



# **YES AmeriCorps Member & Site Supervisor**

# **HANDBOOK 2009-2010**

**"I slept and dreamt that life was joy.  
I awoke and saw that life was service.  
I acted and behold, service was joy."**

**~ Rabindranath Tagore**

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## **HISTORY OF NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

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AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs that engage more than 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. AmeriCorps members serve through more than 2,100 nonprofits, public agencies, and faith-based organizations. They tutor and mentor youth, build affordable housing, teach computer skills, clean parks and streams, run after-school programs, and help communities respond to disasters. Created in 1993, AmeriCorps is part of the Corporation for National and Community Service, which also oversees Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America. Together these programs engage more than 2 million Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service each year.

## **AMERICORPS OVERVIEW**

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Since 1994, thousands of men and women have served in AmeriCorps, providing needed assistance to millions of Americans. AmeriCorps provides trained, dedicated people to help nonprofits accomplish more and make more effective use of volunteers. President Bush has asked AmeriCorps to expand its work in public safety, public health, and disaster relief to assist in homeland security. The President has also proposed expanding AmeriCorps as part of his USA Freedom Corps initiative. AmeriCorps is made up of three programs: AmeriCorps\*State and National Direct, AmeriCorps\*VISTA, and AmeriCorps\*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC).

## **YES AMERICORPS**

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Currently in its 15<sup>th</sup> program year, YES AmeriCorps is one of the oldest programs in the state of Wisconsin. It is a multi-site national service program serving west-central Wisconsin, including La Crosse, Onalaska, Sparta, Tomah, Black River Falls, and Viroqua. YES AmeriCorps is administered by Workforce Connections, Inc., 402 North 8<sup>th</sup> Street, La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601.

**Our Mission** - YES AmeriCorps members strengthen our communities by helping youth experience success, assisting in public safety, reducing hunger, promoting literacy, expanding volunteer services and . . . **Getting Things Done!**

## **WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU AS A YES AMERICORPS MEMBER**

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### **Commit to the full Program Year**

As a full-time or half-time Member of the YES AmeriCorps program, you are agreeing to commit to the full program year (11 months), to performing service in your community, and to meeting all member requirements for successful completion. If you have reservations, or are just looking to do this “until something else comes along” we ask that you not join YES AmeriCorps. Quarter-time and minimum-time Members are committing to complete the required number of service hours and all other program requirements.

### **Be Professional and Dedicated**

AmeriCorps is not for everyone. The hours are long, the pay minimal and the challenges sometimes seem insurmountable. But even with those difficulties, there are thousands of committed citizens who take up the challenge and succeed beyond all expectations. AmeriCorps members are making a difference in communities by helping to mobilize community resources and empower others to be a force of change. If you decide to commit to this opportunity, we expect that you will give it your all and be professional, committed and energetic. Anyone can get a job; not everyone can be an AmeriCorps Member!

### **Full-time Members**

Full-time Members (1700 hours) will serve approximately 40 hours per week throughout the program year, September through July. These members are typically at their assigned service site(s) Mondays through Thursdays, and part of Fridays. Full-time members are required to attend all mandatory team meetings and special events. Members must accurately record all service hours on the day those hours were performed. You may not “volunteer” at your site assignment and not record service hours. You may not work for pay at your site assignment without prior written state commission and program approval. **Full-time Members may not perform more than 40 hours per week without prior program approval.**

### **Half-time Members**

Half-time Members (900 hours) will serve approximately 20 hours per week throughout the program year, September through July. These members typically serve at their assigned service site Mondays through Thursdays. Half-time members are required to attend all mandatory team meetings and special events. Members must accurately record all service hours on the day those hours were performed. You may not “volunteer” at your site assignment and not record service hours. You may not work for pay at your site assignment without prior written state commission and program approval. **Half-time Members may not perform more than 20 hours per week without prior program approval.**

### **Quarter-time and Minimum-time Members**

Quarter-time (450-hours) and Minimum-time (300-hours) Members are committing to complete the required number of hours and all other program requirements, such as developing and leading a service learning or community project and completing all reports.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT FROM ORIENTATION WEEK**

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What does it mean to be an AmeriCorps Member? How does what you are doing in your local community fit in with the national service program? Why should you be honored to serve your community and country as an AmeriCorps Member?

Your Orientation Week experience will offer you a glimpse into the world of national service, and examines how AmeriCorps impacts the problems of poverty and illiteracy in our nation. You will learn about the effects AmeriCorps Members have had on our society and how local, systematic, grassroots change is affecting the vast problems that plague so many families and communities in our country. You will also:

- Become familiar with the YES AmeriCorps mission, goals, objectives and performance measures.
- Find out how being a YES AmeriCorps Member is different than having a “job” or being a regular “volunteer”.
- Meet and network with other Members on our team.
- Discuss the problem of poverty and what it means to be impoverished in order to understand the unique needs of west-central Wisconsin.
- Learn how to accurately record your service hours and activities.
- Get to know Serve Wisconsin and regional Corporation for National and Community Service staff.

## **EXPLANATIONS OF BENEFITS**

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Note: Members who resign or who are exited for cause will receive a prorated stipend check through their final day of service.

### **Living Allowance/Biweekly Stipend:**

**Full-time Members** - your total living allowance will be \$11,400 for the entire program year. This amount is divided by the number of pay periods (24) in the program year to determine the amount of your biweekly stipend checks. Each stipend check will be approximately the same amount. Your living allowance is taxed as income.

**Half-time Members** - your total living allowance will be \$6,035 for the entire program year. This amount is divided by the number of pay periods (24) in the program year to determine the amount of your biweekly stipend checks. Each stipend check will be approximately the same amount. Your living allowance is taxed as income.

### **Living Allowance (Stipend) Payments for Full-time and Half-time Members**

- Your stipend check will be directly deposited in your account on Fridays on a biweekly basis according to the Timesheet Submission/Check Distribution schedule.
- The official dates for the 2009-10 program year will be Tuesday, September 8, 2009 through Saturday, July 31, 2010.

**Quarter-time and Minimum-time Members** do not receive a living allowance. These positions are Education Award only positions. The Education Award is earned and awarded to the member upon successful completion of their service hours and all other program requirements.

### **Education Award:**

**Full-time Members** - receive an Education Award of \$4,725 from the National Service Trust Fund upon successful completion of all program requirements. This Education Award can be used for furthering your education at approved colleges and universities or for repaying qualified student loans. Your Education Award is taxed in the year you use it.

**Half-time Members** - receive an Education Award of \$2,362.50 from the National Service Trust Fund upon successful completion of all program requirements. This Education Award can be used for furthering your education at approved colleges and

universities or for repaying qualified student loans. Your Education Award is taxed in the year you use it.

**Quarter-time Members** - receive an Education Award of \$1,250 from the National Service Trust Fund upon successful completion of the program requirements. This Education Award can be used for furthering your education at approved colleges and universities or for repaying qualified student loans. Your Education Award is taxed in the year you use it.

**Minimum-time Members** - receive an Education Award of \$1,000 from the National Service Trust Fund upon successful completion of the program requirements. This Education Award can be used for furthering your education at approved colleges and universities or for repaying qualified student loans. Your Education Award is taxed in the year you use it.

**Student Loan Forbearance:**

Eligible members may place their qualified student loans in forbearance during their term of service with YES AmeriCorps. Once in forbearance, the National Service Trust will pay any interest that accrues on your loans during your term of service. You must complete the appropriate documents to place your student loan(s) in forbearance (Forbearance Request for National Service Form) and to request that the interest on those loans be paid by the National Service Trust (Interest Accrual Form). The program will make these forms available to you as needed.

**Medical/Rx and Dental Insurance Benefits:**

Medical/Rx and dental insurance benefits are available to active, full-time AmeriCorps Members only. The programs are coordinated through Willis of Seattle. NASCC is the medical/Rx provider and Ameritas Group is the dental provider of service.

**Can a Member waive medical/Rx or dental coverage?**

Not if they are enrolled in the medical/Rx plan. Both the medical and dental plans will have common eligibility, meaning anyone enrolled in one plan must be enrolled in the other as well. No Member can have medical/Rx or dental only.

**What if a Member has coverage through another insurance plan?**

If the Member can provide documentation that he/she is covered elsewhere, and submits a signed waiver form, the Member may waive coverage. However, it is entirely permissible to have other coverage and be enrolled in the medical/Rx and dental insurance plans. The NASCC health plan and Ameritas dental plan always pays secondary to any other coverage in place.

**Who is responsible for paying the premiums for the Member's coverage?**

The NASCC insurance plan is a group plan. Therefore, premiums cannot be billed to the Members. The program is responsible for the cost of all Member coverage. This is exclusive of COBRA coverage.

**When does a Member's coverage begin?**

The plan is designed to allow coverage to be in place on the Member's beginning service date.

**Can I enroll a family member?**

No, coverage is individually based. Only active full-time AmeriCorps Members can be covered under this program/policy.

**When does a Member's coverage end?**

Insurance coverage ends on the last day the Member's active service concludes. The YES AmeriCorps program cannot extend eligibility beyond the end of the Member's active service.

**What about COBRA?**

COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Benefits Reconciliation Act) is employer/employee legislation whereby an active medical/Rx and dental participant, whose coverage ends, is eligible for continuation coverage up to 18 months after they leave service. The cost of the insurance is covered by the AmeriCorps Member plus a 2% administrative charge is applied by Workforce Connections, Inc. to administer the COBRA program.

**Who should I contact if I have questions regarding either the medical/Rx or dental insurance programs?**

Please contact Rebecca Grapes, Director of Administrative Services/Benefits Administrator, for Workforce Connections, Inc. She can be reached at (608) 789-5611, (800) 742-5627 or [grapesr@workforceconnections.org](mailto:grapesr@workforceconnections.org).

**Medical/Rx Insurance**

The NASCC Health Insurance Program is a group insurance plan offered to active, full-time AmeriCorps Members only. The plan also provides for an Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) policy.

**What type of health coverage is provided?**

Different types of covered medical expenses include (this list is not all inclusive): hospital room and board; outpatient charges for hospital; surgical charges; x-ray and lab tests; office visits; ambulance services; and prescription drug coverage (reimbursement). Benefits will be paid at 80% of usual, reasonable and customary (UR&C) charges.

Preventive care will be paid at 80% of UR&C charges up to the maximum preventive care benefit of \$150 per benefit period: complete health assessments; routine physicals; blood pressure screening; cholesterol screen; glucose-blood level screening; prostate-rectal exams for insured's age 40 and over; colorectal cancer screening; immunizations; and other similar type services when recommended by a physician.

The following will be paid at 100% of UR&C charges up to the maximum medical expense benefit per benefit period: annual pap smear; annual cervical cytologic screening; baseline mammogram; breast evaluation and screening mammogram.

Diabetes Benefits – NASCC will pay the expense incurred for equipment, supplies and other self-management training and education, including medical nutrition therapy for: insulin dependent diabetes; insulin using diabetes; gestational diabetes; and non-insulin

using diabetes; if prescribed by a health care professional legally authorized to prescribe treatment.

\$50,000 Maximum Benefit for each Injury or Sickness

\$100 Deductible per Insured Person per Service Year

\$1,000 Out of Pocket maximum per Insured Person per Service Year

**Dental Insurance**

The Ameritas Group Dental Insurance Program is a group insurance plan offered to active, full-time AmeriCorps Members only.

**What type of dental coverage is provided?**

The dental program is networked based. The program is divided up between Type I and Type II benefits. Type I benefits (routine and diagnostic procedures such as cleanings, oral exams and x-rays) is the Ameritas network negotiated fee, the discounted amount that contracted dentists agree to accept as payment in full. For Type II benefits (basic services such as fillings, root canals and certain oral surgery procedures), all covered services have a fixed benefit based on the exact procedure performed.

<b>Plan I – Deductible and Benefit Maximums</b>	
<b>Deductible</b>	\$25 per benefit year (July through June)* <i>Deductible must be met before benefits are payable.</i>
<b>Benefit Maximum</b>	\$1,000 per benefit year (July through June)*
<b>Type I Benefits – Diagnostic and Preventive Services</b>	
<b>Benefit</b>	100%
<b>Reimbursement**</b>	Charges up to the negotiated fee for Ameritas network dentists will be considered for payment; charges exceeding the network negotiated fee are patient responsibility**
<b>Covered Services</b> (Frequency Limitations)	Routine Exam (1 per 6 month period) Bitewing X-rays (1 per 12 month period) Full Mouth/Panoramic X-rays (1 per 5 year period) Periapical X-rays Cleanings (1 per 6 month period)
<b>Type II Benefits – Basic Services</b>	
<b>Benefit</b>	Fixed dollar amount based on the service provided (see schedule)
<b>Reimbursement**</b>	Charges up to the negotiated fee for Ameritas network dentists will be considered for payment; charges exceeding the network negotiated fee are patient responsibility**
<b>Covered Services</b> <i>For more detailed information on covered services, please see the schedule summary or the full schedule (available upon request)</i>	Fillings Endodontics (nonsurgical) Periodontics (nonsurgical) Simple Extractions

\*Unlike medical, deductible and benefit maximums accrue based on the policy benefit year, July through June. Deductibles and benefit maximums reset on July 1 for all enrolled members, regardless of their actual start date.

\*\*Ameritas has negotiated discounts on services provided by contracted (network) dentists. Those providers are required to “write off” any difference in their normal charges for a service and the negotiated fee. Non-contracted, or non-network dentists are under no such obligation and are free to bill the member for any amounts exceeding the negotiated fee.

**Child Care:**

Child Care assistance is available to qualifying active full-time AmeriCorps Members. Please see program staff for more information.

**SERVICE SITE POSITION DESCRIPTIONS**

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Service site position descriptions are site-specific. All full-time and half-time members will receive a service site position description upon site assignment. All quarter-time and minimum-time members will be required to supply the program with a position description.

**TIMESHEETS AND RECORDING DATA**

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All service hours must be performed at a program-approved service site such as a school or non-profit organization. Service hours cannot be performed for individuals or for-profit businesses. Member timesheets will be completed on-line in the OnCorps system. No paper timesheets will be accepted. Members will be trained and then required to use this system during the first two weeks of the program year.

Member timesheets must be completed and submitted by **12:00 p.m. on Mondays** per the Timesheet Submission/Check Distribution schedule to their site supervisor(s) in OnCorps. All service hours must be recorded accurately. Incomplete or inaccurate timesheets will be rejected. If rejected, the member must correct and resubmit it to their site supervisor(s) immediately. Once approved by the site supervisor(s), program staff will review, verify and accept the member timesheet as complete.

**Late Submission of Timesheets**

The definition of a late timesheet is as follows: the timesheet was not submitted (or resubmitted in the case of a timesheet being rejected by a site supervisor) and/or approved by 12:00 p.m. on the Thursday following the due date noted on the Timesheet Submission/Check Distribution schedule. Late timesheets will incur a \$10.00 per week fine according to the 2009-10 AmeriCorps State and National Policy FAQ’s Number C.23, Section H – Minor Disciplinary Actions. YES AmeriCorps may deduct fines from that portion of the member’s living allowance that is paid by non-Federal funds.

**Example:** If a member’s timesheet was due by 12:00 p.m. on Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup> but not correctly submitted or not approved by 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, that member will incur a \$10.00 fine.

**Service Hours** – are hours performed by a member at a program-approved service site that directly relate to one or more of our program’s focus areas; promoting public health and safety, promoting literacy, promoting volunteerism, and reducing hunger.

**Fundraising Service Hours**

The Yes AmeriCorps member’s participation in fundraising activities is strictly limited by the Corporation for National and Community Service and the YES AmeriCorps Program policies. A YES AmeriCorps member may only participate in a fundraising activity that is directly linked to a project or activity within the scope of their service site position description and with **prior** approval of the program. Members may **NOT** participate in a fundraising activity for general operating costs of any organization. Member’s participation in fundraising activities is limited to 10% of a member’s total service hours.

Members must submit to the program a Fundraising Request Approval Form for approval **prior** to performing any fundraising service hours. This form must be completed by the member and received by the program director at least two (2) weeks prior to the proposed event. A response to the request will be provided in a timely manner. A copy of this document is attached.

**Training Hours** – are hours devoted to member development and include training offered at team meetings and at outside venues, such as conferences and workshops. Please bring outside training opportunities to the attention of the Program Director well in advance of the event for approval. Member’s participation in training activities is limited to 20% of a member’s total service hours.

**BENCHMARK FOR SERVICE HOURS**

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Program staff will coach members who are behind the benchmark for service hours listed below. Disciplinary action may be taken by the program if the member does not take corrective action to improve their service hour requirement.

<b>Measurement Date</b>	<b>FT Benchmark Hours</b>	<b>HT Benchmark Hours</b>
November 4	326	173
January 6	652	346
March 10	977	520
May 12	1305	693
July 31	1700	900

## OTHER SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

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In addition to satisfactorily completing the required number of service hours, members must:

- Complete pre-service training and orientation
- Complete mid-term and end-of-term evaluations
- Attend two (2) statewide events
- Attend all mandatory member meetings and special events
- Complete and submit **all** paperwork on time. This includes timesheets, Time Off Request forms, data collection, project summaries, service reflections, resume, citizenship pre- and post-test and record of intent.
- Complete appropriate education/training that relates to the Member's ability to perform service. This includes CPR, first aid, disaster preparedness training, citizenship, conflict resolution, career exploration, service and/or service-learning activities, etc.
- See Page 25 for a List and Timeline of Other Service Requirements.

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

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### Member Meetings, Community Service and Special Events

AmeriCorps members are required to attend all mandatory weekly Friday meetings, trainings and community service. Members are also expected to be on time for meetings, statewide events, community service and special events. **Members must complete and submit the Time Off Request form prior to taking time off.**

**In the case of illness, the Time Off Request must be submitted immediately (i.e., at the beginning of the next service day) following the illness.** Forms will become part of member's permanent file. Members will receive a copy of the completed form for their personal file. A copy of the **Time Off Request form** can be found in the member orientation folder, on our website at [www.workforceconnections.org](http://www.workforceconnections.org) and in the front of the member mailbox.

Failure to report for service, excessive tardiness or absences from your site, meetings, service or mandatory events may lead to disciplinary action, including verbal reminders, written warnings, suspension or disciplinary exit.

In addition to weekly meetings and community service, members are required to attend several special events during their year of service. **Members are responsible for discussing any conflicts with Program staff prior to the event.** Event dates and times will be made known to members as soon as they become available.

### Absences from Member Meetings

- Members are allowed to use two (2) personal days for missing Friday meetings.
- Each tardy will count as 1/3 unexcused absence.
- Members with one (1) unexcused absence will receive a verbal reminder.
- Members with two (2) unexcused absences will receive a written warning.
- Members with three (3) unexcused absences may receive a 3-day suspension or disciplinary exit.

- With **sufficient prior notice and at the discretion of the Program staff**, members in good standing may be allowed up to two (2) vacation days. Members must be current with hours and have a record of being on time to sites, meetings, community service and special events.
- Other absences will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Program staff.

### **Service Site Attendance**

Members are expected to meet their obligations to their site in a professional manner. **Members must complete and submit the Time Off Request form prior to taking time off.**

**In the case of illness, the Time Off Request must be submitted immediately (i.e., at the beginning of the next service day) following the illness.** Forms will become part of member's permanent file. Members will receive a copy of the completed form for their personal file. A copy of the **Time Off Request form** can be found in the member orientation folder, on our website at [www.workforceconnections.org](http://www.workforceconnections.org) and in the front of the member mailbox.

Failure to report for service, excessive tardiness or absences from your site, meetings, service or mandatory events may lead to disciplinary action, including verbal reminders, written warnings, suspension or disciplinary exit.

### **Reporting Absences from Your Service Site**

If you are ill or cannot otherwise serve at your site on a given day, or if you must leave early from your site, you must immediately contact Katie Groves, Program Director, **by phone** at (608) 789-5646. You are also responsible for immediately contacting your site supervisor **by phone**. **Email notifications are not accepted, and any absence reported by email will be considered unexcused. A Time Off Request must be submitted immediately (i.e., at the beginning of the next service day) following the illness.**

### **Reporting Absences from Member Meetings, Community Service or Special Events**

If you are ill and cannot attend a weekly member meeting, community service or special event, you must immediately contact Katie Groves, Program Director, **by phone** at (608) 789-5646. You must use a personal day or have a doctor's excuse; otherwise your absence will be marked as unexcused. **Email notifications are not accepted, and any absence reported by email will be considered unexcused. A Time Off Request must be submitted immediately (i.e., at the beginning of the next service day) following the illness.**

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## **GIFTS AND GRATUITIES**

YES AmeriCorps members are prohibited from accepting gifts, money, and/or gratuities from sites or persons receiving service.

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## **SERVICE GEAR**

Members will be provided various AmeriCorps service gear such as shirts, pins, patches, ID badge, etc. **When on duty, an AmeriCorps Member must wear one or more pieces of service gear.** Wearing the AmeriCorps shirt is especially important during team meetings and

when serving on a community service day project. When wearing AmeriCorps service gear, the member should behave in an appropriate, professional manner and represent the Program respectfully. Members should never wear their AmeriCorps gear at improper venues such as bars and taverns.

## **PROGRAM / MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS**

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Email is at this time the best and fastest means for the Program staff to communicate with Members between team meetings. It is important that all Members supply the Program with a current and active email address. Members must notify the Program of personal status changes such as change of name, mailing addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, etc. using the Change Form. A copy of this document can be found in the member orientation folder.

In addition, a phone tree for full-time and half-time Members will be created and distributed. This phone tree will be used to notify Members in case of meeting cancellations or venue changes.

## **RULES OF CONDUCT**

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- A. The Member is expected to, at all times while acting in an official capacity as an AmeriCorps Member:
  - 1. Demonstrate mutual respect toward others;
  - 2. Follow directions of the AmeriCorps Program office and Host Service Site;
  - 3. Direct concerns, problems, and suggestions to the Program Director.
  - 4. Have a neat and clean appearance and wear attire appropriate for the work site and activity. When on duty, an AmeriCorps member **must** wear one or more pieces of service gear, even if it is just the pin. Wearing the AmeriCorps shirt is especially important when working on a community service day project.
  
- B. While acting in an official AmeriCorps capacity, the Member **may not**:
  - 1. Write or assist in the preparation of any reports or proposals for the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board or any other grants to benefit the Program;
  - 2. Serve as clerical or other secretarial support for any service site staff;
  - 3. Engage in religious instruction; conduct worship services; provide instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship; construct or operate facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship; maintain facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship; or engage in any form of religious proselytization, consistent with

Section 132 of the Serve America Act. Acknowledging that religious and political activities play a positive role in healthy communities, it is important that AmeriCorps members do not appear to be taking sides religiously or politically. AmeriCorps members are free to pursue these activities on their own initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-AmeriCorps funds. The AmeriCorps logo should not be worn while doing so.

4. Engage in activities that pose a significant safety risk to participants;
5. Organize a letter-writing campaign to congress;
6. Engage in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
7. Participate in, or endorse, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
8. Print politically charged articles in a Corporation-funded newsletter or listserv;
9. Take part in political demonstrations or rallies;
10. Engage in any efforts to influence legislation, including state or local ballot initiatives;
11. Participate in voter registration drives;
12. Organize or participate in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
13. Assist, promote, or deter union organizing;
14. Impair existing contracts or collective bargaining agreements;
15. Provide a direct service to any for-profit organization or entity; a labor union; a partisan political organization; an organization engaged in the religious activities described in the preceding clause; or a nonprofit entity that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Code Title 26.
16. Raise funds for his/her living allowance; raising funds for an organization's operating expenses or endowment; or writing a grant application for funding provided by a federal agency.
17. Provide abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services.

18. Perform any other activities not in line with the YES AmeriCorps mission.
19. Engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state, or federal law.
20. Engage in any other activity that the Corporation for National and Community Service or the YES AmeriCorps program determines will be prohibited, upon notice to the Host Service Site.

The member understands that the policy of the YES AmeriCorps Program is to assign members to a sponsoring site for the duration of the program year. Transferring to another site during the term of service is not permissible. If a member puts in a request to serve a second term of service, and is invited to serve on the team for a second term, a change of service site can then be made.

C. The Member understands that the following acts will also constitute a violation of the Program's rules of conduct:

- Unauthorized tardiness;
- Unauthorized absences;
- Repeated use of inappropriate language and profanity;
- Failure to wear AmeriCorps gear and/or appropriate clothing at worksite and when participating in service assignments;
- Performing personal business, such as making excessive phone calls or running errands, during AmeriCorps service hours.
- Stealing, lying or falsifying AmeriCorps reports;
- Inappropriate or unprofessional behavior.
- Destroying or defacing any Program property or service site property.
- Refusing to follow the Site Supervisor or Program Director's instructions.
- Failure to notify the Program of any criminal arrest or conviction that occurs during the term of service.
- Possessing or using any illegal drugs during the term of service;
- Consuming alcoholic beverages during the performance of service activities;
- Being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs during the performance of service activities; or
- Failure to follow the rules and regulations set in the Member Handbook and the Member Agreement.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

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For violating the above stated rules of conduct, as well as the policies and procedures stated in this handbook, the Program will take the following action for those infractions where the Program sees the possibility of reversing the behavior:

1. For the member's *first offense*, the AmeriCorps Program Director (or other appropriate program official) will issue a verbal warning to the member, documented in the member's file.
2. For the member's *second offense*, the AmeriCorps Program Director (or other appropriate program official) will issue a written warning and reprimand the member, a copy of which will be placed in the member's file.
3. For the member's *third offense*, the member may be suspended for three days without compensation and will not receive credit for any service hours missed. Documented will be placed in the member's file.
4. For the *fourth offense*, the program may release the member for cause.

For each offense, a Site Incident Report Form will be completed by the YES AmeriCorps Program Director and/or the Site Supervisor. The member must be presented with this completed form, have the reason for the form's completion explained to them, and sign the completed form before it is included in their member file. A copy of this document is attached and can also be found in the member orientation folders and site orientation packets.

In order for the above disciplinary action to take place, Host Service Sites must have physical proof of the member's offense. Host Service Sites are required to use the Site Incident Report Form to document any inappropriate behavior and what type of action was taken prior to the YES AmeriCorps Program disciplinary action process being started. They are also strongly encouraged to notify the Program Director immediately of any member behavior which they deem inappropriate, even if the Host Site does not wish for Program to take any disciplinary action. The Site Incident Report Form should be completed and submitted to the program immediately.

The member understands that he/she will be either suspended or released for cause for committing certain acts during the term of service, including but not limited to, being convicted or charged with a violent felony, or the possession, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance.

## **RELEASE FROM TERM OF SERVICE**

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The member may be released by the Program from their term of service in the following two ways:

1. Suspension, or
2. Termination.

The member understands that he/she may be released for the following two reasons:

1. For cause, or
2. For compelling personal circumstances

**Release for Cause:** The program will release the member for cause for the following reasons:

1. The member has failed to report for duty or dropped out of the program without obtaining a release for compelling personal circumstances from the appropriate program official.
2. During the term of service the member has been convicted of a violent felony or for the sale or distribution of a controlled substance.
3. The member has committed a fourth offense as explained above.
4. The Host Service Site requests that the member be terminated from service at the site.
5. The member has committed any of the offenses listed below:
  - Engaging in any activity that may physically or emotionally damage other members of the program or people in the community.
  - Unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of any controlled substance or illegal drugs during the term of service.
  - Consuming alcoholic beverages during the performance of service activities.
  - Being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs during the performance of service activities.
  - Any other serious breach that in the judgment of the YES AmeriCorps program staff or Host Service Site would undermine the effectiveness of the program.

***Note: If the program releases the member for cause, the member will cease to receive the benefits described in the Member Benefits section and will receive no portion of the education award.***

A member's term of service that ends early for cause is still considered a term and the education award that the member receives, or would have been eligible to receive, will count towards the total of two education awards an individual may receive through service with AmeriCorps.

**Release for Compelling Personal Circumstances:**

The Program may release the member from the term of service for compelling personal circumstances if the member demonstrates that:

1. The member has a disability or serious illness that makes completing the term of service impossible.
2. There is a serious injury, illness, or death of a family member which makes completing the term of service unreasonably difficult or impossible for the member.

3. The member has military service obligations.
4. The member has accepted an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work; or
5. Some other unforeseeable circumstance beyond the member's control makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for the member to complete the term of service, such as a natural disaster, relocation of a spouse, or the non-renewal or premature closing of the Program.

A member who wishes to be released from service for compelling personal circumstances is required to do the following before the final living allowance check can be received:

1. Discuss the terms of the release with the Program Director;
2. Provide a written letter outlining the reason the member wishes to be released from the program; and
3. Complete an exit form.

***Note: If the program releases the member for compelling personal circumstances the member will cease to receive the benefits described in the Member Benefits section; however, the member will receive a prorated education award, provided the member has completed at least 15 percent of the hours needed to complete the term of service.***

A member's term of service that ends early for compelling personal circumstances is still considered a term and the education award that the member receives, or would have been eligible to receive, will count towards the total of two education awards an individual may receive through service with AmeriCorps.

**Suspension:**

The YES AmeriCorps program staff may suspend the member's term of service for the following reasons:

1. During the term the member requests a suspension based on compelling personal circumstances. During the suspension from service, the member will not receive credit for service hours or benefits (as described in the Member Benefits section). The member may resume his/her term of service once the circumstances supporting the suspension have been resolved. However, a member must complete their required number of service hours by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year following the term start date. If the member does not resume the term within that timeframe, the member may request that the program exit the member and the member will be eligible for a partial educational award based on the number of hours served in the term.

2. During the term of service the member has been charged with a violent felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance. During the suspension from service, the member will not receive credit for service hours or benefits (as described in the Member Benefits section). If the member is found not guilty or the charge is dismissed, the Program can allow the member to resume his/her term of service. If the member is found guilty, that member will be released for cause.
3. During the term of service the member violates the rule of conduct provisions set forth in this manual. During the suspension from service, the member will not receive credit for service hours or benefits.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT PROCEDURES**

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YES AmeriCorps is committed to having the service environment free of sexual harassment and will not tolerate harassment of members or other volunteers. The following are procedures for filing a sexual harassment complaint as well as disciplinary penalties that could be imposed for inappropriate conduct.

### **A. Informal Resolution**

It is illegal and against YES AmeriCorps policy for any member to harass another member or other volunteer, or to create a hostile service environment by either committing or encouraging:

1. “Quid pro quo” (something for something) – submission to, or rejection of, sexual advances used as a basis for employment decisions;
2. Physical assaults or attempts to commit such assaults;
3. Intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature;
4. Unwanted sexual advances, propositions, or sexual comments made in the presence of any member who has indicated that such conduct in their presence is unwelcome;
5. Posting or displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, or other materials that are sexual in nature or pornographic; and/or
6. Regular use of offensive language, jokes, gestures, or comments.

The Program will determine whether conduct constitutes sexual harassment, based upon a review of the facts and circumstances of each situation.

It is the intent of this policy to resolve possible sexual harassment concerns in an informal manner before they become a larger problem and without entering a formal process. During this process, all concerns will remain confidential and there will be no record kept of the process.

If a member feels victimized by sexual harassment, or has witnessed sexual harassment, but does not feel the necessity, or does not choose to take formal action (for whatever reason), she/he may try to resolve the complaint in an informal manner.

## **B. Formal Resolution**

Members who feel victimized by sexual harassment or who have witnessed sexual harassment are encouraged to report the harassment to the EEO Officer at Workforce Connections immediately. In the event that the EEO Officer is a party to the complaint, the report should be made to the Executive Director. No member will be subject to any form of retaliation or discipline for pursuing a sexual harassment complaint.

The complaints will be carefully and promptly investigated. The investigation will include interviewing anyone who may have personal knowledge of the situation including the accused harasser. Both the complaint and the investigative steps and findings should be thoroughly documented. As much as possible, confidentiality will be maintained with respect to sexual harassment complaints and only those who need to know about such a complaint will be advised of its existence.

If an investigation confirms that harassment has occurred the corporation will take corrective action including discipline up to and including dismissal for any act of sexual harassment they commit.

If an employee is dissatisfied with the results of the sexual harassment investigation, they may pursue further complaints through the grievance procedures.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

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- A. The Member understands that the Program has grievance procedures to resolve disputes concerning the Member's suspension, dismissal, service evaluation, or proposed service assignment. Grievance procedures are as follows:

To file a complaint with the Program, use the Program's complaint form. That form is available at Workforce Connections, Inc., 402 N. 8th Street, 3rd floor, P.O. Box 2908, La Crosse, WI 54602-2908, (608) 789-5646. You may also write your complaint as clearly and specifically as possible and send it to the address above, or call the phone number above for assistance. Complaints must be filed within one year of the alleged occurrence.

1. Individuals in complaint investigations are protected from retaliation, are permitted to have translators, interpreters, and/or readers and representatives of their choice during the complaint process.
2. The Program will send a written acknowledgement of a complaint within five working days of receipt.

3. An individual may then be asked to participate in a hearing within fifteen days of the receipt of the complaint as scheduled by the Director of Program Operations for Workforce Connections, Inc.
4. After an investigation, a preliminary decision will be sent in writing to the complainant from the Director of Program Operations of Workforce Connections, Inc. within twenty days of receipt of the complaint.
5. If the preliminary decision does not resolve the complaint, a written appeal can be submitted to the Executive Director of Workforce Connections, Inc within five days of receipt of the preliminary decision. Instructions for filing an appeal will be provided with the preliminary decision.
6. The Executive Director of Workforce Connections, Inc shall give the complainant a written decision within twenty days of receipt of the written appeal. The decision letter will uphold or reverse the preliminary decision.
7. All complaints except those listed below should be filed with the Program. Complaints based on discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief shall be filed directly with the Corporation for National Service at the address in paragraph 8 above. Complaints must be filed within one year of the alleged occurrence or with the Equal Rights Division within 300 days of the alleged occurrence using the complaint form provided by the Program.

## **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

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In compliance with State and Federal requirements, the Program prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance in the field or service site. AmeriCorps provisions dictate that a member must be released for cause if the member is convicted of sale or distribution of a controlled substance during a term of service. Desks, attaché cases, file cabinets, cars and any other equipment or property, personal or corporation-owned, located at the service site may be searched under appropriate legal circumstances. Members will abide by the terms of this policy and will notify Program Director of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the field or service site no later than 5 days after such a conviction.

The Program recognizes drug dependency as an illness and a major health problem; and also recognizes drug abuse as a potential health, safety, and security problem. Members needing help in dealing with such problems are encouraged to seek assistance programs and health insurance plans, as appropriate. Conscientious efforts to seek such help will not jeopardize a member's position, and will not be noted in any personnel record.

## **HOST SERVICE SITE RESPONSIBILITIES**

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The AmeriCorps member will be expected to serve with the Host Service Site on various results driven, direct service projects. Service activities must result in a specific documented service or improvement that otherwise would not be provided with existing funds or volunteers and that does not duplicate the routine functions of workers or displaced paid employees.

The Host Site is expected to:

- Comply with objectives, policies and procedures of the AmeriCorps program.
- Assist in the recruitment process of the AmeriCorps member for their site.
- Participate in AmeriCorps orientation and other required meetings for designated site supervisors.
- In coordination with YES AmeriCorps, develop a direct service site position description with clear outcomes for the AmeriCorps member.
- Notify YES AmeriCorps program staff before changing the service site position description for the AmeriCorps member.
- Provide meaningful service work and performance criteria that are appropriate to the skill level of the AmeriCorps member.
- Interact with the member in the same respectful and professional manner as they would with any other staff.
- Determine an appropriate daily work schedule for the member, in accordance with AmeriCorps policies.
- Provide the AmeriCorps member with appropriate orientation to the agency and community, including the policies and procedures, chain-of-command, and expectations of the worksite.
- Provide daily supervision for the AmeriCorps member.
- Provide appropriate office space, clear instructions, equipment and/or materials for use by the AmeriCorps member to complete work tasks.
- Provide the AmeriCorps member access to a phone, computer, e-mail and the Internet within one week of the member's start date.
- Provide internet access and allow time for members to complete their timesheets on the OnCorps web-based reporting system per the Timesheet Submission/Check Distribution schedule.
- Provide a safe, sanitary and handicap accessible work environment.
- Review and approve the AmeriCorps member's time sheets, service documents and quarterly reports prepared by the AmeriCorps member in a timely manner.
- Submit monthly electronic member feedback forms to YES AmeriCorps program staff.
- Prepare a mid-term AmeriCorps member performance review that is shared with and signed by the AmeriCorps member. Forward the evaluation to the YES AmeriCorps Headquarters by the due date.
- Report immediately to YES AmeriCorps program staff any problems or work-related accidents.

- Report immediately to YES AmeriCorps and document any concerns regarding unsatisfactory performance of the member. Disciplinary and/or termination process is determined by the AmeriCorps program provisions.
- Report immediately to the YES AmeriCorps program staff if the AmeriCorps member is convicted of any drug violation occurring in the workplace or during performance of any program project, in accordance with the Drug Free Workplace Act.
- Assist in identifying a local professional in the AmeriCorps member's field of interest to serve as their mentor.
- Support the AmeriCorps member's participation in ongoing program meetings, team trainings and other required program events.
- Support the AmeriCorps member's participation in all statewide events, service-related conferences, and service projects during National Service Days.
- Provide reimbursement for the member's travel expenses related to direct service activities being performed per your typical staffing policy.
- Ensure that the AmeriCorps member is not being asked to participate in any Prohibited Activity during AmeriCorps service hours.
- Provide cash match payment per approved site application by the deadline(s) as set by YES AmeriCorps.

## **HOST SERVICE SITE VISITS**

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Staff of the YES AmeriCorps Program will perform at least one on-site visit per program year to each Host Service Site. Site visits will be conducted in person with the site supervisor. The site visit will be approximately 1 hour. The purpose of the site visit is to identify any concerns or problems and discuss accomplishments and progress toward objectives. The Program Director will work with each Site Supervisor to schedule a convenient date and time for the site visit.

## **MEMBER LIABILITY INSURANCE**

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While on duty, YES AmeriCorps members are covered under the liability insurance plan provided by Workforce Connections, Inc. The Member and the Site Supervisor should report immediately to YES AmeriCorps program staff any work-related injuries or illnesses. The First Report of Injury or Disease document is attached and a copy can also be found in the member orientation folders and site orientation packets.

## **UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS**

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AmeriCorps members are ***not entitled*** to unemployment benefits. The Corporation for National and Community Service has interpreted federal legislation to mean that there is no employer-employee relationship between members and programs. Wisconsin has chosen to agree with this interpretation and denies unemployment benefits to members; hence, programs are not required to pay unemployment taxes.

## **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY**

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YES AmeriCorps and its Host Site agencies will provide Reasonable Accommodations to any AmeriCorps member with a disability who is in need of assistance to perform their term of service. Members are encouraged to notify the Program Director of their disability and accommodation needs. All requests will be taken into consideration. A request cannot cause an undue financial or resource hardship for YES AmeriCorps or Host Service Site, or be an item for personal use.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY**

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The YES AmeriCorps Program is available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, political affiliation, religion, sexual orientation, or other non-merit factors. Anyone believing that he/she has been subject to discrimination on these grounds may contact the Corporation for National and Community Service, Equal Opportunity Office at (202) 606-7503 or [eo@cns.gov](mailto:eo@cns.gov).

## **PROGRAM CONTACTS**

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Katie Groves, Director of AmeriCorps  
402 North 8<sup>th</sup> St., Room 301  
La Crosse, WI 54601  
Phone (608) 789-5646  
Fax (608) 785-9939  
[GrovesK@workforceconnections.org](mailto:GrovesK@workforceconnections.org)

Sarah Carson, AmeriCorps Coordinator  
402 North 8<sup>th</sup> St., Room 301  
La Crosse, WI 54601  
(608) 789-6089  
Fax (608) 785-9939  
[CarsonS@workforceconnections.org](mailto:CarsonS@workforceconnections.org)

\*\*Your Site Supervisor for daily guidance, supervision, and support.

## RESOURCES OF INTEREST

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[www.workforceconnections.org](http://www.workforceconnections.org) Workforce Connections, Inc.

[www.americorpswi.org](http://www.americorpswi.org) OnCorps Reports (timesheet submission)

[www.servewisconsin.org](http://www.servewisconsin.org) Serve Wisconsin (State Commission) Wisconsin National and Community Service Board

[www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov) Corporation for National and Community Service

[www.nationalserviceresources.org](http://www.nationalserviceresources.org) National Service Resource Center

[www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov) AmeriCorps website

<https://my.americorps.gov> My AmeriCorps Portal Login

[www.servicelearning.org](http://www.servicelearning.org) National Service-Learning Clearinghouse

[www.rethinkingschools.org](http://www.rethinkingschools.org) Rethinking Schools Magazine website

[www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org) Teaching Tolerance

[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) US Department of Education homepage

[www.ysa.org](http://www.ysa.org) Youth Service America

[www.mlkday.gov](http://www.mlkday.gov) MLK Day of Service

[www.fns.usda.gov/tn](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn) TEAM Nutrition homepage (community approach to wellness)

[www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org) Afterschool Alliance

[www.partnershipschools.org](http://www.partnershipschools.org) National Network of Partnership Schools

## Other Service Requirements

Requirements	Date Due
Complete pre-service training and orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009</li> </ul>
Complete two evaluations with program staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-term evaluation (including program evaluation, site evaluation, and self-evaluation)</li> <li>• End-of-term evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2010</li> <li>• July 2010</li> </ul>
Attend two (2) Statewide events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statewide Swearing-In Ceremony</li> <li>• Statewide End-of-Year Ceremony</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oct. 29, 2009</li> <li>• TBA- May 2010</li> </ul>
Attend all mandatory member meetings and special events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member retreat</li> <li>• MLK Day</li> <li>• Global Youth Service Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBA- end Oct./early Nov. 2009</li> <li>• TBA- mid Jan 2010</li> <li>• Saturday, April 24, 2010</li> </ul>
Complete and submit all paperwork on time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timesheets</li> <li>• Time off request forms</li> <li>• Data collection</li> <li>• Three (3) program evaluations</li> <li>• Service reflections</li> <li>• Resume</li> <li>• Citizenship pre- and post-test</li> <li>• Record of Intent</li> <li>• Project summaries (QT student teachers and interns only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bi-weekly, see Member Handbook, pg. 8-9</li> <li>• See Member Handbook, pg. 10-11</li> <li>• Quarterly</li> <li>• Nov., March, and July</li> <li>• TBA- mid March 2010</li> <li>• End of June</li> <li>• End of June/early July 2010</li> <li>• July 2010</li> <li>• TBA- see Member Agreement</li> </ul>
Complete appropriate education/training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes CPR/First Aid, disaster training, conflict resolution, citizenship, career exploration, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See monthly calendars</li> </ul>

**YES AmeriCorps  
Fundraising Request Approval Form**

The Yes AmeriCorps member's participation in Fundraising activities is strictly limited by the Corporation for National and Community Service and the YES AmeriCorps Program policies. A YES AmeriCorps member may only participate in a fundraising activity that is directly linked to a project or activity within the scope of their position description. Additionally, member's participation in fund raising activities is limited to 10% of their total service hours.

This form must be completed by the member and received by the Program Director at least two (2) weeks prior to the proposed event. A response to the request will be provided in a timely manner.

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Name of the Event/Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time of Event/Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Explanation of how the fundraising event/activity is linked to your service:

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Please sign and date if you agree with the following statement. I believe that this activity is directly linked to the member's service based upon duties outlined in the position description and member agreement. The funds raised at this event will not go towards the organization's operating expenses or endowment nor will they go towards supporting the cost of having an AmeriCorps member.

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Signature

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Date

**YES AmeriCorps  
Site Incident Report 2009-10**

Name of Member \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident \_\_\_\_\_  
Site \_\_\_\_\_ Site Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person Completing this Report \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Record of Incident**

Please explain what happened in detail, including the names of witnesses.

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What action did the Site Supervisor/Staff take to resolve this matter?

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What action do you wish the Program to take?

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Signed

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Date





**YES AmeriCorps Program  
2009-10 Pay Period / Check Distribution Schedule**

<b>PAY PERIOD</b>	<b>Timesheets Due Monday by 12:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Check Date</b>
September 8 – September 12, 2009	September 14, 2009	September 18, 2009
September 13 – September 26	September 28	October 2
September 27 – October 10	October 12	October 16
October 11 – October 24	October 26	October 30
October 25 – November 7	November 9	November 13
November 8 – November 21	November 23	November 27
November 22 – December 5	December 7	December 11
December 6 – December 19	December 21	December 25
December 20 – January 2, 2010	January 4, 2010	January 8, 2010
January 3 – January 16	January 18	January 22
January 17 – January 30	February 1	February 5
January 31 – February 13	February 15	February 19
February 14 – February 27	March 1	March 5
February 28 – March 13	March 15	March 19
March 14 – March 27	March 29	April 2
March 28 – April 10	April 12	April 16
April 11 – April 24	April 26	April 30
April 25 – May 8	May 10	May 14
May 9 – May 22	May 24	May 28
May 23 – June 5	June 7	June 11
June 6 – June 19	June 21	June 25
June 20 – July 3	July 5	July 9
July 4 – July 17	July 19	July 23
July 18 – July 31 (final)	August 2	August 6