

AmeriCorps: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)

What is AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is a network of local, state, and national service programs that connects more than 70,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet our country's critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment.

AmeriCorps, started in 1994, is program of the Corporation of National and Community Service (CNCS). AmeriCorps is commonly described as a domestic Peace Corps. There are three programs under the umbrella of AmeriCorps:

AmeriCorps*State & *National
AmeriCorps*VISTA
AmeriCorps*NCCC (National Community Civilian Corps)

Why should I become an AmeriCorps member?

Becoming an AmeriCorps member enables you to do great things for your community while you grow as an individual and attain education, experience, and skills you can bring to your future work. Make a community safer. Help a child receive a meaningful education. Protect the environment. Whatever your interest, there is an AmeriCorps opportunity that needs your courage, your skills, and your dedication. You will learn teamwork, communication, responsibility, and other essential skills that will help you for the rest of your life. You will also gain the personal satisfaction of taking on a challenge and seeing results.

Can I work part time as an AmeriCorps member?

In most cases, yes. Though the majority of AmeriCorps terms are 11 months of full time work, there are several other opportunities to serve both six month positions and part time/non-stipend positions. The availability of these various options depends solely on the position. Please inquire for details on specific positions or share your interests in a specific term with us.

Is joining AmeriCorps like having a regular job?

While AmeriCorps members are expected to show up to work on time and have the responsibilities of a regular job, being an AmeriCorps volunteer is a unique commitment. The purpose of AmeriCorps is to serve others and the community. AmeriCorps is about personal and professional growth. Not only is AmeriCorps personally rewarding, our members are given substantial responsibility in their assignments and learn many new professional skills.

What happens if I cannot complete my hours?

In most cases, failure to complete an AmeriCorps commitment results in forfeiting the opportunity for future AmeriCorps involvement and the educational award. However, if an AmeriCorps member has personal and compelling circumstances (e.g. major illness or death in the family), he or she can earn a prorated amount of the educational voucher and are eligible to reenroll in AmeriCorps at a later date.

Can I work another job during my AmeriCorps service?

Members are permitted to work at another job or attend school during their AmeriCorps term. We ask that other work/school commitments do not conflict with your work as an AmeriCorps member.

Will I receive training before I start?

Members participate in an orientation within the first month of their service and are given project-specific orientations upon arrival to their site. Much of the training received is on daily basis while working with supervisors. Training classes on a variety of topics are also offered throughout the term. Past training topics have included how to write a press release, social media, engaging young volunteers in service, creating success youth and adult partnerships, and grant writing.

Where is our AmeriCorps office located?

Our AmeriCorps office is located at:

Goodwill Industries of Northern New England
185 Lancaster Street
PO Box 8600
Portland, ME 04104

Phone: 207-347-3236

Please note that this is the location of our administrative office. Host sites are located throughout Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Do I need a car?

This all depends on your site. If you are working in the city, live near public transportation, and your site does not require much travel, you should be able to find ways around not having a car. Many sites are rural and necessitate a car. It is best to talk to the site supervisor to discuss feasibility of serving without a car.

When can I start?

You can only begin your term of service once all of your enrollment paperwork is complete and received by our office. Specific start and end dates are decided upon enrollment by the member and site supervisor.

Who do I contact if I have a question about my education award?

For general questions about the Education Award and student loan deferment, contact National Service Trust at 1-800-942-2677. Live operators are available from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm EST, Monday through Friday.

If you have successfully completed your AmeriCorps service, you can view your [AmeriCorps Education Award account balance](#) and activity online.

To request a copy of your AmeriCorps Education Award voucher or report a change of address, you can e-mail edwardvoucher@cns.gov.