



Request for Applications

AmeriCorps Member Placement through Washington Service Corps Programs

Public Health AmeriCorps

Program Year 2023 - 2024

Release Date:
Updated:

February 13, 2023
April 10, 2023

This guidance document accompanies our 2023-24 Request for Applications form, and contains the following information:

Introduction to Washington Service Corps and Public Health AmeriCorps	Page 2
Are you prepared to host an AmeriCorps member?	Page 3
Program information	Page 5
Applicant eligibility criteria	Page 5
Focus area and performance measurement	Page 6
Application instructions	Page 6
Additional required documents	Page 6
Definitions	Page 6
Estimated timeline	Page 7

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The Washington Service Corps is seeking organizations interested in recruiting, placing, and utilizing AmeriCorps members to impact needs in communities across Washington State in the realm of **public health**. We are interested in partnering with organizations that will support and develop AmeriCorps members and projects with an ethic of civic mindedness.

Successful applicant organizations will demonstrate how they will implement the use of AmeriCorps members in an evidence-informed approach, providing a service intervention that will result in intended solutions to identified community problems.

Application Review

Applications will be reviewed and scored by a panel of WSC staff. A rating scale will be used. Responses to questions will be rated on completeness, relevancy, and specificity.

Some applicants may receive a request to provide clarifying information and/or make changes to their application. This information is used by WSC staff in making award considerations. Applications may be recommended for an award even if they are not asked clarification questions. A request for clarification does not guarantee an award. Failure to respond to requests for clarification adequately and in a timely manner may result in the removal of an application from consideration.

Grant Period and Incremental Funding

The period of performance of any contract resulting from the Request for Application (RFA) is scheduled to begin September 1, 2023, and will be in effect through August 31, 2024. Projects selected through this RFA process may be eligible to continue their project for the duration of the applicable (per award) three-year AmeriCorps grant cycle, providing that projects meet continuing contractual requirements and expectations, and per continued funding from AmeriCorps. **Future continuation awards will be on a re-application and evaluation process.**

Funding and Performance Measurement Contingency

In the event funding for Washington Service Corps is reduced or eliminated, or if federal program requirements change, WSC may terminate or modify this Request for Application without advance written notice and will be subject to renegotiation under the new AmeriCorps funding level, requirements, terms and conditions or clarification/negotiation.

Technical Assistance

Prior to starting your application, please thoroughly review this guidance document in its entirety.

We will be hosting a number of live Q&A sessions via Microsoft Teams, the first of which is scheduled for **February 15** at 11:30 a.m. Visit our [website](#) for session schedule and joining options.

Any additional technical assistance provided in the future will be posted on our [RFA webpage](#).

Questions regarding our programs or the application form must be sent to wscmail@esd.wa.gov.

INTRODUCTION

What is AmeriCorps?

[AmeriCorps](#) is a federally-funded national service program whose mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps provides opportunities for more than 75,000 Americans each year to provide direct service to their communities and country.

AmeriCorps members typically serve a term of 10-12 months.

In exchange for their service, AmeriCorps members receive (*visit our [website](#) for more details*):

- a monthly living allowance;
- training and professional development;
- subsidized childcare assistance;
- health insurance;
- student loan forbearance;
- a Segal Education Award.

AmeriCorps members may be recent high-school graduates, college graduates, exploring a career path, or changing their career. They come with all levels of professional experience, and sometimes no professional experience at all.

By hosting an AmeriCorps member, the Sponsoring Organization should be prepared to cultivate the professional pathway of their member and develop civically-minded leaders.

A member's position is to enhance or expand their Sponsoring Organization's service to its clients or participants through the project in which the member serves; not to maintain existing programs or replace (supplant) staff positions (vacated or otherwise).

What is the Washington Service Corps?

Created in 1983 and administered by the Washington State Employment Security Department, Washington Service Corps (WSC) is a national service intermediary that runs multiple grant-funded AmeriCorps programs. Our mission is to build and expand a statewide ethic of service by engaging individuals of all backgrounds to contribute their time, energy, and talents to improve communities across Washington State. WSC currently provides service opportunities for approximately 500 AmeriCorps members to support communities as they address their most pressing needs.

Public Health AmeriCorps

Public Health AmeriCorps (PHA) was established by AmeriCorps in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically to recruit and mobilize individuals to help alleviate a strained public health system, address inequities in access to health care, and create a pathway for PHA AmeriCorps members into careers in the public health sector.

One of WSC's primary goals through its PHA cohort is to help address the digital divide present in low-income and underserved communities that limits access to, and knowledge of, online healthcare information and ability to make telehealth visits with their care provider. Examples of member service activities in this cohort include providing health information, supporting clients in accessing healthcare provider portals to make online appointments and message providers, help individuals apply for health insurance, and provide referrals to services to address housing or food insecurity, employment needs, etc.

PHA members are to complete an online training course entitled *Foundational Training for Public Health AmeriCorps*, which entails a minimum of 15 hours. Sponsoring Organizations who host PHA members must be prepared to factor this into their member's service position.

WSC has up to eight (8) full-time member placements to award for its PHA cohort.

INTRODUCTION

Are you prepared to host an AmeriCorps member?

Roles and responsibilities

Our Member Placement Contract outlines the responsibilities that the Sponsoring Organization will have to its AmeriCorps members and the Washington Service Corps.

We strongly urge you to review the sample contract (hyperlinked at the beginning of the application form), particularly *Exhibit A – Statement of Work*, to understand what will be required.

A few of these key expectations:

The Sponsoring Organization and/or its sub-service sites will be responsible for **recruiting and interviewing** AmeriCorps applicants.

The Sponsoring Organization and any sub-service sites must have a plan in place to actively recruit for their member position(s), and **be committed to filling all awarded positions** by the last member start date offered.

The Sponsoring Organization must identify a staff member that will provide **primary, daily oversight and support of the AmeriCorps member**, as well as an additional staff member that can immediately step in, in the absence of the primary staff.

The primary site staff will also be responsible for **tracking and reporting all data** relative to performance measures for the project and service hours of the member.

The Sponsoring Organization must build in an element of **professional development** for their AmeriCorps members, related to their service position. This is in addition to an orientation provided by the member's service site and training provided by WSC.

The Sponsoring Organization must ensure that its member(s) and the staff providing oversight to the member(s) **complete all required training** provided by WSC.

Sub-service site oversight will be the responsibility of the Sponsoring Organization. Should awarded organizations plan to place members at service site locations outside the control of their organization, the same standards, expectations, member recruitment and management, and contractual responsibilities will be maintained and upheld by the Sponsoring Organization, including completion of required documents for enrollment, training, reporting, and oversight of the assigned site staff who will work directly with the members.

Applicants can evaluate their readiness to host members by completing the [WSC Readiness Assessment](#).

INTRODUCTION

What AmeriCorps members **CAN** do

In general, members serving through one of our programs **directly interact with the beneficiaries** of the project they serve in.

Service activities can also include minimal capacity building of the *project*, such as resource development, volunteer management structure, and facilitation of community service project opportunities. Capacity building activities cannot exceed 30% of a member's position.

What AmeriCorps members **CANNOT** do

Per federal regulations, a member's position cannot displace an employee or a paid staff position within your organization or the member's service site.

Members can do minimal administrative tasks specific to the project they serve in (e.g. help with project progress reporting), but they cannot do administrative tasks for the organization at large.

In addition, federal regulations and Washington Service Corps prohibit certain activities by members and project staff while charging time to the AmeriCorps project, or accumulating service or training hours; these activities include (**but are not limited to**):

1. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
2. 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;
3. 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 proselytizing;
4. Conducting a voter registration drive or using AmeriCorps funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
5. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services;
6. Preparing any part of a grant proposal or performing other fundraising functions to help the [organization] achieve its match requirements, or to pay the [organization's] general operating expenses;
7. Fundraising, unless under the following circumstances: if it provides direct support to a specific service activity; falls within the project's approved objectives; is not the primary activity of the project; and does not exceed 10% of the total hours served in the member's term.

A complete list of prohibited activities is available on our website:

<https://washingtonservicecorps.org/prohibited-activities/>

ELIGIBILITY & PROGRAM INFORMATION

Applicant eligibility

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- State, local, and tribal government organizations;
- Nonprofit, private organizations; not limited to those with IRS 501(c)(3) status, but rather all organizations with IRS 501(c) status, including faith-based organizations;
- Schools: school districts, educational service districts, colleges, universities, alternative schools and others;
- Federal entities may apply as long as the funding being used to pay the program participation fee is allowed by the federal funding source (written confirmation must be available).

Organizations that focus solely on advocacy, lobbying or religious proselytizing are NOT eligible.

Program information

For the 2023-24 program year, WSC is offering a 10.5-month (1,700-hour) service term, with member start dates in September and October.

Member living allowance (stipend)

For the 2023-24 program year, there are four tiers of monthly living allowance (stipend) available:

Stipend Tier	Monthly Stipend	Per 10.5-Month Term
Tier 1 Stipend	\$2,066.86	\$21,702
Tier 2 Stipend	\$2,562.10	\$26,902
Tier 3 Stipend	\$3,019.24	\$31,702
Tier 4 Stipend	\$3,328.76	\$34,952

Program participation fee

- Refer to Section 10, *Fees*, of the WSC Member Placement Contract (hyperlinked in the first page of the online application form) as well as WSC Policy #155 for details regarding payment of Fee, refills and refunds.
 - Review [WSC POL-155](#) for how the Fee may be pro-rated in the event of a member exiting service prior to the originally scheduled term end date, and the circumstances under which the Fee might be adjusted.
- The Applicant Organization can elect to increase their member's monthly living allowance (stipend) by paying a higher Fee.

Stipend Tier	Per-Member Fee
Tier 1 Stipend	\$10,000
Tier 2 Stipend	\$15,200
Tier 3 Stipend	\$20,000
Tier 4 Stipend	\$23,250

Member service terms

1,700-hour 10.5-month service terms as follows:

Term Start/End <i>(subject to change at WSC's sole discretion)</i>	
9/1/2023 – 7/15/2024	10/2/2023 – 8/15/2024
9/18/2023 – 7/31/2024	10/16/2023 – 8/31/2024

FOCUS AREA AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

All projects awarded under WSC's Public Health AmeriCorps grant are required to track and report on the Access to Care performance measure. Note: The performance measure listed in this document may be revised based on the potential release of future guidance from AmeriCorps. Data collection approaches and reporting could be re-negotiated during the grant period.

[Focus Area - Healthy Futures](#) refers to unmet health needs within low-income communities including access to health care, disease prevention and food security.

Performance measure:

- [Access to Care](#)

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

This Request for Applications is hosted through Zoho's online survey platform. Applications must be submitted through Zoho.

We strongly recommend you apply by June 30, 2023 to allow enough time for application evaluation, member recruitment and enrollment to be completed in time for your preferred member start date.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Please review the sample Member Placement Contract and Member Service Agreement before submitting your application! They outline your organization's responsibilities to WSC and to your member, if awarded. **These documents are hyperlinked at the beginning of the application form.**

- **Sample Member Placement Contract - no revisions to this document will be allowed, unless at WSC's sole discretion.** Organizations cannot submit their own standard contract, purchase order, terms and conditions, etc. in response to an award or as a contingency to process payment of the Program Participation Fee.
- **Sample Member Service Agreement**

As part of your application for each project, you will need to submit the following documents (hyperlinked within the application form) by uploading them into the application form:

- Wage Theft Prevention Certification (if requested)
- A position description form for each unique member position
- A MyAmeriCorps recruitment worksheet for each unique member position
- Project performance plan

DEFINITIONS

Member Service Site: The location (organization) at which an AmeriCorps member is placed to provide their service to the community.

Sponsoring Organization: Once awarded, an organization that manages their AmeriCorps project. AmeriCorps members may be placed at the Sponsoring Organization, or at multiple member sub-service sites.

ESTIMATED TIMELINE

RFA Release Request for Applications initiated	February 13, 2023
Evaluation and Scoring Process Application review and clarification period	2 weeks after receipt of application
Anticipated notification of award status to applicants	3 weeks after receipt of application
At your site Start recruiting as soon as possible to fill your AmeriCorps positions. Recruitment and interviews of AmeriCorps member candidates by Sponsoring Organization and service sites (Sponsoring Organization commits to ensuring placements and member enrollment)	Begins immediately upon award <i>Factor in at least 8-10 weeks for member recruitment and selection.</i>
Form and guidance provided from WSC Office: Contract sent out for signature (electronically) by WSC	2 weeks after award
Signed contract due to WSC	2 weeks after receipt of contract; must be received prior to first member start date
Written Union Concurrence due to WSC, if applicable	2 weeks after award
Insurance certificate, or statement of self-insured status, submitted to WSC. Requirements outlined in Member Placement Contract Section 11.	2 weeks after award
Program Participation Fee invoice issued	Dependent upon award date
Deadline to submit payment to WSC for Program Participation Fee	30 days from invoice date