



## CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### AmeriCorps NCCC Program Specific Questions

Last update 12/3/2021

#### **I am an AmeriCorps NCCC member with questions about my service/benefits, who should I contact?**

AmeriCorps NCCC members with questions can review the FAQs below or contact their regional campus staff. Additional information is available by contacting the National Service Hotline at 1-800-942-2677, via [webform](#), or [LIVE CHAT](#).

#### **1. Does NCCC require members to be vaccinated for COVID-19?**

AmeriCorps requires COVID-19 vaccinations for participants in the AmeriCorps NCCC program to maximize the health and safety of members, staff, program sponsors, and the communities we serve. This decision also aligns with President Biden's six-pronged, [comprehensive national strategy](#) to combat the virus.

NCCC follows CDC guidelines regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. In accordance with the CDC, to be considered fully vaccinated NCCC requires a single dose of the J&J vaccine or 2 doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. Please note that this definition of fully vaccinated may change if the CDC changes its definition of fully vaccinated.

AmeriCorps NCCC members must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have an approved reasonable accommodation. As part of the health clearance process, applicants will receive information about the disability related and religious accommodation process. Members with approved reasonable accommodations will be considered not fully vaccinated and will follow appropriate safety precautions.

**[Updated 12/2/2021]**

#### **2. Can a project sponsor receive proof of vaccination of the members serving at their project?**

AmeriCorps NCCC cannot provide sponsors with proof of vaccination for the members serving at their project. AmeriCorps NCCC can, however, share whether the team is fully or not fully vaccinated. Under no circumstances will AmeriCorps share any member's individual vaccination status with a project sponsor. **[Updated 10/15/2021]**

#### **3. What measures is AmeriCorps taking to support the health and safety of NCCC members?**

NCCC has developed protocols for social distancing, cleaning, housing, use of face coverings, and health screenings based on guidance from the CDC and other experts.

- All members are required to either be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have an approved reasonable accommodation.
- Members with an approved reasonable accommodation will be considered to be not fully vaccinated and will follow specified safety guidelines.
- To ensure necessary social distancing, the NCCC program will utilize a large and dispersed campus facility with multiple training rooms to minimize interaction.



- In training sessions where multiple teams participate, NCCC will use large training facilities to ensure adequate distance between members.
- AmeriCorps will provide NCCC members with face coverings that meet CDC guidance. Fully vaccinated and not fully vaccinated members will wear face coverings when required by project sponsors, federal, state or local authorities, or businesses/organizations; when in public indoor settings in areas of high or substantial transmission; or when NCCC leadership determines conditions warrant, unless a reasonable accommodation is granted. Not fully vaccinated members will receive additional information about their masking and distancing requirements.
- Routine health screenings will utilize regular temperature checks for everyone on campus. Any member with COVID-19 symptoms is required to disclose those symptoms to NCCC staff immediately.

**[Updated 10/15/2021]**

#### **4. When does AmeriCorps screen and test NCCC members for COVID-19?**

- **As a preventative measure:**
  - Prior to arrival on all campuses, NCCC staff contact all candidates and use a questionnaire to screen for symptoms of COVID-19.
  - Upon **arrival** on campus all members, regardless of vaccination status, are tested for COVID-19 as a preventative measure, when tests are available.
  - After arrival on campus, NCCC staff **screen members** daily for COVID-19 symptoms as part of AmeriCorps' strategy to provide a safe service environment.
- **When symptomatic:**
  - Any members who report COVID-19 symptoms will be tested at a local testing facility.
- **When a member has had close contact\* with someone that tested positive for COVID**
  - If a member or candidate has been in close contact\* with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, the member or candidate will be required to follow AmeriCorps protocols until they are cleared to return to service. Protocols include testing and daily health screenings; quarantine or isolation may be required based on the specific situation.

\* Close contact is defined by the CDC as being within six feet of an individual for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. **[Updated 10/15/2021]**

#### **5. What is the protocol if a member contracts COVID-19 during their term of service?**

If a member presents with COVID-19 symptoms, the member will be isolated either on campus or at the service site pending testing. Rooms have been set aside for this purpose. NCCC staff will ensure the member is transported to a medical facility for a COVID-19 test, and the member will remain in isolation until the results of the test are obtained. If a member tests positive, and does not require hospitalization, they will be isolated for the duration of their illness. Members with negative test results will return to their prior housing. **[updated]**



7/16/2020]

## **6. How does AmeriCorps monitor transmission rates in the communities where NCCC members serve?**

NCCC staff regularly review the [CDC's COVID-19 data tracker](#) to monitor transmission rates in each county where members serve, as well as national, state, and local health guidance to ensure awareness of the latest developments as we plan for projects and activities. NCCC leaders adjust plans depending on the situation, keeping member safety as the highest priority. **[updated 10/15/2021]**

## **7. I need a reasonable accommodation to serve in AmeriCorps NCCC because of my medical history and COVID-19. What should I do?**

AmeriCorps provides religious and disability-related reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals in accordance with federal law. Any NCCC member needing a reasonable accommodation should contact the AmeriCorps NCCC Health Unit at [ncccimmunizations@cns.gov](mailto:ncccimmunizations@cns.gov). **[updated 10/15/2021]**

## **8. Does AmeriCorps anticipate that project sponsors will need to meet any additional health and/or safety measures related to COVID-19?**

Project sponsors will be expected to follow national, state, and local health and safety guidelines for COVID-19. The health and safety of NCCC members remains the highest priority. Specific questions regarding social distancing and other health and safety guidelines related to NCCC projects should be directed to regional NCCC staff. **[updated 10/15/2021]**

## **9. The CARES Act increased the upper age limit for participation as an AmeriCorps NCCC member to 26 years old. What does this mean for applicants?**

Under the CARES Act, Section 3514(d), the upper age limit for AmeriCorps NCCC members is 26. AmeriCorps NCCC applies the upper age limit at the time a member arrives on campus and is activated as a member. That means individuals must be on campus and activated as members for at least one day before turning 27. The 26-year upper age limit will remain in effect until further notice. If you are interested in applying, [visit our website](#). **[updated 4/20/2020]**

## **10. As part of my AmeriCorps NCCC application, I must submit fingerprints. How can I get my fingerprints done if I am unable to get to a fingerprinting location?**

If you run into difficulty getting fingerprints, please contact your Selection and Placement assistant or email [ANCCC@cns.gov](mailto:ANCCC@cns.gov) to discuss options. **[updated 3/25/2020]**

## **11. Will future AmeriCorps NCCC graduation events be hosted in person?**

NCCC graduations will be streamed on Facebook to allow members to share their accomplishments with family and friends. NCCC will monitor federal, state, and local



guidance as graduation dates approach to determine if we can allow families and friends to attend in person. Please continue to monitor the AmeriCorps website and NCCC communications for updates. **[updated 10/15/2021]**

## **12. If I graduate from NCCC and do not have a job, does that qualify me for unemployment benefits?**

No. Graduation from the AmeriCorps NCCC program does not constitute a basis for claiming regular unemployment compensation. However, under the CARES Act Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) may be available. Eligibility for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance is not determined by AmeriCorps. Please contact the government agency in your state that administers the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefit with any questions you may have regarding the benefit or contact the US Department of Labor. Please also review [AmeriCorps General FAQs](#). **[updated 4/28/2020]**

## **13. Will I still qualify for interest accrual benefits if I was prevented from completing my full term of service due to COVID-19?**

Members who have successfully completed a term of service in an AmeriCorps program are eligible to have the National Service Trust (Trust) pay up to 100 percent of the interest that accrued on their qualified student loan during their service. These are the conditions that apply:

- An interest payment can only be made after you have exited the program and have earned a full, partial, or pro-rated education award.
- The percentage of interest accrual benefit that you are eligible to receive is based upon your total service hours accrued, or the amount of time (in days) you were enrolled when you exited.
- If you qualify for additional hours/time under the CARES Act, such hours/time will be provided to the Trust and be considered "hours/time served."
- The Trust will only pay interest on qualified student loans, as described on the [Using Your Segal AmeriCorps Education Award web page](#).

For AmeriCorps NCCC, if your graduation date was advanced and you were exited from the program earlier than planned due to COVID-19, the Trust will pay 100 percent of the interest that accrued on your qualified student loan for 1,700 hours of service. If you decided to exit the AmeriCorps NCCC program early and your exit was a resignation from the program, you are not eligible to have the Trust pay the interest that accrued. **[updated 4/8/2020]**

## **14. Will I still qualify for forbearance if my term of service is in a Suspended Status, or if I am in an Administrative Hold status or on emergency leave, due to COVID-19?**

Per AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR § 2529.20, your lender is responsible for approving or denying your forbearance request. AmeriCorps—the federal agency that oversees AmeriCorps—provides verification that you are serving in an approved AmeriCorps position (which includes positions in the AmeriCorps State and National Program (ASN), the AmeriCorps NCCC Program, and the AmeriCorps VISTA Program).



Once you are enrolled in the National Service Trust, you can submit a request online through My AmeriCorps to verify your involvement in AmeriCorps and request that your qualified loans be put in forbearance during your service period. Generally, your loan remains in forbearance until you exit from the program. Exiting from the program includes both exiting at the scheduled end of your service term and exiting early from the program, before the scheduled end. After you exit from the program, you are responsible for repaying your loan according to its terms. [For more information, visit our website.](#) **[updated 4/14/2020]**

## **15. May AmeriCorps NCCC members receive the full value of the Education Award if they are exited from service early due to COVID-19?**

It depends, but generally members will fall within one of the three following categories:

1. AmeriCorps NCCC members who have served less than 15 percent of their term of service at time of exit: AmeriCorps NCCC members who served less than 15 percent of their term of service at the time they exit are not eligible for a full or prorated Education Award consistent with the Member Handbook.
2. AmeriCorps NCCC members who have served between 15 and 50 percent of their term of service at time of exit: AmeriCorps NCCC members who completed between 15 and 50 percent of the term of service may be exited for a Compelling Personal Circumstance (CPC) and receive an Education Award proportional to the number of hours they have served. They are not eligible for a full Education Award with a CPC exit related to COVID-19.
3. AmeriCorps NCCC members who have served more than 50 percent of their term of service at time of exit: AmeriCorps NCCC members who have completed more than 50 percent of their term of service (i.e., at least 850 hours) may be eligible to receive the full education award amount with a CPC exit related to COVID-19. See CARES Act, § 3514. **[updated 4/17/2020]**

## **16. What does it mean to be exited early from the NCCC program at the direction of AmeriCorps due to COVID-19?**

A member is exited early from the NCCC program at the direction of AmeriCorps due to COVID-19 when the National Director determines a class should be ended, members graduated early, or a class should be delayed, because of circumstances related to COVID-19. **[updated 10/15/2021]**

## **17. What can teams expect when serving in the field?**

Before teams arrive at a project site, NCCC region staff work with the project sponsor to ensure the work site and housing meet all NCCC requirements, including COVID-specific requirements for social distancing and sanitization.

While on site, NCCC expects teams to follow state, local, and NCCC guidance for COVID-19, as well as sponsor and site-specific guidance. Members will maximize their safety by following this guidance, including wearing face coverings and maintaining social distancing in all interactions with community members. NCCC staff will continue to visit teams on site to provide programmatic support, in addition to being in regular communication.



In prior years, members transitioned between projects by returning to campus and then deploying to a new project site from campus. Moving forward, transitions between projects may occur either on campus or in the field, based on prevailing COVID-19 conditions and to maximize the safety of members. **[updated 10/15/2021]**

## 18. What happens when new members arrive on campus?

- Upon arrival, all members will be tested for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status. There is one exception: Team Leaders and members who have been COVID-19 positive within the last 90 days do not need to be tested on arrival to an NCCC campus facility to begin a new service term.
- NCCC will do daily health screenings with each member to assess the potential exposure to COVID-19.
- All NCCC members, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear masks in indoor, public spaces in counties that have a substantial or high transmission rate as designated by the CDC. NCCC staff will track transmission rates and notify members what protocols are required at their location.
- Not fully vaccinated members must shelter-in-place, mask and maintain six feet of physical distance for 10 days or until they receive 2 negative COVID tests. After that period, not fully vaccinated members must continue to mask and maintain 6 feet of physical distance when mixing with anyone outside of their team.
- Based on transmission rates, additional safety measures may be put in place.

These measures protect members, NCCC staff, and the community. **[updated 10/15/2021]**

These FAQs do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies. You should refer to CNCS's statute and regulations for applicable requirements.

AmeriCorps is the operating name of CNCS.