

## WELFARE OF MEMBERS

**PURPOSE:** To develop attitudes, skills, and knowledge necessary for the prevention of accidents; to reduce or eliminate unsafe practices or conditions that cause accidents; to prevent accidents both on and off campus; and to protect the lives and well-being of AmeriCorps NCCC members. Ninety-five percent of all accidents occur during the first hour of the day, or soon after people stop working. During these times, people are not often focused on safety issues.

### SAFETY

#### A. TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

All members and team leaders will be trained to operate any and all equipment assigned to them. Under no circumstances shall members operate any piece of equipment unless qualified to do so and authorized by their team leader or supervisor. Certification will be obtained when and where required.

#### B. USE OF HAND TOOLS

The following guidelines will be observed when using hand tools:

- All tools will be used and treated in a professional and appropriate manner. For example, handles should be tightly fitted, secured with a wedge, and inspected for splitting, warping, and absence of splinters.
- Always use sharp tools, as dull tools are dangerous.
- Keep tool guards in position on cutting edges during transportation to and from project sites.

- Never throw or play with tools.
- Inventory and clean all tools at the end of each day and return them to their appropriate storage areas. Report any discrepancies to the unit leader.

#### C. POWER EQUIPMENT

Members shall be alert and apply common sense at all times when operating power equipment. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.

##### 1. Protective Clothing and Equipment

Protective clothing and equipment such as hard hats, gloves, safety boots, and foul weather gear, also known as personal protective equipment (PPE), will be issued to AmeriCorps NCCC members as necessary. Such clothing or equipment remains the property of the government and, except for expendable or worn-out items, must be returned to the campus upon termination or when no longer needed. Members who lose this equipment may be required to pay for the loss. This may be accomplished by requiring the member to either replace the item or pay for it directly. Instruction in the proper use and maintenance of such clothing and equipment will be provided.

##### 2. Eye Protection

Eye protection will be worn while using grinders, chainsaws, operating a chipper, stump cutter, hammers or sledge hammers, sawing stranded cable, wire rope or while

painting above one's head. Under no circumstances will face shields be worn in place of safety glasses; they may be worn over the safety glasses.

### 3. Hard Hats and Safety Boots

Hard hats and safety boots will be worn at all times at appropriate project sites, and when carrying or sharpening tools. Under no circumstances will soft caps or soft athletic shoes be worn in place of hard hats or proper work boots.

### 4. Hearing Protection

Hearing protection must be used when operating or working near:

- Routers, circular or table saws, or other power tools.
- Wood chippers, jack hammers, or other mechanical equipment.
- Tractors, back hoes, or other motorized equipment that have the potential of causing hearing damage as determined by the team leader.
- Any other area where the team leader determines there is the potential for hearing damage.

### 5. Safety Gear with Chain Saw

Safety chaps, bibs, or pants must be worn any time a member uses a chain saw. Also, members must wear protective gloves, eye protection, hearing protection and a helmet. Members must receive chainsaw training from an AmeriCorps NCCC approved trainer before operating a chainsaw, even if the member has prior experience.

### 6. Gloves

Except in rare cases, members must wear gloves while working on project sites, and when carrying or sharpening tools.

### 7. Dust Masks

Disposable dust masks must be worn when spraying paint, working with treated wood or plaster, or engaging in any other activity that results in dust, fumes, mists, or other possible harmful conditions.

## D. DRINKING WATER

All teams will be supplied with a water container that is to be taken to all project sites. Team leaders will ensure that drinking water is available at all times.

## E. TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

During transportation to and from AmeriCorps NCCC activities, members will be seated inside the vehicle in which they are riding. No one will stand up, ride the tailgate, ride the running board, or ride outside of any vehicle. Proper restraints (seat belts/shoulder restraints) will be worn at all times. Ground guides will be used when backing or pulling in or out of tight spaces with 15-passenger vans and other vehicles with limited visibility. Drivers will not operate cell phones in any manner whatsoever or use headphones while operating an AmeriCorps NCCC or sponsor-provided vehicle.

## F. LIFE JACKETS

Members working in or around water must wear approved life jackets. This includes, but is not limited to, persons working in boats or barges and cleaning streams in deep areas. When waders and/or hip boots are required, they must be equipped with steel toes. Members working over ice-covered water will carry a rope of at least 20 feet.

## G. TOOL STORAGE

Tools will be properly stowed for transport in vehicles at all times.

## H. FUEL STORAGE

Fuel will only be transported in approved containers. At no time will fuel or other hazardous chemicals be transported in the passenger compartment of any vehicle.

## I. HUNTING-RELATED HAZARDS

Due to the extreme hazards associated with hunting seasons, AmeriCorps NCCC teams must exercise extreme caution in any area where it is reasonable to assume that hunters will be present. Team leaders, staff, and project sponsors should be alert to any hunting-related hazards and work together to ensure team safety. In some cases, it may be necessary for members to wear blaze orange safety clothing.

## J. SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. Members

Members will be monitored by team leaders and unit leaders to ensure that they are using safety equipment properly and responsibly. In cooperation with project directors, they will ensure that project sponsors provide appropriate training in the use of unfamiliar equipment and will participate in planning and/or presenting such training instruction. Members have an obligation to state their concerns to team leaders and/or site supervisors if they are engaged in a task they believe puts them in an unsafe situation.

### 2. Team Leaders

Team leaders are responsible for the day-to-day safety of their teams and for maintaining a safe working environment. They will conduct a safety briefing prior to commencing work each day. They will ensure that safety equipment, tools, and machinery are in good working order and in a good state of repair. Unsafe equipment will be reported and not used until repaired. This includes equipment borrowed from other entities.

### 3. Members and Team Leaders

Members and team leaders will receive appropriate and recurring instruction and/or training in accident prevention, first aid, and CPR. Members and team leaders will:

- Comply with state and federal safety regulations and laws (including highway laws), and the Corporation for National and Community Service, AmeriCorps NCCC, or host facility policies and/or directives.



- Maintain and safeguard all equipment assigned to them. Members are also responsible for advising team leaders or supervisors of the condition of their equipment.
- Ensure that all passengers riding in their vehicles wear appropriate restraining devices. The region director may restrict driving by persons with unsatisfactory driving records. Vehicle operators are responsible for all parking or traffic tickets they receive while operating a vehicle in conjunction with an AmeriCorps NCCC activity.
- Not smoke, burn candles or incense, or create a fire safety hazard in their rooms.

## K. SANCTIONS

Any violation of the above rules will be investigated and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

**PURPOSE:** To comply with the Occupational Safety and Health standards, and to ensure that all AmeriCorps NCCC members are trained to recognize and work safely with any hazardous materials with which they may come in contact.

Each campus will ensure that hazards posed through the use of all chemicals both on campus and at work sites are evaluated, and that information concerning these hazards are transmitted during training sessions. Transmittal of information will include, but is not limited to, identifying specific hazards associated with each product, labeling containers, using material safety data sheets, and providing instruction in the use of all

hazardous chemical products for all AmeriCorps NCCC members.

In accordance with 29 CFR 1910.1200, individuals will be informed of all hazards associated with any chemical products as well as information on their proper usage.

### A. CONTAINER LABELING

Each container holding hazardous material must be clearly labeled according to its contents and must display the appropriate hazard warning. Removing or defacing such labels is strictly prohibited.

### B. PROJECT/WORK SITE INVENTORY

Members and team leaders will participate in a hazard analysis before a new project begins in order to consider both potential safety hazards and accident prevention. This process shall include making a list of all products, the purpose of the products, and where they will be used. Member involvement ensures that all members have thought about safety and makes them more aware of potential hazards. After the brainstorming session, teams will compile their analyses, provide copies to all team members, and provide a copy to the deputy region director for operations, who will maintain a master list for the campus. Anytime a new hazardous material is used, it must be added to the list.

## C. MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS (MSDS)

Campuses will:

- Maintain a mandatory resource file of MSDS on the hazards posed through the use of all chemical products purchased by AmeriCorps NCCC or project sponsors.
- Ensure that MSDS are maintained for each hazardous material on the master inventory list.
- Ensure that MSDS are received with all incoming shipments of potentially hazardous products.
- Ensure that team leaders have MSDS available for each hazardous material used on their respective project sites and within their respective dormitories.

## TEAM CONDITIONING

**PURPOSE:** To increase strength and flexibility, to minimize and/or prevent injuries that may result from AmeriCorps NCCC members' routine work or service, and to enhance self-esteem and esprit de corps.

Members and team leaders will participate in team conditioning at least three times weekly. This conditioning will be team-based. Unit leaders will monitor the planned workouts and will, to the extent possible, participate with their teams. All other AmeriCorps NCCC staff are encouraged to participate in the campus physical fitness program. The conditioning program is important because AmeriCorps NCCC undertakes hard, physical work and members need to be strong and limber enough to engage in it safely. During

the Corps Member Training Institute (CTI), which takes place during the first weeks of the program, physical conditioning will be conducted by units or the entire corps to the extent practicable.

## A. SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

### 1. Warm-Up and Stretching

All exercises must be preceded by an appropriate warm-up and stretching period and followed by an appropriate cool-down period.

### 2. Prohibited Stretching

Ballistic stretching, double-leg lifts of any type, and exercises that cause knee flexation over 90 degrees are strictly prohibited.

### 3. Road Guards

Any jogging/running formations will be accompanied by road guards wearing reflective orange vests and carrying flashlights, if appropriate.

### 4. Weather Conditions

Weather conditions will be considered at all times to determine the safety and feasibility of conducting physical training.

### 5. Health Concerns

No individual will be required to participate in any exercise that is reasonably beyond his or her physical capability or that would constitute a direct threat to his or her health.

## B. PROHIBITIONS

Under no circumstances will physical training

be assigned as a disciplinary measure. However, if members refuse to participate or do not participate to their fullest extent, they will be subject to disciplinary action.

## C. STANDARDS OF PHYSICAL TRAINING

### 1. Physical Fitness

The AmeriCorps NCCC campus community subscribes to the principle of physical fitness for all members and team leaders.

### 2. Exercise and Conditioning

Members and team leaders will engage in a regular and routine fitness regimen for exercise and conditioning while recognizing physically limiting conditions that exist among members of the community.

### 3. Fitness Goal

The regimen utilizes levels of fitness in order to accommodate the differences in the community, with the goal being to have the members and team leaders reach beyond their limits to new heights of physical stamina.

### 4. Continuity

Physical training will not be sacrificed in any manner. Provisions exist at each campus to provide for continuity in the fitness program regardless of weather, facilities, or program conflicts.

### 5. Cohesiveness

Routine physical training provides the team with cohesiveness within their community.

### 6. Benefits

Physical training is designed so that participants see its value. Members should consider physical training to be time well spent, and realize its personal benefits.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

**PURPOSE:** To establish guidelines for conducting service projects and/or physical training during severe weather conditions (i.e., extremes in temperature, heavy precipitation, or high winds). This is not only a health and safety issue; it also affects project quality and timeliness.

Members should be prepared to spend a substantial amount of their time outdoors. Light rain, cold weather, or snow on the ground will not stop AmeriCorps NCCC teams from completing service projects. Team leaders, unit leaders, and worksite supervisors should agree when working conditions are not appropriate for the team to continue working on the project. AmeriCorps NCCC teams should receive training as to how to recognize and respond to conditions caused by severe weather. The following guidelines should be followed during periods of severe weather:

### A. COLD WEATHER

In making decisions about outside activities in cold weather, staff should consider the outside air temperature, the wind chill factor, and access to a water supply and snacks. The wind chill factor makes the body's internal temperature regulating mechanisms feel as though it is much colder than the thermometer indicates.

# MEMBER HANDBOOK

The Wind Chill Index should be used in making a decision. A lower limit of 20 degrees Fahrenheit (when adjusted for wind chill) is the guideline for outside work. Outdoor activities may be authorized at colder temperatures for short periods of time, but only after the following safety precautions have been taken.

Members should be:

- trained to recognize the symptoms of frostbite and hypothermia.
- properly clothed for the temperature - foul weather gear for rain and wool or synthetic fabrics for cold extremes.
- assigned to work in pairs
- assigned outside for limited periods of time.
- accessible to a readily available warm-up location.
- regularly monitored by team leaders and/or unit staff.

## B. HOT WEATHER

Precautions must be taken, both outdoors and indoors, in extremely hot and humid weather. The Heat Index demonstrates how heat and humidity combine to create hazardous working conditions. When working in hot weather, members and team leaders will:

- have access to an adequate water supply.
- wear SPF 15, at a minimum, sunscreen/block to protect themselves from sunburn.
- undertake less physically strenuous work tasks.

- take frequent breaks.
- avoid working outdoors at mid-day.
- be monitored frequently.
- recognize and be alert to symptoms of heat exhaustion and dehydration.

## C. ALL INCLEMENT WEATHER CONDITIONS

On days when there is freezing rain or heavy precipitation, campuses should rely on information available from local sources, such as law enforcement, highway department offices, weather bureau, and the radio, to determine whether teams should report to project sites, or, if already at a project site, whether they should end work early to avoid unsafe travel conditions. Teams required to work in inclement weather must also check the above referenced sources of weather information to ensure that working outdoors is safe.

## SPIKE SITES

**PURPOSE:** To provide to AmeriCorps NCCC members information regarding spike sites.

A "spike" occurs when a team undertakes a service project that is 50 miles or more from the campus and requires an overnight stay for one or more nights.

### A. GENERAL

#### 1. Length of Spikes

No team will be away from the campus for more than 60 continuous days unless approved by the National Office. However, teams may spend several months of their overall term of service on spike.



## 2. Support Services

Support services for members will be, to the extent practicable, commensurate with campus support services and will be assured for the life of the project.

## 3. Communication

Regularly scheduled communication lines must exist between the spike camp and the campus.

## B. SUPERVISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

All spike projects will be team-based. The following rules will apply:

### 1. Team Leader Responsibilities

The team leader is in charge of the team from the time of departure until return and is responsible for the safety and well-being of the team. However, any unit staff member or project staff member may direct changes affecting the safety and well-being of the team, or the accomplishments of project objectives.

### 2. Delegation of Responsibilities

At the beginning of each day, the team leader will appoint one member to assume responsibility for the safety and well-being of the team in the event that a team leader becomes incapacitated. If such a situation arises, the appropriate unit leader must be notified immediately.

### 3. The housing facility and boundaries designated by the team leader will be known as the spike housing. Any rules specific to the regional campus will be enforced in this area. This includes no overnight guests, with the limited exception of personnel affiliated with AmeriCorps NCCC or the project sponsor.

If a team is staying at spike housing that has hosted previous teams, then the existing spike boundaries will apply. This information should be communicated prior to the team's arrival at the spike housing site. If the spike housing site is a new project, the team will assign boundaries upon arrival at the site and make those boundaries clear to the team immediately. This will be accomplished in consultation with the unit leader. If a team has a team charter, the spike boundaries should be included in the charter.

When multiple teams are at a project site, teams will make recommendations to their unit leaders on what the spike boundaries should be. If teams from other campuses arrive shortly thereafter, the team leaders will work together to establish common team boundaries. This will happen within seven days of the teams being at the project site. Unit leaders are responsible for approving proposed boundaries.

If a team arrives prior to other teams, they should establish temporary boundaries until all teams arrive and can agree on a recommendation which must occur within seven days. Once a spike boundary is established and approved by the unit leader(s), it will remain in place for all future teams and may

only be adjusted if there are significant changes to the community where the spike housing is located.

## 4. Code of Conduct

The AmeriCorps NCCC Code of Conduct will be enforced at all times during the spike, including free time both on and off the spike camp.

## 5. Host Facilities Rules

Any rules specific to the host facility must be enforced.

## 6. Additional Rules

The team leader may establish additional rules as necessary that are reasonable to ensure the health, safety, and morale of the team.

## 7. Leaving Spike Housing

No one may enter (friends, visitors), nor may members leave the spike housing without first notifying the team leader. Members who wish to leave the spike area should do so in groups of two or more. Those leaving should inform the team leader as to their destination and expected time of return. Once back in the spike housing area, members should check in with the team leader or designated member if the team leader is offsite.

## C. USE OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE VEHICLES

### 1. Official Business

Government vehicles are to be used only for official business necessary for the health, welfare, and well-being of the team.

### 2. Structured Leisure Activities

Government vehicles may be used for structured leisure activities after service hours using the following guidelines:

- Team leaders can approve trips within a 25 mile radius from the spike site
- Unit leaders can approve trips between a 26 - 100 mile radius from the spike site
- Any trips over 100 miles from the spike site must be approved by the region director

However, the vehicle may not be used to transport participants to establishments where alcoholic beverages are primarily consumed (i.e., bars, taverns, etc.). The team leader, with unit leader approval, may authorize a larger radius if needed.

### 3. Personal Business

The vehicle is not to be used for personal business unless permission is granted from campus staff and the team leader.

### 4. Authorized Drivers

Only those members authorized to operate government vehicles may operate the vehicle during spikes.



## 5. Enforcement of Rules

Rules and regulations applying to the operation of government vehicles will be strictly enforced.

## 6. Private Vehicles

Personal (private) vehicles or rental cars are not allowed on spike, except as authorized by region directors.

## D. TEAM LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

While a team is out on spike, the team leader is required to:

- Maintain a list of emergency contact phone numbers for campus personnel.
- Locate the emergency medical facility upon arrival and familiarize the team on how to get there in case of an emergency.
- Maintain a supply of Worker's Compensation forms and other related injury and accident forms.
- Provide main campus and the project sponsor with a telephone number where the team can be reached.

- In consultation with the unit leader, assign boundaries to the spike camp upon arrival and make those boundaries clear to the team.
- Ensure that members and visitors are aware of spike camp rules.
- Check in with unit leader at the campus daily and provide a status report.
- Prepare and submit Project Status and Accountability Reports (progress report) to the unit leader at least once a week which will be forwarded to the region director.
- At no time, while on spike, will alcohol be consumed by any member at the spike camp.

## E. SANCTIONS

Any violation of spike rules may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

