2019 California For All AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications due October 2, 2019

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO APPLICANTS: The following documents are necessary to complete a 2019-20 operating grant application for AmeriCorps funding. All can be found on the California Volunteers website, californiavolunteers.ca.gov/Grants/americorps/.

(1) 2019 California For All AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity Request for Applications (RFA)
(2) 2019 California For All AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity Mandatory Supplemental Guidance
(3) 2019 California For All AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity Application Instructions
(4) 2019 California For All AmeriCorps Application Forms
(5) 2019 National Performance Measures Instructions

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTACT INFORMATION

This Request for Applications (RFA) is available on the California Volunteers (CV) AmeriCorps funding webpage at https://CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov/grants/americorps.

California Volunteers is committed to providing the most current information available to all applicants. We will rely primarily upon our website to keep applicants abreast of changes. Please check our website frequently for updates and information on technical assistance opportunities.

Please submit questions about this funding opportunity to Funding@cv.ca.gov. Responses will be included in a list of *Frequently Asked Questions* (FAQs) that we will update periodically on the CV AmeriCorps funding webpage. Applicants are encouraged to submit their questions well in advance of the application deadline as CV is not obligated to respond to questions that are received 48 hours prior to the application due date.

For questions regarding multi-state or Indian Tribes applications submitted directly to the Corporation for National and Community Service, please contact:

Corporation for National and Community Service
Phone: (202) 606-7508
TTY: (202) 606-3472
Email: americorpsnational@cns.gov

OVERVIEW

State Entity Name: California Volunteers
Funding Opportunity Title: 2019 California For All AmeriCorps
Announcement Type: Initial Announcement
CFDA Number: 94.006

Disclosure: Funds requested under this opportunity are subject to applicable federal laws, rules, and regulations. References to specific regulations will be linked to e-CFR at www.ecfr.gov.

Important Dates:

- Notice of Intent to Apply: Applicants must submit a Notice of Intent to Apply for this competition. The mandatory Notice of Intent to Apply is due to CV by **5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Thursday, September 19, 2019.** The Notice can be found here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019CFAAmeriCorpsNOI.

- Deadline: The **Complete Application** is due to CV by **5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Wednesday, October 2, 2019**.

- Application Notification: Successful applicants will be notified by October 31, 2019.

Our Purpose: California Volunteers, as part of the Office of the Governor, addresses state and community challenges by investing in high impact service solutions, while leveraging public, private, and nonprofit resources. CV invests $40 million annually in AmeriCorps grants to support effective community service solutions.

The *2019 California For All AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity* awards AmeriCorps grants to eligible organizations that will engage AmeriCorps Fellows in intensive results-driven community service to help tackle critical state and local problems in the following San Joaquin Valley counties: San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern.

AmeriCorps is a national service program that provides full-time or part-time service opportunities for Americans to address critical community needs. An AmeriCorps service year is organized to have an important community impact while making a lasting difference in the lives of those who serve. Program service activities are delivered by eligible citizens serving as AmeriCorps Fellows who are recruited by grantees and their community partners. Fellows may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, Fellows earn an AmeriCorps education award that can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans. For this funding opportunity, full-time Fellows who successfully complete a minimum of 1700 service hours will receive both a federal Segal AmeriCorps Education Award and a California For All Education Award for a combined value of $10,000.

This *2019 California For All AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity* should be read together with the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR Sections 2520-2550. The following documents are necessary to complete the application for 2019-2020 AmeriCorps Funding:
  (1) 2019 California For All AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity Request for Applications (RFA)
  (2) 2019 California For All AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity Mandatory Supplemental Guidance (Mandatory Supplemental Guidance)
  (3) 2019 California For All AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity Application Instructions (Application Instructions)
  (4) 2019 AmeriCorps State Grant Application Forms
  (5) 2019 National Performance Measures Instructions

APPLICATION TIMELINE

This timeline is subject to change due to federal announcements and other events.

September 19, 2019	**Mandatory Notice of Intent to Apply due to CV by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time**
October 2, 2019	**Applications due to CV by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time**
October 3–4, 2019	Compliance Review & Response Period*
October 7–18, 2019	Application Review Period
October 21-25 2019	Application Clarification & Selection Period*
October 28, 2019	Approved applications submitted electronically to CNCS's web-based grant management system**
November 2019-January 2020	Contracting Process and Program Launch
December 31, 2020	Complete All Program Service Activities

* Applicants must be available during this timeframe to respond to any CV requests for additional information/clarification.

** During this period, applicants must have appropriate staff available to enter and submit application into CNCS's web-based management system.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Funding Program Description

California Volunteers
Within the Office of the Governor, California Volunteers (CV) serves as the State Service Commission responsible for promoting service and volunteerism for the state. California Volunteers' mission is to empower and mobilize Californians to actively help tackle state and local challenges through volunteer and service action. Since 1993, the office has successfully addressed many state and local challenges by investing in service solutions, while leveraging public, private, and nonprofit resources. Through AmeriCorps, the Volunteer Generation Fund, and disaster volunteering, California Volunteers transforms small investments into major impacts. California Volunteers is led by the State of California Chief Service Officer with advisory support from a 25-Fellow Commission appointed by the Governor. The Commission develops and adopts policies that guide the State's AmeriCorps grantmaking process.

California Volunteers receives federal funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to support AmeriCorps State programs. CNCS's mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, CNCS has helped to engage millions of citizens in community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding
AmeriCorps is a national service program that provides opportunities for Americans each year to serve their country as AmeriCorps Fellows (also known as Members) by engaging in intensive results-driven service that addresses community problems. An AmeriCorps Fellow is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. AmeriCorps Fellows are recruited, trained, supervised, and managed by the funded organization, and may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, AmeriCorps Fellows are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust that they can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans. In addition to receiving the federal Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, full-time Fellows who complete a minimum of 1700 service hours will receive a California For All Education Award for a combined total value of $10,000. Fellows must be: U.S. Citizens, U.S. Nationals or Lawful Permanent Residents of the United States, at least 17 years of age (no upper age limit), high school graduates or GED recipients (or working towards this goal), and are subject to criminal history checks. AmeriCorps Programs may add additional program-specific requirements. For more information on Fellow eligibility requirements, please visit: http://www.americorps.gov/for_individuals/ready/eligibility.asp.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded on a competitive basis to eligible organizations that engage Fellows in *evidence-based or evidence-informed* interventions to strengthen communities (see *Mandatory Supplemental Guidance*). AmeriCorps grants include an allotment of AmeriCorps Fellow positions and provide partial funding to support AmeriCorps projects and programs. Grants are solely for program expenses and cannot be used for general organizational operating expenses. **AmeriCorps Fellows or grant funds can help meet unmet needs or can expand an organization's ability to better address community needs, but cannot be used to duplicate, displace or supplant resources that already exist in a community**.

California for All AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity
To help realize Governor Newsom's vision and commitment to build a California For All, the 2019-20 California State Budget included $20 million to support both the expansion of AmeriCorps service in the San Joaquin Valley and an augment to the education award for full-time AmeriCorps Fellows completing a minimum of 1700 service hours. The San Joaquin Valley has been selected as the targeted region for

this funding opportunity based on meeting the criteria of being the economic region with the highest need[1] and lowest AmeriCorps footprint in the state. This opportunity provides substantial state and federal funds to support AmeriCorps programing with some cost-share from successful applicants and their community partners.

California Volunteers AmeriCorps Values
As home to the largest and most diverse population in the country, California faces many challenges that need our attention. California Volunteers is seeking to invest AmeriCorps resources in programs that are:

Targeted at solving a critical challenge facing California. While there are a large number of issues that are identified as "challenges," CV is most interested in those that have been publicly labeled as concerns for California's long-term quality of life by state government leaders as well as key civic and research institutions. While CV will generally view programs and initiatives addressing statewide challenges as more compelling, CV will also give consideration to those that are designed to tackle problems faced by a particular locality or region of the state. Issues that have been addressed in the past include low academic achievement, unemployment, child welfare, and many others.

Using national service as an appropriate strategy. California Volunteers is committed to continuing to demonstrate that service is a powerful strategy to address community challenges. Successful program designs clearly identify those directly impacted by the challenges, identify an intervention proven to address the need, and clearly articulate why the efforts of AmeriCorps Fellows are an appropriate strategy to deliver the intervention. This includes demonstrating how AmeriCorps Fellow service activities will enhance or expand an organization's ability to better address a community problem, and how the AmeriCorps program will not duplicate, displace or supplant resources that already exist to address the stated problem.

Applying an evidence-based approach. California Volunteers expects those seeking an investment from AmeriCorps to demonstrate that their proposed intervention is guided by the best available research evidence that supports its effectiveness. This includes demonstrating that the proposed intervention will lead to the desired outcomes, and providing strong evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the target population and community challenge identified. CV is particularly interested in programs that directly involve leading experts from the relevant subject area in the design and/or evaluation of the program. CV values programs that can demonstrate the intervention is implemented with fidelity across sites and that apply performance data and evaluation findings to continuously strengthen their model.

Based on a well-aligned logic model and focused on measurable outcomes. California Volunteers values strong program designs built to address community needs by logically connecting all program components and services back to these needs. Programs funded through AmeriCorps are expected to achieve results that can be quantifiably measured and reported on program impacts annually. (See *Grant Application Forms; California Performance Measurement Worksheets*)

Dedicated to quality. California Volunteers seeks to invest in programs that are committed to making a difference and incorporate quality management practices to oversee the program and ensure appropriate investment of public funds. California Volunteers values programs that can successfully implement the program design by assuring that the systems and processes necessary for managing and assessing the effectiveness of the program model are in place prior to operation. This includes adequate oversight in the management of each component to assure that the program design and systems are implemented and assessed, the capacity to collect data and report on program effectiveness, and that stakeholder feedback leads to continuous improvement.

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[1] Lewis, K. Burd-Sharps, S. (2014). The Measure of America Series: A Portrait of California 2014-2015.

B. Funding Priorities
California Volunteers is only accepting applications for programs addressing community challenges in the counties of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern. Program service activities to be carried out by AmeriCorps Fellows must address the following focus areas:

- Economic Opportunity--improving economic opportunity for economically disadvantaged people by providing access and linkages to critical services that contribute to the improved economic well-being of economically disadvantaged people; construction of affordable housing; facilitating access to affordable housing; and/or engaging formerly homeless individuals either as the population served and/or as AmeriCorps Fellows, to prepare them for the workforce;

- Healthy Futures--improving access to primary and preventative care for uninsured and/or low-income individuals and families and other populations with high health disparity, including providing healthcare enrollment and navigation support, connecting service recipients to affordable healthcare programs, providing health education, patient rights and responsibilities, and health care access and benefits; and/or strengthening families by providing family stabilizing services, building Family Protective Factors, and building the parenting knowledge, skills, and practices of mothers and fathers living in poverty.

- Education—supporting and/or facilitating access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children; improved school readiness for economically disadvantaged children; and/or help economically disadvantaged students prepare for success in post-secondary educational institutions or post-secondary employment opportunities.

- Youth Development—creating positive outcomes for young people from all socioeconomic backgrounds by engaging them in activities and experiences that build positive character, leadership skills, self-empowerment, and an ethic of service.

In order to be considered for this funding opportunity, applicants must propose a program that addresses at least one of the above community needs. Additionally, service activities must be carried out by AmeriCorps Fellows in the target counties identified. Applicants proposing activities that are outside of the above focus areas or service activities that are not located in the target counties may be disqualified.

C. Available Funds
This opportunity includes approximately $14 million in both state and federal dollars that have been appropriated for the Fiscal Year 2019-2020. These are one-year federal and state funds that must be matched by other funding secured by the applicant. The cost share breakdown of the grant will be as follows: 61% state funds, 24% federal funds, and at least 15% of other matching funds secured by the legal applicants. Funds awarded through this opportunity are only available to support one year of program implementation. Funding for subsequent years are contingent upon state and federal appropriations and may be subject to a higher level of match requirements consistent with AmeriCorps federal grants.

D. Types of Grants Available
Applicants may apply to be considered for both an implementation grant and a planning grant or just an implementation grant alone.

- **Implementation or operating grants** provide funds to support up to 85% of the total program costs. Grant size may range from $558,000 (supporting at least 20 full-time AmeriCorps Fellows) to $8,376,000 (supporting 300 full-time AmeriCorps Fellows), depending upon the number of full-time equivalent AmeriCorps Fellow positions requested by an applicant.

- **Planning grants** provide up to $75,000 to support building operational systems critical to managing an AmeriCorps grant and activities that will support strengthening or expanding

partnerships to support program implementation and sustainability beyond year 1, including developing match funding strategies.

To be eligible for a planning grant, applicants must apply for an implementation grant that will operate during the 2019-20 program year. In addition to submitting a full operating grant application, applicants that wish to also be considered for a planning grant must complete and submit the planning grant application components following the guidance included in the Application Instructions.

E. Authority
Federal funds are available under authority of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1990, as amended, (NCSA) (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.).

II. ELIGIBILITY

A. Eligible Applicants
Only applicants proposing to operate in the targeted San Joaquin Valley counties (San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern) are eligible to apply. Applicants must be the following non-federal entities (as defined in 2 CFR §200.69) who have DUNS numbers and are registered in System for Award Management (SAM):
- Nonprofit organizations (2 CFR §200.70)
- Institutions of higher education(2 CFR §200.55)
- Local government/public agencies (2 CFR §200.64)
- State government agencies (2 CFR §200.90)
- Indian Tribes within the state of California (2 CFR §200.54)

Other Requirements
Under section 132A(b) of the National & Community Service Act, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this RFA.

Note that under section 745 of Title VII, Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, if CNCS is aware that any corporation has any unpaid Federal tax liability which—
1) Has been assessed,
2) For which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and
3) That is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, that corporation is not eligible for an award under this RFA. A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this RFA.

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, any organization described in Section 501 (c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501 (c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply for funding.

B. Community Partnerships Requirements
In order to maximize community involvement in the AmeriCorps program, all applicants are required to develop partnerships with at least three independent entities that include *one public and one private* partner (nonprofit or for-profit entity). Partners should have a significant role in planning, operating, and sustaining the program (e.g. match contribution, training resources, continuous improvement assessment, etc.).

C. Dun and Bradstreet University Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management System (SAM)
Applications must include a DUNS number **and** an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: DUNS Request Service. CNCS recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date.

After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants **must** register with the System for Award Management (SAM) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete and, if a grant is awarded, throughout the life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. CV suggests finalizing a new registration or renewing an existing one at least two weeks before the application deadline to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and address on all grant applications to CV.

Applicants that do not comply with these requirements may become ineligible to receive an award. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at
https://sam.gov/sam/transcript/Quick_Guide_for_Grants_Registrations.pdf

III. IMPLEMENTATION GRANT FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

A. Project and Award Period

Applications must include proposed activities and a detailed proposed budget for one year of operation. Grants awarded through this funding opportunity will support programming beginning January of 2020. Successful applicants must allow up to 12 months for Fellows to complete a term of service. Any exception to this start date expectation must be included in the application. Additionally, the program may not start prior to the execution of the program's contract with CV, which means AmeriCorps Fellows may not begin service, certify any Fellow hours, or accrue costs on the federal and state share of the budget prior to the conclusion of the contracting process. More information on the contracting process will be provided at funding notification.

B. Cost per Service Year (MSY)

Applicants request for the number of AmeriCorps Fellow positions that are needed to address the community need stated in their application. A full-time (1700-hour) AmeriCorps Fellow position is equivalent to one Service Year (MSY). An AmeriCorps grant amount is determined based on the number of MSYs that a grantee will support at the cost per MSY amount established by California Volunteers for the state and federal cost shares.

The cost per Service Year limits for this opportunity are as follows:

Table 1: California For All AmeriCorps Cost per MSY Limit

Cost Share	Maximum Limit
Federal (CNCS Dollars)	$7,920
State (CV Dollars)	$20,000

Exceptions: Applicants that have already been awarded with a FY 2019 AmeriCorps grant to operate a new program <u>and</u> support new service positions in the San Joaquin Valley are only eligible to apply for State funds up to $7,920 per MSY already awarded. Current grantees wishing to expand existing program services into new targeted communities in the San Joaquin Valley must apply for a new grant through this RFA and may request up to the maximum state and federal cost shares.

Table 2: Member Service Year Conversion

Position Type	Minimum Hours	MSY Equivalence
Full-Time	1700	1
Third Quarter Time	1200	.70
Half-Time	900	.50
Reduced Half-Time	675	.3809524
Quarter Time	450	.26455027
Minimum Time	300	.21164022

C. Award Amount

Grant awards have two components: operating funds and AmeriCorps Fellow positions. Operating funds awarded will include up to $7,920 of federal grant funding and up to $20,000 in state funds per one full-time equivalent Fellow. The total grant award will depend on the number of full-time equivalent AmeriCorps Fellow positions requested. It does not include child care or the value of the education award a Fellow may earn, which is covered directly by CV or CNCS outside of the grant.

Any program costs can be included on any combination of the federal, state, or grantee shares as reflected in the budget as long as the costs per MSY for each category are maintained.

CV will review applications and determine the final award amount based on availability of funds. Award amounts may vary from the requested amounts.

Methodology for Calculating Grant Request Amount

An applicant's grant amount is determined by the number of full-time equivalent Fellow positions requested multiplied by the amount of federal/state funds being requested (not to exceed the maximum limit).

Example 1: *Applicant is requesting for 20 full-time Fellows and seeking the maximum federal and state cost per MSY:*

($20,000 state dollars per MSY x 20 MSYs) + ($7,920 federal dollars per MSY x 20 MSYs) = $558,400 in total requested funds

Example 2: *Applicant is requesting for 40 half-time (20 MSYs) and 5 full-time (5 MSYs) Fellow positions, for a total of 45 positions and 25 MSYs at the maximum cost per MSY:*

($20,000 state dollars per MSY x 25 MSYs) + ($7,920 federal dollars per MSY x 25 MSYs) = $698,000 in total requested funds

D. Type of Award

The AmeriCorps grant award under consideration in this funding opportunity is a Cost-Reimbursement grant. Funds are accessible after costs have been incurred, on a reimbursement basis.

E. Cost Sharing or Matching

Successful implementation grant applicants are required to provide a single overall match of at least 15 percent of the total program budget. Match may be cash or in-kind.

Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act (42 U.S.C. 12571(e)) requires that programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to CV on the Federal Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year.

The legal applicant is the entity responsible for meeting matching funds requirements. The legal applicant may request that partnering organizations provide a share of the match necessary to meet matching funds requirements. Programs may match their share of operating costs through cash or in-kind resources. Matching funds must be verifiable, not be included as match for other federal programs, be necessary and reasonable for the purpose of the proposed program, and be allowable under OMB cost principles. Successful applicants must demonstrate matching funds are secured before CV can issue the grant award. Additionally, successful applicants are required to maintain the awarded match and support any new costs not included in the grant award through match or its own or other resources.

F. Indirect Costs

Applicants are allowed to include indirect costs in application budgets. Based on qualifying factors, applicants will either use a federally approved indirect cost rate, a 5/10 percent fixed option, a 10% *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly as outlined in 2 CFR § 200.413 Direct costs. States, local governments and Indian Tribes may use approved cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across federal awards. Applicants that have a federal negotiated indirect cost rate or that will be using the 10% *de minimis* rate must include the agreement in the application. However, under section 121(d) of the NCSA and CNCS's regulations at 45 CFR 2517.710, no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants, of which up to two percent may be allocated to cover CV share of indirect costs. See *Grant Application Instructions* for more information on calculating indirect costs.

G. Performance Measurement Requirements

Applicants are required to develop a set of performance measures using the California Performance Measurement Worksheets (PMWs) that addresses requirements described in the *Application Instructions.* Each applicant will need to complete at least three PMWs, titled as follows:

- *Primary Needs and Service Performance Measurement Worksheet*—Applicants must have at least one aligned performance measure (output and outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary program intervention. Applicants proposing program service activities beyond the primary intervention are required to include additional aligned performance measures for those activities. Please note that CV values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures. Applicants should focus Fellow service hours in service activities that are significant to the program's theory of change and intended outcomes.

- *Common Fellow Development Worksheet*—Applicants must have an aligned output and outcome that reflects the knowledge and skills Fellows will gain through the program.

- *Common Strengthening Communities Worksheet*—Applicants must track the number of volunteers recruited by AmeriCorps Fellows and service hours contributed by those volunteers to expand the impact and reach of the program in the communities served.

All three PMWs combined must account for all Fellow service hours requested. Applicants should use both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work as well as make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals. CV values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of measures. For more information, see the *Application Instructions* for specific requirements for each required performance measurement area.

National Performance Measures
National Performance Measures are developed by CNCS for each focus area. CV expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance measurement strategy if the National Performance Measures are part of the applicant's theory of change. The National Performance Measures can be found in the *2019 National Performance Measures Instructions*. This document provides definitions, requirements, and guidelines that will help applicants determine which measures best apply to their program. All requirements for any National Performance Measures selected must be clearly included in the Performance Measurement Worksheets. Providing performance measures information elsewhere in the narrative cannot be in lieu of providing full information in the PMWs. Successful applicants will be required to report on the measures they select.

H. Minimum Program Size
The minimum program size funded by CV is 20 MSY (full-time equivalent Fellow positions). California Volunteers believes this MSY requirement is necessary to provide Fellows in quantities that make a substantial difference in meeting community needs. Applicants requesting less than the minimum required MSY level must include a compelling rationale with the application in order for the application to not be disqualified.

I. Minimum Number of Fellows per Service Site
To ensure strong program design and to provide Fellows with at least a minimal mutual support network, successful applicants must place a minimum of two AmeriCorps Fellows at each service location as part of their program design. Exceptions to this requirement must be supported by compelling rationale in the application and receive approval from CV.

J. Living Allowance
The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time Fellows that are within the required range per Fellow. Although strongly encouraged, living allowance are not required for part-time positions. A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. Programs are prohibited from comparing the Fellow living allowance to an "hourly wage" in any recruitment materials, Fellow handbooks, etc. Living

Allowance costs can be included on the federal, state, or grantee shares of the budget or any combination of the three.

Table 3: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Living Allowance
Full Time	1,700	$13,992	$27,984
Three-Quarter Time	1,200	n/a	$19,753
Half Time	900	n/a	$14,815
Reduced Half Time	675	n/a	$11,111
Quarter Time	450	n/a	$7,408
Minimum Time	300	n/a	$4,938

K. AmeriCorps Education Awards

AmeriCorps Fellows who successfully complete a term of service will receive a Segal Education Award from the National Service Trust. The amount of the Education Award is based on the value of the Pell Grant. The Education Award amounts for each Fellow slot type is listed in the table below. Learn more about the Education Award here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-americorps-education-award.

The Segal Education Award for full-time AmeriCorps Fellows funded through this opportunity will be supplemented by state funds for a combined total Education Award of $10,000. At this time, the State Education Award supplement is only available to full-time Fellows funded through this opportunity.

Table 4: AmeriCorps Education Awards

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	Federal Education Award	State Education Award
Full Time	1,700	$6,095.00	$3.905
Three-Quarter Time	1,200	$4,266.50	n/a
Half Time	900	$3,047.50	n/a
Reduced Half Time	675	$2,321.90	n/a
Quarter Time	450	$1,612.43	n/a
Minimum Time	300	$1,289.95	n/a

L. Enrollment Requirements

Enrollment rates ultimately effect the total number of AmeriCorps Fellows awarded to California for service in California communities. Grantees are expected to enroll all MSYs awarded in the grant and may not use unexpended funds resulting from not fully enrolling Fellows for any other purpose in the operating budget. California Volunteers reserves the right to adjust grantee budgets as needed in order to maintain awarded/contracted cost per Fellow MSY. Successful applicants that do not fully enroll may be subject to a reduction in grant award amount and are likely to receive a decrease in funding in subsequent years.

M. Retention Requirements

Retention rates are an indicator of the grantee's ability to properly design and manage an AmeriCorps program that results in achieving the outcomes contracted. We expect grantees to pursue the highest Fellow retention rate possible. Retention rates will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and recompete processes. Successful applicants that do not retain Fellows are likely to receive a decrease in funding in subsequent years.

N. California for All Identification Requirements

Programs funded under this Opportunity must adhere to all California For All branding and identification requirements in addition to standard California Volunteers' AmeriCorps branding requirements. This includes identifying their AmeriCorps program as a California For All AmeriCorps program and including the phrase "California For All" as part of the program title or name.

IV. PLANNING GRANT FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

A. Fundable Activities

Grant funds support activities that are directly tied to AmeriCorps program planning and development. The grant shall only be used to cover costs that directly support the development of planning grant deliverables described in *Section VII.D. Reporting Requirements/Planning Grants* that include but are not limited to:

- Staff or consultant(s) to facilitate project planning and provide training and technical assistance aimed at improving the Grantee's ability to implement an AmeriCorps program effectively;
- Outreach and establishment of community partnerships to support the planning, implementation, and sustainability of the AmeriCorps program;
- Partnership planning meetings;
- Meeting or office space;
- Developing plans for member recruitment, selection, placement, training, and supervision;
- Developing plans for managing and supporting program site partners;
- Developing plans and systems for ensuring grant compliance and accountability
- Developing match funding strategies beyond year 1
- Travel to training and technical assistance sessions provided by CV
- Travel to see and learn about program models the applicant would like to replicate

Applicants must obtain prior written approval from CV for out of state travel costs or planning activities that occur outside of California.

B. Grant Award Amount

The maximum grant amount that can be requested through this opportunity is $75,000.

C. Matching Requirement

The grantee is required to provide a match to support at least 24% of the project's total cost. Match may be cash and/or in-kind. For example, an applicant that is proposing a planning project at a combined total cost of $65,000 (federal share and grantee match combined) and is requesting for $49,400 from CV will need to provide a match of $15,600 in cash or in-kind.

D. Staffing Requirement

Successful planning requires substantial staff to lead the oversight of planning activities. Planning grants have the best results when they have at least one full-time staff dedicated to the grant or a strong planning team with shared responsibilities and an identified lead spending a majority of their time on the grant. California Volunteers highly recommends assigning a full-time person to manage the planning grant activities.

All time spent on the grant must be tracked using functional timesheets that allow for time allocation. No time can be charged to the grant unless National Service Criminal History Checks have been completed. Verification of timesheets and background check status must occur before any expenses can be incurred.

E. Award Period

The project period for this grant is up to 12 months. Grantees may choose to contract for up to twelve months depending on the amount of time needed to complete deliverables. **The project start date may not occur prior to a grantee's contract execution date with CV.**

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. California Volunteers Review and Selection Process
Applications will be reviewed and selected for funding using an intensive multi-stage process that includes CV Staff Review, Clarification and Feedback, and CV Commission approval. The 2019 grantmaking process follows the policies adopted by the Commission, available on the CV website at CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov. California Volunteers' review and selection process will occur in several stages as follow.

Compliance Check
California Volunteers staff will review all applications to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completeness requirements. Applications that are submitted by eligible organizations by the deadline and that meet minimal compliance check requirements will advance to Staff Review. See the *Application Instructions* and *Application Forms* to ensure submission of a complete and compliant grant application.

Applications that have noncompliant issues identified may be disqualified or have points deducted from the application's total raw score. Criteria for assessing compliance includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Minor Issues (3 point deduction): Packaging not completed according to guidance (see *Application Instructions* for specific packaging guidelines).
- Major Issues (6 point deduction): Items incomplete, or required items not submitted. Applicant will have 24 hours to submit incomplete or missing documents (other than those listed in Disqualifying Issues). If documents are received, the application will still receive a point deduction for Major Issues.
- Disqualifying Issues: The application will be disqualified if any of the following are missing: Program Narrative, Logic Model, Program Diagram, Performance Measurement Worksheets, or Budget Narrative.

Staff Review
In Staff Review, reviewers will evaluate each application against assessment criteria outlined in this RFA and the accompanying Application Forms and Instructions. Staff will review applications in teams of at least three and come to a consensus score for each criteria. Applications that do not meet the minimum score threshold will be released from consideration.

Clarification Period
Some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information and/or make changes to their application, including changes to the budget. This information is used by CV staff in making final funding recommendations. Applications may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked clarification questions. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to CVs' clarification requests in a timely manner may result in removal from funding consideration.

Risk Assessment Evaluation
CV staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds and the applicant's past performance (if applicable.) This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If CV determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. In evaluating risks, CV may consider the following, but not limited to:
- Financial capability and capacity to manage Federal funds
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant's record in managing previous CNCS awards,

cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
- o Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements,
- o If applicable, meeting matching requirements, and
- o If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- Information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as—
  - o Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS),
  - o U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
  - o Dun and Bradstreet, or
  - o "Do Not Pay"
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance (formerly OMB Circular A-133) and findings of any other available audits
- IRS Tax Form 990
- An applicant organization's annual report
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website
- Any other information listed in 45 CFR § 2522.140
- The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.
- Past Performance

Additionally, CV may use the results of the review of the risk assessment evaluation in determining which applications to fund. If CV concludes that the reasons for applicants having poor risk assessment evaluations are not likely to be mitigated, those applications may not be selected for funding.

Selection
The primary consideration in the selection of AmeriCorps programs is merit. Applicants must meet a minimum score threshold **and** satisfactorily address all clarification issues in order to be considered for funding. In lieu of a three-year operating grant, California Volunteers may award an application a limited-term "planning" or "program development" grant. A planning grant provides funds to support the development of an AmeriCorps program design and infrastructures needed to operate the program. A program development grant provides funds to support one year of implementation; where continued funding would be subject to available funds and satisfactory performance.

The Commission reserves the right to bypass an applicant's state ranking on a case-by-case basis under the following circumstances:
- An applicant has multiple national service funding opportunities available;
- The Commission has constrained resources; and/or
- The legal applicant presents serious concerns around grant performance and/or fiduciary responsibilities discovered after rankings have been completed.

Results of the grant review process are presented to the Commission, which makes final approval of funding decisions. Funding decisions are final—there is no appeal process.

Feedback to Applicants
At the conclusion of the grant review process applicants may request their review results and feedback on their application by email funding@cv.ca.gov.

CV reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, in the event that unforeseen challenges or exigent circumstances make it impossible, impractical or inefficient to execute the review process as planned. Any such adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria that will be used to assess applications submitted to CV in response to this RFA.

B. Assessment Criteria

Each implementation grant application must clearly describe a project that will effectively deploy AmeriCorps Fellows to address a significant community need. We urge all applicants to submit a high quality application which carefully follows the guidance in the RFA and in the *Application Instructions.* Applications will be assessed based on the quality of the response to criteria described in the *Application Instructions.* The following outlines the corresponding weight for each application component. The specific criteria that will be assessed is described in the Program Narrative section of the *Application Instructions.* Planning grant applications will be assessed based on the criteria provided in the Planning Grant Narrative section of the *Application Instructions.*

Program Design (Program Narrative, Performance Measurement Worksheets, Logic Model) – 50%
Fifty percent of the applicant's score will come from their description of the proposed program design addressing all relevant application instructions. This includes presenting a well-documented community need, a logical and well-thought out theory of change and logic model supported by evidence, the specific program intervention that AmeriCorps Fellows will perform, and measureable outputs and outcomes as a result of Fellow activities. Applicants will also be assessed on the plans they have in place to ensure effective service delivery and meaningful Fellow service experience. See *Application Instructions* for the weights of specific subsections in Program Design.

Organizational Capacity (Program Narrative) – 25%
Twenty-five percent of the applicant's score will come from their description of the legal applicant's organizational capacity addressing all relative application instructions. This includes presenting the organization experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program, and demonstrates that plans are in place to ensure compliance and accountability. Applicants will also need to demonstrate that their organization values learning and that they have a plan to supervise Fellows. See *Application Instructions* for the weights of specific subsections of Organizational Capacity.

Cost Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy (Budget) – 25%
Twenty-five percent of the applicant's score will come from the quality of the application's budget based on the following criteria:
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.
- Unless specifically noted for certain applicants, the cost per MSY must not exceed $7,920 for the federal share and $20,000 for the state share. The overall grantee share is at least 15 percent of the total proposed budget.

Proposed budgets that contain MSY costs that exceed the maximum cost per MSY and/or less than required match will be considered unresponsive to the application criteria.

Applicants must complete the budget and ensure the following information is included:
- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project
- Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash), the sources of these commitments, and if the commitments are proposed or secured.

C. Threshold Issues
Applications should reflect that they meet the following threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying.
- All applicants should request at least 20 MSYs. Applicants requesting less than 20 MSYs without a compelling justification will be deemed noncompliant and will not be reviewed.
- If the proposed service activities require specialized Fellow qualifications and/or training (for example, tutoring programs: 45 CFR §2522.910-.940), the applicant must describe how the program will meet these requirements.

D. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information

Prior to making any award that exceeds $150,000, CV/CNCS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).

Any applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

CV/CNCS will consider any comments by any applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing its review of risk posed by the applicant under this section.

E. Potential Change to RFA Guidelines and Supplemental Guidance

This *Request for Applications* was created in good faith and based on the most recent state and federal guidance available. The amount of funds available for this opportunity, as well as new grant limits and requirements, are subject to the availability of final state and federal appropriations. These and other factors may require changes to the guidance and to this RFA. As necessary, CV will issue all updates and supplemental materials at the earliest possible date. All supplemental materials and updates will be available on the CV website at CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov. **Applicants are advised to check the website at least weekly.**

This RFA provides a broad overview of AmeriCorps guidance, highlighting many basic components and rules to provide a general understanding of the complexities and intricacies of AmeriCorps programming and requirements.

The full AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR § 2520-2550, are available online at www.ecfr.gov. Successful applicants will be required to comply with these regulations, AmeriCorps provisions, and federal and state policies. Federal funds provided under this grant are identified by the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 94.006.

The AmeriCorps regulations include federal criteria used to select applicants for funding and other pertinent information (Table 4).

Table 5: Program Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Requirements and Selection	Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations
Fellow Service Activities	§2520.20 - §2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§2520.65
Tutoring Programs	§2522.900-2522.950
Matching Funds	§2521.35-2521.90
Fellow Benefits	§2522.240-2522.250
Calculating Cost Per Fellow Service Year (MSY)	§2522.485
Performance Measures	§2522.500-2522.650
Evaluation	§2522.500-2522.540 and §2522.700-2522.740
Selection Criteria and Selection Process	§2522.400-2522.475

VI. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Submission to California Volunteers

Applicants must submit a hardcopy application package and related electronic submission requirements to California Volunteers by the application deadline. To complete the application, please:

1. Download the following documents from the CV website at https://CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov/grants/americorps/:
   a. *Request for Applications* (this document),
   b. *Mandatory Supplemental Guidance,*
   c. *Application Instructions*,
   d. *National Performance Measures Instructions,*
   e. *Application Forms*

2. Follow the instructions included in the *Application Instructions* document in completing and submitting an application. The *Application Instructions* document also contains directions for completing the required Electronic Submission.

3. A complete **Paper Application** must include one original and three copies containing required items (as applicable), as listed on the AmeriCorps State Grant Application Checklist. See *Application Instructions* and *Forms.*

4. An **Electronic Submission** of the required documents by email to Funding@cv.ca.gov (electronic submission of any other pieces of the application will not be reviewed). See the *Application Instructions* for more information.

Page Limits
The Program Narrative may not exceed 14 double spaced, single-sided, pages in portrait orientation (including the Executive Summary Page). This limit does not include other aspects of the application (e.g. the budget, logic model, performance measures, or program diagram), though individual documents may have their own limits. The other documents with page or character limitations are as follows:
- Logic Model may not exceed 3 pages
- Fellow Training Plan may not exceed 3 pages
- Planning Grant Narrative may not exceed 7 pages

Do not submit unrequested materials such as videos, brochures, or any other items not requested in these application instructions. California Volunteers will not review or return them.

B. Notice of Intent to Apply Submission Deadline

Submission of a Notice of Intent to Apply is mandatory for this competition and is due **Thursday, September 19, 2019 by 5 P.M. PacificTime**. Please submit the notice using this link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019CFAAmeriCorpsNOI.

C. Application Submission Deadline

Applications (both the full Paper Application and Electronic Submission items) must arrive at California Volunteers by **Wednesday, October 2, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time** in order to be considered.

Please send Paper Application to:
California Volunteers
ATTN: California For All AmeriCorps 2019
1400 10th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Applications that do not meet the *Application Checklist* and packaging requirements included in the *Application Instructions* will be subject to point deduction or disqualification.

Electronic Submissions will be completed by email to funding@cv.ca.gov with the subject line "2019 CFA Application Electronic Submission." Please refer to the *Application Instructions.*

CV will not consider applications received after the deadline, except when noted below. CV reserves the right to extend the submission deadline and any notice of such extended deadline will be posted.

Late Applications
All applications received after the submission deadline published in this RFA are presumed to be non-compliant. CV may, at its discretion, consider an application received after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay, including the timing and specific cause(s) of the delay and any evidence that substantiates the claimed extenuating circumstance(s) via email to funding@cv.ca.gov. . The written explanation and evidence must be received no later than one business day after the application deadline stated in the RFA. CV determines whether or not to accept a late application for review on a case-by-case basis.

Communication with CV staff, including program officer of a current grantee, is not a substitution for the above protocol. Applicants that do not submit a justification or any other evidence to overcome the presumption of non-compliance within the required timeframe will not be reviewed or selected for award.

Please note: CV will not consider an advance request to submit a late application. Applicants are encouraged to continue working on their application until it is submitted. If you are experiencing technical difficulties, please carefully review and follow the guidance above, and submit your application as soon as possible.

D. Submission to CNCS
Once selected for AmeriCorps funding, applicants will be required to submit their applications electronically into CNCS's web-based management system. Please ensure staff availability to enter the application into the system as well as respond to CVs' requests for clarification. California Volunteers will provide instructions for submitting applications into CNCS's web-based management system at a later date.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Governing Documents

A grantee's fully executed AmeriCorps contract incorporates the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant as well as the AmeriCorps regulations (45 CFR Sections 2520-2550), CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions, and California Volunteers Policies and Requirements.

B. CNCS Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this *RFA* will be subject to the 2019 CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and the 2019 Specific Terms and Conditions for the particular program (when applicable.) These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cncs-grants.

C. Uniform Guidance

All awards under this RFA are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), now consolidated in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 2205.

D. Reporting Requirements

Implementation Grants

Successful applicants are required to submit a variety of reports which are due to CV at specific times during the life cycle of an award. All reports must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time.

Once the grant is awarded, grantees will be expected to have data collection and data management policies and practices that provide reasonable assurance that they are providing CV with high quality performance measure data. At a minimum, grantees should have policies and practices which address the following areas of data quality:

- The data measures what it intends to measure;
- The grantee collects data in a consistent manner;
- The grantee takes steps to correct data errors;
- The grantee ensures that the data reported is complete; and
- The grantee actively reviews data prior to submission.

In addition to reporting of progress toward the grant's approved performance measure outputs and outcomes, additional demographic and narrative data must be reported annually (as applicable), including the number of applicants for AmeriCorps positions and the number of volunteers recruited and/or supported by Fellows.

Failure to submit accurate, complete, and timely required reports may affect the grantee's ability to secure future AmeriCorps funding. For further guidance and training resources see – CNCS Performance Measure Resources.

Planning Grants

Successful planning grant applicants will be required to complete and submit a variety of deliverables related to AmeriCorps program design and operation readiness. These deliverables are due to CV at specific times throughout the project period. Some deliverables may be waived by CV if an applicant can demonstrate that those components are already in place. All deliverables must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time. California Volunteers may withhold payment of invoices if required deliverables are incomplete or are of poor quality.

The following provides a brief description of each planning grant deliverable to be completed by the Grantee during the planning project period. Detailed instructions regarding each item will be provided during the planning period.

1) **Compliance and Accountability**: AmeriCorps programs must have monitoring and oversight plans to <u>prevent</u> and <u>detect</u> non-compliance and <u>enforce</u> compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities and criminal history checks at the grantee, subgrantee (if applicable), and service site locations. Grant recipients will be required to report on the specific systems, processes, and tools created to implement its compliance and accountability plans.

2) **Partnership Development:** Grant recipients are expected to build private and public partnerships that will support the ongoing implementation and sustainability of the AmeriCorps program. The partnership development deliverable will include a report of the existing and/or new partnerships strengthened or established during the planning process that will support the program beyond year 1.

3) Member Support and Management: Grant recipients are responsible for the recruitment, selection, placement, training, and supervision of AmeriCorps Fellows. The deliverable for this component includes written plans for the recruitment, selection, placement, training, and supervision of AmeriCorps Fellows.

4) **Securing Match Funding**: Grant recipients will develop fundraising strategies to secure match funding for year one and beyond and will report on progress made to secure match funding for years 2 and 3 shall the program reapply for funding to be continued.

5) **Data Collection Plan**: Grant recipients will ensure a data collection plan and system is in place to collect high quality performance measurement data, including a strategy for using performance data (including proposed performance measures and other process and outcome measures if applicable) to improve its program in year 1 and beyond. The deliverable for this component includes a completed CV Data Collection Plan and ready instruments for all performance measures included in the program's Performance Measurement Worksheets.

6) **Other Program Operational Readiness Deliverables**
   AmeriCorps Program Readiness deliverables are critical preparedness pieces to effectively operate an AmeriCorps program. In some cases entirely new systems and documents will be developed while in other instances, the legal applicant will need to adapt current systems to reflect the addition of AmeriCorps members. As needed, grant recipients may leverage planning grant dollars to build or strengthen the following systems and processes that must be in place prior to a successful program launch:

   Program Staffing and Management Structure:
   - Program Oversight Plan
   - Staff Position Descriptions
   - Staff Timesheet Template (must be "functional")
   - Staff Training Plan

   Partnership Management:
   - Member Placement Site Application/Selection Process
   - Member Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities
   - Partnership Agreements (MOUs)
   - Orientation and Training Plan for Site Supervisors
   - Policy and Procedure for Collecting and Approving Member Timesheets
   - In-Kind Match Documentation for Partners (if applicable)

   Member Support and Management:
   Onboarding:

- Member Recruitment, Application, and Selection Plan (My AmeriCorps Portal optional)
- Member Position Description
- Member Eligibility/Citizenship Screening and Documentation Process
- Member Service Agreement

Training:
- Member Pre-Service Orientation Plan
- Member Placement Site Orientation Plan
- Member Ongoing Training Plan
- Member Timesheet Template
- Member Performance Evaluation Template

Support and Supervision:
- System for Tracking Member Hours
- Member Individual Development Plan
- Performance Review and Feedback Plan
- Performance Improvement Process

Other
- Labor Organization Certification
- Fiscal Readiness
- National Service Criminal History Checks Policy and Procedure for Staff and Members
- Member Service Gear Plan
- Website Page for AmeriCorps Program
- AmeriCorps Branding and Communication Policy and Procedure

E. National Service Criminal History Check Requirement

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, AmeriCorps Fellows, or volunteers) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend or education award through a program receiving CNCS funds (through either federal or grantee share of the budget). An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such CNCS funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award. Please budget on the CNCS share at least $54 plus the cost of a state criminal history check per covered individual (both staff and Fellows).

California Volunteers requires that all "Covered Positions" (program staff and AmeriCorps applicants) must undergo NSCHCs that include:
1. Nationwide[2] name-based National Sex Offender Public Registry Check using NSOPW;
2. Statewide Name- or Fingerprint-based Criminal History Registry Check in the State of residence at the time of application **and** in the State where the individual will serve or work;
3. FBI National Fingerprint-based Check
   All checks must be conducted and any results considered according to Program and CV policy, with the individual cleared prior to the start of service and/or time on the grant. **This includes anyone listed on the budget whether grantee or match funded.**

In addition, California Volunteers requires that grantees comply with the following:
1. Follow all CNCS requirements outlined in 45 CFR §§ 2540.200 – 2540.207 and CNCS' most

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[2] An "Advanced Search" of geographic region will not satisfy this requirement. All states that make up the nationwide NSOPR database must be checked before the check is considered complete. Use of a vendor for this check is often not compliant. (See CNCS' NSCHC FAQs regarding Vendors).

recent *NSCHC FAQs*; and

2. Follow CVs' definition that since all programs/grantees serve and/or enroll vulnerable populations, all covered staff and potential AmeriCorps Fellows must complete the **State, FBI and NSOPW** checks; and

3. Recheck the NSOPW nationwide search prior to the start of each term of service for all returning AmeriCorps Fellows; and

4. Ensure all required checks are completed, results are considered and the individual is cleared prior to becoming an AmeriCorps Fellow eligible to earn hours and/or a staff person beginning work on an AmeriCorps grant; and

5. Appropriately documents the checks process and results in each staff/Fellow file; and

6. Has a written policy and procedures in place, which at a minimum addresses requirements 1-5.

7. Ensure one staff Fellow be trained annually in National Service Criminal History Checks using CNCS' training module and maintain the resultant training certificate (per AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions).

Successful applicants will be required to use the CNCS approved vendors True Screen and Fieldprint to conduct all required checks. Inability of a grantee to demonstrate that they have conducted all required criminal history checks as specified by CV may result in disallowance of all or part of the costs associated with noncompliance.

F. Requests for Improper Payment Information
 At the request of CNCS, CV may, from time to time, request documentation from grantees in order to monitor the award or to comply with other legal requirements, such as the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002, as amended. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on temporary manual hold, reimbursement only, or other remedies as appropriate. In addition, CV/CNCS may, in appropriate circumstances, consider in its funding decisions any previous failures to make timely responses.

G. Use of Material
To ensure that materials generated with CNCS funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, CV and CNCS reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so (2 CFR §200.315 (b)).

H. Reallocation of Funding
California Volunteers reserves the right to re-focus program dollars in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.