CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
AmeriCorps VISTA Program Specific Questions
Last update 3/12/20

CNCS is closely monitoring the latest developments related to COVID-19. As Americans prepare for the possibility of a COVID-19 outbreak in their community, you may have concerns about the potential impact of this new virus on your program. To help address these concerns, we are providing you with these FAQs. They will be updated regularly.

If a sponsor moves all employees to telework full-time, can a VISTA also telework full-time?
In the event a sponsor moves its employees to full-time telework due to a state of emergency or federal, state, or local health officials’ determination that people within a geographic area should not physically report to work due to the coronavirus, members should also be offered the opportunity to teleserve full-time. VISTA is granting a temporary exception to the two-day per pay period cap on teleservice in these instances. In accordance with VISTA policies, a VISTA project should ensure that the member has an approved teleservice agreement in place before permitting a VISTA member to engage in teleservice activities.

May a member teleserve if the member is quarantined?
If a member is not ill and is able to teleserve, the existence of a quarantine does not prevent teleservice. In accordance with VISTA policies, a VISTA project should ensure that the member has an approved teleservice agreement in place before permitting a VISTA member to engage in teleservice activities. VISTA is granting a temporary exception to the two day per pay period on teleservice in these instances.

Does a quarantine imposed by a federal, state, or local health officials count against a VISTA member’s leave time?
Members who are able to teleserve should do so. See above regarding the availability of teleservice.

If a member cannot teleserve due to lack of teleservice resources or lack of assignments suitable for teleservice, the sponsor may grant up to fourteen service days of emergency leave. This is a temporary exception to the policy permitting sponsors to grant up to five days of emergency leave in accordance with Section 105(b)(1) of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973.

If after fourteen days additional emergency leave is needed, please make a request to your assigned Portfolio Manager/Program Officer.

What should a VISTA who has reason to self-quarantine do?
Members who are able to teleserve should do so. See above regarding the availability of teleservice.
If a member cannot teleserve due to lack of teleservice resources or lack of assignments suitable for teleservice, the sponsor may grant up to fourteen service days of emergency leave. This is a temporary exception to the policy permitting sponsors to grant up to five days of emergency leave in accordance with Section 105(b)(1) of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973.

If after fourteen days additional emergency leave is needed, please make a request to your assigned Portfolio Manager/Program Officer.

**What should a VISTA member do if a service site is closed for a significant amount of time?**
If the physical service site is closed and staff is directed to telework, the VISTA should teleserve. See above for details. If the service site is ceasing operations altogether, the VISTA Supervisor should contact the assigned Portfolio Manager/Program Officer.

**Is medical documentation necessary to receive a prorated end of service benefit if a member needs to early terminate due to coronavirus issues?**
No. As a temporary exception to VISTA policy, a member may submit a written statement describing the member’s circumstances in lieu of medical documentation.

**Can VISTA grant funds be used to offset costs of additional expenses related to coronavirus?**
No. The use of VISTA grant funds is restricted to payroll, supervision, training, and travel.