



AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service

Member Handbook





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Welcome to AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service!

Congratulations on your entrance into AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service, and welcome as you enter a network of diverse but like-minded people devoted to strengthening their communities. As an AmeriCorps member you are given the opportunity to:

- Work with a cohort of students within your own campus to actively participate in strengthening your community
- Make a commitment to service and the recruitment of five volunteers throughout one calendar year
- Become a part of a larger initiative that is active on 35 campuses and will involve students as well as yourself across three different regions

What is AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service?

AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service involves 40 campuses in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Puerto Rico. These campuses have a deep commitment to the value of service in education and to fulfilling their public trust by graduating people who are active participants in civic life. AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service is designed to both acknowledge and advance their efforts, placing students at the core.

To encourage student ownership of public service as a way of teaching, learning and living, we offer a program that will involve students as active participants in the institutionalization of service-learning, as advocates for strong community-campus partnerships, and as direct providers of service in the areas of education, children and families, the environment, public health, and other human needs.



What is AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is a national service program initiated by President Clinton, often referred to as the “domestic Peace Corps.” AmeriCorps is an opportunity to make a big difference in your life and in the lives of those around you. It’s a chance to apply your skills and ideals toward helping others and meeting critical needs in the community.

Each year, AmeriCorps offers 80,000 opportunities for adults of all ages and backgrounds to serve through a network of partnerships with local and national nonprofit groups. Whether your service makes a community safer, gives a child a second chance, or helps protect the environment, you’ll be getting things done through AmeriCorps!



AmeriCorps Education Award

What is an Education Award and what can it be used for?

After successfully completing a term of service and submitting the required exit paperwork to the Program Coordinator within 30 days of their exit date, AmeriCorps members are enrolled in the National Service Trust and are then eligible to receive an education award. The education award can be used to pay education costs at qualified institutions of higher education or to repay qualified student loans. You may use the Education Award in the following ways, or a combination of them:

- To repay qualified existing or future student loans;
- To pay all or part of the current cost of attending a qualified institution of higher education (including certain vocational programs); or
- To pay current expenses while participating in an approved school-to-work program.

What Types of Loans Can the Education Award Repay?

Most post-secondary loans that are backed by the federal government are qualified for repayment with an AmeriCorps education award. The lender should be able to tell you if the loan is qualified. Qualified loans include:

- Stafford Loans
- William D. Ford Direct Loans
- Supplemental Loans for Students
- Nursing Student Loans
- Loans issued to AmeriCorps members by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
- Perkins Loan
- Federal Consolidated Loans
- Primary Care Loans
- Health Education Assistance Loans

If you are unsure if your lender will honor the education award, call them, ask, and we would recommend getting written confirmation that they will honor the award too. It is not MACC's responsibility to know or confirm this information.

What Types of Expenses Are Considered Part of the Current "Cost of Attending" an Institution?

"Cost of attending" may include tuition, room and board, books, supplies, transportation, and other various expenses. The financial aid office at your school has information on expenses for specific academic programs, and that office determines the cost of attendance for your particular school.

When Can Education Awards Be Used?

The Education Award can be used any time after you receive your voucher for up to seven years after the date you ended your service.



The member must fill out the AmeriCorps Exit Form and turn it in the Program Coordinator. Once all required paperwork has been completed and entered into the Corporation for National & Community Service's database, they will send a check directly to the institution that you selected online in My AmeriCorps.

What are the Categories of Education Awards?

The amount of your education award depends on the length of your term of service. The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act made changes to the maximum amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award. The amount is now tied to the maximum amount of the U.S. Department of Education's Pell Grant. The award amounts will change each year with the Pell Grant. The 2011-2012 award values are listed below.

Position	No. of Hours	Award
Full-Time	1700 Hours	\$5,550.00
Half-Time	900 Hours	\$2,775.00
Reduced-Half Time	675 Hours	\$2,114.00
Quarter-Time	450 Hours	\$1,468.00
Minimum-Time	300 Hours	\$1,175.00

Is the Education Award Taxable?

Yes. The education award is taxed in the year it is used. The Corporation for National Service does not deduct taxes from the award, but in late January it sends 1099 Forms to all AmeriCorps members who have made payments from their education award. The 1099 Form does not need to be included in your tax return, but it reflects the amount that the National Service Trust reports to the IRS as taxable miscellaneous income. If you have questions about how to file taxes for your award, contact your local IRS office.

Remember, you can split up the use of your award to pay a combination of student loans and/or educational expenses. And, you can split up the allocation of your award over multiple calendar years, as well, to divide up the tax costs.

Must the Education Award be used all at once?

No. It is completely up to the member as to how the education award is used. It may be used all at once or in increments.

How Many Education Awards Can I Receive?

A member may serve up to four terms of service in AmeriCorps State and National, regardless of type of term. However, there is a monetary cap on the *amount* of education awards a member can earn. A member may only receive the **value** of two full-time education awards. For example, the 2011 amount for a full-time award is \$5,550. So the value of two full-time education awards = \$11,100.



What if I Need to Transfer to Another College?

In some cases, students need to transfer from one school to another. If these circumstances arise during your term of service, they will be reviewed by campus supervisor and the Program Coordinator at MACC on an individual basis. By working together we will find a resolution that will best suit the needs of all involved parties.

If I have already paid for some education expenses out of my own pocket, can the check be sent to me?

By law, the Trust can only send checks to qualified schools and loan holders. Checks cannot be sent to others, such as landlords, parents, or mortgage companies. However, some schools can reimburse you for the expenses included in the “cost of attendance” that you paid for yourself. See your financial aid office for more information about how they handle reimbursement and disbursements.

What kinds of courses can I use my education award for?

You may use your education award to pay for all courses in which you are enrolled as a student in a Title IV educational institution. You are not limited to courses that are part of a degree, certificate or credential program.

Is my award transferable?

You will be eligible to transfer your educational award to your child, grandchild or foster child if you meet the following criteria:

- You were at least 55 when you enrolled;
- You began service on or after October 1, 2009; and
- You are serving in an AmeriCorps State or National program.

Only awards earned in terms beginning on or after Oct. 1, 2009, are eligible for transfer.

Forbearance

Forbearance is temporarily postponing your obligation to make payments on your student loan(s). As an AmeriCorps member you may be eligible for forbearance on your qualified student loans during your term of service. Forbearance is granted by the Financial Institution, not by CNCS. To have repayment of your federal qualified student loans postponed, you must first officially enroll in an AmeriCorps program, which electronically sends enrollment information to the Trust.

Requesting forbearance on your student loan is a very simple process. Just follow the steps below:

1. Go to my.americorps.gov and sign in. You must already have an account to request forbearance. You can create an account if you do not already have one.
2. Click “Create Forbearance Request” under the My Education Award tab on the left
3. Verify that all of the pre-populated information on your request form is correct.



4. If you served more than one term of service, select the dates of service for which you are requesting forbearance.
5. Search for and select your Financial Institution. If you cannot find your Institution, select the “not found” button. This brings up a new page where you will need to enter the Institution’s name and address, as well as any other information that you know such as a phone number or contact name.
6. Once you click the “submit” button, your forbearance request will be sent to your Financial Institution for them to process.

If you have loans with more than one Financial Institution, you’ll need to submit a separate request for each lender, for each term of service.

Interest Accrual

As AmeriCorps alum, you are eligible to have the National Service Trust pay all or a portion of the interest that accumulated on your qualified student loan(s) during your term of service. These payments are made in addition to the Education Award, and are not deducted from your Education Award balance. To be eligible to have accrued interest paid:

- The loan must have been placed in forbearance for the service period, and
- You must have successfully completed a term of service and received an Education Award.

Generally, the Trust will pay all of the interest for full-time members who complete their term and a portion of the interest for part-time members. The portion that the Trust pays is based on a formula contained in the regulations that govern the Trust. The Trust cannot pay interest accrued outside your service period. Nor can it pay interest if you did not earn an education award. Payments for interest are considered taxable income in the year payments are made.

To request your Interest Accrual Benefit:

1. Go to my.americorps.gov and sign in.
2. Click “Create Interest Accrual Request” under the My Education Award tab on the left.
3. Verify that all of the pre-populated information on your request form is correct.
4. If you served more than one term, select the dates of service for which you are requesting your interest accrual benefit.
5. Search for and select your Financial Institution. If you cannot find your Institution, select the “not found” button. This brings up a new page where you will need to enter the Institution’s name and address, as well as any other information that you know such as a phone number or contact name.
6. Click the “Submit” button. Your Interest Accrual request will be sent to your Financial Institution, which will complete the payment request.

If you have loans with more than one Financial Institution, you’ll need to submit a separate request for each lender, for each term of service.



What about?

Community Work Study: As a community-based work study, your hours working in tutoring, mentoring, or addressing unmet human needs in the community DO count toward the scholarship.

Volunteering: If you are involved in a volunteer program that addresses tutoring, mentoring and unmet human needs in the community, your hours DO count toward the scholarship.

Co-ops, Internships or Student Teaching: If you are involved in an unpaid student teaching position, internship, or co-op in which you are tutoring, mentoring, or addressing unmet human needs in a community, your hours DO count toward the scholarship.

Note: All co-op/internship/student teaching placements must be approved by both the campus supervisor and ASLIS program coordinator prior to service.

For more information, contact the National Service Trust AmeriCorps Information Hotline at 1-800-942-2677. The Hotline is staffed by live operators from 8:00-6:00 EST.

AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service Responsibilities

What are your responsibilities?

To earn an education award, the AmeriCorps member must satisfactorily complete program requirements and a full term of service. Satisfactory service includes:

- Completing the required number of AmeriCorps hours as verified by your service site supervisor and campus supervisor;
- Comply with applicable rules and complete all required enrollment and exit paperwork, including signing a member contract that states rights and responsibilities while in the program. Members must abide by this contract and follow the rules of the program. You may be suspended or terminated if you violate the stated rules of behavior.
- Maintain a positive attitude, quality service, and respect toward others in the program.
- Attend all AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service related leadership, training, and enrichment activities.

Logging Your Time

- Students will receive the monthly timesheet template and example in their enrollment packet prior to their service during the orientation. All monthly timesheets will be available through the MACC website as well.
- Students will complete and sign the timesheet at the end of a month and turn it in to their campus supervisor. Please complete the ENTIRE timesheet. The “Types of Service” column on the right and volunteer and youth numbers at the bottom are very important to collect. Those numbers allow us to achieve our performance measures and receive the grant each year.



- Campus supervisors *must* sign and approve the hours. Once all timesheets from a site for a particular month are collected, the campus supervisor will mail the timesheets to the Massachusetts Campus Compact office.

Service hours will be divided into one of three categories: Service, Training, and Fundraising.

Service Hours: include, but not limited to the direct service in the community and hours spent planning events, coordinating volunteers or prep work for projects.

Training Hours: include only those hours that you are being trained on how to do something. For instance, an hour long workshop on how to lead reflection activities after service projects would count as training. But the time spent during the reflection after the project could still count as service. Any time you spend training others that relates to your service, it would count under the service category.

Fundraising Hours: include raising funds directly in support of service activities that meet local, environmental, educational, public safety, homeland security, or other human needs. Examples of fundraising activities that members may perform include, but are not limited to the following: i.) Seeking donations for of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers tutor children to read; ii.) Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers; iii.) Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals; or iv.) or Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current members.

IMPORTANT: Only 20% of your hours can count as “Training” and only 10% of your hours can count as “Fundraising.” The remaining hours must fall under the “Service” category!

Prohibited Activities

AmeriCorps members may not engage in the activities below 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-Corporation funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

- a. Attempting to influence legislation;
- b. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- c. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- d. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;



- e. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- f. 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;
- g. 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;
- h. Providing a direct benefit to—
 - i. A business organized for profit;
 - ii. A labor union;
 - iii. A partisan political organization;
 - iv. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
 - v. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
- i. Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
- j. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
- k. Such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

Fundraising

AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of your program's service activities. 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.

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.

Safeguards Policy

To ensure member safety, AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service participants may not:

- be alone at a service site without supervision (in those cases when students aren't supervised, they must be paired up with at least one other person – i.e. handing out food, clothing and supplies to those that are homeless)
- participate in projects or undertake service activities that pose a significant safety risk;
- conduct service at a private residence unless it is authorized by the agency (i.e. working with senior citizens in their home; working with the Big Brothers Big Sisters' community program); or
- provide transportation for youth unless it is authorized by the agency and institution (i.e. Big Brothers Big Sisters).

Important Reminders:

- Let your service site know if you have any health or physical issues of which they should be aware.
- Wear clothing that is appropriate to your volunteer environment and to the work that you are doing.
- Any injury, no matter how small, should be reported at once to the service site and your site supervisor.

*A member should immediately contact his/her site supervisor and the ASLIS program coordinator if he/she feels that his/her safety is at risk during service hours.



Drug-Free Workplace Policy

Purpose and Goal

The AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service Program is committed to protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of all members and other individuals in community-based sites. We recognize that alcohol abuse and drug use pose a significant threat to our goals. We have established a drug-free workplace program that balances our respect for individuals with the need to maintain an alcohol and drug-free environment.

- This organization encourages members to voluntarily seek help with drug and alcohol problems.

Covered Workers

Any individual who conducts business for the organization, is applying for a position or is conducting business on the organization's property is covered by our drug-free workplace policy. Our policy includes, but is not limited to members.

Applicability

Our drug-free workplace policy is intended to apply whenever anyone is representing or conducting business for the organization. Therefore, this policy applies during all service hours and whenever conducting business or representing the organization.

Prohibited Behavior

It is a violation of our drug-free workplace policy to use, possess, sell, trade, and/or offer for sale alcohol, illegal drugs or intoxicants.

Notification of Convictions

Any member who is convicted of a criminal drug violation in the workplace must notify the organization in writing within five calendar days of the conviction. The organization will take appropriate action within 30 days of notification. Federal contracting agencies will be notified when appropriate.

Consequences

One of the goals of our drug-free workplace program is to encourage members to voluntarily seek help with alcohol and/or drug problems. If, however, an individual violates the policy, the consequences are serious.

In the case of applicants, if he or she violates the drug-free workplace policy, the offer of enrollment can be withdrawn. The applicant may reapply after one year and must successfully pass a pre-employment drug test.

If a member violates the policy, he or she will be terminated from their term of service.



Assistance

The AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service Program recognizes that alcohol and drug abuse and addiction are treatable illnesses. We also realize that early intervention and support improve the success of rehabilitation. To support our members, our drug-free workplace policy:

- Requires supervisors to share drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs for the institution with members.
- Encourages members to seek help if they are concerned that they or their family members may have a drug and/or alcohol problem.
- Encourages members to utilize the services of qualified professionals in the community to assess the seriousness of suspected drug or alcohol problems and identify appropriate sources of help.

Confidentiality

All information received by the organization through the drug-free workplace program is confidential communication. Access to this information is limited to those who have a legitimate need to know in compliance with relevant laws and management policies.

Shared Responsibility

A safe and productive drug-free workplace is achieved through cooperation and shared responsibility. Both members and supervisors have important roles to play.

All members are required to not report to their service site or be subject to duty while their ability to perform their service is impaired due to on- or off-duty use of alcohol or other drugs.

In addition, members are encouraged to:

- Be concerned about working in a safe environment.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to:

- Inform members of the drug-free workplace policy.
- Ensure members participate in the Drug Awareness Quiz *prior* to enrolling in the ASLIS program.

Communication

Communicating our drug-free workplace policy to both supervisors and members is critical to our success. To ensure all members are aware of their role in supporting our drug-free workplace program:

- All members will receive a written copy of the policy.
- Supervisors will post a drug-free work place statement in areas where members serve.



Criminal Background Check Policy

The Corporation for National & Community Service has established the following provision **effective October 1, 2009**:

Section 1612 of the Serve America Act adds a new section to the National and Community Service Act, codifying existing AmeriCorps criminal history check requirements, with two significant changes.

1. It expands coverage to all individuals receiving “a living allowance, stipend, national service educational award, or salary through a program receiving assistance under the national service laws”—regardless of the type of service the individual is performing or the individual’s access to vulnerable populations.
2. It states that an “individual shall be ineligible to serve in a [covered position] if such individual has been convicted of murder...” This is in addition to the current suitability criteria rendering ineligible individuals who are registered, or required to be registered, on a State sex offender registry.

ASLIS Policy:

1. The ASLIS Program Coordinator will conduct a National Sex Offender Public Registry (NSOPR) check on every applicant. The results of the NSOPR check are reviewed *before* an applicant can serve. An individual who is registered, or required to be registered, on a sex offender registry is automatically disqualified from serving.
2. All members enrolled after October 1, 2009 are required to complete a background criminal record check in order to participate in the program, regardless of type of service.
3. The *service* site supervisor must complete the **Site Agreement and Member Development Plan** with the member and check whether or not the member will receive a criminal background check *prior* to service.
4. If the service site supervisor checks yes, they will need to complete the **Criminal Record Check Verification Form** that verifies the member underwent a CORI check *prior* to service. The applicant’s identity must be verified by examining a government-issued photo identification card. If results are pending, the service site supervisor should note that they will send in a completed form later.
5. If your institution automatically conducts a CORI on every student applying for the ASLIS program, it is the site supervisor’s responsibility to fill out the **Criminal Record Check Verification Form**.
6. If neither the service site nor institution requires a criminal background check, then the member must complete the **CORI Request Form** and the ASLIS Program Coordinator will conduct the check.
7. The applicant may review and challenge the factual accuracy of a result before action is taken to exclude the applicant from the position.



8. The completed **Site Agreement and Member Development Plan** and **Criminal Record Check Verification Form** (if applicable) must be returned to the ASLIS Program Coordinator before the member will be enrolled in the program.

9. ASLIS must conduct a criminal registry check and NSOPR check the first time an individual applies to our program, but a second check is **not** required for an individual who is serving a consecutive term of service within the same program. A consecutive term of service means that there is no intervening break in service of more than 30 days during which the applicant did not serve in that specific program. However, if an individual applies for a second (or later) term of service with a different program, a new check is required.

Temporarily Serving under Supervision:

For any member whom the results of a State criminal registry check are pending: the member may serve temporarily at a service site with vulnerable populations, however, he/she is not permitted to have access to children, persons age 60 and older, or individuals with disabilities without being accompanied by an authorized program representative who has previously been cleared for such access.

In order for a member to serve temporarily with these populations until results come back, the authorized program representative who will supervise the member and the campus supervisor must complete the **Verification Form for Temporary Supervision** and submit it to the ASLIS Program Coordinator before that service can count. Once the member passes the criminal background check, he/she can serve at the site without the program representative's supervision.

Reasonable Accommodation

It is an AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service policy to provide accommodation, upon request by a qualified individual with disabilities, to any member unless doing so is an undue financial or administrative burden to your program. All selections and project assignments must be made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodations.

Non-Discrimination Policy

It is against the law for organizations that receive federal financial assistance from the Corporation for National and Community Service to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, sex, age, political affiliation, or religion. It is also unlawful to retaliate against any person who, or organization that, files a complaint about such discrimination. In addition to filing a complaint with local and state agencies that are responsible for resolving discrimination complaints, you may bring a complaint to the attention of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

At any time, persons who believe they have been subjected to harassment in violation of non-harassment provisions of applicable laws, regulations or this policy may raise their concern claim with the Corporation's Equal Opportunity Office. However, claims not brought to the EO Office within 45 days of occurrence may not be accepted in a formal complaint of



discrimination. The Corporation does not retaliate, or tolerate any attempt at retaliation, against a person who raises harassment concerns in good faith.

If you believe that you or others have been discriminated against, or if you want more information, please speak with your campus supervisor or contact:

Kate Beyer
200 Boston Ave., Suite G700
Medford, MA, 02155
617-627-2033
Kate.Beyer@tufts.edu

Grievance Procedures

- A. The member understands that AmeriCorps Student Leaders in Service has a grievance procedure to resolve disputes concerning the member's suspension, dismissal, service evaluation or proposed service assignment.
- B. The member understands that, as a participant of the program, he/she may file a grievance in accordance with the Program's grievance procedure.
- C. In the event that informal efforts to resolve disputes are unsuccessful, AmeriCorps members, labor unions, and other interested individuals may seek resolution through the following grievance procedures. These procedures are intended to apply to service-related issues, such as assignments, evaluations, suspensions, or release for cause, as well as issues related to non-selection of members, and displacement of employees, or duplication of activities by AmeriCorps.
- 1. OPTIONAL ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR):** ADR is available, but must be selected within 45 days of the underlying dispute. If an aggrieved party chooses ADR as a first option, a neutral party designated by the program will attempt to facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution. The neutral party must not have participated in any previous decisions concerning the issue in dispute. ADR is confidential, non-binding, and informal. No communications or proceedings of ADR may be referred to at the grievance hearing or arbitration stages. The neutral party may not participate in subsequent proceedings. If ADR is chosen by the aggrieved party, the deadlines for convening a hearing and of a hearing decision, 30 and 60 days respectively, are held in abeyance until the conclusion of ADR. At the initial session of ADR, the neutral party must provide written notice to the aggrieved party of his or her right to request a hearing. If ADR does not resolve the matter within 30 calendar days, the neutral party must again notify the aggrieved party of his or her right to request a hearing. At any time, the aggrieved party may decline ADR and proceed directly to the hearing process.
 - 2. GRIEVANCE HEARING:** An aggrieved party may request a grievance hearing without participating in ADR or, if ADR is selected, if it fails to result in a mutually agreeable resolution. The aggrieved party should make a written request for a



hearing to Program Coordinator. A request for a hearing must be made within one year after the date of the alleged occurrence. At the time a request for a hearing is made, the program should make available to the aggrieved party information that it relied upon in its disciplinary decision. The program will arrange for one or more pre-hearing conferences at a time mutually convenient to the parties. Pre-hearing conferences are not a substitute for a hearing. They are intended to facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution of the matter to make a hearing unnecessary or to narrow the issues to be decided at the hearing. The format of the pre-hearing conference may be flexible, involving meetings with one party at a time and/or with both parties together. Pre-hearing conferences are conducted by the campus fellowship coordinator. The hearing will be conducted by the Program Coordinator. The person conducting the hearing may not have participated in any previous decisions concerning the issue in dispute. (Note: To ensure impartiality in the hearing, programs may choose to designate someone other than the program director to approve disciplinary actions regarding members, leaving the director available to conduct grievance hearings.) A hearing must be held no later than 30 calendar days after the filing of the grievance, and a written decision must be made no later than 60 calendar days after filing.

3. **BINDING ARBITRATION:** An aggrieved party may request binding arbitration if a grievance hearing decision is adverse or if no decision is made within 60 days of the filing of the grievance. The arbitrator must be independent and selected by agreement of the parties. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer will appoint one within 15 calendar days after receiving a request from one of the parties. An arbitration proceeding will be held no later than 45 calendar days after the request for arbitration, or no later than 30 calendar days after the appointment of an arbitrator by the Corporation's CEO. An arbitration decision will be made no later than 30 calendar days after the commencement of the arbitration proceeding. The cost of arbitration will be divided evenly between the parties, unless the aggrieved party prevails, in which case the program will pay the total cost of the proceeding as well as the prevailing party's attorneys' fees.

Exiting Process

My AmeriCorps Portal

Once you have exited the program, you can use the "My AmeriCorps/AmeriCorps Online Payment System" to request your Eli Segal AmeriCorps Education Award benefits online. Once you register, you can create your requests online and submit to your Education or Financial Institution for processing. Through the online payment system you can request AmeriCorps Education Award payments, Interest Accrual payments and Forbearance on your qualified student loans. Additionally, this automated system will let you view the status of your requests, provide up to date information on your AmeriCorps Education Award balances, show the history of your requests and even let you update your contact information online.

1. Go to the AmeriCorps.gov website
2. In the "For Individuals" section find the "My AmeriCorps" box located on the lower right hand side.



3. Click on “Visit My AmeriCorps now!”
4. Click on where it says “Register to create a new Member/Alum account.”
5. Enter your Last Name, Date of Birth, Social Security Number and Email Address

Once you have successfully registered, you will receive an email with a link giving you access into the system. Once there, you will be asked to create a User Name and Password. The system will then bring up your personalized homepage and show your award balance. Once you have submitted a request for payment, you will be able to view the status of your requests from your home page. You will also be able to view your payment history on your homepage. In addition, you can edit and update your mailing address, permanent address, email address and phone numbers.

To request your Segal AmeriCorps Education Award payment:

1. Login at my.americorps.gov
2. Click “Create Education Award Payment Request” under the My Education Award tab on the left.
3. Verify that all of the pre-populated information on your request form is correct;
4. Fill in the amount you authorize the National Service Trust to pay the Institution out of your available award balance;
5. Choose whether your payment will be used to *pay a loan* or to pay for *current education expenses*;

If you chose to pay for *current education expenses*, enter the semester or term for which you are authorizing payment;

4. Search for and select your Institution. If you cannot find your Institution, select the “not found” button. This brings up a new page where you will need to enter the Institution’s name and address, as well as any other information that you know such as a phone number or contact name. This information, along with your request, will be sent to the Trust, and someone there will then contact the Institution within 5 business days to get them registered for the system;
5. Check the terms of agreement boxes if you agree with the statements;
6. Click the “Submit” button. Your payment request will be sent to your Institution, which will complete the request and forward it to the Trust for payment.

If you have questions about the automated process, please visit:

<https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/answers/list>

For any questions about the education award, contact The National Service Hotline at:
1-800-942-2677

ASLIS Frequently Asked Questions

Can I participate if I’m an international student?

You can participate in ASLIS as long as you meet the AmeriCorps eligibility requirements. They are:



1. Be at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service;
2. Have a high school diploma or its equivalent; or
3. Be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States.

Primary documentation of status as a U.S. citizen or national. The following are acceptable forms of certifying status as a U.S. citizen or national:

- (1) A 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;
- (2) A United States passport;
- (3) A report of birth abroad of a U.S. Citizen (FS-240) issued by the State Department;
- (4) A certificate of birth-foreign service (FS 545) issued by the State Department;
- (5) A certification of report of birth (DS-1350) issued by the State Department;
- (6) A certificate of naturalization (Form N-550 or N-570) issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service; or
- (7) A certificate of citizenship (Form N-560 or N-561) issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. 110

Primary documentation of status as a lawful permanent resident alien of the United States.

The following are acceptable forms of certifying status as a lawful permanent resident alien of the United States:

- (1) Permanent Resident Card, INS Form I-551;
- (2) Alien Registration Receipt Card, INS Form I-551;
- (3) A passport indicating that the INS has approved it as temporary evidence of lawful admission for permanent residence; or
- (4) A Departure Record (INS Form I-94) indicating that the INS has approved it as temporary evidence of lawful admission for permanent residence.

Can service hours abroad count?

Because AmeriCorps is a domestic program, any service hours outside of the country cannot count toward your total hours. However, members can serve at international organizations as long as the work is done in the country and any planning or training hours for international service work can count (i.e. planning for alternative breaks).

Is AmeriCorps like Peace Corps?

Yes. AmeriCorps is often referred to as "the domestic Peace Corps." Both agencies are committed to service, and both offer challenging and rewarding full-time opportunities. Peace Corps assignments are all overseas, and AmeriCorps members serve only in the US. While Peace Corps Volunteers serve for two years, a stint in AmeriCorps usually lasts 10 months to one year. (Some AmeriCorps projects also offer part-time opportunities, and some AmeriCorps members serve more than one term of service.)

What is the National Service Trust?

The National Service Trust, also known as the Trust, is the department within CNCS that handles all matters related to the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.

Who can I contact for more information about my Education Award?

If you need additional information, you can contact The National Service Hotline at: 1-800-942-2677. Customer service representatives are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (EST).



How long will it take to process a request I make on My AmeriCorps?

We anticipate that Institutions will promptly process all requests that come through the system, but you can check on the status of your request at any time by going to your homepage and viewing your list of pending requests. It should take about 2 to 4 weeks.

How will I know when a payment has been made?

You have the choice either to receive notification e-mail or simply to log in to your account to view the status of pending requests. The system's default option is set to send you e-mail notifications of any change to your account.

How can I prove I served in AmeriCorps?

Certification of Service Letter

Once you have completed a term of service you can print out a Certification of Service letter that certifies that you were serving in an AmeriCorps program for the period you actually served.

To print out a Certification of Service letter, follow the steps below:

1. Log into My AmeriCorps.
2. Click the "My Service Letter" tab on the left.
3. Select your *Service Term* from the dropdown.
4. Select "Certification of Service Letter" from the drop down.
5. Enter the name and address of the intended recipient.
6. Click the *Print* button.



You can use this page to track your hours during your AmeriCorps year.

Month	Service	Training	Fundraising	Total
September '11				
October '11				
November '11				
December '11				
January '12				
February '12				
March '12				
April '12				
May '12				
June '12				
July '12				
August '12				
TOTAL				