AmeriCorps NCCC Acknowledgment Packet

Please carefully review the following materials

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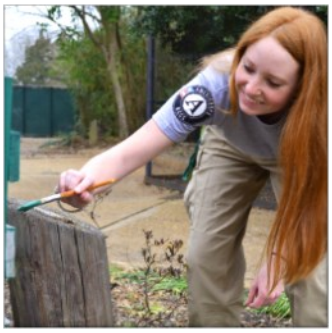
Traditional Corps

Our original, rugged, and demanding service experience designed to strengthen communities and build America's next generation of leaders

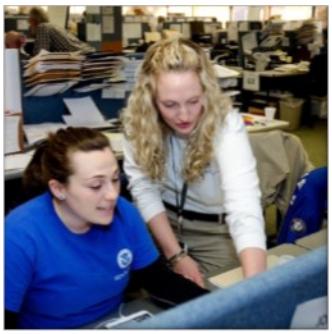
OPTION 1	OPTION 2
CORPS MEMBER	TEAM LEADER
Serve 10 Months	Serve 11 Months
Serve on a diverse team	Lead a diverse team
Must be 18 - 24	No upper age limit
Hands-on projects in a field setting	Supervise members, coordinate projects
Travel regionally, work with a variety of organizations	Travel regionally, work with a variety of organizations
Be a team player; set and reach goals	Manage team dynamics; facilitate member development
$4,000 Living Allowance $5,775 Education Award	$12,500 Living Allowance $5,775 Education Award

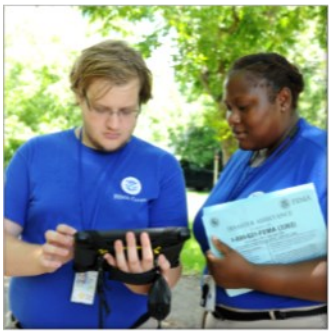


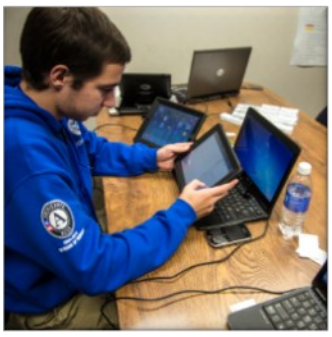
FEMA Corps

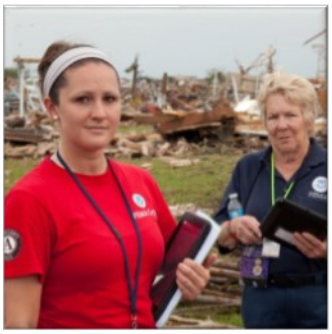
An immersive professional experience designed to build leaders and strengthen our nation's capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters

OPTION 3	OPTION 4
CORPS MEMBER	**TEAM LEADER**
Serve 10 Months	Serve 11 Months
Serve on a diverse team	Lead a diverse team
Must be 18 - 24	No upper age limit
Skill-building projects in a field or office setting	Supervise members, coordinate projects
Travel nationally, work directly with FEMA	Travel nationally, work directly with FEMA
Be a team player; set and reach goals	Manage team dynamics; facilitate member development
$4,000 Living Allowance $5,775 Education Award	$12,500 Living Allowance $5,775 Education Award









AmeriCorps NCCC

History & Introduction

AmeriCorps NCCC is modeled after the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the 1930's and incorporates aspects of teamwork, leadership, and self-discipline derived from the military. NCCC is a structured program with strict policies regarding uniforms, visual facial piercings, hairstyles, use of drugs and alcoholic beverages, punctuality, physical training and work ethic.

Participants selected to serve in AmeriCorps NCCC are referred to as Corps Members, are between the ages of 18-24, and have demonstrated strong interest and commitment to national service. Corps Members serve for 10 months on teams of 8-12 members and are led by a Team Leader. Team Leaders, generally similar in age to Corps Members and enrolled through a separate selection process, are responsible for team performance in fulfilling the NCCC mission.

AmeriCorps NCCC has two branches of service: (1) the Traditional Corps and (2) FEMA Corps. NCCC Traditional Corps teams participate in community service projects that respond to locally identified needs in the areas of natural and other disasters, infrastructure improvement, environmental stewardship and conservation, energy conservation, and urban and rural development. FEMA Corps teams participate in service projects identified by FEMA that respond to disaster preparation and long term disaster recovery efforts.

An AmeriCorps NCCC project can last from 1 day to several months, but is typically 6-13 weeks long. Teams will perform a variety of projects throughout their term of service, performing a minimum of 3 different projects. *Spikes*, projects that require a team to temporarily establish a base of operations in another community away from the campus, are in a wide variety of settings from remote rural areas to the inner city. Campuses may also have local projects that are projects in the same community where the NCCC campus is based.

AmeriCorps NCCC operations are based out of five regional campuses strategically located around the country. Members can choose their attendance cycle (summer, fall or winter), but cannot select their assigned campus.

- Atlantic Region (Baltimore, MD)
- Southern Region (Vicksburg, MS)
- North Central Region (Vinton, IA)
- Southwest Region (Denver, CO)
- Pacific Region (Sacramento, CA)

Corps Members and Team Leaders live in dormitory-like and barracks-like facilities when based at the campus. When on spike, they live with their teammates in housing provided within the community they are serving. Members should expect a variety of accommodation styles and anticipate living in modest, sometimes rustic conditions. Teams travel in passenger vans with limited space, sometimes for long distances, to get to project sites. Members will often experience a lack of privacy as the team eats, lives, serves, and travels together. Teams shop for and prepare meals together and may have to compromise on menu selection and dietary preferences to stay within a limited team budget.

AmeriCorps NCCC values diversity and emphasizes a spirit of inclusion. As we strive to serve different communities across the US, we cannot deliver on our mission without diversity amongst our corps members, Team Leaders and staff. In NCCC, as with the communities served, you will work alongside people with different social, economic, ethnic, political and religious backgrounds, as well as having different sexual orientations, gender expressions, educational experiences, and physical and mental abilities. There will be differing viewpoints, feelings, perspectives, and values. Corps members, Team Leaders and staff are expected to be respectful of others at all times, even when they disagree with one another. Corps Members, Team Leaders and staff are expected to ensure that everyone entering the program feels welcome and is included in the NCCC community.

Core Expectations of Corps Members & Team Leaders

AmeriCorps NCCC is a rigorous national service program. Corps Members and Team Leaders receive support from NCCC staff, one another, partners of sponsoring organizations, residents of the communities with whom they serve, as well as friends and family at home. While there is a strong support network in place, as an NCCC participant, you will be fully responsible for your success in the program.

Specifically, you will be expected to:

The Basics:

- Comply with the AmeriCorps NCCC Member Handbook *(provided upon campus arrival)*
- Participate in all required elements of the NCCC program, including:
    - Community service projects
    - NCCC and sponsor-delivered trainings
    - Project debriefs
    - Physical training
    - Any other mandatory events as determined by NCCC staff
- Refrain from the illegal use of alcohol and drugs (e.g. marijuana).
- Submit to random drug testing
- Promote your safety and the safety of your teammates
- Serve in high stress environments.

The mission of the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps is to strengthen communities and develop leaders through direct, team-based national and community service.

Team Related:

- Share a living space with other members that may offer little to no privacy. This may include:
    - Residing in rustic living conditions such as camping or sleeping on the floor in close quarters.
    - Sometimes sharing one bathroom with the entire team for the length of the project.
    - Participating in the upkeep of the shared living space.
    - Having no or very limited access to technology (cell phones, computers, internet, etc.).
    - Residing in accommodations where restrictions such as a curfew may be in place based upon the requirements of the facility.
- Adjusting to limited nutritional options that may require Corps Members and Team Leaders to supplement their dietary requirements.
- Express your needs and preferences so your teammates are aware of them, while at the same time putting the team's best interests ahead of your own.
- Develop respectful relationships with other people from diverse backgrounds, respect differing opinions, and contribute to a welcoming, inclusive environment for all.
- Engage in effective conflict resolution and problem solving with teammates, Team Leaders, NCCC staff, community members, and project sponsors.
- Manage your emotions (e.g. frustration) constructively and in a way that does not impede the ability of other members to pursue and accomplish the NCCC mission.

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Service Related:

- Deploy to any approved location and/or project
- Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability to sudden and unexpected changes to your service and/or living environments
- Complete service assignments that may vary greatly, to include tasks completed in office settings, as well as manual labor completed in remote outdoor locations.
- Serve beyond traditional hours, possibly including weekends, nights, and holidays.
- Operate equipment and property of NCCC and/or sponsoring organization, with appropriate training and supervision without endangering oneself or others or causing any damage to property.
- Demonstrate professionalism with project sponsors, community members, teammates, Team Leaders and NCCC staff. Professionalism includes:
    - Following lawful orders, direction, and instruction from supervisory personnel.
    - Communicating through the existing chain of command.
    - Serving cooperatively and collaboratively.
    - Demonstrating patience, empathy and courtesy.
    - Giving and receiving feedback constructively, and communicating effectively.
    - Maintaining appropriate personal appearance and hygiene.
    - Being respectful in all forms of communication.
    - Being on time.
    - Giving a good-faith effort at all times.
- Fitness to Serve:
    - Demonstrate basic self-management skills, including, but not limited to, adequate sleep, nutrition, and hydration, as well as maintaining good fitness and hygiene.
    - Independently manage and take all prescribed medications.
    - If serving in the Traditional Corps, perform physical activities such as trail building, home construction, tree planting, and removal of invasive plant species.
    - If serving in the FEMA Corps, pass a background security check from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

AmeriCorps NCCC ▪ Service Projects

The NCCC accomplishes its mission by working with local community organizations and groups to help them meet needs that they have identified and that would not be fully addressed without additional assistance. Potential project sponsors are required to submit a project application that outlines project goals and activities. Approved project applications must meet the following criteria:

- Address compelling community needs
- Have clearly stated and well planned tasks and objectives
- Have demonstrable, measurable goals
- Engage all team members in meaningful service throughout the project
- Provide opportunities for member growth and development
- Involve the community throughout the project
- Have a plan for sustainability after the team completes its service

Projects are normally six to eight weeks in duration, but will vary depending on the requirements of the project. Projects must be capable of using at least one full team of 8 to 12 members effectively. Transportation and some basic tools are provided by the NCCC; however, project sponsors are required to provide materials, specialized tools, orientation, training, and technical supervision. When projects are beyond a reasonable driving distance between the campus and project site(s), the project sponsor works with the NCCC to help arrange housing, food, and other logistical needs.

AmeriCorps NCCC service projects address community needs in the following areas:

Traditional Corps

Natural and Other Disasters

Focus on preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery projects by coordinating volunteers; managing distribution centers and shelters; preparing and distributing meals; clearing debris; enrolling victims into emergency-assistance databases; mucking and gutting; surveying community assets; distributing educational materials and preparedness kits; implementing disaster-preparedness curricula; mapping for improvements to community emergency response systems; and installing hurricane shutters.

Infrastructure Improvement

Contribute to the safety and well being of community members by repairing and building structures, as well as improve basic facilities and services needed for the functioning of the community by building wheelchair ramps; establishing community centers; assembling playgrounds; repairing and painting public facilities.

Environmental Stewardship and Conservation

Helping to preserve and enhance a community's natural resources by working on trail development and maintenance; planting trees; removing invasive plant species; cleaning up rivers, streams, and beaches; performing water quality assessments; and leading environmental education workshops and camps for youth.

Energy Conservation

Promote energy efficient practices with organizations, communities, families, or individuals by providing energy efficiency assessments; assisting with installations of energy efficient appliances and light bulbs; developing recycling programs; performing home weatherization projects for low-income, disabled, and senior citizens; and providing and developing educational programming on sustainability and conservation practices.

Urban and Rural Development

Address the special needs of communities in ways that improve the quality of life for citizens and the success of whole communities by supporting homeless shelters, food banks, youth and family service organizations; historical preservation; programming for seniors and special populations; renovating and constructing homes; leading neighborhood and community revitalization projects; and providing direct service to students, parents, and families through tutoring, one-on-one assistance, afterschool programming, employment counseling and health awareness.

FEMA Corps

All FEMA Corps projects will fall into one of FEMA's five mission areas: Disaster Protection, Prevention, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery. These projects may occur in the field, at a disaster field office, in one of the ten FEMA Regional offices, at FEMA Headquarters, in the community with state and local governments, or with voluntary agencies.

Protection and Prevention

Projects in the Protection and Prevention mission area help support efforts to secure the homeland against acts of terrorism and manmade or natural disasters. These activities may include surveying disaster shelters; expanding disaster preparedness training to America's youth; participating in national disaster exercises.; or supporting public disaster awareness initiatives.

Mitigation

The goal of projects in the Mitigation mission area is to enhance communities' abilities to reduce the impacts to life and property of future disasters by strengthening communities' ability to plan for them. Project activities may include archiving historic preservation materials; creating flood plain maps; or utilizing GIS technologies to support disaster field operations.

Response

Projects in the Response mission area are geared towards saving lives, protecting property and the environment, and meeting basic human needs after an incident has occurred. Activities during response projects may include registering disaster survivors for assistance; answering disaster survivors' questions at Recovery Centers; providing logistical support at a disaster Joint Field Office; or supporting other mass care operations in an affected community.

Recovery

Projects in the Recovery mission area aim to help communities affected by an incident to rebound more effectively. Project activities may include working with voluntary organizations to assess unmet needs of disaster survivors; developing press releases or reports for the media; responding to Congressional questions; or assisting with damage assessments of public buildings or infrastructure.

What to Expect

AmeriCorps NCCC is a structured residential program. In order to successfully complete the ten month service term, members must perform 1700 hours of service, including 80 independent service project hours (ISPs) for the Traditional Corps and 40 hours for FEMA Corps.

An AmeriCorps NCCC member should expect the following:

- Dress Code, Grooming Standards, Code of Conduct & Professional Behavior.
- Room inspections/Dormitory cleaning duties.
- At a minimum, physical fitness conditioning is 3 times a week for 45 minutes.
- Work week is on average 45-50 hours and may not be the standard Monday—Friday.
- NCCC campuses, projects sites and spike housing are alcohol and drug free environments.
- All members undergo a drug test upon their arrival at the campus. Random drug testing does occur throughout the term of service.
- Members who test positive for illegal drugs are immediately dismissed from the program.

Application Process:

- AmeriCorps NCCC operates three application cycles for each of our Summer, Fall, and Winter sessions, with each application cycle open for six months (Winter for seven), and service beginning approximately three months after each application cycle closes. Initial invitations are typically sent two months after the application cycle opens, and then regularly until the class is full. NCCC selection is merit-based and continuous up until the campus start dates.

Application Assessment:

- AmeriCorps NCCC reviews applicants in the following areas when performing application assessments: interest, motivation, flexibility, adaptability, collaboration, and accountability.
- In some instances, assessors may require further information before determining an applicant's eligibility for the program. When this occurs a follow up interview will be conducted with the applicant.

Selection & Placement Process:

- If recommended for service in AmeriCorps NCCC, applicants are placed in a pool of eligible applicants. Invitations are made based on submission date and applications' strength. Once invitations begin, members will be selected from this pool and sent an email invitation as well as an invitation packet in the mail, either to a campus or to our waitlist. In order to serve, the invitation packet clearance paperwork must be completed and returned, and applicants must pass through our full clearance process.
- AmeriCorps NCCC does not guarantee positions to all applicants recommended for service in the NCCC program.
- At any time an individual may decline their position, including the day prior to the start of the program. If and when positions become available, NCCC continues to make selections from the waitlist to fill vacated member slots.

Team Leader Selection:

- Team Leaders are not selected in the same way Corps Members are. Instead, complete Team Leader applications are reviewed on a rolling basis by the campuses that are active during that application cycle. Campus Unit Leaders will conduct phone interviews with their top candidates. Invitations for Team Leaders will be sent out during two different hiring rounds for each application cycle— one that takes place before the application deadline, and another that takes place within 1 month after the deadline.

Member Benefits

Housing
Campus residences are coed floors with same gender roommates.

Uniforms
AmeriCorps NCCC members are required to wear a uniform. Uniforms are issued to members when they report to the campus. The uniform colors are blue (FEMA Corps) gray (Traditional Corps), black, and khaki.

Living Allowance
- **Corps Members** earn approximately $4,000 per service year, or $180 biweekly before taxes.
- **Team leaders** earn approximately $12,500 per service year, or $500 biweekly before taxes.

Meals
Campuses may have either kitchens for members to cook or dining halls. Teams are provided with a food budget while on spike. On spike, meals are prepared by the members. Those with special dietary needs or food allergies should be prepared to supplement their diet.

Health Benefits:
It is not medical insurance, but a limited health benefit plan. Pre-existing conditions are not covered.

Education Loan Forbearance
While serving, eligible federally-guaranteed student loans can be placed in forbearance. Upon successfully completing the program, the National Service Trust will pay all or a portion of the interest that accrued during your service period.

Childcare
$400 per month may be available for a custodial parent of a minor child.

Transportation
AmeriCorps NCCC pays for your transportation to the campus and back home when you have either completed or exited the program. Members are responsible for the cost of their personal travel on breaks or leave.

Education Award
Upon successful completion of the program you will be eligible to receive an education award totaling $5,775 or more. This award can be used to pay educational expenses at qualified institutions of higher education, for educational training, or to repay qualified student loans within seven years after your term of service has ended. It is taxed by the government when used.

Summer & Fall Cycle Breaks

Winter: Approximately 2 weeks and occurs in November - January

Spring: Usually a long weekend (Friday and Monday off) and occurs in April

Winter Cycle Breaks

Summer: Approximately 2 weeks and occurs in July

Fall: Usually a long weekend (Friday and Monday off) and occurs in September

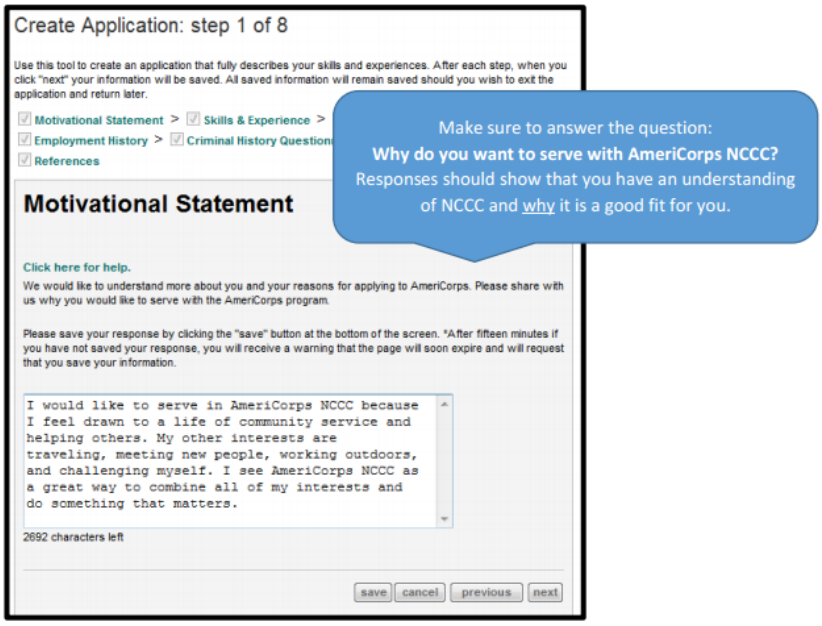
Additional Resources

[Visual Guide to the AmeriCorps NCCC and NCCC-FEMA Corps Application]

Although you have completed your application, we encourage you to review it and make sure that everything is both complete and within our guidelines of what makes a good application.

This guide will walk you through each individual step of making an application and help you better understand what we look for when reviewing it.

bit.ly/VisualGuideNCCCApplication



Have questions regarding your application or about NCCC?

E-mail **ANCCC@cns.gov** or call the National Service Hotline at **1-800-942-2677**

Frequently Asked Questions

Both of the AmeriCorps NCCC service branches: bit.ly/NCCCFAQs
FEMA Corps-specific: bit.ly/FEMACorpsFAQs

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