

Corporation for National and Community Service

NationalService.gov



Title: AmeriCorps State and National Guidance Teleservice Guidance

Date issued: January 19, 2017

Date posted: February 28, 2020

Unique identifier: ASN 006

Topic: AmeriCorps Members and Teleservice

Summary: This is guidance on AmeriCorps Members and teleservice.

The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

TO: State Service Commissions and AmeriCorps State and National grantees

FROM: Jennifer Bastress Tahmasebi
Acting Director, AmeriCorps State and National

SUBJECT: 2017.01: AmeriCorps State and National Guidance - Teleservice

DATE: 19 January 2017

Telework has become increasingly popular across the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. CNCS's OIG has recommended that AmeriCorps State and National provide grantees and/or subgrantees with guidance on AmeriCorps members who request to perform their service remotely (teleservice). Members requesting teleservice arrangements under the auspices of reasonable accommodation of a disability are excluded from this policy, as those requests are covered under other laws and policies.

This guidance should not be taken as a change in AmeriCorps State and National's position that members should generally be providing service directly to the people and in the communities where they serve rather than performing service remotely. Therefore, teleservice should be rare, if ever, and involve appropriate documentation, supervision and oversight.

The following guidance is provided for those unique situations in which a grantee determines that teleservice is appropriate or when a small number of a member's service hours can properly be accrued through teleservice. Teleservice is appropriate only when the activity can be meaningfully supervised and the hours verified independently. If a grantee or subgrantee determines that its AmeriCorps members will be allowed to teleserve, the grantee must establish a policy that addresses the following:

- Written authorization of teleservice in advance
- Expectations of the communication requirements between supervisors and teleserving members
- Mitigation of the increased risk of time and attendance abuse
- Appropriate supervision including validation of the activities to be performed, and
- Verification of hours claimed.

Further, the grantee should consider updating its insurance coverage to address legal liability attribution (for the grantee or teleserving member) for incidents that occur during teleservice.

Grantee or subgrantees should be aware that their staff may be subject to legal sanctions for erroneously certifying that AmeriCorps members have sufficient valid service hours to complete their terms of service. In addition there are legal

penalties for knowingly submitting false claims to the government.

Please distribute, as appropriate, to your subgrantees and/or operating sites and/or service site locations and/or other interested parties.