



Host Site Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What is HeartCorps?** HeartCorps is the American Heart Association's new initiative serving rural communities across the U.S. As an inaugural grantee of the Public Health AmeriCorps Program, the AHA will launch HeartCorps this fall to address health inequities and develop a new generation of public health leaders in rural America. [Learn more](#) about our program.
- 2. What types of roles and responsibilities can HeartCorps members have at host sites?**

Members can serve a variety of roles within the host site and the parameters of our grant. As the AHA, we are committed to addressing issues related to hypertension as well as its risk factors, which include tobacco use and nutrition security. **Members are not required to fulfill every role and will develop work plans in collaboration with host sites to determine priorities via a submitted member work plan.**

 - a. Support blood pressure self-monitoring initiatives.
 - b. Help increase the adoption of evidence-based BP measurement and treatment practices.
 - c. Facilitate tobacco, BP, and nutrition security screenings and referrals to care.
 - d. Conduct community health education workshops.
 - e. Engage local media in blood pressure and healthy living promotion.
 - f. Recruit volunteers to support host site community initiatives such as health fairs.
 - g. Mobilize the community in addressing cardiovascular health and contributing conditions.
 - h. Connect health centers and community organizations with social platforms to facilitate ongoing screening and referral for social needs.
 - i. Establish local support for patients/community members in navigating the care or resources they need.
 - j. Promote registration in research platforms among historically under-represented populations.
 - k. Launch learning collaboratives for health or community centers with similar populations.
 - l. Plan and implement local engagement events – days of service, town halls or community conversations – to raise awareness of blood pressure, cardiovascular health, and related issues and engage the community in supporting one another in key strategies for management.
 - m. Cultivate and manage volunteer clubs in local schools or community organizations.
- 3. Will HeartCorps members serve full-time?** Yes, all HeartCorps members will serve full-time over the course of the program year. They will receive holidays off as well as a winter and spring breaks. The HeartCorps staff will provide a program calendar of these important dates to host sites. Additionally, HeartCorps members will have the ability to take personal days. However, any missed time is the responsibility of members to make up, and if members are behind in hours before scheduled breaks (not holidays), they will forfeit their break to ensure they are on track toward their hours goal to successfully complete the program. Makeup hours may be completed outside of the normal business day including before and after the regularly scheduled service day or on weekends. Any virtual assignments must adhere to the HeartCorps teleservice policy and require the approval of the host site supervisor or AHA field supervisor to be valid.
- 4. Are there things HeartCorps members are not allowed to do?** Yes, federal AmeriCorps has strict guidance on [prohibited activities for members](#). HeartCorps host sites will receive training on these prohibited activities, and they are also listed in the host site agreement.
 - a. In addition to those that are termed 'Prohibited' there are also other activities that also aren't allowed to be performed by AmeriCorps members. These unallowable activities relate to keeping

Email HeartCorps@heart.org with any questions.
www.heart.org/heartcorps



members from causing issues with labor organizations, as well as simply seeking to always be the best use of taxpayer dollars!

- b. Put simply, we want to ensure AmeriCorps members are doing the service they are funded to do – as described in our program’s awarded grant. Things like community health education, patient navigation, etc. – those things described in the [member position description](#).
 - c. Members **cannot** displace host site staff or volunteers, even partially such as through a reduction in hours.
 - d. Members cannot **solely** function to refer individuals to federal or state assistance programs that are funded by the government.
- 5. Can host sites have a member of their staff participate in the member training and other regular trainings, along with their service members, so that they can understand and reinforce on site what is being taught?** Pre-service orientation and our ongoing training and professional development initiatives are designed specifically for members. However, HeartCorps staff will provide an overview of topics that members will receive during pre-service orientation as well as recommended topics for what should be included in a host site orientation for members. Members will receive training on CPR, HIPAA, cyber-security, sexual harassment, health equity, allyship, and much more. The HeartCorps team is happy to connect directly with any host site about specific questions.
- 6. How are HeartCorps members selected?** Our goal is to recruit members from local communities, but there are some members who choose to relocate. Public Health AmeriCorps is a professional development opportunity, and it is the responsibility of the AHA to provide foundational training and leadership opportunities for members. While some may have advanced degrees or experience, most will have a passion to make a difference. We want to harness their service spirit and provide a pathway to a career in public health. While members can be aged 18-100, most members will be early in their professional careers. They must all undergo a rigorous background check that includes state, federal, and the National Sex Offender Registry. They are pre-screened and interviewed by the AHA. If interested, host sites may request a brief, virtual conversation with finalists to ensure fitness. **The AHA cannot share copies of the background check results with host sites.**
- 7. Are HeartCorps members covered by the AHA’s liability insurance?** Yes. Please note that HeartCorps members **should not** be administering medical advice or diagnosing any individuals under any circumstance. Even if they have the requisite training and credentials, they **are not authorized** to operate in this capacity by AmeriCorps nor the American Heart Association. If host sites have company vehicles available for members to utilize, **the host site is responsible** for all motor vehicle history checks, training, automotive insurance coverage, and any damages to this property by members.
- 8. Are students good candidates for HeartCorps member positions?** Students can be AmeriCorps members **only** if the student can commit to full-time service at 41.25 hours per week, including some evenings and weekends as the program may require due to engagement with community members. Unfortunately, the HeartCorps program does not currently offer part-time opportunities. Host sites are under no obligation to accommodate class schedules by offering virtual assignments or alternative schedules. However, host sites can do so at their own discretion.
- 9. Can host sites assist in recruiting HeartCorps members?** Yes! We highly encourage host sites to support member recruitment by sharing the opportunity with official and personal networks. Sites can request sample social media posts, images, and digital flyers by contacting your AHA liaison or emailing HeartCorps@heart.org.
- 10. Are HeartCorps members required to wear uniforms? Who is responsible for providing the uniforms?** Yes, the AHA will provide members with AmeriCorps/AHA branded uniform shirts (t-shirts, polos,

Email HeartCorps@heart.org with any questions.
www.heart.org/heartcorps



sweatshirts, and jackets). Members will provide their own khakis or black pants, along with closed-toed and closed-heel shoes for safety. Members are expected to be in uniform each day unless professional attire is required for events. Clothing should be clean and not ripped or overly distressed. Clothing should not be excessively tight or loose. Skirts and headscarves are allowed for religious reasons if requested by members. Our current vendor is still experiencing supply chain issues which may affect uniform delivery. If a host site requires ID badges, the host site must provide at no cost to the member. In addition, the AHA will provide an identification badge with the member name and photo.

- 11. What if a member placement is not working?** We realize that not every person and personality will mesh despite the best of intentions. However, we hope that when differences arise, host sites will make every effort to operate in the best interests of the work and patients/community members. For poor performance, we do need to allow time for corrective action that will be administered in a collaborative manner with both the AHA and the host site supervisor. Members are subject to progressive disciplinary actions, just as in most professional environments. AmeriCorps is a professional development experience, and we allow opportunities for people to mature and grow, within reason. Should a placement become untenable, we have a few options. Unfortunately, since we are a multistate program with only a few sites in each state, moving members is logistically challenging and usually unfeasible. If no resolution is found due to performance issues, the member can be dismissed from the HeartCorps program. If they have completed less than 30% of their service hours, we can recruit a new member to replace them. If they have completed over 30% of their hours and are then dismissed or resign, the member will not be replaced.
- 12. Does the AHA provide mileage reimbursement for members?** Yes, the HeartCorps program has a limited mileage reimbursement budget for each member that is in addition to member stipends. Members must submit their own mileage reimbursement documentation directly to the AHA, which **may not** include the regular commute to and from the host site. We expect host sites and members to manage program delivery to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.
- 13. Can members complete their service virtually?** AmeriCorps strongly believes that member service is best delivered in-person. However, due to space constraints, a hybrid model can be explored. Please note that HeartCorps will employ its own teleservice policy for members in accordance with AmeriCorps requirements.