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POLICY/PROCEDURE

Focus Area: Site & Member Svc

See Also: Member Service Agreement; POL-120; POL-121; 2023.01: AmeriCorps State and National Guidance – Teleservice

POL – 125

MANAGING MEMBER TELESERVICE

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

WSC reserves the right to refuse to allow members to teleserve. WSC may withdraw that privilege for mission related purposes, if supervision becomes too burdensome, or if hours or service products cannot be validated.

Members interested in teleservice must be approved by site staff and communicated to WSC. The teleservice must be in alignment with the member position description, be direct service the majority of the time and align with the mission of the Sponsoring Organization. In all cases, teleservice will be limited in duration and scope.

1. Teleservice is Appropriate When it Can be Validated

- Washington Service Corps member teleservice is appropriate only when the activity can be meaningfully supervised and the hours independently validated. Advance authorization by the Sponsoring Organization must be provided prior to the teleservice taking place. Documentation of the teleservice outcome or project must be provided by the member to the Sponsoring Organization to verify. The Sponsoring Organization must have the appropriate technology to monitor and track teleservice.

2. Teleservice Hours Should be Limited in Duration and Scope

- Direct service is required as a majority of service projects, this is typically in person. If direct service is performed virtually, teleservice is allowable. Sponsoring Organizations may communicate directly with WSC for approval that follows guidance outlined here.
- Teleservice hours cannot be “banked” and used in future months.
- Teleservice is not intended to be used as an alternative service to make up a significant amount of missed hours.
- Teleservice can be used when the site is closed if it is direct service using site-provided equipment.
- Teleservice is allowable and should follow Sponsoring Organization policies and resources, members may not use personal equipment to tele-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.

3. Member Reports Hours as Service or Training

- Teleservice hours will be reported as service or training (depending on how time was spent) hours on the AmeriCorps member’s timesheet.

4. Teleservice Should Not Replace In-Person Direct Service a Majority of the Time

- Direct in-person service should be prioritized but under certain circumstances performing service from home, also considered teleservice, is allowable if the Sponsoring Organization provides the equipment, oversight, training, and validation of hours.

5. Online Training Via Teleservice

- Teleservice may include completing online training. In this example, an audit trail would be produced by which the Sponsoring Organization can verify the hours claimed. Where the service activity results in a work product, the Sponsoring Organization can reach a reasoned judgment as to whether the product reflects the number of hours claimed by the member. Tasks performed while logged into a grantee information system may result in a record of the member’s level of activity.

6. Teleservice Activities Should Be in Alignment with The WSC Project

- Teleservice activities should be within the scope and purpose of the Sponsoring Organization's Request for Application (RFA) and the activities contemplated in the application. The Sponsoring Organization should not create teleservice activities solely to accommodate a request for teleservice.

7. Member & Sponsoring Organization Completes the WSC Member Teleservice Authorization and Verification Form

- The member & Sponsoring Organization will use the WSC Teleservice Authorization and Verification Form to document prior approval and completion of teleservice. When the Sponsoring Organization approves a member timesheet that contains teleservice hours, the Sponsoring Organization will ensure accuracy of teleservice hours by referring to the WSC Teleservice Authorization and Verification Form. Any teleservice hours served without proper approval outlined in this policy will be disallowed by WSC.

8. Site Staff Will Ensure Liability Insurance Covers Teleservice

- Sponsoring Organizations are to ensure their liability insurance will cover a member serving in their agency for incidents that could occur while a member is performing teleservice.

9. Reasonable Accommodations Requests May Be Exempt

- Members requesting teleservice arrangements under the auspices of reasonable accommodation for a disability may be excluded from this policy and procedure, as those requests are covered under other policies, rules, and laws.

10. WSC Monitors Teleservice

- WSC will monitor the quality and effectiveness of its internal controls, including the execution of the Member Teleservice Authorization and Verification Form, and will initiate corrective action when deemed appropriate.