

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION FOR HOMELESS AND RUNAWAY SERVICES

AMERICORPS SUPERVISOR'S INSTRUCTIONS

I. AmeriCorps Project Eligibility

Wisconsin runaway programs eligible to receive AmeriCorps members in 2010 are those who have submitted request to WARS in 2009. These proposals were submitted jointly to the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board and accepted at both state and national levels of the Corporation for National Service. New program applicants will be accepted in 2010.

II. AmeriCorps Member Recruitment

- A. ***Start up:*** AmeriCorps recruiting begins when the joint WAHRS grant application is officially approved. Individual programs will be immediately notified. AmeriCorps offer recruitment information through their Web site (www.americorps.gov). Applicants that apply to WAHRS utilizing this web site will be directed to local WARS sites. Local agency's own job application form and process may be used for initial recruitment of AmeriCorps members. The AmeriCorps application form (found on line) must be used for the AmeriCorps finalists.

Background checks must be done in accordance to instructions provided by WAHRS. These must be completed before a member is officially enrolled in the program.

Members who have successfully completed the application process and passed their background check will be enrolled. Once enrolled, members are required to attend a two day pre-service orientation.

AmeriCorps participants are not considered agency employees, but members, who perform service assignments, not job duties. They are not allowed to perform any work that will fill in for, or displace, agency employees. AmeriCorps members earn living allowances, not salaries or wages. Supervisors are encouraged to use AmeriCorps members as a team, and, when they work with volunteers, as team leaders. Service gear, including T-shirt, sweat jacket, baseball cap, logo patches, decals, lapel pin, and site signs, will be given to each member. Members are required to be identified as AmeriCorps while on duty.

B. ***Target Populations for Recruiting***

1. Individuals receiving some form of public assistance. A member's living allowance may affect his or her eligibility for programs funded under the Social Security Act, such as SSI and Medicaid. Other Federal programs, such as Food Stamps, Section 8 Housing and public Housing, will not be affected. Members receiving assistance should consult with their caseworker before enrolling in AmeriCorps.
2. Recent graduates or students who receive student loans. Most federally subsidized education loans are eligible for deferment during the period of AmeriCorps service. By law, an AmeriCorps member's living allowance does not affect work-study eligibility or eligibility for any other federal student's aid.
3. Organizations that recruit low income, minority and/or displaced home maker job applicants.
4. Skilled individuals who are returning to the work force.
5. Volunteers in the program. A program may not select a member who is or has been employed by the agency within six months of enrollment in AmeriCorps.
6. Persons with disabilities.

III. Compensation

A term of service is defined as 1700 hours of participation over a period of 12 months (900 hours PT). Holidays, leaves, and other absences may not be counted toward service hours, but should be included in the programmatic year. AmeriCorps members receive living allowance check on the 15th and 30th of the month directly from WAHRS. This check is sent to the member at the agency's address. The amount of the check does not vary based on the hours of service performed during any given payroll period. Payroll deductions will be made for Social Security (7.65%) and federal income tax, based on a W-4 form. Individual sites are responsible for worker's compensation.

In addition to the living allowance check, an educational benefit (for a maximum of two years) will be paid to the qualified school, school-to-work program, or qualified loan holder designated by the member after the end of service, provided there is certification of the completion of 1700/900 service hours per year. The education can be used to pay off debt to a college or financial institution or to pay future college expenses.

IV. Benefits

- A. **Child Care:** Member eligibility for child care benefits is based on state established guidelines under the Child Care Development Block Grant and will be determined at the member's request, assisted by the site supervisor and AmeriCorps CARE. AmeriCorps CARE must also be notified in writing immediately by the site supervisor when a member is no longer eligible for benefits due to changes in status i.e. the family income exceeds the limit, the child turns 18, a member chooses to change child car providers, or a member is absent from the program for excessive periods of time (five or more days in a month). AmeriCorps CARE can be reached by calling 1-800-570-4543 Additional information can be found at www.naccrra.org/ameriCorpsvista/index.php.
- B. Health Insurance is provided by AmeriCorps directly to all full time AmeriCorps members who are not covered under another plan. The health plan administered by Summit America covers only the member, not family members. Once members are enrolled insurance cards and benefit plans will be provided.
- C. Loan Forbearance: AmeriCorps members are eligible to have the repayment of qualified student loans postponed while completing their term of service. Members complete the loan forbearance process through utilizing the My AmeriCorps portal. Instructions on how to access this will be provided to members. Upon successful completion of the term of service the Corporation will pay interest that has accrued on qualified student loans that were held in forbearance through AmeriCorps during the members term of service. The interest accrual form will be found on the My AmeriCorps portal.
- D. Vacation, Medical Leave, Emergency Leave, Etc. (See III Compensation)

V. Supervision

- A. Division of responsibility between WAHRS staff and local supervisors
 - 1. The WAHRS AmeriCorps Director (John Babbitt), aided by the WAHRS Executive Director (Patricia Balke) , is responsible for administration of the AmeriCorps project, including
 - a. Final hiring and firing responsibility
 - b. Training (WAHRS PSO/Fall Conference)
 - c. Reporting to the AmeriCorps State and Federal Agencies
 - d. Consultation with AmeriCorps members and local supervisors including site visits
 - 2. The local agency supervisor is responsible for
 - a. Development of the AmeriCorps Members on site training agenda
 - b. Recruitment and hiring
 - c. Goal setting

- d. Supervision, support, and evaluation of members' performance, recognition, and disciplinary actions.
- e. Member safety
- f. Liability courage
- g. Working with the member throughout the year and especially toward the end of the term of service on career and educational goals
- h. Promoting organizational/work skills with the members
 - i. Work Schedule
 - ii. Periodic review of job description
 - iii. Periodic program reporting
 - iv. Record keeping
 - v. Enforced punctuality
 - vi. Participation in staff meetings with clear presentation of AmeriCorps role and duties
 - vii. Knowledge of individual staff roles in the agency
 - viii. Frequent job performance monitoring to correct deficiencies in a timely manner

VI. Prohibited Activities

Prohibited activities are outlined in the member's contract.

AmeriCorps members are allowed to hold other employment or to be enrolled in educational courses, so long as the duties and hours do not interfere with those of the AmeriCorps position, as determined by the supervisor.

Specific hours and days of the week are determined by the needs of the individual programs. The nature of the work, such as street outreach and availability for runaway referrals may require members to do much of their work outside of the office, in the evenings and on weekends. Supervisors are free to implement time reporting and monitoring systems with which they are comfortable to ensure accountability.

VII. Training

Responsibility for the training of AmeriCorps members is provided jointly by WAHRS and the local sites. Attendance at a two day Pre-Service Orientation (PSO) sponsored by WAHRS is mandatory for all new AmeriCorps. All members are also required to attend a two day WAHRS sponsored Fall Conference in addition to two statewide Corporation sponsored events.

Overnight accommodations and meals for WAHRS trainings are provided by WAHRS. Sites are responsible for mileage to these events. The two Corporation sponsored trainings expenses, including mileage, will be covered by the Corporation. All other mileage paid to members is the responsibility of local sites.

The local site supervisor is responsible for site orientation, which generally includes orientation to the agency and the program with which the member will be working, the job description, and a description of the community to be served. The orientation should include discussion on the member's role in developing the new program, the goals to be addressed, and a work plan that includes objectives, methods, outcomes, and a time line.

VIII. Record Keeping and Reporting

- A. Programs must maintain computerized time sheets for each AmeriCorps member and Site Supervisor(s) utilizing the OnCorps system (information provided by WAHRS).
- B. Programs must document in-kind, or matching contributions (sent to WAHRS at least on a quarterly basis).
- C. WAHRS is required to submit a progress report to AmeriCorps. Data required for the report is outlined in the report form sent by WAHRS to the AmeriCorps members at the end of each quarter.
- D. Site supervisors are required to conduct a mid term and end of year evaluation of AmeriCorps Members. The evaluations should be sent to John Babbitt (WAHRS AmeriCorps Prog. Direc.)

IX. Termination

Termination for cause or personal circumstance is outlined in the AmeriCorps member contract.

For clarification and/or additional information contact:

Patricia Balke, WAHRS Executive Director
2318 East Dayton St.
Madison, WI 53704
608-241-2649
pbalke@sbcglobal.net

John Babbitt, WARS Program Director
414-403-1526
doublebass53@sbcglobal.net