

Memorandum

To: Corporation Representatives to State Commissions

Cc: Corporation State Office Staff
State Commission Executive Directors and Commission Chairs
Corporation Program Staff

From: Lois Nembhard
Acting Director, AmeriCorps State and National

Mike Berning
Director, Field Liaison

Date: June 3, 2009

Re: Role of the Corporation's Representative to a State Commission

The attached policy guidance is intended to clarify the role of the Corporation's *ex officio* members of State Commissions on national service. Although some of our *ex officio* members have served for quite awhile, a number of others have taken on this responsibility in the past year. And we expect a number of new State Directors to come on board shortly. We thought it would be useful to set out a common set of expectations regarding the roles and responsibilities that come with this designation.

The most important goals of an *ex officio* member are to represent the Corporation and its interests on the commission, and to support the commission's mission and work. These and other roles and responsibilities are described more fully in the attached guidance. Should you have any questions, please contact one of us.

Attachment



WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE CORPORATION'S REPRESENTATIVE TO A STATE COMMISSION?

June 3, 2009

The Corporation's Representative to the Commission serves as an *ex officio* member. Ex Officio only means that the person serves as a member by virtue of some other status, in this case the person's position as Corporation employee. Most often, the *ex officio* member works in the Corporation State Office.

Status as an *ex officio* member, by itself, has no effect on rights or privileges of the member. The role of the Corporation representative is outlined in 45 CFR 2550.50 (i)¹. The Corporation has chosen to make its representative a non-voting member. Governors can also appoint additional *ex-officio* members if they so choose.² The only role within a Commission from which an *ex-officio*, non-voting member is excluded by regulation is that of chair.³

As the Corporation's Representative to the Commission you:

- Represent the Corporation and its interests;
- Like all commissioners, represent the broader interests of national service and volunteerism;
- Like all commissioners, support the mission, goals, and objectives of the Commission;
- Like all commissioners, help ensure that the Commission accomplishes its primary duties, including developing a comprehensive national service plan, assembling applications for funding and approved national service positions, and administering national and community service programs in the State; and
- Like all commissioners, bring your own experiences, perspectives, and values to the table.

As the Corporation's Representative, some of your key responsibilities with respect to your commission are to:

¹ 45 CFR 2550.50 (i) *The role of the Corporation representative*. The Corporation will designate one of its employees to serve as a representative to each State or group of States. This individual must be included as an ex officio member on the State Commission, and may be designated as a voting member by the chief executive officer of a State. However, because the Corporation wishes to encourage State autonomy in the design and development of the State plan and in State national service programs, States are discouraged from allowing the Corporation representative to vote. In general, the Corporation representative will be responsible for assisting States in carrying out national service activities.

² 45 CFR 2550.50 (d) *Appointment of ex officio, non-voting members of a State Commission*. The chief executive officer of a State may appoint as ex officio, non-voting members of the State Commission officers or employees of State agencies operating community service, youth service, education, social service, senior service, or job training programs.

³ 45 CFR 2550.50 (f) *Selection of Chairperson*. The chairperson is elected by the voting members of a State Commission. To be eligible to serve as chairperson, an individual must be an appointed, voting member of a State Commission.

- Keep the Commission staff informed about your office activities, grant-making, and administrative matters of interest to them;
- Keep other Corporation staff, including the appropriate AmeriCorps State and National program officer, informed about the Commission's activities and your activities as a commissioner;
- Coordinate information sharing and gathering among our various constituencies;
- Be knowledgeable about the Commission, its mission, goals, and objectives;
- Encourage State Office involvement in appropriate Commission-related activities, e.g. training, conferences, and state service planning;
- Maintain regular contact with Commission staff;
- Support and promote national service in your state; and
- Build a strong, cooperative and collaborative relationship between the Commission and the state office.

As a commissioner, your key roles are to:

- Assist the State in carrying out national and community service activities;
- Promote the Commission and its leadership role with respect to national service and volunteerism within the State;
- Be as actively involved and participative as possible, as measured by attendance at meetings, participation in committee work, and involvement in other Commission activities;
- Be thoroughly knowledgeable about the Commission, its mission, goals, and objectives;
- Work closely with volunteer leadership in support of the Commission;
- Serve as a resource for fellow commissioners, as needed;
- Be an advocate for all national service programs and initiatives, especially those funded or supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service;
- Keep your office's staff apprised of Commission activities, goals, and objectives;
- Encourage the public's knowledge of and involvement in appropriate Commission-related work, including attending meetings and participating in state service planning;
- Help ensure that all commissioners are knowledgeable about AmeriCorps*VISTA and Senior Corps programming; and
- Communicate with other commissioners and Commission staff, as appropriate, including providing them with information that they might not otherwise receive.