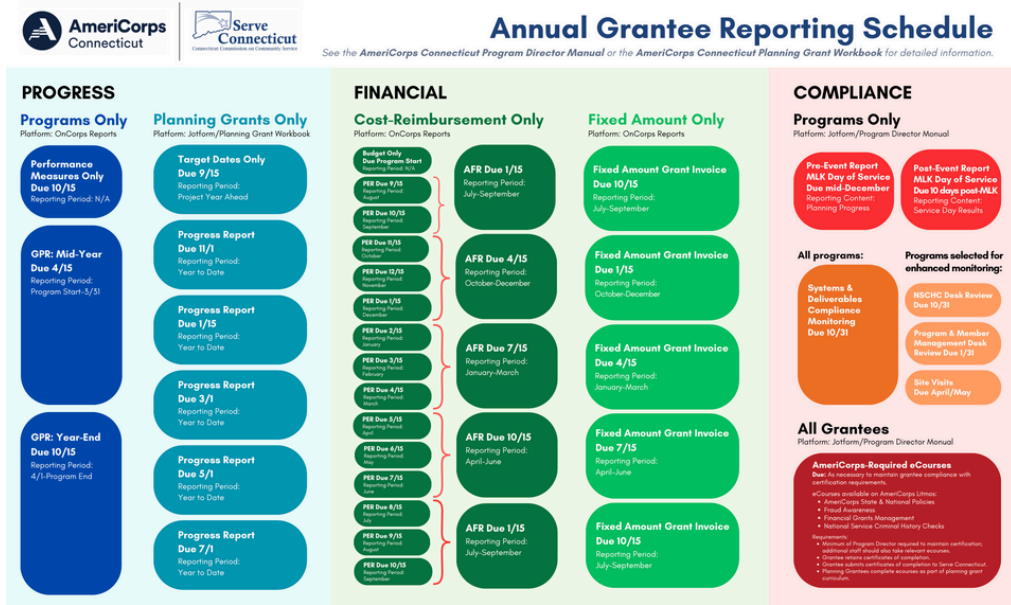


# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resource: Grantee Reporting & Monitoring Schedule

This infographic is designed to provide AmeriCorps Connecticut programs and planning grantees with an handy overview of deadlines and deliverables associated with the grant year. As noted on the infographic, grantees should review detailed guidance regarding each of these deliverables elsewhere in this AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual or in the AmeriCorps Connecticut Planning Grant Workbook as appropriate. A version of this infographic that can be exported to PDF and printed is available at this [Grantee Reporting & Monitory Schedule](#) link.



## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)

Click here to download a fillable, printable version of the Program Year Ramp Up Checklist.







# AmeriCorps Connecticut Program Director Manual

[BACK TO CONTENT LINKS](#)

## Resource: AmeriCorps Program Staff Core Competencies

The following core competencies are intended to provide AmeriCorps programs and prospective applicant organizations with an overview of the competencies needed for effective AmeriCorps program management. A competency is a combination of knowledge, skills and abilities that are required to perform a task. Competencies described here are all important and interrelated. Managing a program and grant effectively requires proficiencies in all of the core competencies. The program director need not possess all of these competencies individually, but should have strong working relationships with other professionals in their organization who do.

The full **AmeriCorps Program Staff Core Competencies** document provides detailed performance indicators for each competency listed here and can be a helpful aid in the hiring and development of AmeriCorps program staff. This document is provided as a technical assistance resource and is not a Serve Connecticut compliance expectation setting or monitoring tool.

	COMPETENCY	PROGRAM STAFF WORKING WITH AMERICORPS PROGRAMS WILL POSSESS THE ABILITY TO...
Effective Grant and Program Management	Program Management	Develop and maintain sound fiscal and organizational management systems and practices compliant with federal laws and regulations, AmeriCorps requirements and Serve Connecticut policies and procedures.
	Theory of Change and Continuous Improvement	Define and revise a Theory of Change for how the program activities will lead to long term results, including performance measures with outputs and outcomes; develop and utilize appropriate data collection instruments, analyze data gathered, report on the performance as demonstrated by the data, and utilize this data to make improvements to the program.
	Site Management	Develop strong partnerships with member service sites, supported by written agreements, intended to support overall program goals and quality member experiences. Ensure proper training and monitoring of sites and, where possible, incentivize strong site management through a competitive application process.
	Community Engagement & Strengthening	Work with individuals and organizations to identify community needs, leverage community assets, and position program or project as a strategy for solving community problems, ideally as part of a collective impact model.
Member Management	Member Human Resources	Utilize sound human resource and inclusion practices and principles to recruit, enroll and retain member positions as detailed in the approved grant. Provide members with written service agreements outlining program requirements. Ensure that member placements are developed based upon a program design that is reflective of community need and that member activities contribute to the program goals. Effectively recruit and retain a corps that represents the overall diversity of the community it serves.
	Member Support	Develop and conduct a comprehensive member training plan, including member leadership development, designed to ensure that members receive the federal and state required trainings, and maintain appropriate documentation thereof. Work to ensure that members have the skills and training necessary to successfully carry out their specific service activities. Develop partnerships that enable well-rounded, high quality training inclusive of adult learning strategies.
Fiscal Oversight and Management	Financial Management	Actively participate in managing the budget of the program. Work cooperatively with financial and leadership staff to develop practices that effectively plan for and manage program funds and provide for accurate, complete and current documentation of the financial status of the AmeriCorps program.
	Sustainability	Develop financial and non-financial support including, but not limited to, creating a sustainability plan, identifying potential sources of funds, developing funding and partnership proposals, presenting requests for assistance and securing adequate cash and in-kind match.
Leadership Development	Professional Development	Plan and participate in skill and knowledge-building educational opportunities that promote personal and professional growth. Opportunities should be related to issues that impact the program, broader community needs, evolving national priorities and the competencies outlined in this document.
	Leadership & Public Policy	Cultivate leaders and champions within AmeriCorps and the national service network. Maintain a working knowledge of federal and state legislation, national governing policy, and policy trends that affect the implementation of national service programs. Support Serve Connecticut in promoting AmeriCorps, the national service movement, and volunteerism.

Source: Based on Volunteer Florida, Michigan Community Service Commission, Volunteer Iowa, and Massachusetts Service Alliance Core Competencies documents.

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





## Resource: Recruitment Strategy Questions to Consider

### Individuals of Interest

- What functions will members have to execute during the service term
- What are the skills necessary, preferred or desired for members?
- What are the qualifications necessary, preferred or desired for members?
- What are your program's expectations for members?
- What additional applicant characteristics will be considered during the selection process (e.g. education, life experience, attitude, temperament, potential, motivation, etc.)
- What are the best recruitment strategies that can be used to attract individuals with the qualities your program seeks?

### Means to Reach AmeriCorps Applicants

- Where is your program likely to find concentrations of potential applicants you are interested in recruiting?
- What events can your program partake in that already exists (e.g. career fairs, expositions, conferences, festivals, community days and local occasions)? What are the costs to register, attend and/or recruit at these events?
- What community partners can your program work with to improve recruitment?
- What are the anticipated travel costs?
- What is the estimated amount for incidental costs?
- Are there social media or online outlets that should be utilized to reach your program's target applicants?

### Materials

- What materials are needed (i.e. informational pamphlets, flyers, position description handouts)? If there is a cost involved, what is it and does it fall within your approved budget?
- Who will create your program's materials? How much will the services rendered by external individuals/agencies cost?
- Are alternative formats are needed? If so, how much will they cost? Note: AmeriCorps, the agency, provides **free information** (brochures, posters, impact kits, etc.) that may be useful in recruitment.

### Individuals Responsible for Effective Outreach

- Who is the point person for member recruitment in your organization? What are his/her roles and responsibilities?
- Who will provide a supportive role in recruitment and to what extent?
- How much staff time and funds will be dedicated to recruitment?

### Timeframes

- What date do members need to start the program year?
- How much time will the recruitment campaign take? When will your program be ready to start recruiting? When will the campaign start and end?
- How much time will interviews take to complete?
- When will orientation sessions begin?
- How much time does it take for a member to start service after being selected?

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)



## Resource: Seven Sins of Supervision

AmeriCorps program staff and site supervisors have a vested interest in ensuring that AmeriCorps members experience a supervisory culture that fosters their success in implementing their service duties as well as their growth as professionals and people. Fulfilled and engaged AmeriCorps members are positively impacted by service and positively impact their communities. Unfulfilled and disengaged AmeriCorps members leave service share their disappointment in the experience with others. Program Directors should build a supervisory culture that avoids these common pitfalls of poor supervision.

**Snap Judgment Selection of Employees:** Supervisors often goof at the beginning. Poor worker selection may mean years of worker unhappiness and conflict with fellow workers and supervisors. If the supervisor does a poor job of sizing up the applicant, then a misfit is as likely as not to occur.

**Letting the Job Grow Like Topsy:** Careless supervisors plus particularly ambitious or lazy workers can shape jobs carelessly. New duties are assigned to the worker who has the capability or the time to squeeze the work in. Lazy workers tend to shrug off unpleasant, demanding or boring duties. Ambitious workers sometimes gobble up all the duties in sight – without regard to whether they are wasting their high-level skills carrying a gold brick. Good supervision requires good job design.

**Failure to Make Assignments Clear:** Vague instructions are bad. Supervisors should make specific, detailed assignments and then give subordinates the authority needed to accomplish them. A worker can't do a job without adequate authority. Divided responsibility results in misunderstanding conflict and low productivity.

**Being a Boss Rather than a Leader:** "When I give an order around here, I want it obeyed!" Everybody knows the type. The easy way for a supervisor is to know it all and brook no interference. It's much easier to handle problems if one doesn't have to consider alternative solutions and possible disadvantages.

**Indifference toward Discipline and Recognition:** Nothing makes subordinates more indifferent toward discipline and achievement than the supervisor who couldn't care less. High morale and high productivity are engendered by the supervisor who demands good quality work and recognizes and regards achievement. The important thing is that recognition is given and more significant achievements are openly acknowledged.

**Too Busy Train:** The supervisor who is too busy getting out production to take the time to train subordinates adequately isn't doing a good job. This kind of supervisor is the fellow who can never be away from their own job. More often than not, proper training would make it easier to reach production goals.

**Playing Everything Close to the Chest:** Perhaps worst of all is the supervisor who keeps it all to themselves. They neglect to pass the work. Nobody knows where they stand. Instructions from this person are curt and incomplete. Questions are frowned upon or rejected. This kind of supervisor typically keeps their own bosses in the dark, too. Turnover, overloads, slowdowns, and other problems occur unexpectedly.

Source: Rick Lynch, VMSystems, *Seven Deadly Sins of Supervisors*

## Resources

### Federal Regulations

- [AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations](#)
- [AmeriCorps Official Guidance](#)
- [Office of Management/Budget \(OMB\) 2 CFR 200 Guidance for Grants & Agreements](#)

### AmeriCorps State and National Terms & Conditions

Visit [Manage Your AmeriCorps Grant](#) to find the most recent versions of both the *AmeriCorps General Terms & Conditions (GTC)* and the *AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions (ASNTC)*:

- [AmeriCorps State & National Specific Terms & Conditions](#)
- [AmeriCorps General Grant Terms & Conditions](#)

### Serve Connecticut Program Management Portals

- [Online Learning Center](#)
- [OnCorps Reports Portal](#)
- [Basecamp](#)

### Other Resources

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Connecticut Commission on Community Service](#)
- [Office of Higher Education](#)





**AmeriCorps**  
Connecticut



**Serve  
Connecticut**  
Connecticut Commission on Community Service

End of Manual

**Thank you for your service!**

