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POLICY

Focus Area: Site Staff

See Also: Member Service Agreement; POL-120; POL-121

POL – 122

ALTERNATIVE SERVICE AND SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECTS

This Policy applies to all Washington Service Corps (WSC) AmeriCorps members, including Washington Reading Corps (WRC) and any other AmeriCorps program managed by WSC.

Alternative service is defined as service completed outside of the normal duties, location, and supervision outlined in the position description. Members are encouraged to serve in their focus area. However, members may serve in any AmeriCorps focus area. These areas include: disaster services, economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, healthy futures and veterans and military families. Note that these areas are subject to change. To find out more information about focus areas follow this link: [AmeriCorps Focus Areas](#).

Washington Service Corps recognizes that there are regular circumstances where a member must serve outside of the primary host service site. Members may serve in alternative approved locations and projects to supplement service hours or if the primary service site is closed for regular business and service schedule is interrupted. Alternative service may be used to fulfill a member's obligation to complete a minimum number of hours within their service term. A credible third party must verify alternative service hours. Some projects may require members to perform alternative service to continue accruing hours during temporary site closures.

Site staff are responsible for:

- Communicating with Site and Member Service Coordinator with questions about alternative service
- Prioritizing alternative service to meet required service hours or during site closure
- Denying alternative service if unallowable or prohibited activity, benefiting a for profit business, or interrupts a member's pre-approved schedule

Service-learning projects (on-site or not) that are supported by the sponsoring organization or service site staff are treated as regular service, not alternative service. Generally, a service-learning project is a member designed, developed, and implemented project that engages their community volunteers to serve. For example, an AmeriCorps member could develop a book drive or organize a tree planting. A service-learning project may be in any AmeriCorps Focus Area. However, members should seek out

approval for such projects by their sponsoring organizations. **Service projects should not exceed 5 percent of the member's overall service hours.** The primary service duties take priority over service-learning projects. Sponsoring organizations must verify and validate hours spent on service-learning. Members may team up to develop service projects together, or members can recruit other volunteers for large service projects.

Service-learning projects are optional but encouraged. Alternative service will be required if the member does not have enough hours in their primary service site.

Members must wear gear and are encouraged to take pictures during Alternative Service and Service-Learning events and projects.