

# What is AmeriCorps?

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THE BASICS OF AMERICORPS, AMERICORPS STATE FUNDING, & PROGRAM  
MANAGEMENT

UPDATED: NOVEMBER 2020



# Training Goals:

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- Discuss AmeriCorps overall & AmeriCorps State basics
- Understand Serve Indiana role in AmeriCorps in Indiana
- Understand basics of AmeriCorps State funding
- Understand role of AmeriCorps State program
- Discuss other webinars in series and next steps

# GARP Contact & Information

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- How to keep up to date:
  - Sign up for newsletter, receive emails
  - Check website frequently especially funding opportunities page
  - Follow us on Facebook and twitter
  
- Main Contact:
  - Cassandra Gillenwater, [ckellogggillenwater@serveindiana.gov](mailto:ckellogggillenwater@serveindiana.gov)
  - 317.220.1659

# AmeriCorps Basics

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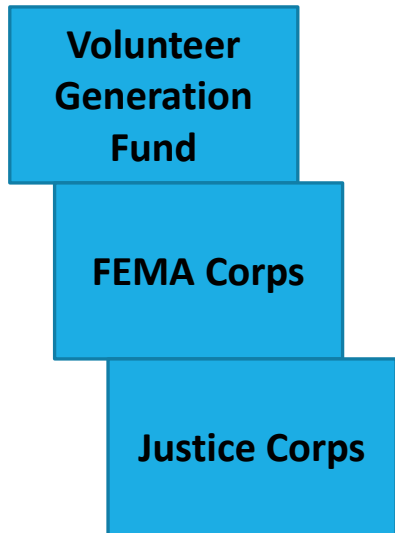
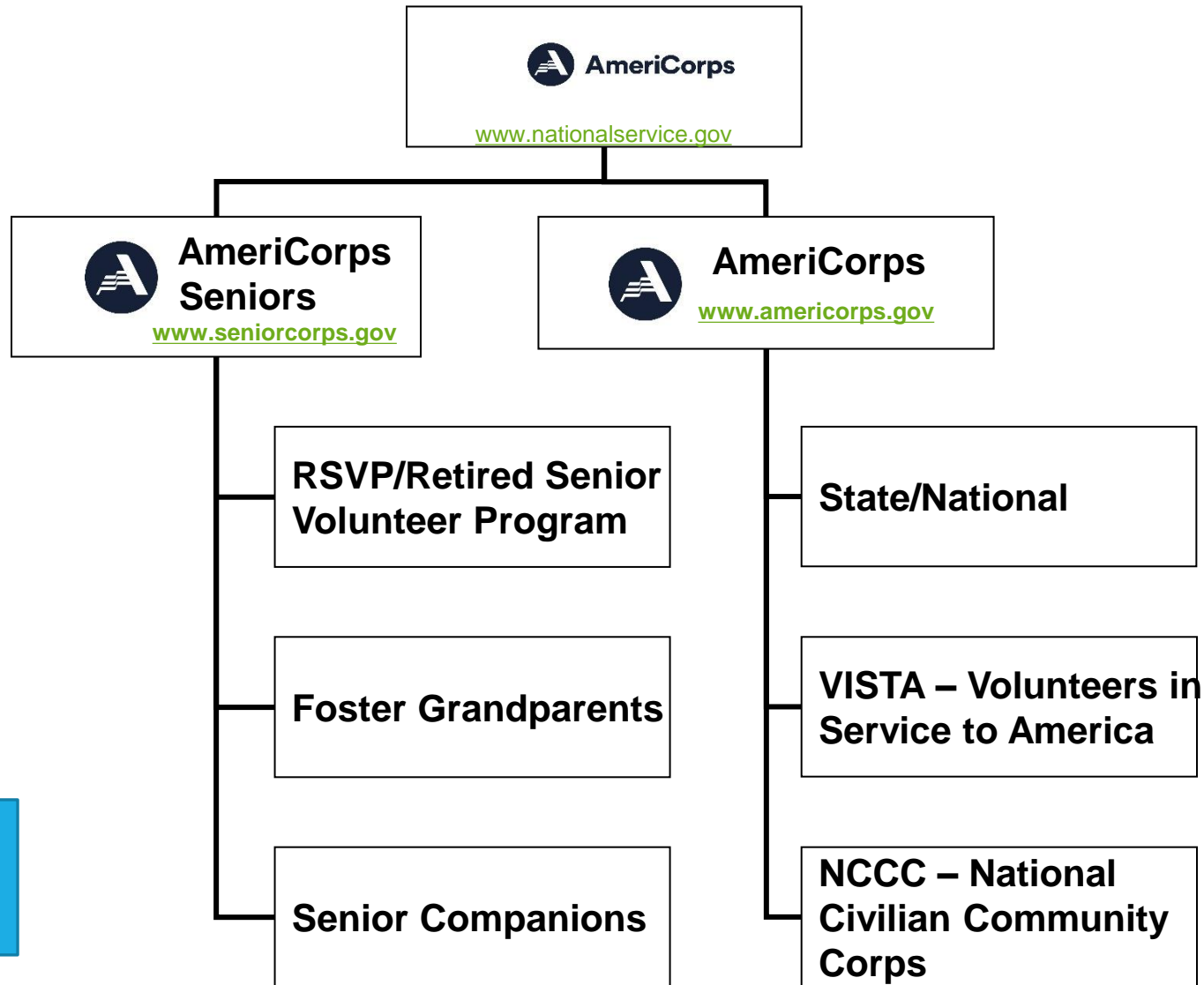


# Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS)

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- Recently went through a branding update. CNCS is now known as AmeriCorps
- AmeriCorps' mission: Improve lives, strengthen communities and foster civic participation through service and volunteering.
- Focus areas:
  - Disaster Services
  - Economic Opportunity
  - Education
  - Environmental Stewardship
  - Healthy Futures
  - Veterans and Military Families





# AmeriCorps

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*AmeriCorps is a national service organization run through the Corporation for National and Community service that offers over 75,000 opportunities nationwide for people to make a difference in their community!*

- Similar to the domestic Peace Corps
- Run through the federal government
- Service to the United States



# Member Basic Qualifications

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- ***All members must...***

- Be a US Citizen, US National or Legal Permanent resident of US
- Be at least 18 years of age upon completion of service
- Have High School Diploma or equivalent by end of the service

- ***Each branch of AmeriCorps has their own rules, regulations, and goals beyond these basics.***



# AmeriCorps State: Indiana

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## *Serve Indiana*

- *Mission: Advance service and volunteerism by informing, connecting, and promoting opportunities and resources that enrich the lives of Hoosiers*
  - Programs: AmeriCorps State, Indiana Kids
  - Initiatives: Day of Service Grants, Awards for Excellence
- Staff:
  - Marc McAleavey: Executive Director
  - Willie Brooks: Employer Based Volunteer Program Manager
  - Cassandra Gillenwater: Director of Grants
  - Naejla Walton: Operations Manager
  - Kim Brooks: Communications and Training Manager
  - *Vacant*: Program Manager



# AmeriCorps State Basics

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- ***Members conduct interventions created by the organizational host.***
  - Direct service activities with some capacity building activities.
- ***In Indiana...***
  - 15-20 AmeriCorps programs annually
  - 600 members serving statewide within programs
  - \$2.5 million in grants given out for AmeriCorps funds on average

# AmeriCorps State Member Slots & Benefits

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- Types of position:
  - Full Time (1700 Hours)
  - Three Quarter Time (1200 Hours)
  - Part time (900 Hours)
  - Reduced Minimum Time (675 Hours)
  - Quarter Time (450 Hours)
  - Minimum Time (300 Hours)
- Full Time members receive:
  - Living allowance/stipend
  - Health care
  - Loan forbearance
- All members receive:
  - Education Award upon successful completion of service
  - Professional Development: Programs provided 12-20% of time in training/professional development

# What can members do?

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*While serving members should act as neutral members of society and should follow their direct service position description.*

- Members are here to help build up your organization and should **not** be seen as cheap labor
- **Member's should not:**
  - Displace or duplicate staff or volunteers
  - Fundraise more than 10% of their time
  - Be involved in political activities
  - Lead prayer as part of their service or while representing themselves as AC members
  - Provide direct benefit to for profit organization, political parties or labor unions

# AmeriCorps State Funding FAQs

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# What are the application materials?

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- **NOFO:** Notice of funding opportunity
- **Supplemental Guidance:** Definitions
- **Performance Measure Instructions**
- **Application Instructions**
- **Templates**

# When and how do I apply?

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- **Late August/early September:** Application materials released to public by Serve Indiana
- **Late October:** Applications due in the eGrants system
- **November:** Applications reviewed, and clarifications sent to organizations
- **December:** SI Commission votes on Competitive versus Formula placement
  - Competitive sent for review by CNCS, Formula wait for final vote
- **March:** CNCS alerts SI of decisions on Competitive
- **April:** SI Commission votes on Formula awards
- **June:** SI required orientation
- **August/September:** Members begin their service

# AmeriCorps Funding FAQs

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- **What does AmeriCorps Funding Do?**

- Provides high quality programs that demonstrate an evidence-based or evidence-informed approach to strengthening communities and solving community problems by engaging individuals in service as AmeriCorps members

- **Who are awarded grants?**

- Nonprofits, Indian tribes, colleges and universities, and state and local public agencies

- **What do grants accomplish?**

- Address unmet needs in education, economic opportunity, veteran services, disaster services, health, the environment and more



# AmeriCorps Funding FAQs

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- **Can I use funding for an existing program?**

- A grantee might use AmeriCorps resources to make an existing program more effective, to reach previously underserved communities or to expand their activities beyond what they were able to do without AmeriCorps.
- **AmeriCorps funding should not duplicate, displace or supplant resources that currently exist in the community. AmeriCorps members cannot be used to take the place of staff, current volunteers or existing funding.**

# What do grants include?

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- An allotment of AmeriCorps member positions and funds that are directly tied to a specific number of members
- Are solely for program expenses and are not for general organizational expenses
- Provide partial funding to support AmeriCorps projects/programs
- Grant recipients must contribute cash or in-kind match funding to support the project

# Program Roles & Responsibilities

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# Program Roles

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- ***Serve Indiana:*** Funder, monitor, CNCS communication, training and technical assistance
- ***Organization's Role:*** Program host
  - ***Executive Director:*** Oversee program staff, advocate for program, champion service
  - ***Program Director Role:*** Manage grant/program/sites/member issues, attend required SI trainings, conduct member trainings, submit program reports, act as main contact for SI
  - ***Fiscal Role:*** Overall fiscal grant management, knowledge of budget, submit reports (budget in OnCorps, PER, RFF, FFR, close out), internal controls, allowable expenses, match management, etc.

# What are the responsibilities & requirements of the program host?

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- Employ strong fiscal and program management systems
- Monitor financial management, program performance and member activities
- Train and provide technical assistance to staff and members
- Ensure the recruitment, orientation and training of members
- Track and ensure the accuracy of member hours and activities
- Track progress toward meeting approved performance measures
- Act as a liaison between the State Service Commission and other components of the program

# Program Expectations

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Serve Indiana expects all programs (and their staff) to...

- **Be knowledgeable of**
  - Federal Rules and Regulations
  - Serve Indiana/State Rules and Regulations
- **Act as Champions for National Service in Indiana**
  - Advocate, share, network, expand
- **Follow Communication Expectations with Serve Indiana**
- **Attend all required SI trainings as an active participant**
  - New staff/program for 2 years; 1 person required at all trainings
  - 1-2 contacts

Data Point:	CNCS Expectation	Serve Indiana Expectation
Recruitment/Enrollment Rate	100%	90%
Retention Rate	100%	90%
Performance Measures Met	All measures met	90% of measures met
Deadline compliance	100% compliant	90% compliant
Monitoring Visit Report Results	No clear expectation	1 Finding and/or less than 5 observations on most recent report
16-17 Risk Level:	Low risk	Low risk for existing programs (over 3 years in existence)

# Program Director Role

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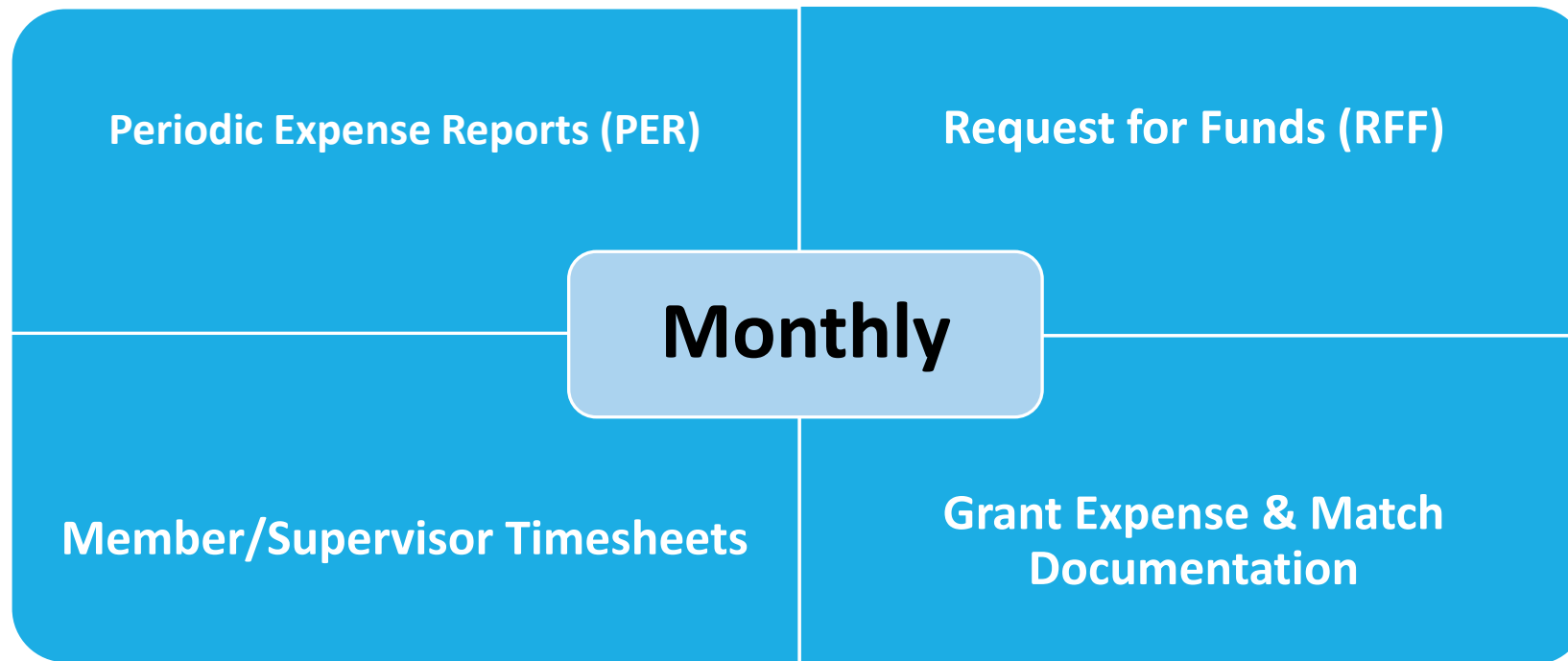
- **Its important that programs...**

- Create strong policies and procedures
- Train staff, members and sites
- Communicate roles and responsibilities
- Deal with issues early and in a fair/direct manner
- Document, document, document
- Involve HR of organization (as able)



# Monthly Program Duties:

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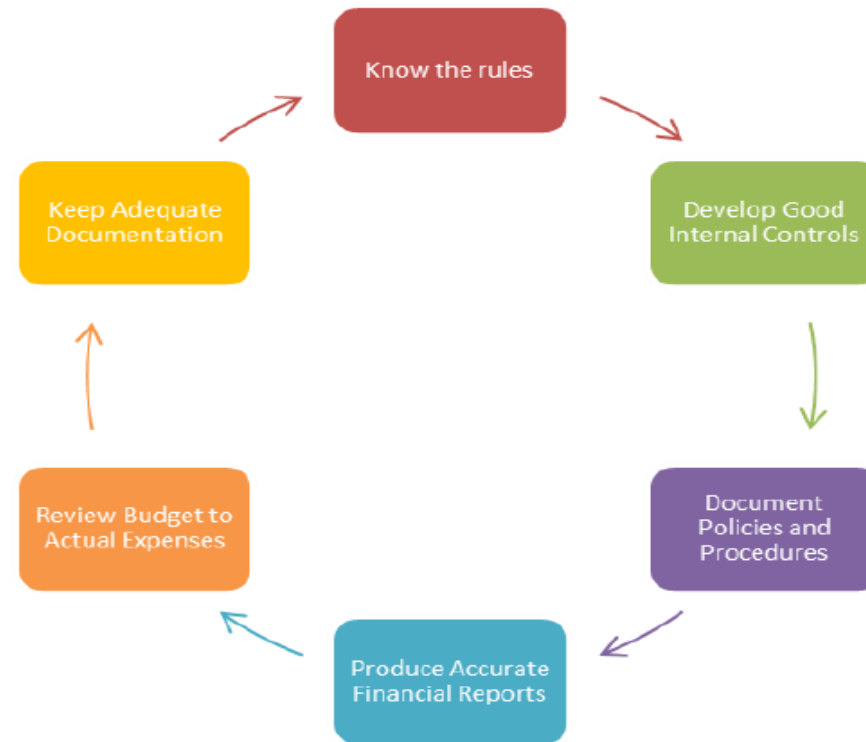
# Program Director Duties Continued:

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# Program Director Duties Continued:

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# Serve Indiana Technical Assistance

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- You're not alone!
- Serve Indiana offers
  - New Program webinar series
  - 2-3 In-person trainings with all programs
  - Mentor partnerships with existing programs
  - 1:1 Technical Assistance
  - AmeriCorps Handbook
  - CNCS guidance and support

# Program Models

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# Program Management Structure

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- An AmeriCorps grant generally operates on two levels:
  1. Grantee (parent organization)
  2. Service Locations (where members serve)
  
- The grantee has overall legal, administrative, and fiscal responsibility for the entire scope of the program, even if the funds are sub-granted

# AmeriCorps Management Structure

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- **Centralized:** Grantee handles all administrative functions and assigns members, and doesn't sub-grant funds
- **Decentralized:** Grantee sub-grants funds, and the sub-grantee is responsible for member training, payroll and other administrative functions
- **Combination:** Share responsibilities

*Grantee is ultimately responsible for administration of grant and members!*

# Program Management

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*Where and how AmeriCorps members are placed at service sites may vary.*

- **A Few Things to Consider:**

- Where will the service activities take place?
- Who are your community and service partners?
- What can your partners provide?
- What is their capacity?
  - Will they match funds for the member's service?
  - What type of support can they provide?
  - Are there other benefits to consider? Housing, meals, etc.

\*\*Competitive funding = 20 member minimum



# Member Experience is important!

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- ***Members should have opportunities to:***

- Discuss and explore their community and the people, processes, and intuitions most effective in improving community conditions
- Develop the skills to help plan effective service projects that respond to real community needs and emergencies
- Foster within themselves and others positive attitudes regarding the value of lifelong citizenship and service for the common good
- Increase life and/or employment skills
- Gain and greater appreciate and understanding of those from different backgrounds

# Are you ready to host an AmeriCorps program?

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- Experience managing federal funds
- Organizational capability
- Staff skilled in training, supervision and oversight
- Community partners
- Intervention, logic model, research, performance measures
- Readiness assessment through Serve Indiana

# How else can I partner with AmeriCorps?

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- **AmeriCorps State**

- Become a program
- Become a service site
- Become a reviewer
- Become a service champion

- **AmeriCorps VISTA**

- Host one or several VISTA members

- **AmeriCorps NCCC**

- Host an NCCC group

# Next Steps

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- Review 2021-22 Application materials:
  - <https://www.in.gov/serveindiana/funding-opportunities/>
  - Work on logic model, budget, performance measures
  - Contact Cassandra Gillenwater for individual meeting
- Review remaining PowerPoints in series
- Watch for NOFO/Calendar updates August 2021