

# GLOSSARY OF NATIONAL SERVICE TERMS

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<b>Act</b>	The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993
<b>ACTION</b>	The Federal domestic volunteer agency, established in 1971 to administer VISTA and the senior volunteer programs (Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and RSVP). ACTION became part of the Corporation for National and Community Service in April of 1994.
<b>acquirers of service</b>	Those people who benefit from the service provided by participants in national service programs. We use this term rather than “service recipients” because we believe that in order to truly benefit from provided service, citizens must take an active role in the acquisition of that service.
<b>administrative costs</b>	Administrative costs are costs associated with the overall administration of a program. Such costs include: indirect costs as identified in applicable provisions of OMB circulars that relate to indirect costs; costs for financial, accounting, auditing, or contracting functions; costs for insurance that protects the entity that operates the program; and that portion of the salaries and benefits of the director and any other program staff equal to the portion of the time that is not spent in support of specific project objectives (meaning recruiting, training, placing, or supervising participants).
<b>AmeriCorps</b>	<p>President Clinton’s new national service initiative. All AmeriCorps programs are united by four common goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Getting Things Done</b> through direct and demonstrable service that meets communities’ education, public safety, environmental, and health and other human needs</li><li><b>Strengthening Communities</b> by bringing together Americans of all ages and backgrounds in the common effort to improve our communities</li><li><b>Encouraging Responsibility</b> by encouraging members to explore and exercise their responsibilities toward their communities, their families, and themselves</li><li><b>Expanding Opportunity</b> by enhancing members’ educational opportunities, job experience, and life skills.</li></ul> <p>AmeriCorps is not a "job"; it is not "job training"; it is not a typical volunteer position. It is a <b>stipended service</b> position.</p>
<b>AmeriCorps Care</b>	The contract agency in Washington, DC, that administers reimbursement for child care expenses incurred by dependents of full-time, qualified, AmeriCorps members. (800) 570-4542.
<b>AmeriCorps member</b>	An individual serving on a full-time or part-time basis in an AmeriCorps program who is eligible to receive an education award or alternative post service benefit. AmeriCorps members are not “employees”; they are not “apprentices”: they are not typical volunteers. They are AmeriCorps members.

<b>AmeriCorps National Service Network</b>	The network of all AmeriCorps programs, including AmeriCorps*USA, AmeriCorps*VISTA, and AmeriCorps*NCCC.
<b>AmeriCorps*NCCC</b>	The National Civilian Community Corps, a new program authorized by Congress and administered by the Corporation for National Service.
<b>AmeriCorps*USA</b>	This term refers to those programs in the AmeriCorps National Service Network funded through grants to state commissions: local, state, and national nonprofit organizations: federal agencies; and Indian tribes and territories that address unmet community needs.
<b>AmeriCorps*USA National Direct</b>	The AmeriCorps grants competition that supports national and multistate nonprofit organizations, federal agencies, and professional corps.
<b>AmeriCorps*VISTA</b>	The thirty-year old VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) program is now a part of AmeriCorps and is administered by the Corporation for National Service. AmeriCorp*VISTAs engage in capacity-building activities that result in the creation or expansion of programs meeting critical low-income community needs.
<b>capacity-building</b>	Creating the infrastructure necessary to support needed programs and services inside the communities. Helping a nonprofit housing program establish a volunteer network or creating a community watch program to help control and prevent crime are examples of capacity-building activities.
<b>CCC</b>	The Civilian Conservation Corps is a program set up under Franklin D. Roosevelt to provide job opportunities for young men during the Depression. The CCC built roads, blazed trails, and other environmental service projects.
<b>community-based agency</b>	A private nonprofit organization (including a church or other religious entity) that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community; and is engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety community needs.
<b>Commission on National and Community Service (CNCS)</b>	Established by the National and Community Service Act of 1990 to coordinate and fund service activities nationwide, the Commission became part of the Corporation in October 1993.
<b>Compelling personal circumstances</b>	Regulations state, “An individual who is released from a term of service for compelling personal circumstances, in accordance with #2522.230 (a) of this chapter, is eligible to receive a pro-rated education or Stafford loan forgiveness award...” The Corporation gives the following examples for compelling personal circumstances: sickness or critical illness of the Member, death or critical illness of a member of the member’s immediate family, termination of a project site if reassignment to another project is not possible. In other words, compelling personal circumstances are issues outside of the corpsmembers’ control. Examples of situations that would not constitute compelling personal circumstances include: returning to school, getting a job, a member finding out s/he doesn’t like AmeriCorps, the living allowance is too small, etc.

# SAMPLE

## Corporation for National (and Community) Service “The Corporation”

A federal corporation which funds AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America programs (as well as senior service programs). The Corporation was authorized by the signing of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993.

## corps

This word is pronounced as “core” (as in “apple core”)—we discourage the pronunciation of the word as “corpse.”

## corpsmembers

Members of AmeriCorps and other corps programs are called corpsmembers. We commonly use this as one word unless participants are linked directly to a named program (e.g., AmeriCorps members).

## Corpsmember benefits

AmeriCorps member benefits do not include paid time off, paid holidays, or paid sick leave. Time is credited, however, for voter registration, voting, jury duty, and military reserve and guard duty (for a period of no more than the two-week annual active duty). Also included in AmeriCorps member benefits are training/education, health insurance (for full-time corpsmembers not otherwise covered), and child care (for eligible full-time corpsmembers).

## direct and demonstrable

The general criteria for selection and evaluation of national service programs include the achievement of direct and demonstrable results in communities. “Direct” refers to a direct connection between the actions of a participant and the program result. “Demonstrable” refers to the ability of a program to show from a variety of sources including visual data, interviews, and testimony from experts that it has, in fact, achieved results.

## direct service

Direct service is not generally considered to be clerical duty for an agency; it is not answering the AmeriCorps phone. Direct service is providing service directly to the community and/or community residents. Direct service may be tutoring, cleaning a river bed, teaching English, painting a home, assisting a teacher, counseling a crime victim, or teaching someone CPR.

## DVSA

Domestic Volunteer Service Act. This statute authorized VISTA and the National Senior Service Corps in 1970. VISTA was originally authorized under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

## education award

A benefit of \$4,725 (full-time) or \$2,363 (part-time) that AmeriCorps members may receive after **successful completion of a term of service**. The award is paid directly to a lending or educational institution and may be used to pay off federal student loans (Perkins, Stafford, PLUS, etc.) or to finance college, graduate school, or approved vocational training. The education award is not an entitlement; it is not a cash award; it is not a “scholarship.” It can not be transferred to other family members.

## empowerment zones and enterprise communities

Areas selected by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Agriculture to receive federal grants and tax breaks based on need and on the creation of an innovative strategic plan. The Corporation gives funding priority to these areas.

## FGP

Foster Grandparents Program, a service program for low-income seniors administered by the Corporation.

<b>FTE</b>	Full-time equivalency. Two part-time AmeriCorps members fill approximately one FTE position.
<b>GED</b>	General Equivalency Diploma. A degree obtained by examination which may substitute for a high school diploma. An individual must agree to obtain a GED or high school diploma before using the AmeriCorps education award.
<b>hold harmless agreement</b>	A hold harmless agreement is signed by a project sponsor/host site in which that entity agrees to take responsibility for harm/injury that might occur on the project site.
<b>host site</b>	This is an entity that acts as a project sponsor and is responsible for the actual site on which a project is to be performed. This entity may provide task specific training, technical assistance supervision, or other services as agreed to in a “contract” between the program and the host site.
<b>HUD</b>	Department of Housing and Urban Development, a federal agency eligible for national direct AmeriCorps grants.
<b>impacts</b>	National service programs strive for three impacts on communities: getting things done through direct and demonstrable service; strengthening communities by creating partnerships among individuals and among institutions; and fostering citizenship by enhancing participants’ educational opportunities, skills, and commitment to their communities.
<b>independent living</b>	Self-sufficiency for the elderly, people with disabilities, and others who might otherwise be institutionalized. It is a national priority for AmeriCorps programs and the primary goal of the Senior Companion Program. This is often part of an intergenerational service-learning program as well.
<b>JTPA</b>	Job Training Partnership Act. An agency designed to train individuals who are economically disadvantaged or are dislocated workers.
<b>Learn and Serve America</b>	School-based or community-based programs sponsored by the Corporation to promote service-learning as an integral part of the educational experience for youth (K–16).
<b>Living allowance</b>	A living allowance is not a “wage”; it is not a “salary”; it is not based on the number of hours a corpsmember serves. A living allowance is a stipend. It is provided to a corpsmember enrolled and active in an AmeriCorps program. Other service programs providing living allowances include: Peace Corps, Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions.
<b>NASCC</b>	National Association of Service and Conservation Corps. An organization based in Washington, DC that is devoted to promoting and assisting service and conservation corps throughout the U.S. NASCC provides a health care program for corpsmembers in member organizations.
<b>National and Community Service Act of 1990</b>	Originally passed by Congress and signed into law in 1990 to establish the Commission on National and Community Service, the Act of 1990 was amended significantly by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 to establish the Corporation for National Service.

**National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993**

Act that amended the National and Community Service Act of 1990, establishing the Corporation for National Service by combining the Commission for National and Community Service and ACTION.

**national identity**

The sense of purpose and membership in a common program that all AmeriCorps members share. National identity can be strengthened by everything from buttons and T-shirts to reflection activities, common national service projects, and civic education.

**national priorities**

Eight areas of concentration identified by the Corporation, in 1994, to help focus and strengthen the work of AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America in each of the four issue areas.

EDUCATION-school readiness and school success

PUBLIC SAFETY-crime prevention and crime control

ENVIRONMENT-neighborhood and natural environment

HUMAN NEEDS-health and home

The 1995 priority areas included:

EDUCATION-school success

PUBLIC SAFETY-community policing and victim assistance

ENVIRONMENT-neighborhood/community environment

HUMAN NEEDS-early childhood development

**National Senior Service Corps**

Also called “Senior Corps.” This corps encompasses all the senior service programs administered by the Corporation—Senior Companions, Foster Grandparents, and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. Formerly, the Senior Corps was called the National Senior Volunteer Corps, and before that, the OAVP (Older American Volunteer Program).

**National Service Trust Fund**

Also “Trust Fund” or “Trust.” A trust fund in the United States Treasury Department established by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 to hold and to disperse AmeriCorps education awards.

**NOFA**

Notice of Funds Availability. A legal notification, published in the Federal Register, announcing the availability of funds for a new grant program.

**nondisplacement**

AmeriCorps members cannot perform any services that would result in a paid employee losing a job or failure to hire a paid employee.

**OMB**

The Federal government’s Office of Management and Budget assists the President in preparing the annual federal budget and oversees its execution. OMB must approve the Corporation’s regulations, applications, forms, and any other documents that will affect the public.

**program**

A coordinated group of activities linked by common elements such as recruitment, selection, and training of participants and staff, regular group activities and assignment to projects organized for the purpose of achieving the mission and goals of national and community service.

**project**

An activity or a set of activities carried out through a program. For example, a Learn and Serve America program may conduct a drug awareness project.

<b>RFP</b>	Request for Proposal issued by the Corporation, or another agency, to solicit program applications for available grant funds.
<b>RSVP</b>	Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (formerly Retired Senior Volunteer Program). Senior volunteers provide a wide range of volunteer services. Administered by the Corporation.
<b>SCP</b>	Senior Companion Program. Seniors assisting other seniors in living independently. The program is administered by the Corporation.
<b>school-age youth</b>	School-age youth are individuals between the ages of 5 and 17, inclusive; and children with disabilities as defined in section 602(a)(1) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, who receive services under part B of such Act.
<b>SEA</b>	State Educational Agency. An SEA may apply for a direct grant from the Corporation to support Learn and Serve America (K - 12) programs.
<b>service-learning</b>	An educational method by which participants learn and develop through active participation in service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community; is coordinated with a school or community service program and with the community; is integrated into and enhances the lifelong learning of a participant; and includes structured time for the participants to reflect on the service experience.
<b>service site</b>	A service site is not a “work” site; it is not a “job” site. It is a service site—a place where service is being performed by corpsmembers and perhaps other people who are volunteers and/or employees.
<b>SOS</b>	Summer of Service was an eight to ten week national service program for participants of all ages and backgrounds that began in 1993. The Corporation’s 1994 national service summer program focused on meeting public safety needs and was called Summer of Safety.
<b>state commission</b>	A 15 - 25 member, independent, bipartisan commission appointed by a governor to implement service programs in the state. Each state commission receives funding from the Corporation and is overseen by an executive director. The state commission’s duties include developing a state plan, submitting the state applications to the Corporation, and overseeing funded programs.
<b>state competitive funds</b>	One third of the total AmeriCorps*USA funds are awarded to state commissions on a competitive basis. Learn and Serve America community-based programs were also selected on a competitive basis.
<b>state formula funds</b>	One third of the total AmeriCorps*USA funds are awarded to state commissions according to a population-based formula. Learn and Serve America school-based programs were also awarded with formula funds.
<b>state plan</b>	A policy document which describes the mission and goals of a state as well as how national and community service will be promoted, coordinated, and supported in the state.

**Successful completion  
of a term of service**

Successful completion of service is not necessarily just a time frame; it is not necessarily just a targeted number of hours; it is not necessarily just the completion of training or education. Successful completion of service is exactly what it says! It is determined by each program and must contain at least 1700 hours served within 9 to 12 months (full-time); a minimum of 900 hours served within 2 years (3 years for those enrolled in education] (part-time). It may include the satisfactory completion of a training or educational component. It may also include other factors as set forth by individual programs in a written agreement.

**supplantation rule**

Corporation assistance may not be used to replace state and local public funds that had previously been used to support a program.

**TA**

Technical assistance, provided by the Corporation, by staff of the state commission, by a national TA provider, or by any one else.