



AmeriCorps FAQ's

What is AmeriCorps?

- AmeriCorps, the federal agency for National Service, brings people together to tackle the country's most pressing challenges through national service and volunteering. Pronounced "Ameri-core", it is the only federal agency tasked with elevating service and volunteerism across America. There are opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to give their time and talent to strengthen communities across the country.
- AmeriCorps members serve with nonprofits, schools, government agencies and tribes dedicated to the improving the lives of all Americans. AmeriCorps helps make service to others a cornerstone of our national culture. You can learn more about the variety of AmeriCorps programs by visiting AmeriCorps.gov.

What is the difference between an AmeriCorps member and volunteer?

- An AmeriCorps member is an individual serving in an approved national service position with an AmeriCorps program. An AmeriCorps member serves for a pre-determined term of service and is eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award upon successful completion of service. AmeriCorps members are supervised by program staff and often receive a living allowance.
- Volunteers are not eligible for an AmeriCorps Education Award, usually do not receive compensation and might not be required to provide consistent, sustained service. Volunteers and AmeriCorps members might serve side-by-side. In answering questions for the application, do not confuse "volunteers" with "AmeriCorps members"

What is the relationship between the Napa County Office of Education and AmeriCorps?

- The Napa County Office of Education (NCOE) Community Programs department administers AmeriCorps programs serving both locally in Napa and Sonoma counties and across the state of California. Our mission is to provide AmeriCorps members an opportunity to support children, families, and the broader community. AmeriCorps programs at NCOE are funded through the State commission for AmeriCorps programs, California Volunteers.

What are the benefits of becoming an AmeriCorps member?

- **Living Allowance**-Each member will be given a monthly living allowance (stipend) to use for rent and living expenses. The monthly stipend is taxable income.

- **Education Awards** – Members can use these awards for qualified student loans, educational expenses, and future tuition payments). The current total education award for a full term of service is \$10,000.
- **Loan Deferment and Interest Forbearance**- Individuals in approved AmeriCorps positions are eligible for forbearance for most federally-guaranteed student loans. In addition, interest payments that accrue during service may be eligible for repayment by AmeriCorps.
- **Professional Development**- Jump-start your career and gain transferable skills employers value including leadership, teamwork, and problem solving.

Do members get vacation days and/or holidays?

- Yes, members who commit to a full service term receive 5 personal days and 10 sick or bereavement days. AmeriCorps members also generally follow the holiday schedules of their assigned partner sites and schools.

Do you provide housing?

- No, at this time AmeriCorps programs at NCOE do not provide housing. Our team will help you connect with local resources and other members serving in the area.

Do I have to commit to the full term of service?

- Yes, members must serve the complete duration of their contracts, even if they complete the required hours of service (1700 or 900) in advance of that date. Typically our AmeriCorps terms of service are either 10 or 11 months for full time, and 6 months for half time.

May I waive the program’s health insurance and continue using my own?

- Yes, you are welcome to continue with your own insurance. We encourage all members to compare plans closely during the contracting period. Members who reject this benefit may be asked to show proof of insurance.

Would I qualify for CalFresh?

- Very possibly, though each situation is unique. Members should apply for CalFresh benefits upon enrollment. Eligibility depends on other income and circumstances beyond our program’s control. Assistance with applying to CalFresh is provided by each Regional Program Coordinator.

Would I need to drive my own vehicle?

- Members are responsible for having reliable transportation to and from their designated service site. Depending what region you are serving in CA, there may or may not be many public transportation options. Some partner sites may also require use of personal vehicle during service, and would provide standard reimbursement for any personal vehicle use required as part of your service hours.

Will I serve in person or remotely?

- All AmeriCorps members are expected to be able to report to service in person. Teleservice may be required at times only while we continue to navigate COVID safety requirements and needs specific to our various regions and site protocols.