

## **1. Disaster Preparedness and Response**

The Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service (“Commission” or “ICVS”) has pledged to assist with statewide preparedness for, response to and recovery from disasters. The Commission is also the designated state agency responsible for managing unaffiliated volunteers during times of disaster. In addition to disaster volunteer management, the Commission will provide disaster assistance utilizing the network of national service resources in Iowa, as needed and called up by the local, state and federal emergency management officials.

AmeriCorps programs can play an integral role in helping prepare for and respond to disasters. Iowa AmeriCorps programs will be expected to participate in disaster preparedness, response and recovery activities as appropriate to their program design. To that end, grantees must develop policies to allow for members to provide disaster services, both within Iowa and nationally, in the event one occurs. It is acceptable for members to receive hours towards their term of service for participating in local, state, and national level disaster deployments and training opportunities, based on their program’s approved disaster policy. All outside requests for AmeriCorps members to provide disaster services must be coordinated through the Commission and Program Directors must notify the Commission in advance of internally reassigning any members to participate in disaster activities. Depending on the severity of the disaster event, requests may come through county emergency operations centers, the state emergency operations center or through our federal partners, FEMA and/or the Corporation.

### **A. Local Disaster Response**

AmeriCorps programs have the option to respond to local disaster as it fits their program design. If the approved application included disaster activities, such as response and recovery, as an activity in its program design, the program may respond to a local or state disaster according to that design, upon notification to and approval from ICVS. All disaster deployments (to activities outside of the approved program design) must be coordinated by the Commission. In the event that you receive a request for disaster response/assistance directly from a local contact or County Emergency Management Official, please contact your program officer for additional instructions.

### **B. State Emergency Proclamation and/or State-Declared Assistance**

AmeriCorps programs may be asked to serve in some capacity, as appropriate, in the event of a disaster that significantly impacts an area(s) of the state. During state-declared emergencies and disasters, the Commission will work closely with the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to determine the necessity of deploying AmeriCorps members for disaster assistance. Requests coming through the SEOC may allow AmeriCorps members to be relieved of their "regular" program duties to respond to a disaster. The Commission will work with programs to coordinate deployment of members to areas (state and/or national) that are impacted by a disaster. Members should not report to disaster-impacted areas without approval/instructions from the Commission.

### **C. Iowa AmeriCorps Disaster Cadre**

The Iowa AmeriCorps Disaster Cadre is a composite team of AmeriCorps programs that allow members to be deployed for disaster operations, both nationally and within Iowa.

The Iowa AmeriCorps Disaster Cadre will have a trained group of members to provide services that will include, but not be limited to, disaster volunteer coordination, debris removal, disaster damage assessment, and disaster preparedness activities such as sandbagging. The Iowa AmeriCorps Disaster Cadre will be deployable through the Disaster Response Cooperative Agreement between the ICVS and CNCS.

**D. Federal Disaster Recovery Cooperative Agreement (DRCA)**

During times of federal declared disaster, the Commission will work with the Corporation and FEMA to ready Iowa AmeriCorps programs to respond to disaster under a mission assignment. Iowa AmeriCorps programs participating in the Iowa AmeriCorps Disaster Cadre that have members who have been adequately trained in disaster response and recovery may be deployed to national disaster relief operations. As with any disaster, programs must have prior approval from ICVS program officers for members to deploy for a national disaster, whether in Iowa or another state.