

Michigan Education Corps Reading Support Scholars Handbook

2024-2025 Program Year



Michigan Education Corps
**Reading
Support
Scholars**
A Hope Network Initiative



AmeriCorps

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SECTION A: INTRODUCTION TO AMERICORPS

WHAT IS AMERICORPS?

AmeriCorps is often described as the “domestic Peace Corps.” AmeriCorps engages more than 200,000 Americans in intensive service each year at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country.

Since the program’s founding in 1994, over 1.25 million AmeriCorps members have contributed more than 1.6 billion hours in service across America while tackling pressing problems and mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve.

HISTORY OF NATIONAL SERVICE

When faced with challenges, our nation has always relied on the dedication and action of its citizens. AmeriCorps carries on a long tradition of citizen involvement by providing opportunities for Americans of all ages to improve their communities through service.

1960s Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP); Foster Grandparent Program; Senior Companion Program

Demonstration projects launched for these three programs to demonstrate the effectiveness of the service model and to engage older Americans in a range of service activities.

1964 Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)

Created by President Lyndon B. Johnson as a part of the "War on Poverty."

1970s ACTION Agency formed

The Senior Service Programs + Peace Corps + VISTA form the Action Agency

1973 Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973

RSVP, Foster Grandparent Program, and Senior Companion Program become authorized through this act.

1989 Points of Light Foundation

President George H.W. Bush creates the Office of National Service in the White House and the Points of Light Foundation to foster volunteering.

1990 National and Community Service Act of 1990

Signed by President Bush, the legislation authorizes grants to schools to support service-learning through Serve America and demonstration grants. Learn and Serve is created.

1993 Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) created

CNCS merged the work and staff of two predecessor agencies, ACTION and the Commission on National and Community Service. Senior Corps incorporates the three senior-focused programs: Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and RSVP.

1994 AmeriCorps founded

2009 Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act signed

April 21, 2009: President Barack Obama signs bipartisan law to expand and strengthen national service programs.

2010 Social Innovation Fund launched

Ensures that high-impact nonprofits are able to attract the resources they need to grow and improve the economic, educational, and health prospects of low-income communities.

2014 AmeriCorps celebrates 20 years

CNCS has served more than 5 million individuals of all ages and backgrounds to help meet local needs through a wide array of service opportunities.

2016 AmeriCorps celebrates 1 million members, a major milestone for national service.

2020 The Corporation for National and Community Service released a new brand strategy for the future, announcing it will now operate as “AmeriCorps,” as part of a larger effort to grow awareness of service opportunities for all Americans.

AMERICORPS FAST FACTS

- AmeriCorps engages 200,000 members annually.
- AmeriCorps members serve in 36,000+ locations across the country.
- 1,250,000+ people have served as AmeriCorps members since 1994.
- AmeriCorps members have earned more than \$4.5 billion in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards since 1994.
- AmeriCorps efforts focus in five key areas:
 - 1) Disaster services,
 - 2) Economic opportunity,
 - 3) Education,
 - 4) Environmental stewardship, and
 - 5) Healthy futures.

AMERICORPS PLEDGE

I will get things done for America - to make our people safer, smarter and healthier.

I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities.

Faced with apathy, I will take action.

Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity, I will persevere.

I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.

I am an AmeriCorps Member and I will get things done.

**SECTION B: HISTORY OF MICHIGAN EDUCATION
CORPS**

PROGRAM TIMELINE

- 2003 Representative Alice Seagren meets with Ampact (formerly known as ServeMinnesota) and the creation of Reading Corps is inspired**
Reading Corps is piloted in PreK Head Start Agencies. Interventionists are trained to support the development of preschool children’s early language and literacy skills using research-based intervention techniques primarily targeting the “Big 5” language and literacy skill areas. Minnesota Literacy Council, a statewide 501c3, incubates the program.
- 2005 Reading Corps expands its model to K-3**
Reading Corps K-3 model provides daily 1-on-1, twenty-minute sessions with Kindergarten through 3rd grade students. Interventionists provide targeted reading skill practice, commonly called interventions, in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency.
- 2007 Math Corps is piloted in St. Cloud Public Schools**
Minnesota Math Corps is the outcome of a planning grant that was awarded to St. Cloud State University. A Steering Committee was assembled to determine an area of need in the St. Cloud Community that could be effectively and uniquely addressed by a new generation AmeriCorps program.
- 2010 Reading Corps Institute moves from being held regionally to statewide**
Ampact Action Network is launched to be the new 501c3 organization responsible for implementing strategic initiatives of Ampact.
- 2012 Reading Corps is launched in Michigan**
Under the leadership of Tony Campbell, The Heart of West Michigan United Way utilizes an existing AmeriCorps grant to pilot the Reading Corps Program Model with 9 AmeriCorps Scholars at three schools.
- 2013 Michigan Education Corps is launched at Hope Network West Michigan**
- 2014 Reading Corps K-3 impact evaluation shows significant effects**
Details of the report conducted by NORC can be found at <http://www.serveminnesota.org/about/reading-corps-research>.
- 2015 Early Learning Corps (then known as PreK Reading Corps) launches in Michigan**
- 2017 MEC Math Corps launches in Michigan**
- 2022 MEC celebrates 10 years of serving Michigan students and enrolls the program’s 1000th AmeriCorps Member!**
- 2023 Reading Support Scholars launches as AmeriCorps program**



MICHIGAN EDUCATION CORPS

Mission and History

Rooted in service in collaboration with community partners driven by a desire to help learners overcome, Michigan Education Corps seeks to close the achievement gap in literacy and math in the State of Michigan.

Hope Network's Michigan Education Corps Reading Corps is based on the successful Minnesota Reading Corps, the largest AmeriCorps tutoring program in the country. Michigan Education Corps utilizes AmeriCorps members as elementary literacy interventionists to deliver research-based, supplemental literacy interventions for children age 3-grade 3 throughout the Michigan. A rigorous study conducted by the University of Chicago confirms that Reading Corps is a proven model¹ that significantly accelerates literacy achievement for children age 3 to grade 3. In K3, Reading Corps is implemented where AmeriCorps members each provide 1:1 tutoring with a caseload of 15-18 students for 20 minutes a day, five days per week. In preschool, Reading Corps is implemented by Interventionists working directly in classrooms with all learners to create literacy and language rich environments.

Starting in Fall 2015, MEC piloted PreK Reading Corps (now known as Early Learning Corps). In Fall 2017, MEC piloted Math Corps, a replication of the Minnesota Math Corps. Math Corps is implemented with members working directly with student pairs for three-five days, 90 minutes per week, to ensure they are Algebra ready by the end of 8th grade.

Three cutting-edge features that distinguish Reading Corps and Math Corps are data-driven decision-making, evidence-based intervention and progress monitoring, and rigorous attention to fidelity of implementation. These are accomplished through high-quality training and coaching.

¹Hafford, C., C. Markovitz, M. Hernandez, E. Hedberg, B. Silbergitt, H. Langerman, A. Diaconis, and M. Kiss. (2013). Process Assessment of the Minnesota Reading Corps.

Markovitz, C., Hernandez, M., Hedberg, E., & Silbergitt, B. (2014). Impact Evaluation of the Minnesota Reading Corps K-3 Program.

READING CORPS

Mission

Reading Corps envisions a future in which all children will be proficient readers by the end of third grade. Reading Corps demonstrates how service and science can accelerate improvement in both students and systems. By mobilizing the people power of AmeriCorps, Reading Corps provides evidence-based literacy interventions and data-based assessments to children from age three to grade three.

Reading Corps began in 2003 in Minnesota with 24 tutors. Today, more than 40,000 students nationwide are being served by Reading Corps programs.

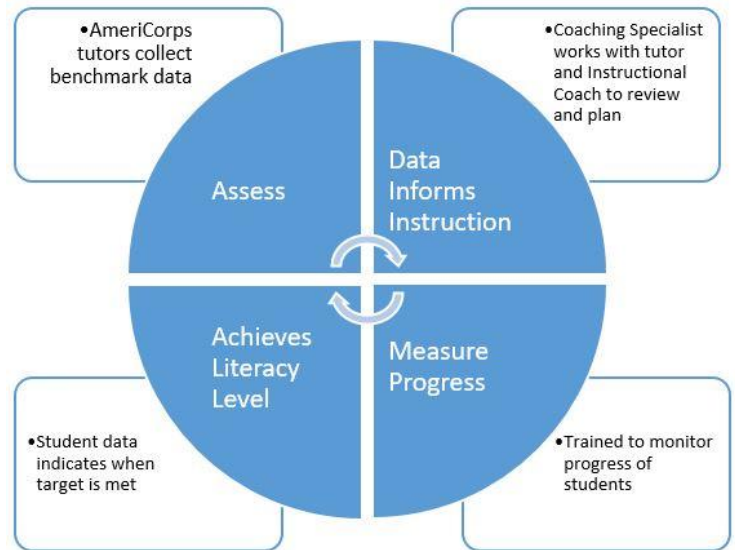
Reading Corps Program Model

The Reading Corps program model supports the implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). This model incorporates frequently assessing students' literacy skills and reviewing this data to make instructional decisions.

Reading Corps has also launched pilot programs that are exploring how the program model can be adapted successfully in other settings or for other skills.

Reading Corps interventionists, with oversight and support from their coaches:

- **Assess** students to identify those students scoring below grade level targets in reading proficiency
- **Use data to inform instruction** to provide to students evidence-based interventions targeted to help the specific skill
- **Measure progress** by continuously collecting data to monitor student growth
- **Help students achieve literacy levels** by providing daily tutoring and reviewing student data to determine when the student is on a trajectory to achieving literacy proficiency



READING SUPPORT SCHOLARS (RSS)

The MEC Reading Support Scholars (RSS) program is dedicated to empowering high school-aged students on their journey toward a successful career in education through AmeriCorps service. Our mission is to prepare aspiring educators with career-launching experiences, equipping them to become impactful educators for the future of all Michigan students. We bridge the teacher shortage by guiding youth toward a teaching career path while still in high school. Through our commitment to activism and educator preparation, we equip students with the tools, skills, and passion to excel in education careers, making a profound impact on both their futures and the communities they serve.

SECTION C: SCHOLAR SERVICE AGREEMENT

MEMBER Service Agreement - READING SUPPORT SCOLAR



MEC Reading Support Scholars: 2024-25

PURPOSE

This agreement delineates the terms, conditions, and rules of membership for participation of the MEMBER as named in the Authorization & Certification section of this agreement (“MEMBER”) in the AmeriCorps program, Michigan Education Corps (“PROGRAM”), during the 2024-25 PROGRAM year.

Reasonable accommodations provided upon request. This document is available in alternative formats.

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Position Description

POSITION TITLE	Reading Support Scholar
REPORTS TO	RSS Program Staff and RSS Supervisor (CTE Educator)

POSITION SUMMARY

The Reading Support Scholar (RSS member), while attending an Educator Prep CTE program (or equivalent), is placed by CTE or high school staff (RSS Supervisor) at one elementary school to provide supplemental reading practice to children in kindergarten through third grade during scheduled work-based learning time. The RSS member will use scripted, evidence-based literacy strategies as guided by their MEC Program staff and will conduct assessments to ensure each student is on track to read at grade level. This is an AmeriCorps service position with the AmeriCorps program, Michigan Education Corps Reading Support Scholars.

Essential Functions

Supplemental Reading Practice and Assessments

- Conduct one-on-one reading practice sessions with students using scripted, evidence-based literacy interventions provided by Reading Corps.
- With the support of RSS Program Staff, achieve a high degree of fidelity to the scripted interventions.
- Assist children in improving their reading skills and abilities to reach grade level expectations.
- While at the assigned work-based learning placement school, conduct 20-minute reading practice sessions using prescribed literacy strategies with a caseload of students determined by RSS Program Staff and RSS Supervisor.
- Assess, with a high level of accuracy, students' continual progress using tri-annual benchmark assessments and ongoing progress monitoring assessments.
- Identify students based on a Reading Corps designed assessment with direction from RSS Program Staff and RSS Supervisor.
- Provide complete, accurate, and timely documentation of students' weekly progress using an online database; maintain confidentiality of all student data.
- Regularly review student data with RSS Program Staff and RSS Supervisor to gauge the effectiveness of the supplemental reading strategies being used and determine if a change in strategy is necessary.
- Participate in regular coaching sessions with RSS Program Staff during CTE and work-based learning time.

Communication

- Communicate and interact with students in an age and developmentally appropriate way.
- Communicate regularly and effectively with RSS Program Staff, RSS Supervisor, and placement site staff.

Attendance

- Regular, timely attendance and adherence to hours as scheduled.

SECTION D: SCHOLAR BENEFITS

- Commit to service for a full-service term, serving the total commitment of hours within the term.
- Attend all required RSS training sessions, meetings, and coaching sessions (completed during school hours).

SECONDARY FUNCTIONS

- Be an ambassador of the program by submitting Great Stories as requested and participating in outreach activities as applicable.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Must be 17+ years of age or older by your start date.
- Must agree to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent prior to using the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.
- Must have signed parent waiver form completed by your start date if not 18 years of age.
- Must be either a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States.
- Must pass mandatory National Service Criminal History Checks if 18+ by your start date.
- Must not have served four or more prior terms of service with AmeriCorps State or National.
- Must speak, read, and write English fluently.
- Must have basic computer skills, including the ability to navigate online systems and email.

Michigan Education Corps will not discriminate for or against any AmeriCorps service member or applicant based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status regarding public assistance, familial status, disability, sexual orientation, age, or any other category protected by law.

Reasonable accommodations provided upon request. This document is available in alternative formats.

Code of Conduct

MEMBERS are expected to serve under the terms and expectations outlined below. Failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct will result in one-on-one coaching conversations in partnership with RSS Supervisor and RSS Program Staff.

Attendance

- Arrive and depart from the service site on time every day following a set schedule and an established sign-in/sign-out procedure and CTE (or equivalent) class schedule.
- With RSS Supervisor, establish and follow a protocol to notify RSS Supervisor if MEMBER will be late or absent.
- Receive approval from RSS Supervisor for scheduled absences.
- Notify RSS Program Staff of a scheduled or unscheduled absence of longer than three (3) days.
- Attend each scheduled coaching session or meeting with RSS Program Staff or RSS Supervisor during school hours.
- Arrive on time to and stay for the duration of each required training session during school hours.
- Provide timely notification to RSS Supervisor and RSS Program Staff if unable to attend a scheduled training session and be prepared to reschedule or otherwise make-up the training requirement.
- Make regular and adequate progress toward the minimum total service hour commitment required by the Term of Service.

Note: The RSS Program reserves the right to withhold payment of the living allowance if a MEMBER does not report to their placement site and/or CTE program (or equivalent) for three (3) consecutive days without notifying RSS Program Staff.

Performance

- Perform satisfactorily the essential functions as described in the position description.
- Submit time sheets for approval by the applicable deadlines.
- Submit student data online once per week.
- Adhere to policies, procedures, and code of conduct of the service site including but not limited to child confidentiality, internet policies, late arrival or absences, and classroom behavior.
- An End-of-Term Evaluation will be conducted on each MEMBER by RSS Program Staff as required by CNCS.

Confidentiality

- Treat any knowledge of or information about students sensitively and confidentially.
- Store confidential student data in a secure on-site location. Student data (including data from the Reading Corps data management system or tutor logs) may **NOT** be

removed from the service site unless instructed by RSS Program Staff to bring to a training session.

- Discuss student data only with a RSS Program Staff, RSS Supervisor, placement classroom teacher, or other school employee working directly with the student.

Dress Code

A MEMBER should adhere to the service site's dress code and must be attired in official RSS Program gear:

- during any public events,
- during site visits by representatives of government, the media, RSS Program funders or potential funders, or other leadership (such as district leadership),
- and in publicity photographs and/or videos, news broadcasts, and articles regarding the RSS Program, AmeriCorps, or Michigan Education Corps.
- MEMBERS should **NOT** wear the AmeriCorps logo while engaging in prohibited activities while on personal time (see Prohibited Activities Section).

As the RSS Program builds awareness about the critical service that MEMBERS provide by their participation, MEMBERS should wear RSS Program gear at least three times per week, and more frequently if possible. MEMBERS must wear the AmeriCorps logo daily (e.g., on their lanyard).

Professionalism

MEMBERS are representatives of their school/site, their community, the RSS Program, and AmeriCorps during their term of service and are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. In the context of an AmeriCorps service term, we define professionalism in the following ways:

- communicating professionally with RSS Program and service site staff,
- checking e-mail daily and responding to email communication in a timely manner (1-3 business days),
- limiting cell phone use to break-time both at the service site and during training sessions (Emergency situations should be communicated to RSS Program and RSS Supervisor as soon as possible),
- being respectful, engaged, and responsive as a training participant,
- engaging in coaching sessions by positively and readily implementing coaching feedback to increase fidelity and service success,
- ensure RSS Program property is inventoried and retained in good condition before the close of the service term,
- and return all site property that may be issued to MEMBER, following site procedures and deadlines.

Code of Conduct applies to anytime a MEMBER is serving hours as an AmeriCorps member including independent service hours on or off site.

Internet Usage

- MEMBER internet activity must remain professional during their term of service and should adhere to the internet policy of their placement site.
- While posting to social media or other websites on behalf of PROGRAM, members should not engage in Prohibited Activities as defined in this Member Service Agreement and 45 CFR §2520.65.
- MEMBERS should set any social networking accounts to *private* (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google +) and should not add or communicate with students or parents/guardians via social networks.
- MEMBERS are prohibited from the following:
 - chatting with students or parents/guardians of students online,
 - posting inappropriate pictures of themselves on the internet (e.g., pictures involving alcohol consumption and/or intoxication, sexually provocative photographs) while representing the RSS Program,
 - posting pictures or videos of students on the internet,
 - posting blog entries communicating online about students or their parents/guardians,
 - forwarding non-service-related or offensive emails to anyone within the RSS Program or service site network (e.g., political, or religious emails),
 - on social media, expressing personal views as if they are the views of the RSS Program or the placement site,
 - on social media, disparaging the RSS Program, the service site, AmeriCorps, or any of their employees or representatives while representing the RSS Program,
 - on social media, using any RSS Program or AmeriCorps copyrighted materials or trademarked images unless specifically authorized in advance.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

Michigan Education Corps' approach to performance management demonstrates our organizational commitment to:

- Provide growth, fulfillment, and life-changing service experiences for MEMBERS, and
- Implement evidence-based programs to make a measurable impact on outcomes for service recipients.

Performance management and performance improvement are a normal and expected component of the service experience. The RSS Program has structures in place to ensure MEMBERS can effectively fulfill the essential functions of the position with a reasonable level of support. Specifically:

- MEMBERS are expected to follow the RSS Program Code of Conduct and adhere to the policies of both the RSS Program and the placement site. MEMBERS are expected to satisfactorily complete the duties outlined in their position description. Failure to fulfill these expectations, with or without reasonable accommodations, may result in one-on-one coaching conversations in partnership with the RSS Supervisor and RSS Program Staff.

- When RSS Program Staff become aware of a member performance concern, depending on its severity, they will take the following actions:
 - Gather and document specific, objective information about the performance concern from the involved parties (CTE Educator/RSS Supervisor, CTE Administrator, and/or RSS program partners).
 - RSS Supervisor and/or RSS Program Staff communicates directly with the MEMBER about the concern as it relates to their Code of Conduct and position description.
 - Determine if there is an underlying cause of the issue and work with relevant parties to create an action plan, which could include:
 - Providing customized or tailored support (as part of this process, MEMBER could request a formal accommodation),
 - Creating a performance improvement plan,
 - Addressing conflict between MEMBER, site staff, and/or RSS Program,
 - Taking formal disciplinary action as determined by school district policy.
- Depending upon the circumstances, disciplinary action may take any or all the following forms, even on a first infraction, at the sole discretion of RSS Program Staff:
 - Oral or written reprimand.
 - Corrective action plan or probation based on written notice.
 - Involuntary suspension of service.
 - Early exit from service for cause. Benefits will cease on the exit date and the MEMBER will not be eligible for any portion of the education award.
 - Throughout the service term, documentation will be kept in the MEMBER'S file for any observed performance concerns and the action taken to address such concerns.

EXIT FROM SERVICE

MEMBERS will be exited from service in one of three ways: successful completion, exit for compelling personal circumstances, or exit for cause.

Successful Completion: A MEMBER will exit successfully and, if eligible, receive the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award if the following requirements are completed within one calendar year of the MEMBER'S enrollment date: (1) minimum service hours, (2) PROGRAM requirements, and (3) end-of-service tasks.

- (1) **Minimum Service Hours:** MEMBERS must serve the minimum total number of service hours required by the Term of Service. A MEMBER must complete, submit, and obtain approval for every time sheet between enrollment and exit date on time to receive a living allowance. Only hours that are approved and completed between a MEMBER'S enrollment and exit date will be counted towards total service hours.
- (2) **RSS Program Requirements:** A MEMBER must fulfill all essential functions of the position and compete the training provided as required by 45 CFR §2522.940(e).
- (3) **End-of-Service Tasks:** The MEMBER must complete and submit an online *Exit Form* in My AmeriCorps.

There is neither a penalty nor an additional incentive for MEMBERS to serve more than the minimum number of hours required by their term. With approval from the service site, a MEMBER may reduce the number of hours served each week once (1) they have met the minimum number of service hours required by the term, and (2) the site's academic year has ended. A MEMBER who has met the minimum number of service hours before the exit date but who wishes to remain enrolled in the program should continue to serve a regular and reasonable commitment of service hours even beyond the minimum number required.

If a MEMBER plans to complete service hours and RSS Program requirements prior to the expected service end date, the MEMBER may request an early successful exit. RSS Program Staff must receive and approve the request for it to be granted. If an exit on the date requested will prohibit the MEMBER from providing consistent services during the academic year, the RSS Supervisor also must approve the request for it to be granted. MEMBER benefits (including living allowance, if applicable) cease upon exit from the RSS Program, without a lump sum payout.

Exit for Compelling Personal Circumstances: The RSS Program may release a MEMBER upon determination that MEMBER is unable to complete the term of service because of compelling personal circumstances. A MEMBER who is released for compelling personal circumstances and who has completed at least 15% of the required service term will be eligible for a pro-rated education award.

NOTE: The MEMBER bears primary responsibility for demonstrating through documentation that compelling personal circumstances prevent completion of service. The RSS Program Staff must document the basis for exit under these terms to the satisfaction of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The RSS Program may **not** release a MEMBER for compelling personal circumstances without proper documentation.

Compelling personal circumstances include those beyond the MEMBER'S control, such as:

- A MEMBER'S documented disability or serious illness;
- Disability, serious illness, or death of a family member if this makes completion of service unreasonably difficult or impossible;
- Conditions attributable to the RSS Program or otherwise unforeseeable and beyond the MEMBER'S control that make completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible (e.g., natural disaster, strike, relocation of a spouse, the nonrenewal or premature closing of a project or RSS Program);
- Military service obligations; or
- Acceptance by a MEMBER of an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work.

Compelling personal circumstances **do not include** early exit:

- To enroll in an institute of higher education;
- To obtain employment, other than in moving from welfare to work; or
- Because of dissatisfaction with the RSS Program.

Exit for Cause: Exit under these terms includes any circumstance other than compelling personal circumstances or successful completion, such as:

- Failure to complete the minimum number of service hours and/or any other RSS Program requirement by the end of the RSS Program year, or
- The decision of the RSS Program to exit for cause in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure, or
- Violation of a policy that constitutes cause for immediate dismissal. In addition, a MEMBER convicted of a violent felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance during their term of service will be released for cause.

If released for cause, a MEMBER may **not** receive any portion of the education award or any other payment from the National Service Trust. The MEMBER will receive a final living allowance payment prorated to exit date. Furthermore, a MEMBER exited for cause must disclose this information in any subsequent application(s) to any AmeriCorps RSS Program. Failure to do so will disqualify the individual from receipt of an education award, regardless of whether s/he completes a subsequent term of service.

[Reference: 45 CFR §2522.230]

Unemployment Insurance

Pursuant to AmeriCorps Provisions, Section B.11.div. "The U.S. Department of Labor ruled on April 20, 1995 that federal unemployment compensation law does not require coverage for members because no employer-employee relationship exists." In the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, Congress included the following provision: "(B) RULE. A participant shall not be considered to be an employee of the RSS Program in which the participant is enrolled." 42 U.S.C. 12511(17)(B). Therefore, an AmeriCorps participant is not an employee of the RSS Program for purposes of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Please note in this section that "participant" refers to an AmeriCorps MEMBER.

SUSPENSION OF SERVICE

A MEMBER'S service may be temporarily suspended for the reasons listed below.

1. During the term of service, a MEMBER is charged with a violent felony or the sale/distribution of a controlled substance. It is the responsibility of the MEMBER to inform their RSS Program Staff within 48 hours of being charged or arrested on such charges. The MEMBER may be reinstated if found not guilty or if the charge is dismissed.
2. During the term of service if a MEMBER is convicted of a first offense for possession of a controlled substance, the MEMBER may resume service if they enroll in an approved drug rehabilitation program.
3. A MEMBER may be placed on suspension because of disciplinary actions.
4. A MEMBER may request or be placed on voluntary suspension as part of an approved extended absence.

During a period of suspension, MEMBERS will not receive the living allowance and cannot accrue service hours, and may be subject to limitations on other benefits, per RSS Program policy.

- MEMBERS will receive neither back-pay of the living allowance or credit for service

hours 'missed'. If a MEMBER goes on suspension or returns to service from suspension partway through a pay period, the living allowance for that pay period will be prorated accordingly, unless the suspension both begins at least one day after the start of a pay period and ends at least one day prior to the end of that same pay period, in which case usual conditions for payment apply.

- MEMBERS who elected RSS Program health insurance will continue to receive coverage until the last day of the month in which their suspension started. Health insurance coverage will be reinstated on the date that the MEMBER returns to service.
- MEMBERS receiving benefits through the AmeriCorps Childcare Assistance Program will not be eligible for reimbursement for any care provided during the suspension period.

MEMBERS will not receive the living allowance and cannot accrue service hours during a period of suspension, and may be subject to limitations on other benefits, per RSS Program policy. MEMBERS will receive neither back-pay of the living allowance or credit for service hours 'missed'.

Note: RSS Program policy is to extend the benefits of the Family and Medical Leave provisions to all MEMBERS, regardless of the eligibility stipulations outlined by statute. The normal mechanism for an approved leave is a suspension of service. MEMBERS requesting this unpaid leave are asked to notify RSS Program Staff three weeks in advance or as soon as the need for the leave is known. A medical practitioner's statement may be required.

Reasons may include:

- a. The birth of a child to a MEMBER;
- b. The placement of a child with a MEMBER for adoption or foster care;
- c. The serious illness of a MEMBER's spouse, child or parent; or
- d. A MEMBER's serious health condition that makes that MEMBER unable to perform his or her essential service duties (a serious health condition is an illness or condition that requires either inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider).

[Reference: 45 CFR §2540.220]

After determining that compelling personal circumstances exist, the RSS Program may suspend the participant's term of service for up to two years (or longer if approved by the Corporation based on extenuating circumstances) to allow the AmeriCorps MEMBER to complete service.

[Reference: 45 CFR §2522.230]

PROGRAM POLICIES

Background Checks

For RSS members 18+ by the start of service, the RSS Program will conduct all required components of the National Service Criminal History Check, including NSOPW, FBI fingerprint, and statewide repository. Service as a MEMBER is contingent upon successful completion and clearance of these mandated background checks. Full background check results cannot be shared with sites without written permission from the applicant. Sites are free to conduct a background check at their own expense, as required by their internal policy. Sites may not require MEMBERS to pay for service-site required background checks.

Background Check Release

Full background check results cannot be shared with sites without written permission from the applicant. Sites are free to conduct a background check at their own expense, as required by their internal policy. Sites may not require MEMBERS to pay for service-site required background checks.

Pre-Enrollment Conditions

All Pre-Enrollment Conditions must be met prior to a MEMBER's start date. MEMBERS are unable to count hours or start service at site until the following conditions are met:

- Complete MyAmeriCorps Enrollment Invitation
- Complete Parent Waiver form (under 18)
- Receive Citizenship and Social Security Number Verification by the Social Security Administration
 - If not automatically verified, the MEMBER will need to submit Social Security card and proof of citizenship for manual review by the MyAmeriCorps Hotline
- Complete background checks to be certified as cleared in MyAmeriCorps Portal by RSS Program (18+)

Individuals with Disabilities

The RSS Program supports and complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to protect qualified applicants and AmeriCorps MEMBERS with disabilities from discrimination. An individual is considered to have a disability if a MEMBER has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment. A qualified individual is one who meets the requirements of the position and who can perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation.

The RSS Program will provide reasonable accommodation unless it creates undue hardship to the RSS Program. Applicants or AmeriCorps MEMBERS who may require reasonable accommodation should contact PROGRAM Staff for further information. The RSS Program reserves the right to request medical documentation of the disability and the required modifications.

Publicity Release

“Identifying information” (information that can be used to identify a particular RSS Program MEMBER or alumnus: name, photograph, likeness, or statements attributed to a specific RSS Program MEMBER) may be used in newspapers, television, publications, radio, and in any other print, electronic, or web-based publicity materials. The following policy defines the guidelines for using identifying information.

The RSS Program will obtain written approval from MEMBERS or alumni before using identifying information or attributed statements, except approval is presumed for statements entered into the Great Stories section of OnCorps. If the RSS Program MEMBER is under 18 years of age at time of publication, written consent of the parent or legal guardian will also be secured. RSS Program MEMBER and alumnus statements or quotations that are provided anonymously and/or published anonymously do not need to be approved by the RSS Program MEMBER/alumnus. The MEMBER must select on the Authorization and Certification page whether or not they grant permission to use identifying information under the terms of this policy.

Note: Identifying information such as your name and email address will be shared with appropriate personnel at your service site as needed to ensure your ability to complete the essential functions of your position at the site.

Sick & Holiday Leave

MEMBERS are not granted sick or holiday leave. They may follow the holiday and break schedule of the service site and take time off when school is not in session. However, it is the responsibility of each MEMBER to ensure completion of a sufficient number of service hours each week to meet the minimum numbers of hours required by the service term. A MEMBER must inform their RSS Program Staff and RSS Supervisor if they plan to be absent for all planned and unplanned absences.

Voting Leave

MEMBERS (18+) are encouraged to register and vote. MEMBERS who are unable to vote before or after service hours are allowed to do so during their service time without incurring any penalty. The RSS Supervisor may determine the appropriate length of absence. A MEMBER is **not** able to count time spent voting towards his or her service hours.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Living Allowance

MEMBERS receive a bi-weekly living allowance for the pay periods in which they serve and for which they have submitted and approved time sheets, up until the MEMBER'S official exit date or until the maximum gross living allowance has been paid, whichever comes sooner. The amount of the bi-weekly living allowance does not fluctuate based on the number of hours served in a pay period, except where otherwise noted. The living allowance is taxable income; therefore, applicable taxes will be withheld. The RSS Program reserves the right to withhold payment of the living allowance if a MEMBER fails to submit

or gain approval of a time sheet or fails to report to their service site for three (3) consecutive days without notifying RSS Program Staff. Time sheets must have hours served and recorded within the pay period for a MEMBER to receive the living allowance.

Time sheets must be submitted and approved by the stated deadline for each time sheet period for a MEMBER to receive his or her living stipend on time. MEMBERS with time sheets that have not been both submitted and approved by the stated deadline will be placed on payroll leave. Individuals on payroll leave will not receive the living allowance until the next standard pay period in which all previous and current time sheets have been submitted and approved.

Note: The RSS Program may choose, at its discretion, not to formally enroll as an AmeriCorps Member someone who withdraws from the RSS Program. In such an instance, the RSS Program will not owe the MEMBER any of the benefits outlined in this agreement, such as the living allowance, and the MEMBER's time with the RSS Program does not count as a term of AmeriCorps service.

Living Allowance Waiver

A MEMBER may waive all or part of the receipt of a living allowance. The MEMBER may revoke this waiver at any time during the MEMBER'S term of service. If the MEMBER revokes the living allowance waiver, the MEMBER may begin receiving their living allowance prospective from the date of the revocation; a MEMBER may not receive any portion of the living allowance that may have accrued during the waiver period.

[Reference: 45 CFR §2522.240 (b) (5)]

National Service Loan Forbearance & Interest Payment

MEMBERS are eligible for national service loan forbearance for most federally backed (Title IV) student loans. It is the responsibility of the MEMBER to request forbearance via My AmeriCorps. If a MEMBER places a student loan in national service loan forbearance, and successfully completes the term of service, the National Service Trust will repay a portion or all the interest that accrued on the loan during the term of service.

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

Upon successful completion of the term of service and all RSS Program requirements, MEMBERS are eligible to receive the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award up to the maximum amount being offered for the term of service in which enrolled. MEMBERS can use the education award to pay educational expenses at qualified institutions of higher education, for educational training, or to repay qualified student loans. MEMBERS who are 55 years or older by their enrollment date are eligible to transfer their award to an eligible child, grandchild, or foster child.

Accident & Injury Insurance Coverage/Workers' Compensation Insurance Benefits

Insurance for service-related injuries or accidents is provided to MEMBERS at no cost. This benefit may cover service-related injury sustained during the RSS Program year that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment for up to 52 weeks.

MEMBERS who sustain service-related injuries must inform RSS Program Staff within 24 hours and complete all requested documentation. All injuries, no matter how minor, must be reported immediately to determine benefit eligibility in a timely manner.

Michigan Education Corps reserve the right to change their comprehensive insurance coverage at any time, subject to legal requirements, if any.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & CIVIL RIGHTS POLICY

RSS Program policy is to provide equal opportunity for all. The RSS Program will not discriminate for or against any AmeriCorps MEMBER or applicant based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, and status regarding public assistance, familial status, disability, sexual orientation, age, or any other category protected by law.

Michigan Education Corps values the diversity of our staff, members, site partners, and students we serve. We value both the visible and invisible diversity present within our program. Michigan Education Corps believes that we all must strive to create and nurture an environment that demands, engages, celebrates, and cultivates diversity. By agreeing to be a MEMBER with Michigan Education Corps you are committing to join our program in this continuous process to cultivate an environment that is inclusive and respectful to those from all backgrounds and experiences.

Every AmeriCorps MEMBER, applicant, volunteer, professional associate, and RSS Program participant is entitled to a workplace free of discrimination, harassment, or offensive behavior. Whether in RSS Program offices, in other work or service-related settings such as service sites, training sessions, or work or social-related events, discrimination is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Service sites are expected to adhere to the same standards. MEMBERS with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in their service site are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their RSS Supervisor and/or RSS Program Staff. Discrimination on the part of fellow RSS Program MEMBERS also will not be tolerated. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful or harassing discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including exit for cause.

Filing a Complaint of Discrimination

It is unlawful to retaliate against any person or organization that files a complaint of discrimination. In addition to filing a complaint with local and state agencies that are responsible for resolving discrimination complaints, you may bring a complaint to the attention of the Corporation for National and Community Service. If you believe that you or others have been discriminated against, or if you want more information, contact:

Human Resources

Hope Network

795 36th Street SE

Grand Rapids, MI, 49548 *OR*

(616) 301-8000

Office of Civil Rights and Inclusiveness

Corporation for National and Community

Service

250 E Street, SW

Washington, D.C. 20525

(202) 606-7503 (voice); (800) 833-3722
(TTY)
eo@cns.gov (e-mail)

HARASSMENT AND OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY

Harassment and offensive behavior includes verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion towards an individual because of such considerations as race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability (including HIV/AIDS), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or familial status, military service, status with regard to public assistance, or any other status protected by law where such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's ability to serve. Note that these actions may be unacceptable even if they are not performed in the direct presence of the harassed party. Harassment may include but is not limited to: epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, threats, intimidation, hostile acts and denigrating or hostile written or graphic material posted at the service site.

Examples include:

- Threats or other forms of intimidation;
- Persistent intrusion or disturbance;
- Use of offensive or demeaning terms, remarks, jokes, gestures, or pictures;
- Spreading offensive or demeaning materials (pictures, cartoons, magazines, etc.);
- Accessing internet sites containing such materials;
- Unwelcome jeers or personal comments.

Included under the category of offensive behavior is sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is any deliberate, repeated, unwanted sexual behavior (e.g., comments, looks, suggestions, physical contact) that a reasonable person finds objectionable or offensive and/or that causes discomfort while serving. This may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

- Submission to or rejection of the conduct is or is threatened to be a condition of employment;
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used, or is threatened to be used, as the basis for employment decisions;
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's ability to serve or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Examples include:

- Any request or pressure to grant sexual favors;
- Use of offensive or demeaning sexual terms, remarks, jokes, gestures or pictures;
- Spreading offensive or demeaning materials of a sexual nature (e.g., pictures, cartoons, magazines);
- Accessing internet sites containing such materials;
- Objectionable physical proximity or physical conduct.

MEMBERS have the responsibility to immediately report all incidents of harassment or offensive behavior to RSS Program Staff, RSS Program Director, Executive Director, or

Human Resources Department. It is not sufficient to report a complaint to someone other than one of these designated individuals.

All reports of harassment or offensive behavior will be thoroughly investigated as quickly as administratively possible. The investigation may include, but will not be limited to, discussion with all parties involved including witnesses. Anyone found to have engaged in discrimination, harassment, or offensive behavior would be subject to disciplinary action up to and including exit for cause. The RSS Program prohibits retaliation against anyone for having raised a complaint of harassment or for cooperating with an investigation of such a complaint. Any MEMBER determined to have knowingly made false statements during an investigation will be subject to discipline up to and including exit for cause.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

Pursuant to the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the RSS Program is committed to maintaining a drug and alcohol-free environment. MEMBERS are prohibited from the illegal use, manufacture, sale, dispensation, distribution, or possession of illegal drugs, controlled substances, narcotics, or alcoholic beverages on RSS Program premises, service sites, or while traveling in an official capacity. Service is conditioned upon compliance with this policy. The RSS Program requires that each MEMBER engaged in the performance of a federal grant shall, as a condition of service under the grant, abide by the terms of this policy and shall notify RSS Program Staff writing of any criminal drug charge, arrest or conviction occurring during service no later than five (5) days after such charge, arrest or conviction. Upon receiving notice or otherwise learning about the charge, arrest, or conviction the RSS Program will notify the appropriate Federal-contracting agency within ten (10) days.

Within 30 days of receiving such notice, the RSS Program will (1) take disciplinary action up to and including exit for cause consistent with CNCS rules regarding termination and suspension of service, or (2) require the MEMBER to satisfactorily participate in an approved drug treatment program. The RSS Program shall make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of this policy. Furthermore, MEMBERS should not wear the AmeriCorps logo or the RSS Program logo when consuming alcohol as a private citizen.

[Reference: 41 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.]

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

While engaging in service or training hours or otherwise performing activities supported by an AmeriCorps program or CNCS, MEMBERS, who serve as AmeriCorps MEMBERS, are prohibited from the following:

1. Attempting to influence legislation;
2. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
3. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
4. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
5. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;

6. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
7. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
8. Providing a direct benefit to—
 - a. A business organized for profit;
 - b. A labor union;
 - c. A partisan political organization;
 - d. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
 - e. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (7) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
11. Such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

AmeriCorps MEMBERS may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above.

Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non- CNCS funds.

Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

[Reference: 45 CFR §2520.65]

Fundraising

Michigan Education Corps AmeriCorps MEMBERS are not permitted to engage in fundraising activities while accruing service hours. CNCS guidelines for other AmeriCorps programs are as follows:

The MEMBER must abide by the regulations governing fundraising activities during the term of service. The full text of the regulations follows. The MEMBER should direct questions of clarification regarding what constitutes support of your program's service activities to RSS Program Staff. Not all examples listed in the regulation may be applicable. Under what circumstances may AmeriCorps MEMBERS in my program raise resources?

1. AmeriCorps MEMBERS may raise resources directly in support of your PROGRAM'S service activities. Examples of fundraising activities AmeriCorps members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a PROGRAM in which volunteers teach children to read;
 - b. Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers;
 - c. Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals;
 - d. Securing financial resources from the community to assist in launching or expanding a PROGRAM that provides social services to the MEMBERS of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the MEMBERS of a community-based organization;
 - e. Seeking donations from alumni of the PROGRAM for specific service projects being performed by current MEMBERS.
2. AmeriCorps MEMBERS may not:
 - a. Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment;
 - b. Write a grant application to the Corporation or to any other Federal agency.

[Reference: 45 CFR §2520.40]

How much time may an AmeriCorps MEMBER spend fundraising?

An AmeriCorps MEMBER may spend no more than ten percent of his or her originally agreed-upon term of service, as reflected in the member enrollment in the National Service Trust, performing fundraising activities, as described in §2520.40.

[Reference: 45 CFR §2520.45]

Nonduplication

Corporation assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a PROGRAM. And, unless the requirements of [the non-displacement clarifications below] of this section are met, Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.

[Reference: 45 CFR §2540.100(e)]

Nondisplacement

1. An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, because of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
2. An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a PROGRAM receiving Corporation assistance.
3. A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
4. A participant in a PROGRAM receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
5. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that—

- a. Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
 - b. Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
6. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any—
- a. Presently employed worker;
 - b. Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
 - c. Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
 - d. Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
 - e. Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

[Reference: 45 CFR §2540.100(f)]

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Purpose: The purpose of this process is to resolve disputes involving PROGRAM MEMBERS, labor unions, and any other interested individuals, such as AmeriCorps MEMBER applicants, which are otherwise at an impasse in a fair and expeditious manner. In general, disputes must pertain to service-related issues such as a proposed service assignment or evaluation, or a PROGRAM MEMBER'S suspension or dismissal. An applicant may also initiate this procedure to protest the reason s/he was not selected as an AmeriCorps MEMBER; or a labor union's claim that a PROGRAM MEMBER is displacing union members.

In accordance with [42 U.S.C. 12636](#) and [45 C.F.R. 2540.230](#), state and local applicants that receive assistance from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) must establish and maintain a procedure for the filing and adjudication of grievances from participants, labor organizations, and other interested individuals concerning programs that receive assistance from the Corporation.

The Member understands that the Program has a grievance procedure to resolve disputes between the Member and the Program regarding service-related issues, such as assignments, evaluations, suspension or release for cause. Any grievance concerning fraud or criminal activity must be immediately directed to the Michigan Community Service Commission.

In general, aggrieved parties are encouraged to document their specific concerns and requested remedies in writing to Hope Network's Michigan Education Corps whenever seeking relief in a matter of concern or dissatisfaction relating to any AmeriCorps program issues, such as assignments, evaluations, suspension, or release of cause.

For AmeriCorps Michigan programs operating under the MCSC, the following grievance procedure should be followed when handling such grievances:

STEP 1: PRELIMINARY COMPLAINT RESOLUTION (PCR)

As a preliminary first step, an aggrieved party should, if at all possible, address the concern directly with the AmeriCorps program in question, either through an immediate supervisor (if the aggrieved party is an AmeriCorps member) or with the program director or similar program authority (if aggrieved party is not an AmeriCorps member or if the direct supervisor is involved in the concern). Together, the program representative and the aggrieved party should first attempt to resolve the complaint through informal discussion and negotiation in alignment with the AmeriCorps program's standard written policies for resolving complaints and concerns.

TIMELINE

Immediate (as soon as possible and ideally within 30 days of the occurrence to allow the issue to proceed, if necessary, to ADR before the deadline for an aggrieved party to seek such resolution within 45 days of the alleged occurrence).

STEP 2: ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR)

If resolution is not achieved through Step 1 (Preliminary Complaint Resolution), the aggrieved party may then seek resolution through Alternative Dispute Resolution, which requires facilitated mediation and negotiation. Step 2 is not required, but the recommended next step to resolve the concern. Either party may request in writing to begin the process. ADR mediation proceedings must be aided by a neutral party who, with respect to an issue in controversy, functions specifically to aid the parties in resolving the matter through a mutually achieved and acceptable written agreement. The neutral party will be appointed by the Michigan Education Corps Program. The neutral party may not compel a resolution, and the proceedings are informal where the rules of evidence do not apply. ***At the initial session of dispute resolution proceedings, the aggrieved party must be advised in writing of the right to file a grievance and the right to arbitration.*** If the matter is resolved, the terms of the resolution are recorded in a written agreement, and the party agrees to forego filing any further grievance on the matter under consideration. With the exception of a written agreement, the proceedings are confidential. Should there be a cost for the dispute resolution in step 2, the cost will be divided evenly between the parties.

Timeline

ADR must be initiated within 45 days of the alleged occurrence. If matter is not resolved within 30 calendar days from the date the informal dispute resolution process began, the aggrieved party must be informed in writing of the right to file a formal grievance.

STEP 3: FORMAL GRIEVANCE FILING AND HEARING

If the parties engaged in Step 2 (ARD) and the matter is not resolved within 30 calendar days from the date that the Alternative Dispute Resolution process began, the program must again inform the aggrieving party in writing of the right to file a grievance and the right to arbitration.

To file a formal grievance, the member must submit the grievance to the Program Director in writing or through the program's Grievance Form. In the event an aggrieved party files a grievance, ***the neutral party from ADR may not participate in the formal complaint***

process. Therefore, the program will appoint a different neutral party to oversee the Grievance Hearing process. The neutral party will be selected by the Program.

Consultation from the MCSC for contact information of a mediation center is allowed. The member must consent in writing to the selected neutral party. Once a formal grievance is filed, the program will arrange any pre-hearing and hearing meetings.

Pre-hearing Procedures

Pre-hearing conferences are not a substitute for a hearing, but are intended to facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution of the matter to make a hearing unnecessary or to narrow the issues to be decided at the hearing. The format of the pre-hearing conference may be flexible, involving meetings with one party at a time and/or with both parties together.

Hearing Procedures

In the event that the pre-hearing conferences do not fully resolve the dispute, the neutral party will conduct the hearing. A written decision on the grievance must be made no later than 60 calendar days after the filing of the dispute.

Any decision by the neutral party is advisory and is not binding unless both parties agree. Should there be a cost for the dispute resolution in step 3, the cost will be divided evenly between the parties.

TIMELINE

Grievance must be filed no later than one year after the alleged occurrence (except for fraud and criminal activity). The grievance hearing must be conducted no later 30 calendar days after the filing. A decision is made no later than 60 calendar days after the filing.

STEP 4: BINDING ARBITRATION

The final step, Binding Arbitration, is available to the affected party only if a grievance hearing decision is adverse or if no decision is made within 60 days of the filing of the initial grievance. A qualified arbitrator will be used who is jointly selected and independent of the interested parties. The Corporation's CEO will appoint an arbitrator if the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator within 15 calendar days after receiving a request from either party. In addition, no communication or proceedings of the informal dispute resolution process may be referred to or introduced into evidence at the grievance and arbitration hearing. The cost of arbitration is divided evenly between the parties to the arbitration. If the participant, labor organization, or other interested individual prevails during arbitration, then the AmeriCorps sub-grantee pays the total cost of the proceeding and the attorney's fees of the prevailing party.

TIMELINE

A request for arbitration must be filed no later than 90 days after the hearing decision. If no hearing decision is made within 60 days of the filing of the initial grievance then a request for arbitration must be filed within 150 days of the filing of the initial grievance. An arbitration proceeding must be held no later than 45 calendar days after the arbitrator's appointment, or no later than 30 calendar days after the arbitration commences. A decision must be made by the arbitrator no later than 30 days after the arbitration commences.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- If the grievance is regarding a proposed participant placement, the placement is not to be made unless it is consistent with the resolution of the grievance.
- In addition to raising discrimination complaints through the grievance procedure explained below, any person who believes discrimination has occurred may file a discrimination complaint with AMERICORPS 's Equal Opportunity Office. No one may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against an individual to interfere with a right or privilege secured by the civil rights acts or because the person made a complaint, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing. AMERICORPS will keep the identity of complainants and witnesses confidential except as necessary to conduct an investigation.

SECTION D: SCHOLAR BENEFITS

LIVING ALLOWANCE

A benefit of service with AmeriCorps is the living allowance. SCHOLARS receive a living allowance for the time in which they are actively serving. Please refer to the SCHOLAR Service Agreement to read the policies about the living allowance, including distribution and when a payment may be withheld. The living allowance and time sheet schedule are in the Appendix of this manual.

Living Allowance FAQs

Q: What are the implications of listing a current address vs. another address (for example, a parent or friend) with the program?

A: Reimbursement checks, living allowances (if not directly deposited), and W-2s are sent to the most recent address on file. Always give your current address.

Q: Why should I update my address?

A: An incorrect address may cause a significant delay in receiving your living allowance, W-2, or reimbursement check. A change of address form filed with the post office is time sensitive and will expire. Changing your address with the PROGRAM ensures timely delivery of all financial documents.

Q: Who do I contact to change my address?

A: SCHOLARS can contact their assigned RSS PROGRAM Staff.

Q: What are the advantages of enrolling in direct deposit?

A: Direct deposit is faster, safer, and more convenient than paper checks, as the living allowance is deposited into the bank directly. In most cases, the check is deposited on the check date and funds can be accessed immediately, however, this is dependent on the bank. Direct deposit also eliminates the risk of lost or stolen checks since funds go directly into your bank account.

Q: Who do I contact to enroll or change my direct deposit information?

A: SCHOLARS can contact their assigned RSS PROGRAM Staff.

Q: How does the number of allowances claimed on W-4 affect my living allowance?

A: The allowances on the W-4 impact yearly tax obligations. More allowances claimed will result in less taxes withheld from the living allowance. To ensure you have the proper amount of federal tax withheld, please utilize this IRS website: www.irs.gov/Individuals/IRS-Withholding-Calculator. This calculator will help you determine how much federal tax needs to be deducted from your living allowance. The calculator takes into consideration other factors such as additional household income, previous filings, deductions, etc. You can also consult your tax adviser.

Q: How do I change the number of allowances on my W-4?

A: SCHOLARS can contact their assigned RSS PROGRAM Staff.

Q: How do I access my pay stubs and tax information?

A: SCHOLARS can contact their assigned RSS PROGRAM Staff.

Q: When will I receive my year-end tax document?

A: The W-2 form is used to report the living allowance amount paid to SCHOLARS and the taxes withheld from the living allowance on a calendar year basis. This information is reported to the IRS for annual income tax reporting purposes. A W-2 form will be postmarked to all Scholars by January 31.

ADDITIONAL TERMS OF SERVICE

SCHOLARS may be eligible to serve additional terms of service with the PROGRAM. The Scholar must re-apply to the PROGRAM. Eligibility for an additional term of service does not guarantee selection. Currently, the maximum number of terms that an individual can serve in AmeriCorps State and National programs is four (4) terms.

STUDENT LOAN FORBEARANCE AND REPAYMENT

National Service Loan Forbearance and Interest Repayment

National Service Loan Forbearance and Interest Repayment is a benefit of service with AmeriCorps. During their term of service SCHOLARS may be eligible to temporarily postpone the repayment of their qualified student loans through an action called loan forbearance. The national service legislation defines qualified student loan as a loan backed by the federal government under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (except PLUS Loans to parents of students) or under Titles VII or VIII of the Public Health Service Act. While your loan is in forbearance during your term of service, interest continues to accrue. However, if you successfully complete your term of service, the National Service Trust will pay all or a portion of the interest that accrued on your qualified student loans during your service period.

You can request that your loan lender approve forbearance for your qualified student loans during your service period. You can easily and quickly request the forbearance online through your My AmeriCorps Portal <https://my.americorps.gov>. After you finish your term of service, you will be responsible for repaying your loan according to the terms of the loan.

Eligibility for Forbearance

AmeriCorps cannot approve or disapprove forbearance requests; it can only verify that you are in an approved national service position. Only the loan holder can determine your loan's eligibility and approve a request for forbearance. If your loan is in default, it may not be eligible for forbearance.

How to Apply for Forbearance

After your RSS PROGRAM Staff has officially enrolled you in AmeriCorps, you can go into your account in My AmeriCorps <https://my.americorps.gov>. On your home page, click on the "Create Forbearance" link at the top of the page to bring up the page to request forbearance. Follow the instructions. You will select your current term of service and

identify the company that holds your student loan (listed as Institution Name). When you click on “submit,” a request will be sent electronically to your loan company. This request will verify your involvement in AmeriCorps and request that your qualified loans be put in forbearance during your service period.

Your loan holder will notify you when they have acted upon your request. You should contact your loan holder if you have not heard from them within four weeks of submitting your information online.

If the loan company has not registered in My AmeriCorps, they will not be on the list of institutions in the system. In this case, you should click on the institution “Not Found” link and follow the directions.

Interest Repayment

After you successfully complete your term of service, the National Service Trust will pay the interest that accumulated on your eligible loans while you were in service. Your loan balance returns to its pre-service level.

Individuals who have successfully completed a term of service are eligible to have the National Service Trust pay as much as 100% of the interest that accrued on their qualified student loan during their service. The portion that the National Service Trust will pay is determined by the type of service (slot type as noted on your Member Service Agreement) and the length of your service period.

The National Service Trust will not pay interest if you fail to complete your term of service. Exceptions will be made only if you fail to complete your term of service for compelling personal circumstances and you have earned a pro-rated Award. An interest payment can only be made after you have completed your service and have earned an Award.

Interest payments are in addition to your Education Award; they are not deducted from your Education Award amount. Interest payments are based upon the interest that accrued only during the time you were serving in the AmeriCorps PROGRAM.

How to Apply an Interest Payment

After you have completed your service and received notification of your Award, you can go into your account in MyAmeriCorps. On your home page, click on the “Create Interest Accrual” link at the top of the page to bring up the page to request the payment. Follow the instructions. You will select the appropriate term of service and type of loan and identify the holder of your student loan. When you click on “submit,” a notice will be sent electronically to your loan company. A record of your request will appear in your account home page.

This notice will verify your involvement in national service and request that the loan holder provide AmeriCorps with the amount of interest that accrued between your start

date and end date of your service period. The loan company will provide additional information, then certify and submit the information electronically to AmeriCorps.

When the interest payment has been made, it will show up in your MyAmeriCorps account. It should also show up in your account statement that the loan company provides to you.

If your loan company has not registered in MyAmeriCorps, they will not be on the list of institutions in the system. You should click on the institution “Not Found” link and follow the directions. These payment requests may need to be processed manually through paper forms and may take several weeks to complete.

Tax Implications

Interest paid on your loan is **taxable income** in the year the interest payment was made. The amount in taxes is substantially less than the amount of interest paid, but you are required to pay it.

Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program is intended to encourage individuals to enter and continue to work full time in public service jobs. Under this program, borrowers may qualify for forgiveness of the remaining balance of their Direct Loans after they have made 120 qualifying payments on those loans while employed full time by certain public service employers. Careers include teaching, social work, military service, disability assistance, emergency management, and AmeriCorps service. For additional information regarding PSLF, visit <https://studentaid.gov/pslf/>.

Income-Based Repayment (IBR)

The Income-Based Repayment (IBR) is another option that SCHOLARS should be aware of and may want to consider in planning for paying off student loans. If your outstanding federal student loan debt is higher than your annual income or if it represents a significant portion of your annual income, you may want to repay your federal student loans under an income-driven repayment plan. Income-driven repayment plans can help borrowers keep their loan payments affordable with payment caps based on their income and family size.

For additional information regarding IBR, visit <https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/repayment/plans/income-driven>.

SEGAL AMERICORPS EDUCATION AWARD

The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award (commonly referred to as the Education Award) is a post-service benefit received by participants who successfully complete a term of national service in an AmeriCorps PROGRAM. The award is named after Eli Segal, one of the pioneers of the national service movement and the first CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The Education Award comes from the National Service Trust, established by the National and Community Service Act of 1993.

Upon successful completion of the service, Scholars are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.

What is the maximum amount of an Education Award?

The maximum amount of a full-time Education Award is equivalent to the maximum amount of the US Department of Education’s Pell Grant for the year for which the national service position was approved; thus it can vary from year to year.

If you serve multiple terms of service, you can earn up to the value of two full time Awards.

For what purposes can the Education Award be used?

The Education Award can be used in one of, or a combination of, the following ways:

- to repay qualified student loans.
- to pay all or part of the current education expenses to attend eligible institutions of higher education (including certain vocational schools) and educational programs approved under the G.I. Bills.

Does the Education Award have to be used at all once?

No. You can divide up your award and use portions of it at different times, as long as it is for authorized expenditures within the specified period of seven years. You could, for example, apply a portion of it to existing qualified student loans, and save the remainder to pay for authorized college costs a few years down the road.

Which institutions are considered eligible institutions?

Eligible institutions are institutions of higher education (including graduate and professional programs), as well as qualified vocational schools that currently participate in the Department of Education’s Title IV student aid programs. An institution is considered to be a “Title IV school”, if it has a title IV Program Participation Agreement with the U.S. Department of Education making its students eligible for at least one of the federally backed types of financial assistance (such as Pell Grants, Perkins Loans, Stafford Loans, National Direct Loans, and Federal Consolidated Loans).

NOTE: To make sure that an institution is eligible, check with the Financial Aid Office, Business Office, or Veteran’s Affairs Office of the institution before making specific plans.

Legislation enacted in 2009 expanded the use of the Award to include enrolling in courses, programs of education, apprenticeships, and eight on-the-job training programs that have been approved under the Montgomery and the Post 9/11 G.I. Bills. These are referred to as “G.I. Bill approved programs.” If a G.I. approved programs is not offered by a Title IV educational institution, special rules apply.

Do any institutions match the Education Award?

Yes. Colleges and universities across the country actively recruit talented AmeriCorps alumni for their reputation of perseverance, drive, and proven active citizenship. Many of these institutions offer a variety of incentives such as service scholarships or matching tuition funding to the education award.

For a full list of colleges and universities that match the education award, visit: [Schools of National Service Search | AmeriCorps](#)

This list is updated when colleges submit matching award information to AmeriCorps. To make sure that an institution is still offering this incentive and to confirm the amount of the benefit, you must check with the Financial Aid Office, Business Office, or Veteran's Affairs Office of the institution before making specific plans.

What types of loans can the Education Award repay?

Most postsecondary loans backed by the federal government are qualified for repayment with a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award. This includes both subsidized and unsubsidized loans. Also, loans that are made by state agencies, including state colleges and universities are considered "qualified." Qualified loans include:

- Stafford Loans
- Perkins Loans
- William D. Ford Direct Loans
- Federal Consolidated Loans
- Supplemental Loans for Students
- Primary Care Loans
- Nursing Student Loans
- Health Education Assistance Loans
- Loans issued to AmeriCorps SCHOLARS by state agencies, including state institutions of higher education

What expenses are "current educational expenses?"

Education expenses are considered "current" if they were incurred on or after the date the individual began their term of AmeriCorps service. Eligible educational expenses are based on:

- The Cost of Attendance (COA) for a degree or certificate-granting program at a Title IV school
- Educational expenses for non-degree courses, such as continuing education courses offered by Title IV schools
- Educational expenses for enrollment in G.I. Bill approved courses or programs

Each Title IV school's financial aid office can determine a student's COA based upon standard U.S. Department of Education guidance. The COA may include tuition, books and supplies, transportation, room and board, and other expenses. For non-degree educational courses at Title IV schools, the appropriate administrative office that oversees the course—for example a Business Office for Continuing Education—can determine the expenses necessary for the course. Normally it includes tuition, books, and supplies. For eligible individuals who are enrolled in G.I. Bill approved courses/programs, the school's approved Certifying Official for VA courses determines the expenses based upon criteria developed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

How do I access it?

After the successful completion of your term of service, the National Service Trust will automatically deposit your education award into your online MyAmeriCorps account. You will then go through MyAmeriCorps to transfer funds to your chosen school or lender.

What is the period in which the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award can be used?

A SCHOLAR may use the Education Award for up to seven (7) years after their successful completion of the program. A recipient of a transferred Award can use it for up to 10 years from the original Award earner’s service completion date.

Is the Education Award taxable?

Yes, the Education Award is considered taxable income in the year it is used.

The Education Award, unlike most other forms of scholarships and fellowships, is subject to federal tax in the year each payment is made. It is considered taxable income regardless of whether it is used for current educational expenses or to repay a qualified student loan. Please also note that the education award is subject to state taxes as well, depending on where you file your state taxes.

Additionally, if you put a student loan into forbearance, the interest that is paid on that qualified student loan is also subject to income taxes in the year the payment is made to the loan holder. Refer to the forbearance section in this manual for more information.

If you use the entire amount of your Education Award in one calendar year, you must include the entire amount as income on your taxes for that year. If you redeem only a portion of your Education Award in a calendar year, you will be responsible for any taxes owed on that portion. If you do not use any portion of your award in a particular year, you do not include any part as income. All interest payments made on your behalf should be included as income in the year the payment was made.

The National Service Trust **does not** withhold taxes from your education award or interest payments. If your Education Award and interest payments total more than \$600 in a calendar year, in January of the following year, AmeriCorps will send you an IRS Form 1099 to be used in preparing your income tax return.

What rules apply to an individual who earned an Education Award and wants to transfer it?

To transfer an award, the transferring individual must:

- Have been at least 55 years of age before beginning the term of service upon which the award is based;
- Transfer the Award before its expiration date;
- Ensure that the transfer request is received prior to the date the award expires; and
- Transfer the Education Award to only one recipient per Award. The Award cannot be split between multiple recipients.
- The recipient has 10 years from the date the Award earner completed the term of service upon which the Award was based, to use the Award.

What rules apply to the recipient of a transferred Award?

The recipient of a transferred Award must:

- Be the child (which includes stepchild), grandchild (which includes step grandchild), or foster child of the transferring individual;
- Be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the US;
- Have been designated as the recipient by a qualified education Award-earner; and
- Complete the required process for accepting the Award.

Who can I contact if I have questions about the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award?

For questions about your service as an AmeriCorps member, including assistance with your Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, or support with eGrants and MyAmeriCorps Portal (including log-in, password or error messages), contact the National Service Hotline at 1-800-942-2677.

Where can I find more information?

To learn more about the Education Award and all of the ways in which it can be used, please visit <https://www.americorps.gov/Scholars-volunteers/segal-americorps-education-award>.

**SECTION E: SERVICE HOURS -
MAXIMIZE YOUR IMPACT**

SERVICE HOURS CATEGORIES

SCHOLARS can record service hours in the following three categories: Service at Site, Civic Engagement and Training.

Service Category	Description
Service at Site/Direct Service	The primary way SCHOLARS make an impact at the service site. This includes tutoring students, entering student data, and any activity that directly relates to implementing the assigned program model at the service site. These are essential functions listed in the position description.
Civic Engagement	Civic Engagement opportunities such as the Russ Mawby Signature Service Project, MLK Day of Service, or other events will be individually approved by RSS PROGRAM Staff and RSS Supervisors.
Training	Michigan Education Corps required or supplemental training or other pre-approved training activities i.e. AmeriCorps professional learning and service site professional development.

SERVICE AT SITE (MEC SERVICE)

This category represents the service through which interventionists will spend most of their time. This is where SCHOLARS will record service hours achieved through monumental events, like their first student graduating from service, and smaller (yet great) moments like writing and sharing Great Stories.

The service recorded through this category includes:

- Reading Corps tutoring
- Meetings with RSS Supervisor/RSS PROGRAM Staff
- Preparation that supports tutoring
- Data entry that supports tutoring
- All communication, including emails that support service
- Writing and submitting Great Stories in OnCorps

TRAINING

The training provided by MEC will help SCHOLARS change lives through service.

The service recorded through the training category includes:

- Required program model training
- Travel time for required program training, beyond the normal daily commute
- Site training
- Supplemental training provided by MEC
- Professional development/learning group meetings

Prohibited Activity: Fundraising

Fundraising is not an allowable activity, whether it benefits the site or a local nonprofit. Examples of unallowable fundraising activities include, but are not limited to book fairs, PTO/PTA fundraisers, concession stands, races or fun runs, bellringing, grant writing, box tops or service at a thrift store.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SERVICE

“ I serve because I want to help students build CONFIDENCE in their abilities. ”

Can SCHOLARS participate in service at home?

No, SCHOLARS may not participate in service from home. Your service site is the location where you go each day to make an impact. Your presence at your service site deepens your impact in that community.

Can SCHOLARS serve with an after-school program at another school in their district?

If a service activity occurs at a site within the SCHOLAR’s school district and is open to all students in the district, including students from the interventionist’s service site, the activity can be considered supplemental service.

Can SCHOLARS practice interventions and read the manual as part of their service?

Yes. SCHOLARS should practice interventions and read the manual to prepare for their service. SCHOLARS must consult with their RSS Supervisor, RSS PROGRAM Staff or MEC RSS PROGRAM Staff about what amount of time is reasonable. SCHOLARS should keep in mind that this activity should happen at the service site as service from home is not allowed.

Is there a maximum number of hours that can be served through training?

Yes. MEC SCHOLARS serve to change students’ lives through research-based tutoring. To preserve this focus, 10% of a SCHOLAR’S service hours can be served through training. This limit was set federally by AmeriCorps.

Are there activities that are prohibited for AmeriCorps SCHOLARS?

Yes. AmeriCorps is a federally funded program that places restrictions on the activities of its SCHOLARS. SCHOLARS may not participate in any prohibited activities as a part of their service. These prohibited activities are listed in the Member Service Agreement and in the Appendix of this manual.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

This checklist is a summary of SCHOLAR requirements. While not comprehensive in scope, this checklist provides a picture of what is expected of each SCHOLAR to successfully complete their service term. Any questions regarding the requirements below can be directed to RSS PROGRAM Staff.

First Month of Service

- Attend Training (LMS Modules or virtual/in-person meetings with coaches)
- Review PROGRAM requirements in PROGRAM manual and review plan for achieving hours' commitment

Throughout Service

- Attend required training
- Submit one Great Story in OnCorps per quarter.
- Create a plan to stay on track with service hours, planning for site breaks or planned absences. Work closely with your RSS PROGRAM Staff to adhere to your plan.
- Serve minimum average hours per week as noted in your MSA
- Check time sheets to make sure reported hours are accurate
- Submit time sheets and receive approval on time
- Input student data in RCDMS by end of each week

Last Month of Service

- Ensure student data is all up to date and accurate and entered into the data system
- Complete program materials inventory
- Complete MyAmeriCorps exit form online via my.americorps.gov (due before last day of service)

END-OF-TERM EVALUATIONS

SCHOLARS will receive frequent feedback from their RSS Supervisor and RSS PROGRAM Staff through the form of literacy observations. In addition to this ongoing feedback, RSS PROGRAM Staff will conduct end-of-term evaluations for each SCHOLAR. Evaluations are an opportunity to provide a SCHOLAR with objective, timely, and relevant feedback, as well as positive affirmations.

End-of-term evaluations are completed in person. The RSS PROGRAM Staff and SCHOLAR will all sign the evaluation. In addition to being a piece of the SCHOLAR'S professional development, the evaluation is an AmeriCorps requirement. Instructions for completion as well as due dates will be provided by RSS PROGRAM Staff to RSS Supervisors and SCHOLARS.

SCHOLARS can expect to be evaluated on areas including, but not limited to:

- Attendance and timely arrival (punctuality)
- Communicating absences appropriately and timely
- Tutoring and assessment quality and accuracy
- Program model adherence
- Service hours progress
- Respect, sensitivity and working relationships



SUBMITTING TIME SHEETS

SCHOLARS report their service hours in OnCorps and submit a time sheet for approval once every two weeks. **This is a PROGRAM requirement.** SCHOLARS are encouraged to log their time in the OnCorps system daily to ensure accurate documentation.

Some important things to remember about time sheets are:

- Time sheets are submitted every two weeks.
- Time sheets are to be reviewed and approved no later than two days after the end of the time sheet period.
- Time sheet periods start on Sundays and end on Saturdays.
- Time sheets should be submitted after 4pm on the last day of the time sheet period and not any time before the end of the service day.

SCHOLARS are only able to receive their living allowance for a two-week period if the time sheet is **submitted and approved** by the deadline listed in the living allowance and time sheet schedule.

Steps to Submit a Time Sheet in OnCorps

Log in to your account

Please select your program year:

2024-2025 ▼

Submit

1. Using a web browser, navigate to mi.oncorpsreports.com.
2. On the right-hand side of the screen, choose the appropriate year and click submit.
3. Next, you will see a list of AmeriCorps programs. Choose *either* MEC Math and Early Learning Corps **OR** MEC Reading Corps and click on 'AmeriCorps SCHOLAR.' Your Program and Login information is provided to you during SKO.
4. Enter your username and password and click 'Login'. If you forget your password, use the 'Forgot your password?' field to have the password sent to your email. Or contact your assigned RSS PROGRAM Staff Scholar for further assistance.
5. Under the 'Time Tracking' menu click on 'Enter Timesheets.' In the 'Select a Period' drop-down choose the appropriate time sheet period and click on 'Choose.'

[Home](#) > [Time Tracking](#) > [Enter Timesheets](#)

Enter Timesheets

Select a Period:

▼

Choose

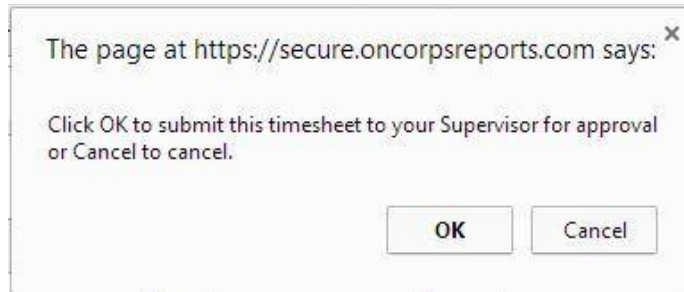
6. Enter service hours on the time sheet. The top of the time sheet will show the due date. Each day in the time sheet period is represented by a row. Be sure to document service as listed in the following pages in the manual.
 - a. Record to the nearest quarter hour:
 - i. 9:00-10:15 = 1.25
 - ii. 9:00-10:30 = 1.50

- iii. 9:00 -10:45 = 1.75
- iv. 9:00-11:00 = 2

7. After you have completed the information for each day, either **save** the time sheet if you plan to return and modify it or **authorize and submit** the time sheet. Submit the time sheet if it is after 4pm on the last day of the time sheet period.



8. A dialog box will appear to ensure that you wish to submit this time sheet, press 'ok' to finish submitting the time sheet.



9. Log out in the upper right-hand corner in OnCorps Reports.

**SECTION G: I WILL CARRY THIS COMMITMENT
WITH ME THIS YEAR AND BEYOND**

Section G: I Will Carry This Commitment With Me This Year and Beyond

Words to Use

AVOID SAYING	INSTEAD, SAY
AmeriCorps, pronounced “AmeriCorpse”	AmeriCorps, pronounced “AmeriCore”
Job	Position
Working/Volunteering	Serving

Service Gear and Apparel

As a SCHOLAR, you receive the following items at the start of your service experience.

- Reading Corps bag
- MEC lanyard
- MEC name badge
- MEC shirt

You are required at a minimum to wear your lanyard daily. As a SCHOLAR, you are responsible for representing MEC Reading Support Scholars at your service site and when representing MEC AmeriCorps in the community. Wearing your gear is an expectation and will allow you to share your story, create understanding about your role, and to promote the program with which you are serving. Program issued apparel must be worn at publicity events, during media coverage, and at funding or legislative awareness site visits. National Days of Service and other opportunities are another great place to wear your gear.

CARRYING THE COMMITMENT

How will you carry the commitment you made in the AmeriCorps pledge with you beyond your term of service?

An important part of national service is proudly carrying your service experience throughout your service term and into whatever is next.

The AmeriCorps Pledge states:

“I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.”

You made that Pledge at the start of your service, but what does it mean? It can be difficult to visualize how you can carry your service experience with you beyond your service and into the future. Whether you’re planning to serve another term with Reading Corps or Math Corps, go back to school, look for a job, or continue service in other capacities, here are the ways you can carry your Reading Corps or Math Corps service with you:

Stay Connected with Michigan Education Corps and AmeriCorps

- Follow Michigan Education Corps on social media!
 - Michigan Education Corps Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/mieducationcorps/>
- Join AmeriCorps Alums

Section G: I Will Carry This Commitment With Me This Year and Beyond

- To connect with other AmeriCorps alums, check out:
<https://www.serviceyearalliance.org/alums>

Stay Committed to Service

- Serve up to four terms with AmeriCorps
- Continue serving with other programs
 - AmeriCorps: <https://americorps.gov/serve>
 - Service Year Alliance: <https://www.serviceyearalliance.org/>
- Volunteer in your community
 - Volunteer Match: <https://www.volunteermatch.org/>
 - United Way: <http://www.unitedway.org/get-involved/volunteer>

Turn Your Service Experience into a Career

Employers of National Service connects AmeriCorps alumni with employers from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. Through this initiative, employers have increased access to a dedicated, highly qualified, and mission-oriented pool of potential employees, and national service alumni have additional opportunities to apply their skills in the workplace.

- Employers of National Service:
<https://americorps.gov/partner/partnerships/employers-national-service>
- Continue your education: Use your Segal AmeriCorps Education Award
 - For more information, see the Scholar Benefits section.
- Start a new career and develop your professional network:
 - Indeed: <https://www.indeed.com/>
 - LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/>
 - The Muse: <https://www.themuse.com/>
 - Jopwell: <https://www.jopwell.com/>
- Sell your service on your resume
 - Focus on skills gained
 - Use data
 - Highlight unique experiences

RESUME EXAMPLES

Reading Support Scholar, Cool Elementary School

August 2021-June 2022

Michigan Education Corps, Taylor, MI

- Implemented research-based interventions with students in grades K-3
- Provided targeted literacy support to individual students
- Recorded student and data progress in the RCDMS database system
- Maintained positive and collaborative relationship with RSS Supervisor, building staff, and MEC coaches and staff

SECTION H: RSS SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

THANK YOU!

RSS Supervisors play a critical role in providing support to SCHOLARS as it relates to literacy interventions and assessments. RSS Supervisors also play a critical role in supervision of the SCHOLARS at their site or virtually.

Michigan Education Corps understands how vital this role is to the success of our PROGRAM and serving students across Michigan. Let us be the first to thank YOU, RSS Supervisors, for taking on this role within your site. We are grateful for the time and energy you will commit this PROGRAM year to ensuring Michigan Education Corps is successful within your building. Thank you!

RESPONSIBILITIES

This section outlines the responsibilities and duties of the RSS Supervisor in providing supervision to the SCHOLAR(s) at the service site. The Site Agreement, completed prior to the beginning of the year by partner site staff, typically the Principal/Site Director and CTE Teacher, outlines RSS Supervisor responsibilities. For more information about the RSS Supervisor responsibilities, refer to the Site Agreement.

SIGN-IN AND SIGN-OUT PROCEDURE

RSS Supervisors must set-up a system for SCHOLARS to sign-in and sign-out every day. RSS Supervisors should set a schedule for checking in with their Scholar(s). MEC recommends daily check-ins to be most helpful. RSS Supervisors should clearly communicate to the SCHOLARS where the sign-in sheet will be located and the expectation is that the SCHOLAR will sign-in and sign-out each day. The sign-in sheet should be kept in a location that aligns with site expectations and is conducive for both the RSS Supervisor and SCHOLAR(s). This sign-in and sign-out sheet or summary of daily check-ins must be sent to MEC RSS PROGRAM Staff bi-weekly for auditing purposes.

The sign-in sheet is a tool used by RSS Supervisor to verify the hours the SCHOLAR served before approving a time sheet. It is also used to hold the SCHOLAR accountable to the daily schedule. A sign-in sheet template is available in the appendix of this manual.

SETTING A TUTORING SCHEDULE

RSS Supervisors are expected to provide each SCHOLAR with a daily schedule at the site. An RSS Supervisor should clearly communicate to the SCHOLAR what time they are expected to arrive and depart each day, and what time they should eat lunch. The schedule should allow SCHOLARS to fulfill their service hour commitment. There is a blank weekly schedule template in the Service Hours and Appendix sections of this manual.

Note: The information above is generalized for each PROGRAM year. Position requirements may change based on Michigan Education Corps recruitment periods. Please contact RSS PROGRAM Staff for questions.

SUPPORTING SCHOLARS IN COMPLETING SERVICE HOURS

SCHOLARS must serve a minimum number of hours each week during their service to successfully complete their term of service to earn their Education Award. The concept of serving a total number of hours is very different than traditional employees or volunteers. The SCHOLAR is not granted any set number of "sick" or "vacation" days, which therefore requires careful and thoughtful planning at the beginning of the year to ensure the SCHOLAR is set up to successfully serve the minimum number of hours required.

RSS Supervisors are expected to support their SCHOLARS in service hours by:

- Ensuring SCHOLARS have the opportunity to serve the minimum number of hours during the service term, given school breaks and anticipated sick days
- Monitoring the total time served throughout the year to ensure the SCHOLARS are on track, and checking in with the SCHOLARS on a frequent basis about their hours
- Supporting the SCHOLARS by exploring after-school service opportunities at their site. All Civic Engagement hours must be pre-approved by RSS PROGRAM Staff.

See the Service section of this manual for more information on SCHOLAR service hours.

In setting SCHOLARS up for success in meeting their service term hours, RSS PROGRAM Staff have created Calendar Planners for each SCHOLAR. These reflect SCHOLARS individual school sites calendars and are meant for tracking hours served by each SCHOLAR.

Each Calendar Planner shows the SCHOLARS expected "bank" of hours or how many hours a SCHOLAR can miss before being in a deficit for service hours. Every SCHOLAR has a "bank" of hours that is set up to cover sick days, school snow days and unexpected absences. These hours in the "bank" are not provided for vacation time for SCHOLARS, it is encouraged that planned vacations and personal appointments be taken during school breaks if possible.

PROVIDING AN ONBOARDING TO THE SITE

RSS Supervisors are expected to conduct a site onboarding with the SCHOLAR at the site. RSS Supervisors help ensure program success by supporting SCHOLARS beginning on their first day at the site. It is a best practice to set clear expectations early to avoid having to reverse course later if professional or performance issues arise.

The plan below is a checklist of everything that should be covered during the onboarding. RSS Supervisors should also share their site-specific employee handbook with the SCHOLARS. This document provides helpful context as to the expectations of teachers and other staff in the site building and can help reinforce Reading Corps policies.

SCHOLAR ONBOARDING PLAN

Before the SCHOLAR’s service begins ...
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare the SCHOLAR’S workspace and computer space
<input type="checkbox"/> Set up SCHOLAR’S school computer with username/login information
During the SCHOLAR’s first week of service ...
<input type="checkbox"/> Introduce the SCHOLAR to staff, especially those with whom they will be working closely
<input type="checkbox"/> Tour the facility, including their classroom or work area
<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss use of telephone, mail services, copier, fax machine and classroom supplies
<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss school-specific safety procedures
School policies and procedures, basic terms of work, professionalism, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss the Code of Conduct for your site (i.e. the rules by which <u>all</u> staff need to abide)
<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss SCHOLAR sign-in procedure (required of <u>all</u> interventionists throughout the year)
<input type="checkbox"/> Review school dress code (Service apparel is required two times per week)
<input type="checkbox"/> Establish process for reporting absence or illness (give interventionist your contact information)
<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss communication procedures used on-site (email, bulletins, mailbox, etc.)
Tutoring Schedule
<input type="checkbox"/> Set up weekly check-ins and fidelity check observations within the first month
<input type="checkbox"/> Review school calendar, staff training days, PLCs, staff meetings, etc. and encourage SCHOLAR attendance, when applicable

REVIEWING AND APPROVING TIME SHEETS

It is the responsibility of the RSS Supervisor to review and approve time reported on the SCHOLAR's online time sheet in OnCorps once every two weeks. MEC RSS PROGRAM Staff are also involved in this two-step process. If time sheets are not submitted **and** approved, the SCHOLAR's living allowance payment will be withheld until all time sheets are submitted and approved.

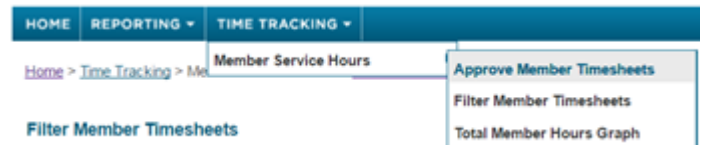
If the RSS Supervisor does not approve a SCHOLAR's time sheet by the deadline, the SCHOLAR will **not be paid on time**.

RSS Supervisors should review the "Service Hours and Time Sheets" section for more information about what activities can be counted for hours.

How to Approve Time Sheets

When the SCHOLAR submits a time sheet for approval, the database will automatically send an email asking the RSS Supervisor to approve the time sheet. Click on the link in the email to go to OnCorps to review the time sheet. Further instructions are included below:

1. Go to OnCorps mi.oncorpsreports.com/
2. Select the current program year and click 'submit'
3. Find the correct program name
4. Click 'RSS Supervisor' and enter your username and password. *Use the 'Forgot your password' box for help, or if you forget your username or program name, contact MEC RSS PROGRAM Staff.*
5. Under 'Time Tracking', click 'Scholar Time sheets'.
6. Select the time period and click 'choose'
7. If you agree with the SCHOLAR's time sheet, check the box "I have reviewed and approve this time sheet." Click submit. If you disagree with the time sheet information or find an error, the time sheet can be rejected. Comments will be emailed to the SCHOLAR.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SUPERVISION

Does the SCHOLAR need a computer?

The site must provide the SCHOLAR access to a regularly updated computer with internet access for Reading Corps related purposes (i.e. completing time sheets, entering student data, checking e-mail, etc.).

The computer used by the SCHOLAR **must have** a modern web browser besides Internet Explorer installed; recent releases of Chrome or Firefox are the preferred web browsers. Any firewall software in use **must permit** unhindered and unrestricted access

Section H: RSS Supervisor Responsibilities

to all websites necessary for completing required MEC and program related tasks and reviewing online program model support and training materials.

What type of workspace does the SCHOLAR need?

The SCHOLAR needs reasonable workspace to prepare for tutoring sessions and a locked drawer to store confidential student data. Additionally, the site should provide reasonable and quiet space for SCHOLARS to work with individual students during the day.

Will the SCHOLAR need a school-assigned email address?

It is not required that the site provide an email address for the SCHOLAR.

If common e-mail providers are blocked at the site and used by the SCHOLAR, the RSS Supervisor should arrange for the SCHOLAR to have a school-assigned or other accessible email address.

It can also be helpful if SCHOLARS have a school-assigned email address because they are then usually automatically included in email communication that is sent to all staff at the site. This is helpful in keeping the SCHOLAR aware of what is happening in the school and can help the SCHOLAR feel more connected and part of the school team.

Will the SCHOLAR need a name badge?

The site can provide the SCHOLAR with a school name badge, if required according to the personnel policies of the service site. The SCHOLAR is provided a badge by MEC/AmeriCorps with their name.

APPENDIX

TIME SHEET SCHEDULE 2024-2025

Time Sheet Period Start Date	Time Sheet Period End Date	Time Sheet Approval Due Date	Living Allowance Pay Date	# of Pay Periods
8/25/2024	9/7/2024	9/9/2024	9/13/2024	1
9/8/2024	9/21/2024	9/23/2024	9/27/2024	2
9/22/2024	10/5/2024	10/7/2024	10/11/2024	3
10/6/2024	10/19/2024	10/21/2024	10/25/2024	4
10/20/2024	11/2/2024	11/4/2024	11/8/2024	5
11/3/2024	11/16/2024	11/18/2024	11/22/2024	6
11/17/2024	11/30/2024	12/2/2024	12/6/2024	7
12/1/2024	12/14/2024	12/16/2024	12/20/2024	8
12/15/2024	12/28/2024	12/30/2024	1/3/2025	9
12/29/2024	1/11/2025	1/13/2025	1/17/2025	10
1/12/2025	1/25/2025	1/27/2025	1/31/2025	11
1/26/2025	2/8/2025	2/10/2025	2/14/2025	12
2/9/2025	2/22/2025	2/24/2025	2/28/2025	13
2/23/2025	3/8/2025	3/10/2025	3/14/2025	14
3/9/2025	3/22/2025	3/24/2025	3/28/2025	15
3/23/2025	4/5/2025	4/7/2025	4/11/2025	16
4/6/2025	4/19/2025	4/21/2025	4/25/2025	17
4/20/2025	5/3/2025	5/5/2025	5/9/2025	18
5/4/2025	5/17/2025	5/19/2025	5/23/2025	19
5/18/2025	5/31/2025	6/2/2025	6/6/2025	20

Instructions:

Members and Supervisors are to use this payroll schedule to ensure time sheets are submitted and approved on time. Doing so will ensure that no delay occurs in the processing and payment of MEMBER'S living allowance. MEMBER time sheets should be reviewed and approved by the Monday following the period end date. Where denoted with an asterisk (*) the approval may occur earlier than the listed date based on service site schedule or supervisor availability. Guidance will be provided and sent by MEC PROGRAM staff ahead these dates.



Time sheets not submitted OR approved on time will result in a delayed payment of the member living allowance. At minimum, this will take up to two (2) weeks.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

To ensure the MEC programs are successful for students and SCHOLARS, while also complying with AmeriCorps rules and regulations, a variety of websites and data systems are utilized. These systems measure SCHOLAR impact and ensure that SCHOLARS receive their well-deserved AmeriCorps benefits.

It can be challenging to remember login and password information across multiple systems. Space is provided to handwrite login information as a point of reference.

Store this document in a locked, secure location if it contains passwords.

	<p>My AmeriCorps Program Website https://My.AmeriCorps.gov</p> <p>This website is where SCHOLARS access AmeriCorps benefits such as the Education Award and Loan Forbearance. This is also where SCHOLARS will enroll and exit from the AmeriCorps PROGRAM.</p> <p>Username: _____</p> <p>Password: _____</p>
	<p>Time sheet Website mi.OnCorpsReports.com</p> <p>SCHOLARS use OnCorps Reports to record and submit time sheets every other week. RSS Supervisors use OnCorps to approve time sheets.</p> <p>Programs: MEC Math and Early Learning Corps, MEC Reading Corps AND MEC Reading Support Scholars</p> <p>Username: Scholar E-mail address (coolguy1@gmail.com)</p> <p>Password: MEC2024</p>

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

Individuals may exercise rights as a private citizen and participate in the activities below on their own initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-AmeriCorps funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo when involved in these activities as a private citizen.

While engaging in service or training hours or otherwise performing activities supported by an AmeriCorps PROGRAM, SCHOLARS, who serve as AmeriCorps members, are prohibited from the following:

1. Attempting to influence legislation;
2. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
3. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
4. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
5. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
6. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
7. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
8. Providing a direct benefit to—
 - a. A business organized for profit;
 - b. A labor union;
 - c. A partisan political organization;
 - d. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
 - e. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (7) of this section, unless corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
11. Such other activities as the corporation may prohibit.

AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and participate in the activities listed above on their own initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-AmeriCorps funds. Individuals must not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.