



President Clinton and youth corps members gather on the South Lawn of the White House for the signing of national service legislation.

AmeriCorps

President Signs National Service Bill

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21 — Before an enthusiastic crowd of service, education, and congressional leaders, President Clinton signed into law the National and Community Service Trust Act to engage Americans in meeting critical needs through direct community-based service.

Promising that national service will "strengthen the cords that bind us together as a people," the President created AmeriCorps, a new program which will allow in its first year 20,000 young people to earn education benefits in exchange for grass-roots community service. With the enactment of this legislation, the nation will have the opportunity to marshal its best resources—Americans of all ages and backgrounds—to meet the challenge of rebuilding America through service.

The national service initiative was launched in the President's Inaugural Address, when he challenged "a new generation of young Americans to a season of service." In March, on the anniversary of the founding of the Peace Corps, the President unveiled his plan for national service and challenged the nation's youth to answer his call "to change America for ever and for the better." In May, the President proposed the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, legislation to strengthen and expand service and educational opportunities for all Americans. The President also initiated a pilot program, the Summer of Service, which engaged 1,500 young people in meeting the critical needs of children through sixteen programs across the country. By the end of the summer, the legislation creating the new Corporation for National and Community Service and AmeriCorps had passed with broad bipartisan support.

The new law focuses national service efforts on the most critical issues facing communities across the nation, bringing energy and commitment to address education, human, public safety, and environmental needs. The Act also creates a new administrative entity to coordinate AmeriCorps, as well as existing community service programs involving children, college students, adults, and seniors. In the best sense of reinventing government, the new Corporation for National and Community Service will feature a bipartisan board of directors, and an entrepreneurial, non-civil service management team and workforce.

At the bill signing, the President expressed his hope that "national service will remain throughout the life of America not a series of promises, but a series of challenges, across all the generations and all walks of life to help push to rebuild our troubled but wonderful land."

A User's Guide

What is the Corporation for National and Community Service?

The Corporation is a new federal entity created by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. In conjunction with the White House Office of National Service, the Corporation combines the Commission on National and Community Service and ACTION, the federal domestic volunteer agency.

What kinds of national and community service programs will the Corporation support?

The programs of both the Commission and ACTION will be enhanced by the new Corporation. The Corporation will continue to support innovative programs in higher education, Serve-America and service-learning, the Civilian Community Corps and programs currently funded by ACTION, including VISTA and the National Senior Volunteer Corps. Current grantees, the youth corps and national service demonstration models, and subtitles of the National and Community Service Act, may continue to receive funding from the new Corporation. The Corporation will also administer AmeriCorps.

What is AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is the President's initiative to achieve direct results in addressing the nation's critical education, human, public safety, and environmental needs at the community level. The program provides meaningful opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their country in organized efforts, fostering citizen responsibility, building community, and providing educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service.

What kinds of service does AmeriCorps support?

The Corporation will support programs that directly address needs in the areas of education, human, public safety, and the environment through service that provides a direct benefit to the community in which it is performed. National service programs must also have an impact on their participants, developing public-spirited, effective citizens with the skills needed for life-long contributions to solving the pressing problems facing our communities and our nation. National service participants may not displace existing workers nor duplicate their functions.

What kinds of organizations will be eligible to participate in AmeriCorps?

The National and Community Service Trust Act encourages grant applications from a wide range of programs — those that engage a handful of volunteers or multi-state networks of service organizations. Programs may be run by not-for-profit organizations, by local, state, and federal government entities, by Indian tribes, by institutions of higher education, by local school and police districts, and by partnerships among any of the above. Programs may not provide direct benefits to businesses, labor unions, or partisan political organizations. They may not use assistance to support religious activities or to engage participants in lobbying activities.

What types of programs are eligible for AmeriCorps grants?

Programs eligible for grants include a wide variety of community corps, youth corps, specialized service programs focusing on a specific community need, individual placement programs, campus-based service programs, programs that train and place service-learning coordinators in schools or team leaders in corps programs, intergenerational programs, national service entrepreneurship programs, professional corps, and the like.

What are the Corporation's criteria for selecting AmeriCorps programs?

The Corporation will develop and publish specific funding criteria in January 1994. Generally, national service programs must directly address the education, human, environment, and public safety needs of the community; must not duplicate or displace existing workers, must ensure that participants receive the proper training and support; and must show that they will apply measurable performance goals to their programs.

How will funds be allocated?

Of the funds that the Corporation allocates for AmeriCorps in fiscal year 1994, approximately \$51 million will be allocated to states that submit plans approved by the Corporation according to a population-based formula, and up to \$51 million will be awarded on a competitive basis. \$1.5 million will be set aside for Indian tribes, and another \$1.5 million will fund programs in United States territories and possessions. The remaining \$48 million in funds will be allocated directly by the Corporation. Additional funds will be used for training and technical assistance or competitively distributed as matching "challenge" grants.

What form will AmeriCorps grants take?

There will be non-renewable planning grants for a period of up to one year and renewable operating grants for up to three years.

What funds will the Corporation supply for AmeriCorps? What non-Corporation funds must programs supply?

Programs are encouraged to raise private funds. These matching requirements must be viewed as floors not ceilings. The Corporation will pay for 85 percent of stipends up to the VISTA subsistence allowance (roughly minimum wage), 85 percent of health care costs, 75 percent of other operating costs, 100 percent of a child care allowance, and the education award. Therefore, programs will pay at least 15 percent of stipends, 15 percent of health care, and 25 percent of other operating costs. Programs that pay stipends above the VISTA level must supply all funds in excess of that amount.

How will states be included in the AmeriCorps program?

Every state wishing to participate in national service initiatives must establish a commission on national and community service or a comparable entity for which the Corporation will provide partial funding. Governors will appoint members to the bipartisan commissions, which will include young people involved in service, educators, representatives of national service programs, older American volunteer programs, labor, and business as well as other experts in the field. States will draft three-year plans outlining their service proposals, which will be updated annually. During the first year of implementation, the governor may designate a transitional entity to perform the functions of the state commission for twenty-seven months after the date of the Act's enactment.

Will organizations receive AmeriCorps funds through a state commission or directly from the Corporation?

In general, local organizations will work with state commissions. National nonprofit, multi-state programs and professional corps programs may receive funds directly from the Corporation.

Who is eligible to serve in AmeriCorps?

Citizens and legal resident aliens aged seventeen years or older—sixteen in the case of programs targeted for out-of-school youths—may serve in AmeriCorps before, during, or after post-secondary education. In general, participants must be high school graduates or agree to achieve their GED prior to receiving education awards. While there is a focus on young people, the Corporation will encourage participation by Americans of all ages, genders, incomes, races, regions, and religions and include individuals with disabilities.

How will AmeriCorps participants be selected?

Programs approved by the Corporation or a state commission will select service participants on a non-discriminatory and non-political basis. To ensure that knowledge of programs is widely available, the Corporation will develop national and state recruiting information systems. There will also be a national pool from which programs may draw potential participants.

How will AmeriCorps participants be compensated?

Participants will receive a stipend during their term of service. Full-time participants not otherwise covered will receive basic health insurance and may receive a child care allowance if they need it to participate. For one year of full-time or two years of part-time service in a designated national service program, participants will also receive \$4,725 as an education award and repayment of any interest on student loans during their service. These awards may be used to pay for higher education or for vocational training. Awards must be used within seven years of completion of service. For those participants who have outstanding loan obligations for qualified educational activities, the post-service educational awards may be paid directly to the lender.

How long is a term of service under AmeriCorps?

The program requires a commitment intensive in hours but limited in years. Participants can perform a 1,700 hour full-time term over nine months to a year, or a part-time term of 900 hours over one to two years (or one to three years in the case of full-time college students).

When will the Corporation for National and Community Service begin processing applications for AmeriCorps programs?

The Corporation will be launched in October 1993. Regulations and appointments will be formalized during the remainder of the calendar year. The projected grant process will begin in early 1994, with programs selected for funding announced as early as the spring and summer of 1994. ♦

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AmeriCorps

IS COMING

URGENT!

Final Applications for AmeriCorps Grants • Learn and Serve America

The final applications for AmeriCorps grants and Learn and Serve America are now available from the Corporation for National Service. This publication includes information on the full range of procedures for applying for these two Corporation service programs.

AmeriCorps is the President's new national service program which engages the energy of the American people, especially its young people, in meeting the most critical education, public safety, human, and environmental needs of our communities. AmeriCorps offers opportunities for Americans age 17 or older to make a substantial commitment to serving their country and to earn money for college in return. Grants totalling up to \$153 million will be awarded to not-for-profit organizations, to local, State, and Federal agencies, to Indian tribes, to institutions of higher education, to local school and police districts, and to partnerships among any of the above. Other AmeriCorps programs include VISTA and the National Civilian Community Corps.

Learn and Serve America programs integrate service-learning into daily academic life for youth in schools, higher education institutions, and community-based programs. Service-learning is a method by which young people learn and develop through active participation in service that meets community needs and strengthen a commitment to service. The **School-Based** and **Community-Based Programs** support projects that engage school-age youth in service-learning activities and involve adult volunteers in the schools. In fiscal year 1994, \$30 million will be available for teacher training, for the placement of service-learning coordinators in schools, and for grants to local partnerships through State Educational Agencies, State Commissions, and grant-making entities. The **Higher Education Programs** will award approximately \$9 million to individual colleges and universities, consortia, or partnerships between higher education institutions and public or private nonprofits in order to develop high-quality programs that make service an integral part of students' educational experience.

APPLICATION DEADLINES

AmeriCorps Grants, National Direct
April 29, 1994 (Extended)
(national & multi-state)

AmeriCorps Grants, State
June 22, 1994 (Extended)

AmeriCorps Grants, Indian Tribes
& U.S. Territories
June 22, 1994

Learn and Serve America
School-based
April 22, 1994 (Extended)

Learn and Serve America
Community-based
May 27, 1994

Learn and Serve America
Higher Education
April 25, 1994 (Extended)

FOR INFORMATION ON:

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technical assistance 7
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Quarterly Report

For the period ending
December 22, 1993



**The Corporation
for National
and Community
Service**

Getting Things Done.

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AMERICORPS NATIONAL SERVICE



Deadline: April 29

Catalog of Federal Domestic

Assistance Number: 94.006

OMB Number: 3045-0001

NATIONAL DIRECT APPLICATION

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Wednesday
March 23, 1994

Federal Register

Part II

Corporation for National and Community Service

45 CFR Parts 2510, 2513, et al.
Corporation Grant Programs and Support
and Investment Activities; Final Rule