

MEMBER STARTUP CHECKLIST

- Background Checks:** Ensure that you are a “Qualified Entity” through the Department of Criminal Investigation. Please call (307)777-7524 for more information and to receive the application to conduct background checks. The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), requires grantees to conduct and document check members and grant/match funded staff against the free National Sex Offender Public Registry (NSOPW), www.nsopr.gov **AT TIME OF APPLICATION or at least one day prior to member service start date (see background check FAQ’s APPENDIX J)**, and initiate their criminal background checks State of residency (if applicable), state of service, and/or FBI **no later than their start date**. This must be conducted for all AmeriCorps participants and grant/match funded staff. Programs must verify identity of the person enrolling with a government issued photo id and document the results of the background check in the Member file. Members serving vulnerable populations may serve while awaiting State/FBI background checks, but must be accompanied/supervised by a cleared staff member at all times until BOTH the state of residency and service OR FBI or check has been received and verified. A member who has not cleared the **NSOPW MAY NOT SERVE WITH OR WITHOUT SUPERVISION**.
- CITIZENSHIP:** Before members can serve, eligibility is now automatically verified within 3 days in the Portal, by CNCS. A member cannot serve until this has been verified.
- MEMBER ENROLLMENT:** Members cannot begin service until they have signed a contract and enrolled in the Portal. Enrollment dates and the service term dates specified in contract must match. All enrollments take place in My AmeriCorps Portal. In addition, all grantees are required to create “operating sites” and assign members to service locations in the Portal. In the Placement Information part of the enrollment form, the program staff should select the appropriate service location from the dropdown menu. Service locations that have been created and linked to the selected program title will populate the drop-down service location menu.
- TIMESHEETS:** Programs use MY SERVICE LOG to track, approve, and print hours. Members must include clear and appropriate activity descriptions.
- MEMBER ORIENTATION AND TRAINING:** This is a critical part of the AmeriCorps experience. At the orientation, Members should gain more in-depth knowledge about your particular program, learn about the bigger picture of national service, and receive training on specific skills they’ll need to perform on their service. Programs should also review Member expectations in detail by going through the member contract, prohibited activities, etc. You might also think about creating a training plan for your member and including a calendar of events (including your own and ServeWyoming training events), so that they may plan accordingly. Members are required to attend at least one ServeWyoming sponsored training.
- MY AMERICORPS PORTAL:** Members should register on My AmeriCorps Portal. This website will help members with information on Loan Forbearance and Ed Awards and can be found at: <https://my.americorps.gov/mp/login.do>.
- MEMBER HANDBOOK:** Members should receive a handbook with information regarding policies and their term of service. *See the Member Handbook Checklist on the AmeriCorps Program Support CD for the required list of documents.*

- HEALTH INSURANCE AND CHILD CARE:** Make sure you have health insurance for and offer child-care to all full-time Members.
- MEMBER FILES:** Documentation of member information is an essential part of record keeping. Creating a system at the beginning of the year will help you in quickly accessing the data you need. *See the Member File Checklist on the AmeriCorps Program Support CD for a list of required documentation*
- GROUP PHOTO:** During the Member orientation, please take a group picture of Members and staff. Please send an electronic copy of the photo to your Program Officer. In addition, please have ALL Members sign a publicity release form and keep a copy in the Member file.
- SERVICE GEAR:** Grant funds may be used to pay for a standard Service Gear (AmeriCorps T-shirt, sweatshirt, hat, pin, etc.) for Members. The Commission urges Programs to provide this to members as it helps with esprit de corps and identification. *Order gear at:* www.gooddeed.org or www.nationalservicegear.com
- MATERIALS FOR MEMBERS:** Order or download free materials for members at: www.nationalservicerresources.org or <http://encorps.nationalservicerresources.org/>

AMERICORPS ADMINISTRATIVE & FINANCIAL SYSTEMS CHECKLIST

- OMB CIRCULARS:** Agencies receiving federal funding should have on hand and be familiar with the federal government's Office of Management and Budget Circulars. They can be downloaded from www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars. The ones that you should review are A-110, A-122 and A-133.
- MY SERVICE LOG:** Setting up an account in My Service Log and assigning accounts to appropriate staff will allow you to check budgets, track match, complete and submit Periodic Expense Reports (PER) on a quarterly or monthly basis, and your Federal Financial Reports (FFR).
- AMERICORPS ACCOUNTING:** All Corporation grant awards must be tracked separately. Devise a system to reconcile the grantee budget with the approved Corporation budget in the award.
- TRACK IN-KIND SERVICES:** You are responsible for tracking in-kind services from partners and from your own agency. This includes donated items as well as staff time. An In-Kind Voucher is available on *AmeriCorps Program Support CD*
- TRACK CASH MATCH:** A system must be developed to track your cash match. Your program is expected to meet your match each quarter and by the end of the program year.
- TRACK MEMBER SERVICE HOURS:** You must document Member hours through signed time and attendance records that track hours either by week or biweekly and separate education/training, fundraising hours, and service hours. This information can be entered into MY SERVICE LOG. Members may log hours, but they can only be approved by a supervisor.
- TRACK STAFF TIME:** You must have signed individual time distribution records for program staff members who will be charged to the grant (in whole or in part) that allow you to identify all of their time and that segregate costs chargeable to the grant (distinguishing between administrative and programmatic functions) and costs not chargeable to the grant (such as organizational fundraising).
- DISBURSEMENT OF STIPENDS:** Members must receive their stipends in equal installments over the term of service. The stipend is not dependent on the number of hours worked in any service period. Remember that the stipend is taxable.
- LIABILITY INSURANCE:** Programs must have sufficient liability insurance to protect the organization, employees, and Members. Members engaged in both on and off site project activities must be covered. You should review your current policies to ensure they cover non-employees in special statuses, such as Members.
- REPORTING:** Become familiar with reporting deadlines, the Reimbursement Form, Periodic Expense Reports (PER), Federal Financial Report (FFR), and other reports. All forms can be found on the AmeriCorps Program Support CD.

AMERICORPS PROGRAM START-UP CHECKLIST

- READ, READ, READ:** Become familiar with the AmeriCorps Provisions, Handbook, Member Files Checklist and especially the contract!
- HIRE OR ASSIGN PROGRAM STAFF:** If you do not already have a program coordinator, you will need to select someone as soon as possible. There are many rules to be learned, documents to create, and recruitment for members and host service sites, well before your members start. Position descriptions must be created for all staff involved with the AC grant.
- DEVELOP DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING PROCEDURES:** It is important that you come up with a strategy for how these tools will be implemented: who will be responsible to record, collect, and compile data, how often will it be done, who will be responsible for reporting to your Program Officer, etc.
- DEVELOP ACTION PLAN WITH TARGET DATES:** Make your best effort to develop an action plan complete with all tasks that need to be accomplished before the start of the program year AND with deadlines for each task. Assign these tasks to staff as appropriate and meet regularly to check on the progress. You'll thank yourselves for it later!
- RECRUIT, INTERVIEW AND SELECT HOST SITES:** If you have not already done so, have agencies apply to become host sites for your Members. Make sure they understand the basics of what will be expected of them in terms of Member supervision, training and evaluation and match requirements. Also make sure they understand what Members can and cannot do. MOU's are an important step in this relationship and the Parent Organization should create steps for monitoring all host sites to ensure all federal regulations are understood and followed as well as any contractual obligations towards the parent organization and members.
- CONTRACT FOR HOST SITES:** Create a contract that outlines the responsibilities of host site supervisors.
- ARRANGE/SCHEDULE YOUR SITE SUPERVISOR GROUP:** It is important that your site supervisors (those who will work very closely with the Members) buy into the Program as soon as possible. Bring them together for an orientation before the Members are oriented and enrolled. You can request that *ServeWyoming* participate in the orientation. All host site supervisors and staff directly involved with the AmeriCorps program are welcome to attend *ServeWyoming* trainings.
- REVIEW MEMBER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND BACKGROUND CHECKS:** To be eligible to serve in AmeriCorps, individuals must be at least 17 years old and be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident alien. A copy of a birth certificate and a passport are perfect for verifying these requirements. Members must also have a high school diploma or equivalency, or agree to earn one prior to using the education award. Please contact your Program Officer if you have questions relating to Member eligibility.
- MEMBER CONTRACT:** Create a member contract. Please see the Member Contract Checklist on the AmeriCorps Program Support CD.

- RECRUIT, INTERVIEW AND SELECT MEMBERS:** Recruitment is the key to retention! Be clear with candidates from the very beginning about what the expectations are for your AmeriCorps program. There is an online recruitment system available at http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/members/index.asp. You are required to place a listing on the web to advertise your AmeriCorps positions and can search for potential members using the same website. In addition, position descriptions must be created for and given to all AmeriCorps members.
- REVIEW MEMBER BENEFITS:** Living allowance: Your Program needs to set up a system for paying Members the living allowance. Health insurance (if applicable): Decide on a plan and get information/enrollment forms from the provider. SRC Aetna is available specifically for AmeriCorps members. Please call 803.333.1733 for more information. You are not required to use any particular provider and you may choose to use your organizations provider. Childcare (if applicable): See below.
- CHILDCARE:** The childcare benefit is administrated by First Financial Associates. Visit the website to download forms, an application or view FAQ's at: www.1stfinancialassociates.com/asnprogram.htm. Eligibility guidelines will also be explained in this packet and a toll-free number will be provided. If a member has ANY problems receive payments, please contact ServeWyoming right away.
- SERVICE GEAR:** AmeriCorps service gear can be ordered from the National Service Catalog, found at www.nationalservicegear.com or www.gooddeed.org.
- CONTACT YOUR PROGRAM OR TRAINING OFFICER:** Get to know your Program Officer at *ServeWyoming*. S/he will be the key source of support and technical assistance during the coming year. You are encouraged to consult the AmeriCorps Provisions or Handbook before calling with your questions; this is a good way to learn what they include. However, after reviewing the Provisions, do not hesitate to call with any of your questions or concerns for clarification.
- CONTACT YOUR PEERS:** Your fellow Programs will be a great contact to ask a lot of the "how do I" questions. Peers will be able to share experiences, forms, and best practices with you. Know that you are welcome to call any Program Director or other staff member. You might even arrange to visit another program that is similar to yours.
- TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY SERVEWYOMING:** *ServeWyoming* provides various trainings on an as-needed basis. In addition to required AmeriCorps meetings, take advantage of these training sessions as they provide a wealth of information.
- LOGOS:** Please email your organization's logo to nurieh@serveyoming.org