2024-2025 Pennsylvania AmeriCorps State Program Grants

Spring Competition Request for Applications

[Intent to Apply](#) Due by 5:00 PM **February 1, 2024**

Information and Technical Assistance Session:
February 8, 2024, **2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**
[Register Here](#)

Applications Due by 5:00 pm **March 6, 2024**

The Honorable Josh Shapiro

Governor, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Nancy Walker
Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry

Contents

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Tables

Appendices

Disclosure: Publication of this Request for Applications does not obligate PennSERVE or the AmeriCorps agency to award any specific number of grants or to obligate any particular amount of funding. The actual level and timing of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Summary

PennSERVE announces the opportunity to apply for grant funding for the operation of AmeriCorps national service programs by community and faith-based organizations, government agencies, and educational institutions. AmeriCorps state grants support the efforts of organizations to recruit and deploy AmeriCorps members and the volunteers with whom they serve to address unmet needs.

AmeriCorps state grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to eligible organizations proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions to strengthen communities. Applicants for AmeriCorps funding must address one or a combination of the AmeriCorps agency Focus Areas, as identified in this request for applications (RFA).

An AmeriCorps member is an individual who is enrolled in an approved national service position and engages in community service. AmeriCorps members will be recruited, trained, supervised, and managed by the funded organization, and may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of service, AmeriCorps members are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

Project Sponsors and Program Authority

AmeriCorps is a program funded by the U.S. Congress under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 94.006. The national organization supporting AmeriCorps is the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), which does business as the AmeriCorps agency. The AmeriCorps agency's legal authority to award these grants is found in the National and Community Service Act (NCSA) of 1990, *as amended*, 42 U.S.C. § 12501 *et seq*. The AmeriCorps agency receives AmeriCorps program funding from Congress and awards funding to state commissions, including PennSERVE, to grant and oversee AmeriCorps programs in each state.

PennSERVE, Pennsylvania's state service commission, encourages, develops, and facilitates volunteerism and service. Each year, PennSERVE awards federal funding to AmeriCorps programs. Through funding and support, PennSERVE engages Pennsylvania residents in strengthening our communities. Learn more at www.dli.pa.gov/PennSERVE.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

AmeriCorps improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps, a federal agency, brings people together to tackle the country's most pressing challenges through national service and volunteerism. AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serve with organizations dedicated to the improvement of communities and those serving. AmeriCorps helps make service to others a cornerstone of our national culture. Learn more at www.AmeriCorps.gov.

AmeriCorps Focus Areas

The federal funding for AmeriCorps is provided to states via the AmeriCorps agency. The NCSA of 1990, as amended by the Serve America Act, Pub.L. 111–13, Apr. 21, 2009, emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on a core set of issue areas. To carry out Congress' intent and maximize the impact of investment in national service, and to achieve the goals laid out in the AmeriCorps agency 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, the AmeriCorps agency has the following focus areas:

Disaster Services: Helping individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of disasters and increase community resiliency.
Economic Opportunity: Improving the economic well-being and security of underserved individuals.
Education: Improving educational outcomes for underserved people, especially children. AmeriCorps is particularly interested in program designs that support youth engagement and service learning as strategies to achieve high educational outcomes.
Environmental Stewardship: Supporting communities to become more resilient through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve land and water, increase renewable energy use and improve at-risk ecosystems, especially in underserved households and communities.
Healthy Futures: Supporting for health needs within communities, including mitigating the impacts public health crises, access to care, aging in place, and addressing childhood obesity, especially in underserved communities.
Veterans and Military Families: Improving the quality of life of veterans, military families, caregivers, and survivors.

AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

The AmeriCorps agency released its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan which defines the agency's goals and objectives to advance the agency's mission to improve lives and strengthen communities. AmeriCorps will execute the following goals to better position the agency to respond to national and local needs and help the communities it serves prosper: partner with communities

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

to alleviate poverty and advance racial equity; enhance the experience for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers; unite Americans by bringing them together in service; effectively steward federal resources; and make AmeriCorps one of the best and most equitable places to work in the federal government.

AmeriCorps will invest in existing and new partnerships with non-profit, faith-based, and Tribal organizations, and State Service Commissions, to get things done for America. The agency will prioritize investment in the most critical issues of our time — public health, climate and the environment, and education and economic opportunity — within AmeriCorps' Focus Areas and increase efforts to ensure AmeriCorps members, AmeriCorps Senior volunteers, and community-based volunteers reflect the communities where they serve. The agency will target investments toward communities where the need is greatest, particularly those with populations that face racial inequality and poverty. These steps will enable more Americans than ever to strengthen the communities that need it most across the nation through their service.

AmeriCorps' priorities for this grant competition are:

- Organizations leading service in communities with concentrated poverty, rural communities, tribal communities, and those organizations serving historically underrepresented and underserved individuals, including but not limited to communities of color, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, people who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community, people with arrest and/or conviction records, and religious minorities;

- Evidence-based interventions on the [AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange](#) that are assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence. Please note that many of these interventions have demonstrated effectiveness in improving outcomes for individuals living in underserved communities and that the agency has committed resources to supporting grantees seeking to replicate and evaluate these interventions in similar communities;

- Veterans and Military Families, Caregivers, and Survivors: a program model that improves the quality of life of veterans and improves the well-being of military and veteran families, caregivers, and survivors;

- Faith-based organizations;

- Programs that provide additional benefits to AmeriCorps members aimed at enhancing member experience and bolstering member recruitment and retention such as paying more than the minimum living allowance, transportation, housing, food, etc.;

- Programs that create workforce pathways for AmeriCorps members, including deliberate training, certifications, and hiring preferences or support;

- Environmental stewardship, including supporting communities to become more resilient through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve land and water, increase renewable energy, use and improve at-risk ecosystems, especially in underserved households and communities;

- Community-based programs that enhance and expand services to second chance youth and/or engage those youth as AmeriCorps members;

- Programs that support civic bridgebuilding programs and projects to reduce polarization and community divisions; and providing training in civic bridgebuilding skills and techniques to AmeriCorps members;

- Programs focused on implementing or expanding access to high-quality early learning and those that prepare AmeriCorps members to enter early learning careers.

To receive priority consideration, applicants must show that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes and must include a high-quality program design. Proposing programs that receive priority consideration does not guarantee funding.

PennSERVE Priorities

PennSERVE may also give special consideration in the review process to applicants that meet needs in one or more of the funding priorities included in our 2022-2024 State Service Plan:

Education	- PreK-12 - College access and completion - Adult basic education
Health	- Mental health - Access to healthy food - Reducing alcohol and/or drug abuse - Ongoing health impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic
Economic Opportunity	- Improving housing access for individuals and families experiencing homelessness - Workforce development
Education/Health/ Economic Opportunity	Bridging the digital divide and increasing technology access for underserved or under-connected communities

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

	• Empowering individuals and families, including youth and young adults, who are impacted by the juvenile and/or criminal justice system; efforts may include but are not limited to diversion, re-entry, and engaging credible messengers to provide or connect individuals with support, treatment, or other services.
Program Structure	• Programs that strategically embed the workforce development of AmeriCorps members in program design • Programs that embed principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion in program design • Programs that provide a living allowance above the minimum required by the federal AmeriCorps agency
Geography	• Programs that provide services in low-income and/or under-resourced communities without other AmeriCorps State programs. "Communities" may be defined as neighborhoods, cities or towns, counties, or regions.

Prohibited Activities

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or AmeriCorps, staff and members may not engage in the following activities (see 45 C.F.R. § 2520.65):

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—

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

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 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; or,

e. an organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph F. 7. above, unless AmeriCorps assistance is not used to support those religious activities;

9. conducting a voter registration drive or using AmeriCorps funds to conduct a voter registration drive;

10. providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; or

11. such other activities as AmeriCorps may prohibit.

The following activities are also prohibited:

- Census Activities: AmeriCorps members and volunteers associated with AmeriCorps grants may not engage in census activities during service hours. Being a census taker during service hours is categorically prohibited. Census-related activities (e.g., promotion of the census, education about the importance of the census) do not align with AmeriCorps State and National objectives. What members and volunteers do on their own time is up to them, consistent with program policies about outside employment and activities.

- Election and Polling Activities: AmeriCorps member may not provide services for election or polling locations or in support of such activities.

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-AmeriCorps funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing any of the above activities on their personal time.

Unallowable Activities

In addition to the Prohibited Activities, the following restrictions also apply to the service of AmeriCorps members:

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Nonduplication: AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. AmeriCorps 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 unless the entity complies with the following "nondisplacement" requirements. Note: In section below Corporation = AmeriCorps

Nondisplacement:

- An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
- 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.
- A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that—
  - Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or,
  - Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
- A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any—
  - Presently employed worker;
  - Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
  - Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
  - Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or,
  - Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

Agency Contact

Inquiries about this funding opportunity should be directed to PennSERVE at pennserve@pa.gov. The subject of the email should be **"2024 AmeriCorps Application Question <Applicant Name>."**

Reallocation of Funding

PennSERVE and/or the AmeriCorps agency reserves the right to reallocate funding in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.

Application Resources

All applicants are urged to review the AmeriCorps Regulations and the AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY 2024 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Mandatory Supplemental **Guidance, and supporting materials (https://americorps.gov/partner/funding-opportunities).**

Table 1: Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Topics	Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations
Member Service Activities	§2520.20 - §2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§2520.65
Tutoring Programs	§2522.900-2522.950
Matching Funds	§2521.35-2521.90
Member Benefits	§2522.240-2522.250
Calculating Cost Per Member Service Year (MSY)	§2522.485
Performance Measures	§2522.500-2522.650
Evaluation	§2522.500-2522.540 and §2522.700-2522.740
Selection Criteria and Selection Process	§2522.400-2522.475

If there is any inconsistency between the AmeriCorps Regulations, the Notice, and the Application Instructions, this RFA, the order of precedence is as follows:

1. AmeriCorps Regulations 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550 take precedence over the
2. Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity/Notice of Federal Funding Availability, which takes precedence over the
3. Application Instructions
4. This RFA

AWARD INFORMATION

AmeriCorps and PennSERVE will not provide more than one grant for the same project in one fiscal year. Two projects will be considered the same if they: address the same issue areas, address the same priorities, address the same objectives, serve the same target communities and population, utilize the same sites, or use the same program staff and members.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Estimated Available Funds and Award Amounts

PennSERVE expects a highly competitive AmeriCorps grant competition. AmeriCorps reserves the right to prioritize providing funding to existing awards over making new awards. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations. In 2023-2024, PennSERVE awarded approximately $17.5 million in federal funding from the AmeriCorps agency to AmeriCorps programs.

Awards will be for funds and/or AmeriCorps member slots. Award amounts will vary. The general practice is to award no more than 50 member positions (slots) to organizations receiving an AmeriCorps grant for the first time. In general, *PennSERVE will not fund any program applying for less than 5 full-time equivalent members (5 MSY)*.

Program operating grant awards have two components: operating funds and AmeriCorps member positions. Grant award amounts vary – both in the level of operating funds and in the type and amount of AmeriCorps member positions – as determined by the scope of the projects. In 2023, award amounts for operating programs ranged from $170,530 to $4,646,000.

Project and Award Period

AmeriCorps grants generally cover a three-year project period. In approving a multi-year project period, PennSERVE and the AmeriCorps agency make an initial award for the first year of operation. The application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding is not guaranteed and shall be dependent on availability of future appropriations and satisfactory performance. Additional factors considered in awarding continuation grants include demonstrated capacity to manage the grant, compliance with grant requirements, and agency priorities. PennSERVE and AmeriCorps agency reserve the right to adjust the amount of a grant or elect not to continue funding for subsequent years.

Applicants who are funded may expect grant awards in **summer 2024**. Project period will be from **Aug. 20, 2024 – Aug. 19, 2025**. The project start date may not occur prior to the date PennSERVE awards the grant. AmeriCorps members may not enroll prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.

Type of Award

Cost Reimbursement Grants (Traditional): These grants fund a portion of program operating costs and member living allowances with flexibility to use all the funds for allowable costs regardless of whether the program recruits and retains all AmeriCorps members. Cost reimbursement grants include a formal matching requirement and require the submission of a budget and financial reports.

Table 2 Cost Reimbursement Grants Requirement

Maximum Cost per MSY	$25,000
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	Full-time, three quarter-time, half-time, reduced half-time, quarter-time, minimum time, abbreviated-time

Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

The following non-federal entities (all of which are defined in 2 CFR 200.1) who are registered in system for award management (SAM) and have a valid Unique Entity Identifier are eligible to apply:

- Indian tribes
- institutions of higher education
- local governments
- nonprofit organizations
- State Service Commissions; and,
- states and US Territories

Programs applying to PennSERVE must operate their program only within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Any programs serving more than one state must apply directly to AmeriCorps agency (see www.americorps.gov).

In addition, under Section 132A(b) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, organizations that have violated a federal criminal statute may not receive assistance described in this RFA. Note that under section 745 of Title VII, Division E of the Consolidated

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Appropriations Act, 2016, if AmeriCorps agency is aware that any corporation has any unpaid federal tax liability which—

- has been assessed;
- for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and,
- that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, that corporation is not eligible for an award under this RFA. (However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation which a federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has decided that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the federal government.) A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this RFA.

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. §501 (c)(4), that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply for AmeriCorps agency funding.

New Applicants

PennSERVE and AmeriCorps encourages organizations that have not received prior funding from AmeriCorps to apply (e.g., small community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, etc.).

Threshold Issues

- Applications should reflect that they meet the following threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying.

- If the proposed service activities require specialized member qualifications and/or training (e.g., tutoring programs: 45 CFR 2522.910-.940), the applicant must describe how the program will meet these requirements.

- In order to be considered for funding, all applicants must propose program designs that are either evidence-based or evidence-informed. Applicants assessed as lower than the Preliminary evidence tier (i.e., Pre-Preliminary) must provide adequate responses to the Evidence Quality review.

Special Requirements for AmeriCorps Programs in Pennsylvania

- Funded programs must be sufficiently staffed to manage the size and scope of the AmeriCorps program. While staffing varies per program, all programs funded by

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

PennSERVE must include at least one full-time equivalent dedicated to AmeriCorps program management.

- Funded programs are required to include the word "AmeriCorps" in their program name. This should be reflected in the application narrative and in field 11.a of the SF424, "Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project."
- AmeriCorps programs may be required to participate in local disaster preparedness planning efforts, including but not limited to emergency management training and management of volunteers. AmeriCorps members may be asked, or offered the opportunity, to participate in disaster services as needed.
- Every AmeriCorps member is required to wear gear that displays the AmeriCorps logo while engaging in service activities as an AmeriCorps member.
- Programs must include funding in the submitted budget to attend PennSERVE required trainings and for members to attend yearly AmeriCorps Week activities.
- Programs are required to use a specific online program management system, as determined by PennSERVE and to include funding in the submitted budget to cover system costs.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION

This RFA should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 C.F.R. §§ 2520–2550, and the AmeriCorps agency's NOFO, mandatory supplemental information, application instructions, and the national performance measure instructions which are incorporated by reference. These documents can be found at https://www.americorps.gov/partner/funding-opportunities. Full regulations are available online at www.ecfr.gov.

Opportunities to Apply

For the 2024-2025 Spring AmeriCorps Grant Competition, organizations have two opportunities to apply for funding. Organizations may apply for **an operational grant or a planning grant. This RFA is for a spring program operating grant for either new, recompete, or continuation applicants.   Please see our PennSERVE website for the RFA for planning grants.**

Program Operating Grants have two components: AmeriCorps member positions and operating funds. These grants are to provide funds to support AmeriCorps members along with various operational expenses, such as staff salaries, program materials, training costs, and other resources necessary for running the AmeriCorps program effectively**.**

Planning Grants are awarded to organizations that are in the early stages of developing an AmeriCorps program. These grants are designed to help organizations plan and design a new

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

AmeriCorps project. The funds can be used for activities such as conducting a needs assessment, developing program goals and objectives, creating a budget, establishing partnerships, and designing the overall structure of the AmeriCorps program. For information about our planning grant opportunity visit our website

Deadlines and Funding Timeline

See Table 3 for the application and funding timelines. See Table 4: Required Application Documents for a complete list of required documents and delivery instructions. Applications are due as follows:

Applications are due not later than, Wednesday March 6, 2024 by 5 p.m. ET

Complete application in eGrants web-based grant management system; and send documents via email to pennserve@pa.gov as listed in Table 4.

In the case of unresolved technical issues, PennSERVE may consider late submission requests that include documentation of technical difficulties and reserves the right to accept such applications on a case-by-case basis. Additional deadlines will be required throughout the application process, including deadlines for required revisions and responses to clarification questions from PennSERVE and/or the AmeriCorps agency.

Table 3: Spring Application/Funding Timeline

Intent to Apply - https://forms.office.com/g/JSfVuzqx0N	February 1, 2024, by 5:00 PM
Technical assistance webinar for new applicants	February 8, 2024, 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Register Here
Applications due in eGrants AND emailed documents due	**March 6, 2024,** by **5 p.m.**
PennSERVE Feedback and Clarification Period; revisions may be required	**April 2024**
PennSERVE's Submission of AmeriCorps Applications to AmeriCorps agency	**May 2024**
Grant award issued	**Summer 2024**
Starting Strong Training, Harrisburg, PA **(required for all funded programs)**	**June 20 – 21, 2024**
New Staff Training (required for all new staff of funded programs), Harrisburg, PA	**September 2024**

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Required Documents

In addition to the application narratives, logic model, performance measures, and budget, several additional documents are required. Please see the complete list of required documents in Table 4.

1) Single Audit or Form 990

Any applicant that receives federal funding in the amount of $750,000 or more in a fiscal year is required to submit their most recent Single Audit to pennserve@pa.gov. An applicant that does not meet the Single Audit threshold must submit their most recent 990.

2) Operational and Financial Management Survey

All applicants regardless of funding level are required to submit an Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS). Please use this link to complete and submit.

3) Labor Union Concurrence

If a program applicant:

- proposes to serve as the placement site for AmeriCorps members; and

- has employees engaged in the same or substantially similar work as that proposed to be carried out by AmeriCorps members; and those employees are represented by a local labor organization, then the application must include the written concurrence of the local labor organization representing those employees. Written concurrence can be in the form of a letter or e-mail from the local union leadership.

If a program applicant proposes to place AmeriCorps members at sites where they will be engaged in the same or substantially similar work as employees represented by a local labor organization, then the applicant must submit a written description of how it will ensure that:

- AmeriCorps members will not be placed in positions that were recently occupied by paid staff; and
- No AmeriCorps member will be placed into a position for which a recently resigned or discharged employee has recall rights because of a collective bargaining agreement, from which a recently resigned or discharged employee was removed because of a reduction in force, or from which a recently resigned/discharged employee is on leave or strike.

For the purposes of this section, "program applicant" includes any applicant to the AmeriCorps agency or PennSERVE, as well as any entity applying for assistance or approved national service positions through an AmeriCorps agency grantee or subgrantee.

4) Delinquent on Federal Debt (if applicable)

Any applicant that is delinquent on any federal debt must disclose this information at the time of application by submitting a complete explanation to pennserve@pa.gov at the same time they submit their application.

5) Alternative Match Request (if applicable)

Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at 45 C.F.R. § 2521.60(b). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community. Applicants that plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request to pennserve@pa.gov at the time the application is submitted. See information on applying for an alternative match in Appendix F.

6) Match Waiver Request (if applicable)

A match waiver can be requested to decrease the required match amount. Pennsylvania AmeriCorps State applicants or subgrantees must submit waiver requests to PennSERVE for review and approval. If PennSERVE approves the waiver request for submission, PennSERVE will submit to the AmeriCorps agency for review and final decision. Please see Appendix G.

7) American Rescue Plan Act Cash Match Replacement (if applicable)

PennSERVE has received American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, which will be awarded in accordance with AmeriCorps agency guidance. ARPA funds may be used to provide cash match replacement – cash match that is necessary for the program budget and not able to be secured. Cash match replacement funds are included in the Grantee share of your proposed budget, clearly noted in the budget narrative, and listed in the Source of Funds Chart; additional guidance is provided in Appendix A. **An applicant requesting ARPA cash match replacement funds must stay within the maximum cost per MSY of $25,000, inclusive of cash match replacement funds.**

8) Emailed Documents

Documents required to be emailed, as listed in Table 4 below, should be attached to an email to pennserve@pa.gov with the subject line "(Your Organization's Name) – Additional Grant Documents." In the body of the email, please list each document that you have attached.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Please note: PennSERVE cannot accept emails with attachments over 5MB.

Table 4: Required Application Documents

Documents Required for All Applicants (New, Recompete, and Continuation)		Further Instructions
Complete application in eGrants: • Narratives • Logic Model • Performance Measures • Budget		See section titles and Appendix for further instructions.
Most recent Single Audit or Form 990		Email to pennserve@pa.gov.
Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey		All applicants regardless of funding level are required to submit an Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey. Complete the online survey here: https://forms.office.com/g/uvn64Tsr57
Labor concurrence (if applicable as required under 45 C.F.R. §2522.100 (c))		Page 16; email to pennserve@pa.gov.
Federally approved Indirect Cost Agreement (if applicable)		Appendix E; submit through eGrants
Delinquent on federal debt explanation (if applicable)		See pg. 15; email to pennserve@pa.gov.
Alternative Match Schedule Request (if applicable)		Appendix F; email to pennserve@pa.gov.
Match Waiver Request (if applicable)		Appendix G; email to pennserve@pa.gov.

Documents Required for Specific Applicants	New	Recompete	Further Instructions
Evaluation briefs, reports, studies	X	X	Evidence Base, page 26-31 Email to pennserve@pa.gov.
Program evaluation plan		X	Evaluation Plan, see more details in Evaluating Plan section on page 35. Please use the evaluation plan template available on the Notice webpage. Email to pennserve@pa.gov.
Evaluation report		X - Recompete applicants who have previously received **six or more years** of funding for the same project being proposed:	Evaluation report. Please submit in Word. The evaluation report should *include a title page with the AmeriCorps grant number for the project that was evaluated*, the name of the project, and the date of completion of the report. If any of this required information is missing, the applicant may not receive credit for meeting their evaluation requirements. Email to pennserve@pa.gov.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Application Content

In eGrants, the AmeriCorps agency's web-based management system, applicants will enter the following components of a complete application:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet: This is automatically generated when applicants complete the data elements in the system;
- Narratives:
  - Executive summary;
  - Program design;
  - Organizational capability;
  - Cost effectiveness and budget adequacy;
  - Evaluation summary/plan (if applicable);
- Logic model;
- Standard Form 424 Budget;
- Performance measures; and,
- Authorization, assurances, and certification.

Page Limits

There are two-page limits that must be adhered to: narrative and logic model. **Please note the length of a document in word processing software may be different than what will print out in eGrants.** Reviewers will not consider any submitted material that exceeds the page limits in the printed report. The eGrants system will not prevent an applicant from exceeding page limits. This applies to both the application page limit and the logic model page limit.

Narrative

New and recompeting applications **may not exceed 10 pages** printed in PDF format from eGrants.

In determining whether an applicant complies with page limits, PennSERVE will count the following for the narrative:

- the applicant's executive summary, SF 424 Facesheet; and,
- the narrative portions contained in the program design, organizational capability, and cost effectiveness and budget adequacy sections of the application.

The application page limit does not include the Evaluation Summary/Plan, Clarification Summary, Continuation Changes, Budget Performance Measures, or any required documents.

PennSERVE will consider the number of pages only as they print out from the "Review" tab in eGrants (where you will see the "View/Print your application" heading) when determining

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

compliance for page limits. PennSERVE will not consider the results of any alternative printing methods in determining whether an application complies with the applicable page limits. PennSERVE strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the "Review" tab prior to submission to check that the application does not exceed the page limit. The application page limit does not include the budget, narrative portion of the evaluation plan, the logic model, performance measures, or any required additional documents, if applicable.

Logic Model

The logic model **may not exceed eight pages**, as printed from eGrants.

Additional Documents

See Section IV.C and [Table 4](#) for information on additional documents.

Do not submit other items not requested in this RFA. Neither PennSERVE nor the AmeriCorps agency will review or return them.

System Requirements

Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

All applicants **must** register with the [System for Award Management (SAM)](#) at https://www.sam.gov/SAM and maintain an active SAM registration and Unique Entity Identifier until the application process is complete and, if a grant is awarded, throughout the life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. **Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and physical address on all grant applications to PennSERVE and AmeriCorps agency. The legal applicant's name and physical address in eGrants must match exactly the applicant's SAM-registered information.** Applicants that do not comply with these requirements may become ineligible to receive an award.

It is recommended that applicants **finalize a new SAM registration or renew an existing one at least three weeks before the application deadline**. This should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. It typically takes seven to ten days to finalize SAM.gov registration. To complete the registration process, you will need to submit detailed information on your organization in various categories relevant to federal procurement and financial transactions:

- General information, such as organization name, EIN, DUNS, location, income, and number of employees;
- Corporate information, such as organization type (e.g., state government, nonprofit);
- Financial information, such as financial institution, bank account numbers, and credit card information; and,

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- Point of contact information, such as primary and alternate points of contact.

Use the [SAM Quick Guide for Grantees for more information](). You should review the guide before you begin the registration process.

Applications must include a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), which is generated as part of the SAM registration process. AmeriCorps will not make awards to entities that do not have a valid SAM registration and UEI.

Applications must include an Employer Identification Number. The UEI and Employer Identification Number must be entered by the organization's Grantee Administrator as an organization attribute, and this will apply the information to all applications for the organization.

PA Vendor ID

Pennsylvania requires that all grant applicants have a Pennsylvania Vendor Number. All applicants must be registered as vendors to apply, to be awarded funds, or to be paid. Vendor numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the Vendor Data Management Unit at 717-346-2676 or 1-877-435-7363, or online at https://www.budget.pa.gov/Services/ForVendors/Pages/Vendor-Registration.aspx (click on "Non-Procurement Vendor"). It may take up to two weeks to receive a vendor number. If you are unable to obtain a Pennsylvania vendor number in a timely fashion, you may submit the application prior to receiving your vendor number; however, **no grant will be awarded without a Pennsylvania vendor number**.

Electronic Application Submission in eGrants

Applicants will be required to apply through eGrants, the AmeriCorps agency web-based grants management system. If you do not currently have an eGrants account, please access the following link: https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp and select "Create an account." It is strongly recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the eGrants application creation process at least three weeks before the application due date.

The applicant's authorized representative must be the person who submits the application. The authorized representative must be using eGrants under his or her own account to sign and submit the application. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Contact the AmeriCorps Hotline at (800) 942-2677 or via
https://questions.americorps.gov/app/ask if a problem arises when creating an account or preparing or submitting the application.

Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the notice to which the organization is applying. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, applicants must continue working with the AmeriCorps Hotline to submit their application via eGrants. When contacting the AmeriCorps Hotline, obtain a ticket number every time.

Funding Restrictions

Member Living Allowance

The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members between $18,700 (minimum) and $37,400 (maximum) per member except as noted below.

Programs are not required to provide a living allowance for members serving in less than full-time terms of service. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to a less than full-time member, it must comply with the maximum limits in the table below. PennSERVE encourages programs to provide a living allowance for all members, regardless of service term. A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage and may not be paid hourly. However, PennSERVE strongly encourages applicants to budget for a living allowance that is reasonable; using comparable hourly wages is helpful in determining an appropriate living allowance. For example, a full-time living allowance of $18,700 is approximately $11/hour; a living allowance of $25,500 is approximately $15.00/hour.

The living allowance amount must be included in the proposed budget as either AmeriCorps agency or grantee share. (See exceptions below.)

Table 5: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1,700	$18,700	$37,400
Three-quarter-time	1,200	n/a	$26,180
One-year half-time	900	n/a	$18,700
Reduced half-time	675	n/a	$14,212
Quarter-time	450	n/a	$9,724
Minimum-time	300	n/a	$7,854
Abbreviated-time	100	n/a	$2,244

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements
Programs existing prior to Sept. 21, 1993 are not required to offer a living allowance. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement but not the maximum requirement set forth in the Living Allowance table.

Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

The AmeriCorps agency cost per MSY is determined by dividing the AmeriCorps agency share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include childcare or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum amount an applicant may request from the AmeriCorps agency per MSY is determined on an annual basis. One MSY is equivalent to 1,700 service hours, or a full-time AmeriCorps position. **In 2024-2025, the maximum cost per MSY for cost-reimbursement grants is $25,000.**

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will be eligible for an education award from the National Service Trust. The amount of the education award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant, as included in the annual federal budget. A member has up to seven years after their term of service to use the education award. The AmeriCorps agency will provide the updated education award amounts on or about the time of the grant award. Use the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award webpage for more information.
As the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award is paid from the National Service Trust, it should not be included in the program budget.

Match Requirements

Applicants are required to match funds based on the chart below. The applicant's match can be non-AmeriCorps cash and/or in-kind contributions. Applicants must indicate whether the match is proposed or secured. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet the match requirement at the time of application submission.

A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR 2521.60 and below.

Table 6: Grantee Match Requirements Based on Year of Funding

AmeriCorps Funding Year	1, 2, 3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Grantee Share Requirements	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

[42 U.S.C. §12571(e)](42 U.S.C. §12571(e))requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds. Grantees must track and report on that match to PennSERVE quarterly.

Program requirements, including requirements on match, are in the AmeriCorps regulations and summarized below.

- Minimum grantee share is 24 percent of program costs for the first three years. Overall grantee share of total program costs increases gradually beginning in Year 4 to 50 percent by the tenth year of funding and any year thereafter. Match requirements based on year of funding are in Table 7. Cost reimbursement grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, if you meet the minimum match of 24 percent for the first three years, and the increasing minimums in years thereafter. See 45 C.F.R. §§ 2521.35–2521.95 for the specific regulations.
- The acceptable sources of matching funds are federal, state, local, and/or private sector funds, in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements.
- In the "Source of Funds" field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the match. Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (private, state/local, or federal) for your entire match. Define all acronyms the first time they are used.
- Section 121(e)(5) of NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12571(e)) requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to the AmeriCorps agency on a Federal Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout.

Note: The AmeriCorps agency legislation permits the use of non-AmeriCorps agency federal funds as match for the grantee share of the budget. Please discuss your intention of using federal funds to match an AmeriCorps grant with the other agency prior to submitting your application. Section 121(e)(5) of the NCSA, 42 U.S.C. § 12571(e)(5), requires that grantees that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to the AmeriCorps agency. If you use other federal funds as match, you must ensure you can meet the requirements and purpose of both grants. PennSERVE grantees that use federal funds as match will be required to obtain and maintain letters from the federal agency(ies) that expressly permit use of funds as match and will be required to report the sources and amounts on Aggregate Financial Reports.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Indirect Costs

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants may either use a Federally approved indirect cost rate, a 10 percent de minimis rate of modified total direct costs or may claim certain costs directly as outlined in 2 CFR 200.4133. States and local governments may use previously approved indirect cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across federal awards.

Applicants that have a federal negotiated indirect cost rate or that will be using the 10 percent de minimis rate must enter that information in the Organization section in the AmeriCorps agency's web-based management system. See Appendix E. However, under Section 121(d) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the AmeriCorps agency's regulations at 45 CFR 2521.95 and 2540.110 , no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants.

Please note: To request a federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, when AmeriCorps is the applicable cognizant agency for an organization's indirect costs, the applicant must submit a request to IndirectCostRate@cns.gov. The applicant may also obtain instructions and additional information by contacting the email address above.

Recommendations

The narrative sections of the application are your opportunity to convince reviewers that your project meets the selection criteria as outlined in the RFA. Below are some general recommendations to help you present your project in a way the reviewers will find compelling and persuasive.

- **Lead from your program strengths and be explicit.** Do not try to stretch your proposed program description to fit each funding priority and special consideration articulated in the regulations or the RFA.
- **Be clear and succinct.** Reviewers are not interested in jargon, boilerplate, rhetoric, or exaggeration. They are interested in learning precisely what you intend to do, and how your project responds to the selection criteria.
- **Avoid circular reasoning.** The problem you describe should not be defined as the lack of the solution you are proposing.
- **Explain how.** Avoid simply stating that the criteria will be met. Explicitly describe how the proposed project will meet the criteria.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- **Don't make assumptions.** Even if you have received funding from the AmeriCorps agency in the past, do not assume your reviewers know anything about you, your proposed program, your partners, or your beneficiaries. Avoid overuse of acronyms.
- **Use an impartial proofreader.** Before you submit your application, let someone who is unfamiliar with your project read and critique the project narrative.
- **Follow the instructions and discuss each criterion in the order they are presented.** Use headings to differentiate narrative sections by criterion. To best respond to the criteria listed in the RFA, we suggest that you include a brief discussion of each bullet if it pertains to your application.

Technical Assistance

As noted in Table 3, PennSERVE will offer a technical assistance webinar for new applicants on **February 8, 2024; 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m**. Register Here

This fall, the AmeriCorps agency organized technical assistance calls to address inquiries related to the funding opportunity and eGrants. For schedules and additional resources, please visit their website at: http://www.americorps.gov/partner/funding-opportunities

If you cannot find the information you are looking for in the AmeriCorps agency resources or this Request for Applications, questions may be submitted to PennSERVE at pennserve@pa.gov. The subject of the email should be "2024 AmeriCorps Application Question <Applicant Name>." Questions will be answered as they are received.

APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION New and Recompeting Program Operating Grant Applicants Criteria

Each applicant must describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to address a significant community need. PennSERVE and the AmeriCorps agency urge applicants to submit high quality applications that carefully follow the guidance in this request for applications and in the Application Instructions. The quality of an application will be an important factor in determining whether an organization will receive funding.

Applications should include a well-designed plan with clear and compelling justifications for receiving the requested funds. Reviewers will assess the quality of applications by using the selection criteria described below and will rate them accordingly.

Table 7: Basic Selection Criteria (New and Recompeting Program Operating Grant Applicants)

Categories/Subcategories	Percentage
Executive Summary	**0**
Program Design	**50**
Community and Logic Model	24
Evidence Tier	12
Evidence Quality	8
Notice Priority	0
Member Experience	6
Organizational Capability	**25**
Organizational Background and Staffing	15
Member Supervision	6
Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility	4
Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	**25**
Member Recruitment	7
Member Retention	8
Data Collection	7
Budget Alignment to Program Design	3

Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. Do not deviate from this template.

"The [Name of the organization] will have [Number of] AmeriCorps members who will [service activities the members will be doing] in [the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage [number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable] who will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing].

The AmeriCorps investment will be matched with $[amount of projected match], $[amount of local, state, and Federal funds] in public funding and $[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding."

Program Design (50 percent)

Reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant demonstrates how AmeriCorps members, and the proposed intervention are particularly well-suited to addressing the identified community problem. Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

to the criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value. Please ensure the Community and Logic Model incorporates the funding priorities listed above, for example supporting communities historically excluded and/or underserved from government services, addressing structural and institutional inequities, or increasing opportunity to achieve sustainable change in communities.

Community Logic Model (24 points)

For the **Community Logic Model Section** consists of two sections:

1. **S*ummary of the community problem:*** applicants should provide a narrative ***detailing*** the community problem including:

- The role current or historical inequities faced by the underserved communities may play in contributing to the problem.
- The community need as it relates to the [CDC's Social Vulnerability Index](#) and to communicate the severity and prevalence of the problem.
- The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the organization's Logic Model.

2. The Logic Model: No narrative is needed other than what is contained within the logic model.

The applicant will depict in the Logic Model:
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
  - Locations or sites in which members will provide services
  - Context in which the intervention is delivered (e.g., the setting where the intervention is delivered)
  - Number of AmeriCorps members who will deliver the intervention
  - Characteristics of AmeriCorps members, including specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required to implement the intervention
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
  - Duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions, or months of the intervention)
  - Dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)
  - Target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level)

- The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e., number of beneficiaries served, types and number of activities conducted, equity gaps closed). If applicable, identify which [National Performance Measures](#) will be used as output indicators

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur because of the intervention. If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators.

Note: The Logic Model is a visual representation of the applicant's Theory of Change. Programs should include short, medium, or long-term outcomes in the Logic Model. Applicants are not required to measure all components of their Logic Model. The applicant's performance measures should be consistent with the program's Logic Model and should represent significant program activities.

Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization's performance data (e.g., program data observed over time that suggests targets are reasonable), relevant research (e.g., targets documented by organizations running similar programs with similar populations), or prior program evaluation findings.

Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention. Logic model content that exceeds eight pages will not be reviewed.

Evidence Base (20 points)
The assessment of an applicant's evidence base has two parts. First, the applicant will be assigned to an **evidence tier** (use the Mandatory Supplemental Information). Second, the **quality of the applicant's evidence** and the degree to which it supports the proposed program design, including program aligned with the priority areas, will be assessed and scored.

Evidence Tier (12 points)

An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of understanding the relative strength of each applicant's evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the logic model.

In 2023, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 25%, Moderate 12%, Preliminary 20%, and Pre-Preliminary 43%. As these figures indicate, AmeriCorps values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. Thus, **applicants should not be deterred from applying for funding due to their current evidence level.**

Applicants who have outcome or impact evaluation reports of the same intervention described in the application and Logic Model (use the Mandatory Supplemental Information for a definition of "same intervention") may submit up to two of those reports, plus (if applicable) the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle, to qualify for the Preliminary,

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Moderate, or Strong evidence tier. In order to qualify for consideration, the intervention evaluated in the submitted report(s) must match the intervention proposed by the applicant in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Community and Logic Model sections of the application:

- Characteristics of the beneficiary population, including evidence of current or historic inequities facing the population;
- Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention;
- Dosage (frequency and duration) and design of the intervention, including all key components and activities;
- The context in which the intervention is delivered; and
- Outcome of the intervention.

Submitted reports that do not sufficiently match the intervention proposed by the applicant in all these areas will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points. Submission of additional documents that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements described in the RFA (e.g., advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives that are not research studies or program evaluations) will not be reviewed.

In the Evidence Tier section of the application narrative, applicants must (1) summarize the study design and key findings of any outcome or impact evaluation report(s) submitted and (2) describe any other evidence that supports their program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform their program design. Applicants who submit evaluation reports for consideration must also describe in the Evidence Base section of the application narrative how the intervention described in the submitted reports is the same as the intervention described in the application.

Applicants should provide citations for the studies they describe, if applicable; however, reviewers will not review any documents external to the application other than evaluation report(s) submitted in accordance with the RFA instructions.

Applicants must meet all requirements of an evidence tier to be considered for that tier.

If the evaluation reports submitted by the applicant do not meet the definitions in this RFA, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier.

Evidence Quality (8 points)

After the applicant's evidence tier has been assessed, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the extent to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

Applicants who are assessed as being in the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tiers, reviewers will score the submitted evaluation reports using the following standards:

- The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.);

- The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years;

- The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries or AmeriCorps members in at least one key outcome of interest.

Applicants that are assessed as being in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier, reviewers will score the narrative provided in the Evidence Base section of the application using the following standards:

- The applicant uses relevant evidence, including past performance measure data and/or cited research studies, to inform their proposed program design;

- The described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years;

- The evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries or AmeriCorps members in at least one key outcome of interest.

Applicants assessed in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier that do not provide adequate responses to the Evidence Quality standards will not meet the threshold requirements for this RFA and will not be considered for funding.

AmeriCorps Agency Priority (0 points)

- The applicant's proposed program fits within one or more of the AmeriCorps agency funding priorities and meets all the requirements within that bullet/section as outlined in the Funding Priorities section and more fully described in the Mandatory Supplemental Information.

Member Experience (6 points)

- The applicant details how AmeriCorps members will be provided an opportunity to be leaders and gain skills during their term of service that will be valued by future employers (e.g., workforce pathways, increasing levels of responsibility and leadership roles for members).

- The applicant details how AmeriCorps members will be provided a high-quality orientation to the community they will serve in that is from an asset based frame and guided and informed by the community.

Organizational Capability (25 percent)

Reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant demonstrates organizational background and staffing and structures, including compliance and accountability, to support the proposed program. Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the following criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

Organizational Background and Staffing (15 points)

- The applicant details the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing, providing oversight, and monitoring the program.

- The applicant has facilitated, partnered, or participated in educational or workforce development programs (i.e., pre-apprenticeship/registered apprenticeship, work experience and job training programs, etc.).

- The applicant describes their organization's mission and relevant experience in areas such as volunteer recruitment and management, community outreach, overcoming project implementation challenges, etc.

Member Supervision (6 points)

- The applicant details how AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service (e.g., structure for member supervision: cadence and format of supervisor/AmeriCorps member check-ins, member and supervisor opportunities to assess strengths and opportunities for growth, member training plan, etc.).

The applicant details how AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations (e.g., structure for support of supervisors, training plan for supervisors related to supervision and AmeriCorps rules and regulations, cadence and format of AmeriCorps supervisors/their supervisors check ins, opportunities to assess strengthens and opportunities for growth of supervisors, etc.).

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (4 points)

- The leadership and staff of the organization have similar lived experience as the beneficiary population and/or community being served.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- The applicant's definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility is demonstrated by the organization (e.g., diversity on the Board of Directors, agency staff and leadership, and/or volunteers) and the organization upholds a supportive and safe environment for individuals of diverse backgrounds.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

Reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant demonstrates the degree to which there is cost effectiveness and budget adequacy to support the proposed program.

Reviewers will assess the quality of the application's responses to the following criteria below.

Member Recruitment (7 points)

- The applicant provides a description of budget expenses to support successful recruitment of AmeriCorps members best suited to serve the community, for example from geographic or demographic communities in which the program operates.

Member Retention (8 points)

- The applicant provides a description of budget expenses to support retention of AmeriCorps members (e.g., additional member benefits such as increasing above the minimum living allowance, supporting workforce pathways, certifications, coaching for members, resume building, individual benefit as well as community building, network building, member recognition, alumni programming, etc.).

Data Collection (7 Points)

- The applicant provides a description of budget expenses to support data collection, continuous improvement activities, and evaluation in service to evaluating the interventions and impact on the community and the member experience).

Budget Alignment to Program Design (3 points)

- The applicant's budget is aligned to the program design outlined in the narrative, meaning activities discussed in the narrative are incorporated in the budget in the agency or applicant share.

  Budget complies with the Application Instructions in Appendix B.

  - The applicant meets match requirements and identifies sources in the Source of Funds section of the budget
  - The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum cost per MSY.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- Proposed budgets that contain MSY costs that exceed the maximum cost per MSY and/or less than required match will be considered unresponsive to the application criteria.

PennSERVE Required Costs

- In Section I – Staff travel:
  - Include costs for at least one staff person to attend two required trainings during the 2024-2025 program year: one two-day training and one single-day training. Assume trainings will be held in Harrisburg, PA. Include costs for applicable travel, meals, and lodging.
  - Include costs for at least one staff member to attend the National Service Training Conference. Assume the conference will be held out of state. Include costs for applicable travel, meals, and lodging. Include registration in Section I – Staff Training.

- In Section I – Staff Training – Include registration for at least one staff person to attend the National Service Training Conference.

- In Section I – Other support costs, include costs for required National Service Criminal History Checks for AmeriCorps members and covered staff. Include costs for the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW), state check(s) and/or FBI check in the federal share of the budget. If funds are not budgeted for all covered individuals, an explanation must be noted in the budget.

- In Section I – Member travel, including costs for all members and relevant staff to attend a statewide AmeriCorps Week event. Assume the event will be in Harrisburg, PA, and include costs to transport members for one day. Lodging may also be included.

- In Section I – Contractual and Consultant Services, include costs for the OnCorps member management system. Cost is $16.80 per member slot (not MSY) per year. For instance, a program with 20 half-time member slots and 10 MSY will pay $336 (20 members x $16.80 per member). Programs with PennSERVE approval to use a separate timekeeping system (e.g., professional corps programs with approval) must budget $300 to cover financial and progress reporting for the year. This cost is subject to change.

- In Section I – Supplies, include costs to supply members with adequate AmeriCorps service gear. Members must display the AmeriCorps logo while in service and members should be dressed uniformly during large service projects (wearing AmeriCorps tees, AmeriCorps hooded sweatshirts, etc.)

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- In Section I – If opting into the member assistance program (optional), visit https://www.statecommissions.org/americorps-member-assistance-program to access pricing.

Evaluation Plan / Report (Required for recompeting grantees - 0 percent)

All applicants should enter "N/A" in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field of the Narrative. Any other text entered in this field will not be reviewed.

If the applicant has previously received **six or more years of funding** for the same project being proposed, the applicant must submit both **an evaluation plan and an evaluation report** as attachments.

If the applicant has previously received three or more years of funding for the same project being proposed, the applicant must submit an evaluation plan as an attachment (see *Table 4: Required Application Documents* for more information). Two projects will be considered the same if they: address the same issue areas, address the same priorities, address the same objectives, serve the same target communities and population, utilize the same sites, or use the same program staff and members.

Applicants should use the evaluation plan template to craft their evaluation plans. The template document provides detailed information about the AmeriCorps evaluation requirements (45 C.F.R. 2522.700-710) and specifies the information that must be provided for the evaluation plan to be approved by AmeriCorps. The evaluation plan will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

Amendment Justification (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used if the applicant is awarded a grant and needs to amend it.

Clarification Information (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field may be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-notification period. Please clearly label new information added during clarification with the date.

Continuation Changes (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter changes in the application narratives in continuation requests.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Review and Selection Process

The grant selection process includes the following steps:

1. determining whether a proposal complies with the application requirements, such as deadlines and eligibility requirements;
2. applying the basic selection criteria articulated in the AmeriCorps regulations;
3. determining the strength of the need and evidence base for the program;
4. determining the level of alignment with the criteria detailed throughout this RFA; and,
5. ensuring innovation and geographic, demographic, and programmatic diversity across the AmeriCorps portfolio.

Do not assume reviewers are familiar with your grant program, even if you are recompeting. Please provide sufficient information in your application to make your program clear to a reviewer.

In evaluating your application for funding, reviewers will assess your program design, organizational capability, the program's cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy, and the program's evaluation plan or evaluation (for recompeting grantees). The weights assigned to each category and sub-category are listed in Table 7 (new and recompeting applicants). Reviewers will measure your application narrative against these criteria and weigh them accordingly.

PennSERVE may request additional clarification concerning your application or require revisions as needed.

After conducting a staff review, PennSERVE staff will make recommendations to the PennSERVE Advisory Board for funding. Applications not funded through this process may be considered for funding through a planning grant process.

eGrants Application Detailed Submission Instructions – New/Recompete

If you are an existing eGrants user, go to eGrants Login (cns.gov) to login
New applicants need to establish an eGrants account by accessing this link: **Create an account**

In eGrants, before starting the **Applicant Info Section** you will need to:
- Start a new grant application;
- Select a program area (**AmeriCorps**); and,
- Select a NOFA (notice of funds available):
2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- o **FY 2024 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission** (New and Cont)
- o and Select **Pennsylvania as** the state to which you are applying
- o Select the **PennSERVE application ID** provided to you by PennSERVE (*to be emailed after letters of intent are received).*

Your application consists of the following components. Make sure to complete each section.

- A. Applicant info;
- B. Application info;
- C. Narratives;
- D. Logic model;
- E. Performance measures;
- F. Program information;
- G. Documents;
- H. Budget;
- I. Funding/Demographics;
- J. Review; and,
- K. Authorize, and submit.

Applicant Info

Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF 424 Facesheet.

- If you are recompeting (in the final year of a funding cycle and applying for a new grant cycle), select **Continuation/Renewal.**
- If you are not a current grantee but have received an AmeriCorps grant in the past five years, select **Continuation/Renewal.**
- If you are applying for the first time or are a former grantee whose last AmeriCorps grant was received more than five years ago, select **New. (Note: previous funding history for the same project, even if more than five years ago, may still affect some application requirements; see the Notice of Funding Opportunity for more details)**
- If you are a current planning grantee applying for an implementation grant, select **New.**

Enter or update the requested information in the fields that appear. **The contact person needs to be the person who can answer questions about the application and enter information into eGrants.**

In the Application Info Section enter:

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- Areas affected by your proposed program. Please include city or county information, followed by the two-letter capitalized state abbreviation (PA).
- Requested project period start and end dates. Please enter Aug. 20, 2024 – Aug. 19, 2025.
- State Application Identifier: Enter N/A.
- The Application is Subject to Review by State Executive Order 12372 Process: This is pre-filled as "No, this is not applicable."
- Indicate Yes or No if you are delinquent on any federal debt. If yes, provide an explanation.

Narratives

Complete all narratives as directed in this RFA. In eGrants, you will enter text for:

- Executive summary;
- Rationale and approach (Program design);
- Organizational capability;
- Cost effectiveness and budget adequacy; and,
- Evaluation summary or plan. **Enter N/A.**
  - If you have previously received three or more years of funding for the same project proposed in your application (see Evaluation Plan section for more information on how to submit your evaluation plan.)

The narratives section also includes fields for Clarification Summary, Amendment Justification, and Continuation Changes. **Please enter N/A in these fields. These may be used later years to enter information for clarification, to request amendments once a grant is awarded, and to enter changes in the narrative in continuation requests.**

Logic Model

- To begin entering your logic model from your eGrants application page select "Logic Model" in the left side navigation menu.
- In the first blank row of the logic model click "edit." Clicking this link will open a pop-up screen with fields for each column of the logic model. Complete any fields that are applicable; there are no required fields in this screen. When you are finished, click "save and close."
- You may add an unlimited number of rows by clicking "add a new row," but **you must remain within the eight-page limit for the logic model, as it prints from eGrants.**

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- You may edit or delete an existing row by clicking "edit" or "delete" in the last column of the logic model.

National Performance Measures

The AmeriCorps agency expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of a comprehensive performance measurement strategy that relies on both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work and make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals.

All applicants must submit performance measures with their application. See Appendix A for instructions for entering performance measures and see the National Performance Measure Instructions for more detail.

Program Information

In the Program Information Section, applicants must check the relevant boxes that align with the proposed program design. Applicants should only check the boxes for those characteristics that represent a significant part of the program.

AmeriCorps Funding Priorities
Check any priority area(s) that apply to the proposed program. Only select priorities that represent a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes.

Grant Characteristics
Check any grant characteristics that are a significant part of the proposed program.

Documents

In addition to the application submitted in eGrants, you are required to provide your labor concurrence (if necessary), a federally approved indirect cost agreement (if applicable), an explanation of federal debt delinquency (if applicable), and other required documents listed in this RFA. After you have submitted the documents to PennSERVE, change their status in eGrants from the default "Not Sent" to the applicable status "Sent," "Not Applicable," or "Already on File at CNCS." See table 4 for a full list of documents and instructions on how to submit to PennSERVE.

Budget Instructions

Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your narrative. Reviewers will consider the information you provide in this section in their assessment of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criterion.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Please include complete calculations for all line items. Follow the detailed budget instructions in Appendix B to prepare your budget. Prior to submission, be sure to review the Budget Analysis Checklist (Appendix C) to ensure your budget is compliant.

As you prepare your budget:

- All the amounts you request must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.
- Itemize each cost and present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.
- Do not include unallowable expenses, e.g., entertainment costs (which include food and beverage costs) unless they are justified as an essential component of an activity.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).
- **Please add the costs associated with the National Service Criminal History Checks. These include the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW), state check, and FBI check for criminal history checks for each covered position in the budget. If funds are not budgeted, you must note in the budget an explanation for how you will cover the costs.**

Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and the requirements of the uniform guidance. Please refer to the uniform guidance, cost principles, and audit requirements for federal awards (2 C.F.R. Parts 200 and 2205) for allowable, allocable, and reasonable cost information, as well as audit requirements, including the need to provide audits to the Clearinghouse if expending over $750,000 in federal funds. The Uniform Guidance is *online*.

Funding/Demographics

In the Funding/Demographics Section enter:

- Other Revenue funds. Enter the amount of funds that your program uses to run the program that are not identified on the application budget as AmeriCorps federal share or grantee share (match). Note: Programs should not enter the total operating budget for their organization unless the entire operating budget supports the AmeriCorps program. Programs that have additional revenue sources not included in the matching funds section of the budget should provide the amount of this additional revenue that supports the program. This amount should not include the AmeriCorps or grantee share amounts in the budget.
- Number of volunteers generated by AmeriCorps members. Please enter the number of volunteers participating in one-day service projects or ongoing volunteer commitments that the proposed AmeriCorps members will generate.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Review, Authorize, and Submit

eGrants requires that you review and verify your entire application before submitting by completing the following sections in eGrants:

- Review;
- Authorize;
- Assurances;
- Certifications;
- Verify; and,
- Submit.

Read the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications carefully. The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant's Authorized Representative or their designee and must have an active eGrants account to sign these documents electronically. An Authorized Representative is the person in your organization authorized to accept and commit funds on behalf of the organization. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Be sure to check your entire application to ensure that there are no errors before submitting it. When you verify the application, eGrants will also generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected prior to submission. If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant's Authorized Representative, that person must log into their eGrants account and proceed to Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, their name will override any previous signatory that may appear and show on the application as the authorized representative.

Note: Everyone within your organization who will be entering information in the application at any point during application preparation and submission in the eGrants system must have their own eGrants account. Individuals may establish an eGrants account by accessing the [eGrants webpage](#) and selecting "Don't have an eGrants account? Create an account."

Continuation Grants: Criteria and eGrants Application Instructions

The following instructions for submitting a continuation request apply only to programs that are currently in their first or second year of operation within a grant cycle. If your program is currently in the final year of its grant cycle, you must apply using the application instructions for new and recompeting programs.

How to Submit Your Continuation Request
2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- Click **Continuation/Renewal** on your eGrants home page. You will be shown a list of grants that are eligible to be continued. Select the grant you wish to continue. **Make sure you select the correct one. Do not start a new application**. The system will copy your most recently awarded application.
- Edit your continuation application as directed in the continuation request instructions below. When you have completed your work, click the **SUBMIT** button.

Your application consists of the following components. Make sure to complete each section.

- Applicant info;
- Application info;
- Narratives;
- Logic model;
- Performance measures;
- Program information;
- Documents;
- Budget;
- Funding/Demographics;
- Review; and,
- Authorize, and submit.

Applicant Info and Application Info

Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF 424 Facesheet. Update the Applicant Info and Application Info sections in eGrants if necessary. Note in the Continuation field that you have updated the Applicant Info or Application Info section(s).

Narratives – Continuation Applicants

Your original application will appear in the Executive Summary and in the narrative sections Rationale and Approach/Program Design, Organizational Capability, Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, Evaluation Summary or Plan, Amendment Justification, Clarification Information, and Continuation Changes, as appropriate. **Do not modify these original narrative fields.**

AmeriCorps expects that programs will maintain a consistent program design for the duration of the three-year project period; however, the AmeriCorps agency and PennSERVE recognize

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

that, on occasion, some programmatic changes are necessary. As a result, continuation applicants may request the changes listed below during the continuation process.

Information should be provided in the **Continuation Changes** narrative field as relevant:

- Changes in operating sites;
- Significant changes in program scope or design;
- Changes to performance measures;
- Significant Changes to Monitoring Structures or Staffing; or,
- Budget Revisions.

The page limit for the Continuation Changes field is **six pages**, as the pages print out from eGrants.

Any continuation applicant not requesting changes that fit within the above categories should enter "N/A" in Continuation Changes. The AmeriCorps agency expects that most continuation applications will not be requesting changes.

Evaluation plans are approved by the AmeriCorps agency when applicants re-compete for funding. If you wish to make changes to your evaluation plan, do NOT change the text of the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in your application. Instead, send a revised version of the evaluation plan (with the proposed changes in track-changes mode) as an attachment to PennSERVE@pa.gov. PennSERVE will coordinate with the AmeriCorps agency and notify you if the changes are approved.

Logic Model

Continuation applicants do not need to enter content into the Logic Model fields.

Performance Measures

Your performance measures are copied from your previous year's application into your continuation request. If you made changes to your program, such as adding or changing grant-funded activities, or requesting additional slots or MSYs, you may need to revise your performance measures. Continuation applicants whose measures do not align with the current-year Performance Measure Instructions must also revise their measures to conform with the current instructions.

To revise your performance measures, "View/Edit" the performance measures that copy over from your original application or add new performance measures. Note in the continuation changes field that you have updated your performance measures. If you are proposing to

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

significantly increase or decrease output or outcome targets for existing performance measures, provide a justification for this change in the continuation narrative.

See Appendix A for instructions for entering performance measures and see the National Performance Measure Instructions at https://www.americorps.gov/partner/funding-opportunities more detail.

Program Information

In the Program Information Section, review and make selections as appropriate. Applicants should only select priorities and characteristics that represent a significant part of the program.

AmeriCorps Funding Priorities
Check any priority area(s) that apply to the proposed program. Only select priorities that represent a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes.

Grant Characteristics
Check any grant characteristics that are a significant part of the proposed program.

Documents

In addition to the application submitted in eGrants, you are required to provide your labor concurrence (if necessary), a federally approved indirect cost agreement (if applicable), an explanation of federal debt delinquency (if applicable), and other required documents listed in this RFA. After you have submitted the documents to PennSERVE, change their status in eGrants from the default "Not Sent" to the applicable status "Sent," "Not Applicable," or "Already on File at CNCS." See table 4 for a full list of documents and instructions on how to submit to PennSERVE.

Budget Instructions

Your budget from the previous year's application is copied into your continuation request so you can make the necessary adjustments. Revise your detailed budget for the upcoming year. Incorporate any required the AmeriCorps agency increases, such as an increase to the member living allowance, into your budget. Please ensure you are including all required PennSERVE budget items. **Continuation applicants may apply for expansions are increases in dollars, MSY, and/or members.** Expansion requests may not exceed the maximum cost/MSY.

Source of Funds (Match)

In the "Source of Funds" field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the match. Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (private, state/local, or federal) for your **entire match**. (The total amount in the Source of Funds field should match the total amount in the budget narrative **exactly**.) Define all acronyms the first time they are used.

See Appendices B and C for Budget Instructions and a Budget Analysis checklist.

Funding/Demographics

AmeriCorps requires grantees to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as you maintain the minimum match of 24% for the first three years and the increasing minimums in years thereafter. See 45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90 for the specific regulations.

*See **Appendix F** and **Appendix G** for instructions for applying for the Alternative Match Schedule and/or a match waiver.*

In the Funding/Demographics Section enter:

- Other revenue funds: Enter the amount of funds that your program uses to run the program that are not identified on the application budget as the AmeriCorps agency share or grantee share (match). Note: Programs should not enter the total operating budget for their organization unless the entire operating budget supports the AmeriCorps program. Programs that have additional revenue sources not included in the matching funds section of the budget should provide the amount of this additional revenue that supports the program. This amount should not include the AmeriCorps agency or grantee share amounts in the budget.
- Number of volunteers generated by AmeriCorps members: Please enter the number of volunteers participating in one-day service projects or ongoing volunteer commitments that the proposed AmeriCorps members will generate.

Review, Authorize, and Submit

eGrants requires that you review and verify your entire application before submitting by completing the following sections in eGrants:

- Review;
- Authorize;
- Assurances;
- Certifications;
- Verify; and,
- Submit.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Read the Authorization, [Assurances](), and [Certifications]() carefully. The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant's Authorized Representative or their designee and must have an active eGrants account to sign these documents electronically. **An Authorized Representative is the person in your organization authorized to accept and commit funds on behalf of the organization**. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Be sure to check your entire application to ensure that there are no errors before submitting it. When you verify the application eGrants will also generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected prior to submission. If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant's Authorized Representative, that person must log into their eGrants account and proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, their name will override any previous signatory that may appear and show on the application as the authorized representative.

Note: Everyone within your organization who will be entering information in the application at any point during application preparation and submission in the eGrants system must have their own eGrants account. Individuals may establish an eGrants account by accessing the [eGrants website]() and selecting "Don't have an eGrants account? Create an account."

AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Award Notice
PennSERVE expects to provide preliminary funding decision to applicants in late May 2024. This notification is not authorization to begin grant activities. An awardee may not obligate or expend federal funds until the start of the project period identified on the approved grant application.

Documents that Govern the Grant/Administrative and National Policy Requirements
These application instructions and RFA incorporate the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant, as well as the requirements of applicable sections of the NCSA of 1990 and other applicable statutes. Awards will be subject to the AmeriCorps regulations and grant terms and conditions.

If awarded, the applicant must complete a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania AmeriCorps State Program Subgrantee Application/Agreement. These documents, along with the completed and submitted grant application and the language in the Request for Applications, will serve as a grantee's contract with the commonwealth.

Uniform Guidance

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

All awards under this notice are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), now consolidated in 2 C.F.R. Parts 200 and 2205.

Requests for Monitoring and Payment Integrity Information

The AmeriCorps agency may, from time to time, request documentation from recipients to monitor the award or to comply with other legal requirements, including the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on temporary manual hold, reimbursement only, or other remedies as appropriate. In addition, the AmeriCorps agency may, in appropriate circumstances, consider in its funding decisions any previous failures to make timely responses.

AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this RFA will be subject to the 2024 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, and the 2024 AmeriCorps Program Specific Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the AmeriCorps agency General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available on the AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant website.

National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving AmeriCorps agency funds. This includes staff that receive part of their salary through a subgrant. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such AmeriCorps agency funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award.

Please budget appropriately for full checks on all covered individuals. Grantees are encouraged to utilize the two vendors the AmeriCorps agency has engaged to conduct the required NSCHCs. Information regarding use of these two vendors can be found at https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2022_11_18_NSCHC_Using_AmeriCorps_Approved_Vendors_Fieldprint_Truescreen_OM.pdf. Failure to comply with all NSCHC requirements will result in significant disallowed costs.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Unless the AmeriCorps agency has provided a recipient with a written exemption or written approval of an alternative search procedure, recipients must perform the following checks.

All award-funded staff and national service participants who are 18 or older at the start of work or service must undergo NSCHCs that include:

- A nationwide name-based search of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW); and:
- A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work;
- A fingerprint-based FBI Criminal History Check.

Use [45 CFR 2540.200– 2540.207](#) and [National Service Criminal History Check Resources](#) for complete information and FAQs.

In addition to conducting the checks, all funded programs must complete the NSCHC eCourse provided by the AmeriCorps agency annually; and submit certification of course completion to PennSERVE as part of the grant record.

Use of Material

To ensure that materials generated with the AmeriCorps agency funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, the AmeriCorps agency reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so (2 C.F.R. § 200.315 (b)).

Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to provide:
- Reporting via the PennSERVE-determined online reporting system, including a mid- and end-of-year report (includes performance measure progress, demographics, and narrative data);
- Monthly expense reports and invoices for reimbursement;
- Quarterly and year-end aggregate financial reports;
- Participation in both desk and on-site monitoring by PennSERVE and/or the AmeriCorps agency; and
- Any additional reporting and/or monitoring as required by PennSERVE and/or the AmeriCorps agency.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Once the grant is awarded, recipients will be expected to have data collection and data management policies, processes, and practices that provide reasonable assurance that they are providing PennSERVE and the AmeriCorps agency with high quality performance measure data. At a minimum, grantees should have policies and practices which address the following five aspects of data quality:

- Data measures what it intends to measure;
- Data reported is complete;
- Grantee collects data in a consistent manner;
- Grantee takes steps to correct data errors;
- Grantee actively reviews data for accuracy prior to submission.

PennSERVE will report on all grantee performance to the AmeriCorps agency on a semi-annual basis, or as required by the AmeriCorps agency.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

APPENDIX A: EGRANTS PERFORMANCE MEASURE INSTRUCTIONS

All applicants must submit performance measures with their application.

About the Performance Measures Module

In the performance measures module, you will:

- Provide information about your program's connection to the AmeriCorps agency focus areas and objectives;
- Show MSY and member allocations;
- Create at least one aligned performance measure aligned with your primary service activity (primary intervention), plus additional measure(s) if desired; and,
- Set targets and describe data collection instruments and strategies for your performance measures.

Home Page

To start the module, click the "Begin" button on the home page. As you proceed through the module, the Home Page will summarize your work and provide links to edit the parts of the module you have completed. You may also navigate sections of the module using the tab feature at the top of each page. Do not use the back and forward buttons on your internet browser.

Once you have started the module, clicking "Continue Working" will return you to the tab you were on when you last closed the module.

To edit the interventions, objectives, MSYs, and member allocations for your application, click the "Edit Objectives/MSYs/Members" button.

After you have created at least one performance measure, the Home Page will display a chart summarizing your measures. To edit a performance measure, click the "Edit" button. To delete a measure, click "Delete." To create a new performance measure, click the "Add New Performance Measure" button.

Objectives Tab

On the objectives tab, applicants will account for the full range of their program activity. Applicants are not expected to create performance measures for every focus area, objective, or intervention they select on this tab.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

An expandable list of the AmeriCorps agency focus areas appears on this tab. When you click on a focus area, a list of objectives from the AmeriCorps agency strategic plan appears. A list of common interventions appears under each objective.

First click on a focus area. Then click on an objective. All national performance measures fall under a strategic plan objective. Only the performance measures that correspond to the strategic plan objectives you select on this tab will be available for selection as you continue through this module. To see which performance measures correspond to which objective, refer to the AmeriCorps agency [National Performance Measure Instructions](#) for more detail.

Next, select all interventions that are part of your program design. Interventions are the activities that members and volunteers will carry out to address the problem(s) identified in the application. Select "other" if one of your program's interventions does not appear on the list. Repeat these actions for each of your program's focus areas. Select "other" for your focus area and/or objective if your program activities do not fall within one of the AmeriCorps Agency's focus areas or objectives.

Choose your program's primary focus area from the drop-down list. Only the focus areas that correspond to the objectives you selected above appear in the list. Next, select the primary intervention within your primary focus area. You will be required to create an aligned performance measure (output paired with outcome) that contains your primary intervention. Note that your primary intervention, and the performance measure associated with your primary intervention, must be focused on the community impact of the program, not on AmeriCorps member development

You may select a secondary focus area and a secondary intervention. The primary and secondary focus area may be the same if you have more than one intervention within the focus area.

MSYs/Members Tab

On this tab, you will enter information about the allocation of MSYs and members across the focus areas and objectives you have selected. You must allocate 100 percent of your program's MSYs to focus areas and objectives. When you create your performance measures, you will be asked to allocate MSYs to each performance measure; however, you will not be required to assign 100 percent of your total MSYs to performance measures.

Begin by entering the total MSYs for your program. This must match the total MSYs in your budget. Please double-check your budget to make sure that the total MSY values match. Next, enter the number of MSYs your program will allocate to each objective. Only the objectives that were selected on the previous tab appear in the MSY chart. If some of your program's

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

objectives are not represented in the chart, return to the previous tab and select additional objectives. The MSY chart must show how all your program's resources are allocated. If the only activity in another objective that you have selected is focused on AmeriCorps member development, enter 0 MSYs for that objective.

As you enter MSYs into the MSY column of the chart, the corresponding percentage of MSYs will calculate automatically. When you have finished entering your MSYs, the total percentage of MSYs in the chart must be 100 percent. The total number of MSYs in the chart must equal the number of MSYs in your budget.

In the members column, enter the number of members who will be assigned to each objective. Some members may perform services across more than one objective. If this is the case, allocate these members to all applicable objectives. For example, if one member performs service in both school readiness and K-12 success, allocate one member to each of these objectives. It is acceptable for the total number of members in this table to exceed total slots requested in the application due to counting members' service across multiple objectives. If the only activity in another objective that you have selected is focused on AmeriCorps member development, enter 0 members for that objective.

Performance Measures Tab

- This tab allows you to create performance measures for all the grant activities you intend to measure.

- Begin by creating the aligned performance measure for your primary intervention. After creating your required performance measure, you will be able to create additional performance measures if desired.

- To create a performance measure, begin by selecting an objective. The list of objectives includes those you selected on the objectives tab. Note that programs may not create performance measures for the Find Opportunity, Teacher Corps, Green Jobs, or Access & Attract objectives, since these are member-focused objectives. Member-focused outputs and outcomes related to these objectives may be reported as Performance Data Elements on grantee progress reports.

- Provide a short, descriptive title for your performance measure.

- Briefly describe the problem your program will address in this performance measure.

- Select the intervention(s) to be delivered by members and/or member-supported volunteers. The list of interventions includes the ones you selected previously for this objective. Select only the interventions that will lead to the outputs (plus outcomes, if

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

applicable) of the performance measure and that are applicable to all beneficiaries counted under the measure. If you selected "other" as an intervention and wish to include an applicant-determined intervention in your aligned performance measure, click "add user intervention" and enter a one or two-word description of the intervention. (Note: you are not permitted to create a user-defined intervention that duplicates an intervention already available in the system.)

- Select output(s) for your performance measure. The output list includes only the National Performance Measure outputs that correspond to the objectives you have selected. If you do not wish to select National Performance Measures, and if the objective you have selected permits applicant-determined outputs, you may create an applicant-determined output by clicking in the checkbox next to the empty output text box and entering the text of your output indicator. You may create additional applicant-determined outputs for the performance measure by clicking "Add User Output." (Note: you are not permitted to create an applicant-determined output that duplicates a national performance measure output. If you do not see the national performance measure output that you wish to use, check the Selection Rules in the National Performance Measure Instructions to make sure you selected the correct objective associated with that National Performance Measure output.) See the [National Performance Measure Instructions](#) for more detail.

- Select outcome(s). If you have selected a National Performance Measures output that has corresponding National Performance Measures outcome(s), these outcomes will be available to select. If you do not wish to select a National Performance Measures outcome, you may create an applicant-determined outcome by clicking in the checkbox next to the empty outcome text box and entering the text of your outcome indicator. If you do not wish to select any outcome for your National Performance Measures output, click in the checkbox next to the empty outcome text box and enter "NA" in the outcome indicator text box. (Note: all output-only measures must consist of national performance measures outputs. Applicant-determined outputs must be paired with applicant-determined outcomes.)

- If you have not selected a National Performance Measures output, or if there is no corresponding National Performance Measures outcome, create an applicant-determined outcome by clicking "Add User Outcome." All applicant-determined outputs must be paired with an applicant-determined outcome.

- Enter the number of MSYs and members your program will allocate to achieving the outcomes and/or outputs you have selected in this performance measure. Since

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

programs are not required to measure all grant activities, the number you enter does not have to correspond to the MSY chart you created on the MSY/Members tab; however, the total number of MSYs across all performance measures within a single objective cannot exceed the total number of MSYs previously allocated to that objective. Members may be double counted across performance measures, but MSYs may not.

- Click "next" to proceed to the data collection tab. Later you can return to this tab to create additional performance measures.

Data Collection Tab

- On this tab, you will provide additional information about your interventions, instruments, and plan for data collection.

- Describe the design and dosage (frequency, intensity, duration) of the interventions you have selected. Frequency refers to how often an intervention occurs (for example, number of sessions per week); intensity refers to the length of time devoted to the intervention (for example, number of minutes per session); and duration refers to the period of time over which the intervention occurs (for example, how many total weeks of sessions). Expand each output and outcome and enter data collection information.

- Select the data collection method you will use to measure the output or outcome. To select more than one method, click the "Add New Method" button. To de-select a method, click the first (blank) line in the method drop-down.

- Describe the specific instrument(s) you will use to measure the output or outcome. Include the title of the instrument(s), a brief description of what it measures and how it will be administered, and details about its reliability and validity if applicable. For outcomes, specify how much improvement in knowledge, attitude, behavior, or condition is required to be counted as having improved and clearly explain how the instrument measures this.

- Enter the target number for your output or outcome. Targets must be numbers, not percentages.

- For applicant-determined outputs and outcomes, enter the unit of measure for your target. The unit of measure should describe the population you intend to count (children, miles, etc.). Do not enter percentages or member service hours as units of measure. In most cases, the unit of measure should be the same for the outputs and outcomes in an aligned performance measure.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- For output-only performance measures, eGrants will require text in the outcome data collection fields. If you do not wish to have an outcome for your National Performance Measure output, enter the following:

    - Method: Select "other"
    - Instrument Description: Enter "NA"
    - Target: Enter "1"
    - Unit of Measure: Enter "NA"

After entering data collection information for all outputs and outcomes, click "Mark Complete." You will return to the Performance Measure tab. If you wish to create another performance measure, repeat the process. If you would like to continue to the next step of the module, click "Next."

Summary Tab

- The summary tab shows all the information you have entered in the module.
- To print a summary of all performance measures, click "Print PDF for all Performance Measures."
- To print one performance measure, expand the measure and click "Print This Measure."
- Click "Edit Performance Measure" to return to the Performance Measure tab.
- Click "Edit Data Collection" to return to the Data Collection tab.

- "Click Validate Performance Measures" to validate this module prior to submitting your application. You should also use the Performance Measures Checklist in Appendix B of the AmeriCorps National Performance Measure Instructions to self-assess your measure(s) prior to submission.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Appendix B: Budget Instructions

Please include complete calculations in all line items.

Section I. Program Operating Costs
Complete Section I, Program Operating Costs, of the Budget Worksheet by entering the "Total Amount column in the budget," "CNCS Share column in the budget," and "Grantee Share column in the budget" for Parts A-I, for year one of the grant, as follows:

A. Personnel Expenses
Under "Position/Title Description," list each staff position separately and provide salary and percentage of FTE devoted to this award. Each staff person's role must be described in the application narrative and each person mentioned in the narrative must be listed in the budget as either CNCS or grantee share. Because the purpose of this grant is to enable and stimulate volunteer community service, do not include the value of direct community service performed by volunteers. However, you may include the value of volunteer services contributed to the organization for organizational functions such as accounting, audit work, or training of staff and AmeriCorps members.

B. Personnel Fringe Benefits
Under "Purpose/Description," identify the types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position. Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, workers' compensation, retirement, State Unemployment Tax Act (SUTA), health and life insurance, Individual Retirement Account (IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If a fringe amount is over 30 percent, please list separately. Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item.

C. 1. Staff Travel
Describe the purpose for which program staff will travel. Provide a calculation to include costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel-related expenses multiplied by the number of trips/staff. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage (not to exceed the federal mileage rate daily per diem, and similar supporting information. Only domestic travel is allowable.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Include costs for at least one staff person to attend two required trainings during the 2024-2025 program year: one two-day training and one single-day training. Assume trainings will be held in Harrisburg, PA. Include costs for applicable travel, meals, and lodging.

Include costs for at least one staff member to attend the National Service Regional Training Conference. The 2024 conference will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Include costs for applicable travel, meals, and lodging.

Please itemize costs. For example: Two staff will attend the National Conference on Volunteering and Service. 2 staff x $750 airfare + $50 ground transportation + (two-day) x $200 lodging + $50 per diem = $2,000.

C. 2. Member Travel

Describe the purpose for which members will travel. Provide a calculation to include costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other related expenses for members to travel outside their service location or between sites. Costs associated with local travel, such as bus passes to local sites, mileage reimbursement for use of car, etc., should be included in this budget category. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information.

Include costs for all members and relevant staff to attend the yearly AmeriCorps Week. Assume the event will be in Harrisburg, PA, and include costs to transport and provide meals to members for one day. Lodging may be included if necessary.

D. Equipment

Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year AND an acquisition cost of **$5,000 or more <u>per unit</u>** (including accessories, attachments, and modifications). Any items that do not meet this definition should be entered in E. Supplies below. Purchases of equipment are limited to 10 percent of the total corporation funds requested. If applicable, show the unit cost and number of units you are requesting. Provide a brief justification for the purchase of the equipment under Item/Purpose.

E. Supplies

AmeriCorps members must wear an AmeriCorps logo daily – preferably clothing with the AmeriCorps logo. The item with the AmeriCorps logo is a required budget expense

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

for program operating grants. Please include the cost of the item with the AmeriCorps logo in your budget or explain how your program will be providing the item to AmeriCorps members without using grant funds. Grantees may add the AmeriCorps logo to their own local program uniform items using federal funds. Please note that your program will be using the AmeriCorps logo in the budget description.

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials, including member service gear and equipment that does not fit the definition above. You must individually list any single item costing $1,000 or more. Except for safety equipment, grantees may only charge the cost of member service gear to the federal share if it includes the AmeriCorps logo. All safety gear may be charged to the federal share, regardless of whether it includes the AmeriCorps logo. All other service gear must be purchased with non-CNCS funds.

F. Contractual and Consultant Services

Include costs for consultants related to the project's operations, except evaluation consultants, who will be listed in Section G and H below. Itemize each contract or consultant and provide a brief justification of the need for each. The cost calculation should provide a basis for determining the cost, such as a daily or hourly rate. There is not a maximum daily rate. Program operating grant applicants must include costs for the OnCorps member management system. As of the writing of this RFA, the cost is $16.80 per member slot and is NOT based on MSY. For instance, a program with 10 MSY and 20 member slots will pay $336 for OnCorps. This cost is subject to change.

Continuation and recompete programs with PennSERVE approval to use a separate timekeeping system (e.g., Professional Corps programs with approval) should budget $300 to cover financial and progress reporting for the year. This cost is subject to change.

G. 1. Staff Training

Include registration costs for at least one staff member to attend the National Service Regional Training Conference.

Include the costs associated with training staff on project requirements and training to enhance the skills staff need for effective project implementation, i.e., project or financial management, team building, etc. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate. There is not a maximum daily rate.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

G. 2. Member Training

Include the costs associated with member training to support them in carrying out their service activities. You may also use this section to request funds to support training in Life After AmeriCorps. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate. There is not a maximum daily rate.

H. Evaluation

Include costs for project evaluation activities, including additional staff time or subcontracts, use of evaluation consultants, purchase of instrumentation, and other costs specifically for this activity not budgeted in Personnel Expenses. This cost **does not** include the daily/weekly gathering of data to assess progress toward meeting performance measures but is a larger assessment of the impact your project is having on the community, as well as an assessment of the overall systems and project design. Indicate daily rates of consultants, where applicable.

I. Other Program Operating Costs

Allowable costs in this budget category should include when applicable:

- Criminal history background checks for all members and for all employees or other individuals who receive a salary, education award, living allowance, or stipend or similar payment from the grant (federal or non-federal share). Please include the cost of the NSOPW, state check, and FBI check for criminal history checks for all covered positions. If you do not budget funds, you must note an explanation in the budget for how you will cover the costs.

- Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.

- Utilities, telephone, internet, and similar expenses that are specifically used for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps project staff and are not part of the organization's indirect cost/admin cost allocation pool. If such expenses are budgeted and shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.

- Recognition costs for members. List each item and provide a justification in the budget narrative. Gifts and/or food in an entertainment/event setting are not allowable costs. Retention incentives/performance awards are allowable to the extent they are 1) reasonable, necessary, and allowable for program outcomes; 2) tied to the program narrative; 3) fair; 4) consistently applied; and 5) part of the organization's written policies and procedures.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Section II. Member Costs

Member costs are identified as "Living Allowance" and "Member Support Costs." Your required match can be federal, state, local, or private sector funds.

A. **Living Allowance**

The narrative should clearly identify the number of members you are supporting by category (i.e., full-time, three-quarter time, half-time, reduced-half-time, quarter-time, minimum-time, minimum-time) and the amount of living allowance they will receive, allocating appropriate portions between the corporation's share (CNCS Share) and grantee share (match). Please do not select the 2-Year Half Time (1st Year) and 2-Year Half Time (2nd Year) slot types.

In eGrants, enter the total number of members you are requesting in each category. Enter the average amount of the living allowance for each type of member. In addition, enter the number of members for which you are not requesting funds for a living allowance, but for whom you are requesting education awards.

Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1,700	$18,700	$37,400
Three-Quarter-time	1,200	n/a	$26,180
One-year half-time	900	n/a	$18,700
Reduced half-time	675	n/a	$14,212
Quarter-time	450	n/a	$9,724
Minimum-time	300	n/a	$7,854
Abbreviated-time	100	n/a	$2,244

B. **Member Support Costs**

Consistent with the laws of the state where your members serve, you must provide members with the benefits described below.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

- **FICA for Members.** Unless exempted by the IRS with accompanying documentation (note in the narrative and provide documentation with application), all projects must pay FICA for any member receiving a living allowance, even when CNCS does not supply the living allowance. In the first column next to FICA, indicate the number of members who will receive FICA. Calculate the FICA at 7.65 percent of the total amount of the living allowance.

- **Workers' Compensation.** Some states, including Pennsylvania, require workers' compensation for AmeriCorps members. Successful applicants are required to pay workers' compensation.

- **Health Care.** You must offer, or make available, health care benefits to full-time members in accordance with AmeriCorps requirements. Except as stated below, you may not pay for health care benefits to less-than-full-time members with AmeriCorps funds. You may choose to provide health care benefits to less-than-full-time members from other sources (i.e., non-federal) but the cost cannot be included in the budget. Less-than-full-time members who are serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period (such as a full-time summer project) are eligible for health care benefits. If you budget health insurance for less-than-full-time members serving in a full-time capacity, indicate in the budget narrative. In your budget narrative, indicate the number of members who will receive health care benefits. AmeriCorps will not pay for dependent coverage. If health care is not budgeted for all full-time members, please confirm all full-time members will have access to coverage.

- **Unemployment Insurance and Other Member Support Costs.** Include any other required member support costs here. Pennsylvania **does not** allow unemployment coverage for their AmeriCorps members.

Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs

Definitions
Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives AmeriCorps funds and do not include project costs. These costs may include administrative staff positions. For organizations that have an established indirect cost rate for federal awards, administrative costs mean those costs that are included in the organization's indirect cost rate agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the

organization's overall operation and are further described in Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance.

Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs (choose either A, B OR C)
Applicants choose one of three methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a CNCS-fixed percentage rate method or a federally approved indirect cost rate method or a de minimis method. Regardless of the option chosen, the CNCS share of administrative costs is limited to 5% of the total CNCS funds **actually expended** under this grant. Do not create additional lines in this category. Applicants who hold a federal negotiated indirect cost rate must use that rate in lieu of the AmeriCorps 5/10% allocation of administrative costs or the 10% de minimis rate.

While the AmeriCorps Application Instructions present three options for budgeting indirect costs, there are only two places to enter those details in eGrants. Applicants who chose to use the Corporation Fixed Percentage will enter the line-item details in Section III.A. Applicants who have a Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate or are using a De Minimis Rate will enter the line item details in Section III.B. Please see [AmeriCorps eGrants Indirect Cost Rate (IDCR) User Instructions](#)

A. CNCS-Fixed Percentage Method

Five/Ten Percent Fixed Administrative Costs Option
The CNCS-fixed percentage rate method allows you to charge administrative costs up to a cap without a federally approved indirect cost rate and without documentation supporting the allocation. If you choose the CNCS-fixed percentage rate method (Section IIIA in eGrants), you may charge, for administrative costs, a fixed 5 percent of the total of the CNCS funds expended. To charge this fixed 5 percent, the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10 percent of all direct cost expenditures.

1. To determine the maximum CNCS share for Section III: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding shares of Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can request as Corporation share. The factor 0.0526 is used to calculate the 5 percent maximum amount of federal funds that may be budgeted for administrative (indirect) costs, rather than 0.0500, as a way to mathematically compensate for determining Section III costs when the total budget (Sections I + II + III) is not yet established. Enter this amount as the CNCS share for Section III A.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

2. To determine the Grantee share for Section III: Multiply the total (both CNCS and grantee share) of Sections I and II by 10 percent (0.10) and enter this amount as the grantee share for Section III A.

3. Enter the sum of the CNCS and grantee shares under Total Amount.

Please include your full calculation in the budget, using this template: [CNCS Section I ($000,000) + II ($000,000) = $000,000] x .0526 = $000,000. Grantee: [Section I ($000,000) + II ($000,000) = $000,000] x .10 = $000,000.

If you are not claiming the maximum allowable amount, include the statement "Amount claimed less than max allowed."

PennSERVE is not electing to retain a share of the federal funds available to programs for administrative costs in 2024 – 2025. PennSERVE reserves the right to elect to retain a share of the 5 percent of federal funds available to programs for administrative costs, up to 2 percent in future funding years.

B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate

If you have a federally approved indirect cost rate, this method must be used and the rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs, not to exceed the 5 percent maximum federal share payable by AmeriCorps. Specify the cost type for which your organization has current documentation on file, i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost (IDC) rate. Supply your approved IDC rate (percentage) and the base upon which this rate is calculated (direct salaries, salaries, and fringe benefits, etc.). AmeriCorps does not restrict the overall indirect cost rate claimed. It is at your discretion whether to claim your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate in the Rate Claimed field.

1. Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both the CNCS and Grantee shares, as prescribed by your established rate agreement (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other). Then multiply the appropriate direct costs by the rate being claimed. This will determine the total amount of indirect costs allowable under the grant.
2. To determine the CNCS share: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as the CNCS share of indirect costs.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

3. To determine the grantee share: Subtract the amount calculated in Step 2 (the CNCS administrative share) from the amount calculated in step 1 (the Indirect Cost total). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for administrative costs.

Please include your full calculation in the budget, using this template: [CNCS Section I ($000,000) + II ($000,000) = $000,000] x .0526 = $000,000. Grantee: [Base Amount ($000,000) - <$CNCS Share>] = $000,000.

If you are not claiming the maximum allowable amount, include the statement "Amount claimed less than max allowed."

C. De Minimis Rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs

Organizations who do not currently have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate (except for those non-Federal entities described in Appendix VII to Part 200-States and Local government and Indian tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, paragraph (d)(1)(B)) and who receive less than $35 million in direct federal funding, may indefinitely use a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Additional information regarding what is included in MTDC, and use of this option can be found in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200) under Indirect (F&A) costs and Definitions. If this option is elected, it must be used consistently across all federal awards.

1. Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the de minimis rate, including both the CNCS and Grantee shares. MTDC includes all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first $25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of $25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs. Once you determine the base, multiply the appropriate costs by 0.10. This will determine the total amount of costs allowable in this section.

2. To determine the CNCS share: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as the CNCS share of indirect/administrative costs.

If a Commission elects to retain a share of the 5% of federal funds available, please note the percentage or amount in the text. There is no separate line item to show this calculation.

3. To determine the Grantee share: Subtract the amount calculated in step 2 (the CNCS share) from the amount calculated in step 1 (the total Indirect Costs allowed). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for indirect/administrative costs.

Source of Match

In the "Source of Funds" field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the match. Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal) for your **entire match**. Define all acronyms the first time they are used. The total amount of Source of Funds should match the total amount in the budget narrative **exactly.**

Please complete the Source of Match Section following this example:

Section	Match Description	Amount	Type	Source
Source of Funds	Do Good Foundation – secured	350,000	Cash	Private
	School District – secured	12,000	In-Kind	State/Local
	Kids R Great Foundation - proposed	175,250	Cash	Private
Total Source of Funds		537,250		

Note: the value of the Segal Education Awards that members earn for their service is not identified in the budget. Also, the childcare reimbursements provided to eligible full-time members is not included in the budget.

Increasing Grantee Overall Share of Total Budgeted Costs -- Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as the minimum match of 24 percent for the first three years, and the increasing minimum in years thereafter, are maintained.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

APPENDIX C: BUDGET ANALYSIS CHECKLIST

Below is a checklist to help you make certain that you submit an accurate budget narrative that meets AmeriCorps requirements.

Section I. Program Operating Costs						
YES	☐	NO	☐			Costs charged under the personnel line item directly relate to the operation of the AmeriCorps project? Examples include costs for staff that recruit, train, place, or supervise members as well as manage the project
YES	☐	NO	☐			Staff indirectly involved in the management or operation of the applicant organization is funded through the administrative cost section (Section III.) of the budget? Examples of administrative costs include central management and support functions.
YES	☐	NO	☐			Staff fundraising expenses are not charged to the grant? You may not charge AmeriCorps staff members' time and related expenses for fundraising to the federal or grantee share of the grant. Expenses incurred to raise funds must be paid out of the funds raised. Development officers and fundraising staff are not allowable expenses.
YES	☐	NO	☐			All positions in the budget are fully described in the narrative?
YES	☐	NO	☐			The types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position are described? Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, workers' compensation, retirement, SUTA, health and life insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If the fringe amount is over 30 percent, please list separately.
YES	☐	NO	☐			Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item?
YES	☐	NO	☐			The purpose for all staff and member travel is clearly identified?
YES	☐	NO	☐			You have budgeted funds for staff travel to PennSERVE sponsored meetings?
YES	☐	NO	☐			You have budgeted funds for member travel to the yearly AmeriCorps Week?
YES	☐	NO	☐			You have budgeted funds to the National Service Regional Conference?
YES	☐	NO	☐	N/A	☐	Funds to pay relocation expenses of AmeriCorps members are not in the federal share of the budget?
YES	☐	NO	☐	N/A	☐	Funds for the purchase of equipment (does not include general use office equipment) are limited to 10 percent of the total grant amount?
YES	☐	NO	☐	N/A	☐	All single equipment items over $5000 per unit are specifically listed and explained?

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

YES	☐	**NO**	☐	**N/A**	☐	Justification/explanation of equipment items is included in the budget narrative?
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	**N/A**	☐	All single supply items over $1000 per unit are specifically listed and explained in the budget narrative?

YES	☐	**NO**	☐	Cost of items with the AmeriCorps logo that will be worn daily is included for all AmeriCorps members? Or if not, there is an explanation of how the program will be providing the AmeriCorps logo item to AmeriCorps members using funds other than CNCS grant funds.
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	You only charged to the federal share of the budget member service gear, with the exception of safety equipment, that includes the AmeriCorps logo?
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	Is the daily rate noted in all sections of the budget narrative where consultants are proposed?
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	You have budgeted $16.80 per member slot for use of the OnCorps member management system? Or, if the program has PennSERVE approval to use a separate timekeeping system, $300 is budgeted to cover financial and progress reporting for the year.

YES	☐	**NO**	☐	**N/A**	☐	Does the budget reflect adequate budgeted costs for project evaluation?

YES	☐	**NO**	☐	Have you budgeted for the cost of the NSOPW, FBI, and state check in the CNCS share for criminal history checks of each member and grant-funded staff that are in covered positions per 45 CFR 2522.205? If not, have you provided an explanation?
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	Are all items in the budget narrative itemized and the purpose of the funds justified?

Section II. Member Costs: In Compliance?				
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	Are the living allowance amounts correct? Full-time AmeriCorps members must receive at least the minimum living allowance as indicated in the chart in the budget instructions. Note: Programs in existence prior to Sept. 21, 1993 may offer a lower living allowance than the minimum. If such a program chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement, but not from the maximum requirement.
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	Living allowances are not paid on an hourly basis? They may be calculated using service hours and program length to derive a weekly or biweekly distribution amount. Divide the distribution in equal increments that are not based on the specified number of hours served.
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	Is FICA calculated correctly? You must pay FICA for any member receiving a living allowance. Unless exempted by the IRS, calculate FICA at 7.65 percent of the total amount of the living allowance.
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	Is the workers' compensation calculation correct? Pennsylvania requires workers' compensation for AmeriCorps members.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

YES ☐	NO ☐			Health care is provided for full-time AmeriCorps members only (unless part-time serving for a sustained full-time period of time such as summer service)? If your project chooses to provide health care to other part-time members, you may not use federal funds to help pay for any portion of the cost. Projects must provide health care coverage to all full-time members who do not have adequate health care coverage at the time of enrollment or who lose coverage due to participation in the project. In addition, projects must provide coverage if a full-time member loses coverage during the term of service through no deliberate act of their own.
YES ☐	NO ☐			Unemployment insurance is ***not*** budgeted?

Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs: In Compliance?					
YES ☐	NO ☐	N/A ☐			Applicant has chosen Option A – Applicant does not have a federally approved indirect cost rate and has chosen to use the CNCS - fixed percentage method and the maximum federal share of administrative costs does not exceed 5 percent of the total federal funds budgeted? To determine the federal administrative share, multiply all other budgeted federal funds by .0526.
YES ☐	NO ☐	N/A ☐			Applicant has chosen Option A – Corporation fixed percentage method and the maximum grantee share is at 10 percent or less of total budgeted funds?
YES ☐	NO ☐	N/A ☐			Applicant has chosen Option B – Applicant has a federally approved indirect cost rate method and documentation has been submitted to PennSERVE?
YES ☐	NO ☐	N/A ☐			Applicant has chosen Option B – federally approved indirect cost rate method and the maximum grantee share does not exceed the federally approved indirect cost rate, less the 5 percent CNCS share?
YES ☐	NO ☐	N/A ☐			Applicant has chosen Option B – federally approved indirect cost rate method and the type of rate, the IDC rate percentage, the rate claimed and the base to which the rate is applied has been specified?
YES ☐	NO ☐	N/A ☐			Applicant has chosen Option C – Applicant has never had a federally approved indirect cost rate and a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs has been budgeted?

Match: In Compliance?			
YES ☐	NO ☐		Is the overall match being met at the required level, based on the year of funding?
YES ☐	NO ☐		For all matching funds, proposed vs secured, the source(s) [private, state, local, and/or federal], the type of contribution (cash or in-kind), and the amount of match, are clearly identified in the narrative and in the Source of Funds field in eGrants?

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

YES	☐	**NO**	☐	The amount of match in the Source of Funds chart is for the entire amount in the budget narrative. (The total amount of match equals the amount in the budget?)
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	If requesting cash match replacement, is the amount requested entered into the Source of Funds section?
YES	☐	**NO**	☐	Does the amount in the budget match the amount in the executive summary?

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Appendix D: eGrants Budget Worksheet

Section I. Program Operating Costs

A.   Personnel Expenses

Position/Title/Description	Qty	Annual Salary	% Time	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
			Totals			

B.   Personnel Fringe Benefits

Purpose/Description	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
	Totals			

C.1.   Staff Travel

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
	Totals			

C. 2.   Member Travel

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
	Totals			

D.   Equipment

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Item/Purpose/Justification	Qty	Unit Cost	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
		Totals			

E. **Supplies**

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
	Totals			

F. **Contractual and Consultant Services**

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
		Totals			

G.1. **Staff Training**

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
		Totals			

G.2. **Member Training**

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
		Totals			

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

H. Evaluation

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
	Totals				

I. Other Program Operating Costs

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
	Totals				

	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Subtotal Section I:			

Section II. Member Costs

A. Living Allowance

Item	# Mbrs	Allowance Rate	# w/o Allowance	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Full-time (1700 hrs.)						
Three quarter-time (1200 hrs.)						
Half-time (900 hrs.)						
Reduced Half-time (675 hrs.)						
Quarter-time (450 hrs.)						

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Minimum-time (300 hrs.)						
Abbreviated-time (100 hrs.)						
			Totals			

B.   Member Support Costs

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	**Total Amount**	**CNCS Share**	**Grantee Share**
		Totals			

	Total Amount	**CNCS Share**	**Grantee Share**
Subtotal Section II:			
Subtotal Sections I + II:			

Section III.   Administrative/Indirect Costs

A. Corporation-fixed Percentage Rate

Purpose	Calculation	**Total Amount**	**CNCS Share**	**Grantee Share**
	Totals			

B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate or *De Minimis* Rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs

Cost Type	Cost Basis	Calculation	Rate	Rate Claimed	**Total Amount**	**CNCS Share**	**Grantee Share**

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Total Sections I + II + III:	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share

Source of Funds

Match Description (Note whether Secured or Proposed)	Amount	Match Classification (Cash or In Kind)	Match Source (Federal, State/Local, Private)

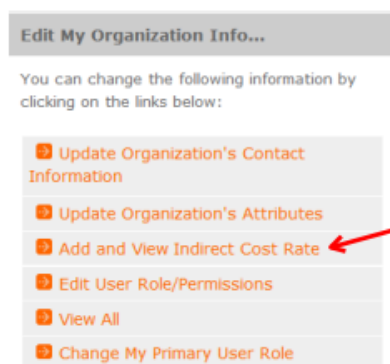2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

eGrants Indirect Cost Rate (IDCR) User Instructions

eGrants contains a feature that allows users to input Indirect Cost Rate information into their eGrants account. Recipients that will be claiming or budgeting for indirect costs on AmeriCorps awards are required to enter the following indirect cost rates in eGrants: federally negotiated rates, state negotiated rates, and the use of de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Recipients of AmeriCorps State and National awards may only charge 5% of their negotiated rate to the federal share of the award, with the remaining balance being charged to match (See 45 CFR Section §§ 2521.95 and 2540.110).
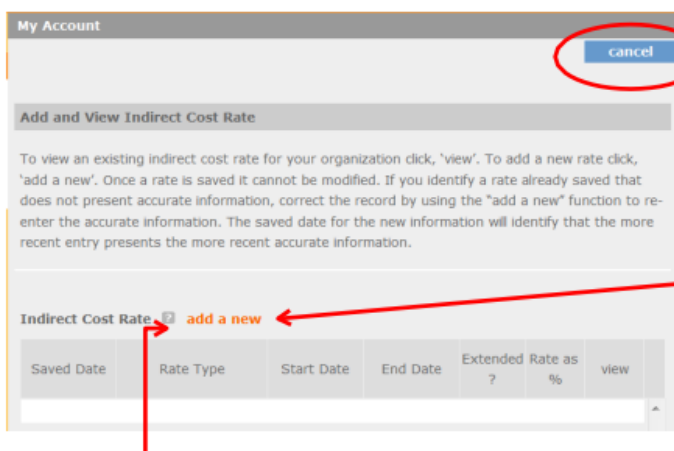
Once a rate is entered and saved in eGrants, it cannot be edited. If users inadvertently enter incorrect information, a new entry must be submitted with the correct information.

Entry for the IDCR screen can be accessed using the following steps:

1) From the **eGrants Home** screen, in the lower panel under **Managing My Account**, click on **My Account**

2) From the **My Account** screen, under **Edit My Organization Info**, click on **Add and View Indirect Cost Rate**

Edit My Organization Info...

You can change the following information by clicking on the links below:

- Update Organization's Contact Information
- Update Organization's Attributes
- Add and View Indirect Cost Rate
- Edit User Role/Permissions
- View All
- Change My Primary User Role

---

3) From the **Add and View Indirect Cost Rate** screen, select **add a new** to add a rate or **cancel** to back out of the screen.

My Account

cancel

Add and View Indirect Cost Rate

To view an existing indirect cost rate for your organization click, 'view'. To add a new rate click, 'add a new'. Once a rate is saved it cannot be modified. If you identify a rate already saved that does not present accurate information, correct the record by using the "add a new" function to re-enter the accurate information. The saved date for the new information will identify that the more recent entry presents the more recent accurate information.

Indirect Cost Rate add a new

Saved Date	Rate Type	Start Date	End Date	Extended ?	Rate as %	view

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Field by field instructions can be found by clicking the question mark "**?**" located next to Indirect Cost Rate or Indirect Cost Rate Record.

If **add a new** is selected, the screen below will pop up.

4) **Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate to record?** Respond Yes or No. If **No** is selected, users cannot go any further and nothing will be recorded. If **Yes** is selected, users can continue.

   If your organization will be claiming or budgeting with a current, approved indirect cost rate on any AmeriCorps awards, it must be reported on this page. The rate information you record will be used in all award negotiation and reviews until it is superseded by a new approved rate, or until it expires. Applicants will have an opportunity to identify, in applications, if they will be using a lesser percentage of an approved rate, if you so choose.

5) **Rate Type** - If your rate type is not one of the following options, contact your Portfolio Manager or Competition contact person from the applicable Notice for guidance:

   Federally Negotiated – Select if your rate has been negotiated by your cognizant federal agency. Cognizance is determined by the agency which provides the highest amount of direct federal funding (see Uniform Guidance Appendices III, IV, V, and VII);

   State Negotiated – Select if your rate has been negotiated by a state agency or other pass-through entity; or

   10% of MTDC – select if your organization qualifies for and elects to use the 10% de minimis rate of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). Organizations qualify for this rate if they do not have a current federally negotiated rate (including a provisional rate). State entities must also not receive more than $35 million in direct federal funding to be eligible for this rate.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Rates must be used consistently across ALL federal awards.

6) **Issuing Agency.** Respond by selecting the federal agency who approved your rate, or if the federal agency who issued your rate is not listed, select **Other**, or if your rate is issued by a state agency select **Other**.

   Identify federal agencies using the drop-down list. If your rate is approved by a federal agency other than the ones listed, notify your Portfolio Manager or Competition contact person from the applicable Notice. Other federal agencies may be added as needed.

7) **Acceptance Date.** Enter a valid date.
   The acceptance date is usually identified when the rate was signed by the issuing state or federal agency.

8) **Rate Status.** Select one of the following options: **Final, Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, Other,** or **Other – 10%**.
   Rates issued by federal agencies will almost always be final or provisional. However, if your organization has formally notified a federal or state agency of your eligibility and intent to use the 10-percent of MTDC rate, select **Other – 10%**. If your organization has a **predetermined** or **fixed rate**, select those options accordingly. If a state rate indicates a term that is not listed here, select **Other** and notify your Portfolio Manager or Competition contact person from the applicable Notice. Additional rate status options may be added as needed.

9) **Effective From.** Enter a valid date.

   The effective from date is found on your indirect cost rate document. If using the 10-percent of MTDC rate, enter today's date or the date your organization formally started charging costs under the 10-percent of MTDC rate.

10) **Effective To.** Enter a valid date.
    The effective to date is found on your indirect cost rate document. If your organization has received approval to extend your rate, enter the end date of the extension.

11) **No Expiration.** Check or leave unchecked.
    If your rate does not have an expiration date, as is the case with the use of the 10-percent of MTDC rate, check this box. Otherwise, leave this box unchecked.

12) **Extended?** Respond Yes or No.
    If the rate "effective to" date has been extended with approval of the federal cognizant agency under authority of the Uniform Guidance, respond **Yes**. If it is not an extended rate effective to date, respond **No**.

13) **Rate Base.** Enter up to 500 characters including spaces.
    Enter the text as found on your indirect cost rate approval document. For rates issued by state agencies, enter either the rate base used to determine the indirect cost pool as stated on your indirect cost rate approval document or "State Rate N/A." If you need more than 500 characters, indicate "Summary", and record the most important content.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

14) **Treatment of Fringe Benefits.** Enter up to 500 characters including spaces.
Enter the text as found on your indirect cost rate approval document. For rates issued by state agencies, enter either how fringe benefits were treated in determining the indirect cost rate as stated on your indirect cost rate approval document or "State Rate N/A." If you need more than 500 characters, indicate "Summary", and record the most important content.

15) **Treatment of Paid Absences.** Enter up to 500 characters including spaces.
Enter the text as found on your indirect cost rate approval document. For rates issued by state agencies, enter either how paid absences were treated in determining the indirect cost rate as stated on your indirect cost rate approval document or "State Rate N/A." If you need more than 500 characters, indicate "Summary", and record the most important content.

16) When you have completed all of the above entries, click the **"save & close"** button at the bottom of the page.
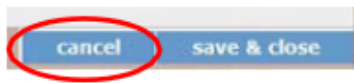
- If you would like to cancel your entry, click the "**cancel**" button and the entry will be cancelled. All entry information will be lost, and no entry will be shown.
- **Once a rate is saved it cannot be modified.**
- If users inadvertently enter incorrect information, a new entry must be submitted with the correct information.

17) **Order of Rates** - Once an entry is saved, users will be able to see the rates they have entered. Rates will display in the order of entry. Entry of rates will provide users and AmeriCorps with a historical record which can be used to clarify indirect cost rate inquiries for monitoring, consistent record maintenance, and audits.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your Portfolio Manager or Competition contact person from the applicable Notice.

APPENDIX F: ALTERNATIVE MATCH INSTRUCTIONS

IMPORTANT NOTE: An Alternative Match Schedule (AMS) is not the same as a Match Waiver Request. An **AMS** is a different match schedule based on certain conditions. Match Waivers have their own request process where the grantee must demonstrate hardship in order to waive the required match in a given year or years.

Background: AmeriCorps State and National grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. Grantees have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as they maintain the minimum match of 24% for the first three years and the increasing minimums in years thereafter maxing out at 50% at year ten. See 45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90 for the specific regulations.

What is Alternative Match Schedule: Under certain circumstances, applicants/grantees may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35% instead of 50% as specified in the regulations at 45 CFR §§ 2521.60(b). To qualify, you must demonstrate that your program is either a) located in a rural county, or b) in a severely economically distressed community as defined below.

Eligibility: The U.S. Department of Agriculture publishes Beale codes, which are used to classify counties as being more urban or more rural. If this county has a Beale Code of 4,5,6,7,8 or 9 then the program is eligible to apply for the alternative match requirement.
See Appendix H for the Table of Beale codes.

If your program is in one of these areas, see the instructions below for applying for this alternative match schedule. **You must submit your alternative match schedule request to PennSERVE at the time of application.**

Instructions for the Alternative Match Schedule: To request an alternative match schedule, programs must send their request to PennSERVE for review. PennSERVE will then forward the request to the AmeriCorps agency for consideration. Upon PennSERVE approval, the AmeriCorps agency will review your request, notify PennSERVE if you qualify for the alternative schedule, and provide instructions for entering your budget into eGrants under the Alternative Match Schedule. To submit a request for an alternative match, submit an email to PennSERVE at the time of the application as follows:

E-mail subject line: AmeriCorps Alternative Match Request
2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

Send your request in memo format. You must respond to each item below. Please include both the item and your response in your request.

1. **Rural County Applicant.** List what county and state your program currently operates in. (If your program does not operate in a rural county, but you want to be considered as a 'severely economically distressed' applicant then write "NA" for question 1 and skip to question 2)

2. **Severely Economically Distressed Applicant.** List what county and state your program currently operates in. (***If your program meets the definition in Question 1 as a rural county you do not need to complete Question 2 and simply write "NA".)*** If you do wish to be considered, please fill the space below with relevant data that would support your claim that your program is in a severely economically distressed area.
Relevant information would include:
    a) the county-level per capita,
    b) county poverty rate,
    c) county-level unemployment rate, and
    d) any description if the areas served by the program lack basic infrastructure like water or electricity.
Please cite sources of where this data is collected. See Appendix H for a list of website addresses where this publicly available information can be found.

3. **What is your current program year?** (i.e., how many years has this ASN Program been funded?) If the answer is over 10 years, please write "10+

4. **Organization Name.**

5. **AmeriCorps Grant Number, or Application ID if applying for a new grant.**

6. **Authorized Representative Name** [Inclusion of name constitutes certification of accuracy of facts included in this request

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

APPENDIX G: MATCH WAIVER REQUEST

The intent of this process is to have your organization identify and document the specific circumstances your organization faced or is facing in meeting your match requirement.

Pennsylvania AmeriCorps State subgrantees must submit waiver requests to PennSERVE for review and approval. If PennSERVE approves the waiver request for submission, PennSERVE will submit to the AmeriCorps agency for review and final decision.

Waiver requests are due to PennSERVE at the time of application. If you do not need a waiver but experience a change in match funding during the program year, you will be able to submit a request at that time.

Per 45 CFR §2521.70, the first four criteria below must be met for AmeriCorps State grants. While the agency has included some examples of sufficient justifications for each of them, individual grantees' circumstances vary, and all justifications will be seriously considered.

AmeriCorps' Office of Grant Administration (OGA) will review and evaluate all justifications for sufficiency with the respective regulatory provisions using a prudent person standard. The first four bold print items below are the regulatory criteria, of which all must be met. The remaining items provide additional information that must also be completed.

Please see Individual Match Waiver Frequently Asked Questions here.

All criteria must be addressed for your request to be considered.
1. **The lack of resources at the local level.** [To meet this criterion, please provide a bulleted list of items such as: reduced state or local budget for allowable sources of cash or in-kind match, reduced corporate and/or foundation giving, any other applicable examples of the lack of local resources (such as deep poverty or other economic circumstances].

2. **That the lack of resources in your local community is unique or unusual.** [To meet this criterion, please provide at least one example such as: a comparison to another nearby community with more resources, a comparison to another point in time for the community(s) served, etc.]**.**

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

3. **The efforts you have made to raise matching resources.** [To meet this criterion, please provide a bulleted list of prospective funders who denied requests for funding this year and the amounts of the requests to each funder.

```

```

4. **The amount of matching resources you have raised or reasonably expect to raise.** [To meet this criterion, please provide a bulleted list of secured or likely funders and the amount you expect to receive from each one.]

```

```

5. What is the current match percentage, and what is the desired new match percentage.

```

```

6. Bulleted list of proposed activities on the Grantee Share of the budget that would not happen if the waiver is granted. That is, what activities will not be undertaken, given that the overall grant budget will be smaller with less match?

```

```

7. Program year or years for which you are requesting a match waiver.

```

```

Name of individual submitting request:
Email address:
Phone Number:

_____

PennSERVE Use Only:
Date received:
All criteria met: (Y/N)
Action taken (include dates):
       ☐Returned to applicant for additional information
       ☐ Submitted to AmeriCorps agency for review
       ☐ Rejected by PennSERVE
       ☐ Approved by AmeriCorps agency
       ☐ Rejected by AmeriCorps agency
Comments:

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

APPENDIX H: RURAL PROGRAMS, BEALE CODES, AND COUNTY-LEVEL ECONOMIC DATA

Rural Community

The U.S. Department of Agriculture published **Beale codes**, which are used to classify counties as being more urban or more rural. Counties are designated on a scale from one to nine according to the following descriptions:

	Metropolitan Type	Description
1	Metropolitan	Counties in metro areas of 1 million population or more
2	Metropolitan	Counties in metro areas of 250,000 to 1 million
3	Metropolitan	Counties in metro areas of fewer than 250,000
4	Non-metro	Urban population of 20,000 or more, adjacent to a metropolitan area
5	Non-metro	Urban population of 20,000 or more, not adjacent to a metropolitan area
6	Non-metro	Urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, adjacent to a metropolitan area
7	Non-metro	Urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, not adjacent to a metropolitan area
8	Non-metro	Completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, adjacent to a metropolitan area
9	Non-metro	Completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, not adjacent to a metropolitan area

Any program located in a county with a Beale code of 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9 is eligible to apply for the alternative match.

Severely Economically Distressed Community

The following table provides the website addresses where you can find the publicly available information on county-level economic data including per capita income, poverty rate, and unemployment levels.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition

WEBSITE ADDRESS	EXPLANATION
http://www.workstats.dli.pa.gov/	**PA Work Stats**: Labor statistics in Pennsylvania, including rates by county
http://www.rural.palegislature.us/	**The Center for Rural Pennsylvania:** Demographics, publications, and data about Pennsylvania's rural communities and residents
http://www.bea.gov/regional/	**Bureau of Economic Analysis' Regional Economic Information System (REIS):** Provides data on *per capita* income by county for all states except Puerto Rico.
https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml	**Census Bureau's American Fact-finder**: Provides census data including estimates on poverty, per capita income, and unemployment by counties, states, and metro areas, including Puerto Rico.
www.bls.gov	**Bureau of Labor Statistics' Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS):** Provides data on annual and monthly employment and unemployment by counties for all states, including Puerto Rico.
http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/RuralUrbanContinuumCodes/	**US Department of Agriculture's Rural-Urban Continuum Codes:** Provides urban rural code for all counties in US.

2024-2025 PA AmeriCorps State Grants Request for Applications: Spring Competition