



# AMERICORPS MEMBER HANDBOOK



## **THE AMERICORPS PLEDGE**

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

**I will bring Americans together  
to strengthen our communities.**

**Faced with apathy,  
I will take action.**

**Faced with conflict,  
I will seek common ground.**

**Faced with adversity,  
I will persevere.**

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

**I am an AmeriCorps member,  
and I will get things done.**



January 2017

Dear AmeriCorps Member,

Welcome to Service! We are pleased that you have chosen to serve with us in this exciting national movement that emphasizes citizen service as a strategy to meet critical community needs.

As a member, not only will your service be making a positive difference to the community around you... it will also change you. Your work will develop new skills, introduce you to new people, and better your understanding of the functioning of non-profits, schools, and other public service agencies. Your service term will give you the opportunity to challenge yourself to stretch beyond your limits.

The service you provide is important work that will benefit others both immediately and in the future. I look forward to our work together.

May you enjoy a rich and rewarding service term!

Sincerely,

Brendan Norman  
Executive Director  
Mt. Adams Institute

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## **ABOUT THE MEMBER HANDBOOK**

This handbook is intended to be used as a reference for you during your term as an MAI AmeriCorps member. It is a compilation of Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and MAI policies and procedures that guide our program operations. We try our best to provide you with clear and up-to-date information; however, from time to time, new procedures will be brought to our attention and added. It is by no means a complete handbook.

We are honored that you have chosen us to be the "vehicle" for which you perform your service commitment. In turn, as staff, we commit ourselves to providing you with quality tools and up-to-date information so your service year will be the best it can be. Welcome!

## **MAI OVERVIEW**

### **MISSION**

*The mission of Mt. Adams Institute is to strengthen the connection between people and the natural world through education, service learning, career development and research.*

### **FOCUS AREAS**

MAI focuses its program activities on the following goal areas:

#### **Needs and Services**

- Restore watersheds;
- Enhance public lands;
- Supporting military veterans transition to the civilian work force
- Increase resource conservation; and
- Increase awareness of environmental issues and concepts.

#### **Strengthening Communities**

- Increasing volunteer involvement; and
- Increasing the capacity of agencies and individuals to meet community needs.

#### **Member Development**

- Increasing member knowledge to serve effectively;
- Supporting the effective transition from the military to a civilian career
- Improving member leadership skills; and
- Increasing member commitment to civic involvement.

### **CORE VALUES**

MAI addresses the environment and education as priorities in communities across the nation. In our efforts to address these priorities, we value:

- Leadership Development
- Service
- Partnership and Collaboration
- Cultural Diversity
- Service-Learning
- Stewardship
- Diversity of Opinions

### **GOVERNANCE**

Mt. Adams Institute is governed by a Board of Directors

## **MEMBER BENEFITS AND RIGHTS**

### **LIVING ALLOWANCE**

Members receive a monthly, taxable living allowance for their entire term of service (including holidays and vacation leave). The living allowance is provided to members in order to meet their basic living needs.

- A member who starts late must extend his/her service period to the same number of weeks as others in their class in order to receive the full living allowance.
- When members leave early (before their contracted exit date) their living allowance will cease.

Payroll department issues checks on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of each month for MAI. If the pay date falls on a weekend the living allowances are deposited on Friday. Deductions, such as FICA and federal and state taxes (when applicable), will be withheld from each living allowance. Direct deposit, at an institution of the member's choice, is offered and encouraged.

Questions about payroll issues should be referred to the MAI Program Director.

It is the member's responsibility to have a current address and phone number on file at the MAI Office to ensure that all necessary information and member living allowances can be received in a timely manner. Provide information regarding any banking account changes as soon as possible to avoid any delays in the direct deposit of your monthly stipend.

**A member who has been temporarily suspended from service receives no living allowance while suspended.**

### **EDUCATION AWARD**

Upon successful completion of a term of service, members are eligible for an AmeriCorps Education Award to pay for higher education and to repay qualified student loans.

Educational awards and hours commitments are as follows:

Hours Commitment	Amount of Educational Award
1,700	\$5,815
900	\$2,8907.50
675	\$2,2215.14
450	\$1,538.36
300	\$1,230.69

## MEDICAL COVERAGE

**Full-time** members may be eligible for medical coverage. **Member medical coverage begins on the first day of service and ends on the last day of the month in which you serve.** Family members are not eligible for medical coverage. Family members may be able to obtain coverage through the Washington Basic Health Plan or Oregon Health Plan.

- \$50,000 Maximum Benefit for Each Injury or Sickness
- \$100 Deductible per Insured Person per Service Year
- \$1,000 Out of Pocket Maximum per Insured Person per Service Year

The Policy provides benefits for Covered Medical Expenses incurred by a Covered Person up to the Usual, Customary & Reasonable Charges (U,C&R) for loss due to a covered Injury or Sickness, up to the maximum benefit of \$50,000. After the \$100 deductible has been satisfied, benefits will be paid at 80% of U,C&R for the first \$4,500 of Covered Medical Expenses, then 100% of U,C&R of the next \$46,400 in Covered Medical Expenses, not to exceed the \$50,000 Maximum Benefit. Covered Medical Expenses for Treatment of an Injury must be incurred within the Term of Coverage. There is a \$1,000 out of pocket maximum per Insured Person per Service Year.

More information regarding the The Corps Network Health Insurance plan is available at [www.summitamerica-ins.com](http://www.summitamerica-ins.com). Click "Students & Participants", then choose "The Corps Network". You will receive a packet with full coverage information and an insurance ID card about 2 weeks after your start date. You MAY use the insurance BEFORE you receive the packet/id card. Your policy deductible is \$100. That means you are responsible for the first \$100 in eligible medical expenses. Subsequent claims will be processed at the appropriate percentages (see above).

You will need the information listed below in order to use your insurance before you receive your packet:

- You will be enrolled in the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (NASCC) health insurance administered by Summit America Insurance Services L.C.
- You are not required to choose a provider who is in the Multiplan Network, but the amount you are responsible for will be less (once you meet your deductible) if you do.
- To locate a Multiplan Provider call 1-800-672-2140 or go to [www.multipan.com](http://www.multipan.com)
- To file a claim or submit a prescription claim, mail them to:

Summit America Insurance Services  
ATTN: NASCCA Claims  
7400 College Blvd, Ste 100  
Overland Park KS 66210

- To verify eligibility or benefits call 1-800-301-9128
- Fax: 913-327-0201
- Email: [the\\_corpsnetwork@summitamerica-ins.com](mailto:the_corpsnetwork@summitamerica-ins.com)
- Website: [www.summitamerica.com](http://www.summitamerica.com)
- Policy Number: 05333001

## FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

Members are entitled to leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act provided they meet the same requirements that an employee would be required to meet. Specifically, to be eligible, a member must have provided service for at least 12 months and have completed 1,250 service hours.

	CIGNA "Open Access Plus" Network Preferred Provider	Out-of- Network
<b>Deductible</b>	\$100 per plan year*	
<b>Out-of-Pocket Maximum</b>	\$2,500 (including deductible)	
<b>Benefit Maximum</b>	Unlimited	
<b>Hospital</b>	Prior Authorization Required for all Inpatient Admissions	
Room & Board	80%	60%
Other Hospital Services	80%	60%
Emergency Room	\$100 co-pay per visit; deductible applies, then covered at 80%	
<b>Professional Services</b>		
Office	80%	60%
<b>Urgent Care</b>	\$20 Copay, deductible applies, then covered at 80%	\$20 Copay, deductible applies, then covered at 60%
Surgery	80%	60%
Diagnostic Lab & X-ray	80%	60%
Allergy Injections	80%	60%
<b>Preventive Care</b>		
Routine Care (including preventive screenings)	100% (deductible waived)	60%
Mammogram/Pap Smear	100% (deductible waived)	60%
<b>Outpatient Rehabilitation</b> (Includes Physical, Speech, Occupational, Cardiac Therapies and Chiropractic Care)	20 visits per plan year	
	80%	60%
<b>Mental Health</b>		
Inpatient	80%	60%
Outpatient	80%	60%
<b>Chemical Dependency</b>		
Detoxification		
Inpatient	80%	60%
Outpatient	80%	60%
<b>Injury to Teeth</b>	80%	60%
<b>Ambulance</b>	80%	80%
<b>Prescription Drugs</b>	Prior Authorization Required for Some Prescriptions Co-insurance is paid at the pharmacy	
(including oral contraceptives)	80%	60%
<b>Durable Medical Equipment</b>	80%	60%
<b>AD&amp;D (Gerber)</b>	\$10,000	
<b>RATE per Corpmember per Month</b>	\$244.55	

## FORBEARANCE

- Apply about two weeks after your start date at <https://my.americorps.gov>.
- You are eligible to have the repayment of certain student loan(s) postponed while earning an education award. You must confirm this forbearance with your loan holder(s), and complete a Forbearance Request for National Service Form(s) at <https://my.americorps.gov>.
- Under this forbearance, interest continues to accrue on qualified loans during your term of service. Upon successful completion of your service, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) will pay, on your behalf, all or a portion of the interest that accrued during the service period. If you are a full time member who completes your service within one year, one hundred percent of the interest accrued during your service will be paid by the CNCS. If you fail to complete your hours during one year or if you are a less than full time member, CNCS will pay a smaller percentage of the accrued interest. In either case, interest payment will not be deducted from your Education Award.
- The **interest** amount the Corporation pays on your behalf **is taxable** and will be reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- If your student loan(s) are in default, they are most likely not eligible for forbearance. If your loans went into default prior to your enrollment as an AmeriCorps member, you can attempt to negotiate with the loan holder or collection agency to request an administrative forbearance to resolve the delinquency at the time this request is processed and ask that they add the interest to the balance of your loan.

## CHILD CARE

**Full-time** members may be eligible for a child care subsidy while serving with MAI. In order to receive the subsidy, the member's family must be income-eligible and the child(ren)'s caregiver must be considered a legal provider in the state.

AmeriCorps pays **up to 100%** of the current market rate of child care costs for eligible members who select qualified child care providers. Reimbursement rates and eligibility are based on locally established guidelines under Child Care Development Block Grants, a federally funded program administered by each state.

Parents are responsible for all registration fees upon the child(ren)'s acceptance or enrollment into the child care program and for any late fees incurred.

To qualify for payment through AmeriCorps\*CARE, a child care provider must qualify as a legal provider under the Child Care Development Block Grants state plan. Each state has its own approval criteria. Payments will not be made to ineligible providers.

- Child care providers must meet eligibility requirements as regulated under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858n (5)); regulations vary by state and are subject to change annually. Child care benefits are paid only to child care providers who have the qualification requirements to participate in the Child Care Subsidy Program. Child care benefit payments cannot be paid directly to the AmeriCorps members. Child care benefits are paid for all or of part of the member's child care costs during their active time of service with AmeriCorps.
- If you are not now eligible, but become eligible during your term of service, you may enroll at that time.
- If you submit an application to AmeriCorps\*CARE for child care benefits, you must provide the MAI Office with copies of all forms submitted. It is your responsibility to inform MAI of any change in your eligibility.

To qualify for benefits, members must satisfy all of the following requirements:

- The State and National member's household income must not exceed 75% of the state's median income for a family of the same size; this limit is different for each state and may change annually. The total household income is used to determine your income eligibility excluding your AmeriCorps State & National living allowance.
- The member must not currently receive a child care subsidy from another source at the time of acceptance into the program (including a parent or guardian) which would continue to be provided while the member serves in the program.
- The member must be the parent or legal guardian of a child under the age 13.

- The child must reside with the member.
- The member must certify that he or she needs child care in order to participate in the AmeriCorps State and National program.
  - GAP Solutions, Inc. (GAPSI) administers the AmeriCorps Child Care Benefits Program for the Corporation for National and Community Service and therefore members must apply directly to GAPSI for the child care benefit. Interested and eligible members should visit the GAP Solutions, Inc. website at: [www.americorpschildcare.com](http://www.americorpschildcare.com) or call toll-free at 855-886-0687 for more information.
  - If you apply for child care reimbursement you are required to give a copy of copies of your application to your MAI Coordinator.
  - Members may become eligible at any time throughout their service. Program Directors must notify GAPSI immediately in writing when a change occurs.

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

MAI provides Workers' Compensation Insurance to all members receiving a living allowance. Workers' Compensation Insurance covers on-the-job injuries.

Member responsibilities:

- Members who have physical limitations or special medical conditions, including allergies and reactions to stings, should notify their Leader/appropriate MAI staff in writing as soon as possible.
- If a member has an accident or injury while serving, s/he must report the accident immediately to his/her Site Supervisor and appropriate MAI staff.
- After the initial verbal report, the member must complete an Accident/Incident Report, detailing the injury or occupational disease, and submit it to their immediate supervisor and MAI staff within 24 hours.
- In addition to the MAI report form, the appropriate Workers' Compensation claim must be completed by the member and their immediate supervisor, and be submitted within 48 hours of a doctor's visit. To facilitate proper filing of a claim, members and/or their supervisors are encouraged to call the Center immediately to provide the designated staff person the information necessary to file a claim. The staff person notifies the Workers' Compensation office of the claim.
- In certain cases, the partner agency will be carrying the workers' compensation coverage. In these cases, you will follow their official procedures in addition to the MAI procedures.
- The member may lose the right to receive Workers' Compensation benefits if the incident is not reported in a timely manner.
- Members have up to one year to file a claim on an incident that has been reported.
- Members must have the medical provider submit all billings to the Workers' Compensation Insurance provider.
- The member is expected to perform alternative service opportunities offered by MAI staff in the case that s/he is unable to return to his/her regular service position.

MAI's responsibilities include:

- MAI supplies forms for reporting accidents and furnishes additional information about Workers' Compensation upon request.
- Workers' Compensation insurance pays certain medical and rehabilitation expenses within the limits of the law.
- **Members will not be credited with service hours for hours missed due to injury.**
- MAI staff will work with the member to find alternative service opportunities if the member is unable to serve at his/her regular service position.
- If the member is unable to perform any service due to injury, service suspension or compelling personal circumstances will be considered at the Director's discretion.

## **REQUEST TO LEAVE THE PROGRAM DUE TO A COMPELLING PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCE**

If a member is unable to complete his/her service obligation due to illness or personal issues beyond his/her control and that were unforeseen at the time of entry into MAI, the MAI Supervisor, upon request or upon

his/her own initiative, may release the member for Compelling Personal Circumstance. In the case of a Compelling Personal Circumstance, the member may choose to leave the program completely or suspend their service year.

Compelling personal circumstances include:

- Those that are beyond the participant's control, such as, but not limited to:
  - A participant's disability or serious illness;
  - Disability, serious illness, or death of a participant's family member if this makes completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible; or
  - Conditions attributable to the program or otherwise unforeseeable and beyond the participant's control, such as a natural disaster, a strike, relocation of a spouse, or the nonrenewal or premature closing of a project or program, that make completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible;
- Those that the Corporation has, for public policy reasons, determined as such, including:
  - Military service obligations;
  - Acceptance by a participant of an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work; or
  - Acceptance of an employment opportunity by a participant serving in a program that includes in its approved objectives the promotion of employment among its participants. For MAI programs this exception is valid only when obtaining a job in the natural resources field.
- **Compelling personal circumstances do not include leaving a program:**
  - To enroll in school;
  - To obtain employment, other than in moving from welfare to work or in leaving a program that includes in its approved objectives the promotion of employment among its participants (see item ii-c above); or
  - Because of dissatisfaction with the program.

Under a Compelling Personal Circumstance, the MAI Supervisor may either:

- Exit the member from the program and authorize a pro-rated award, as long as the member has served at least 15 % of his/her term of service; or
- Suspend the member's term of service for up to two years. Conditions of a suspended term of service include:
  - The member may return to MAI or to a similar AmeriCorps program. There is no guarantee the member will have the same position when s/he returns.
  - The member will not accrue service hours or receive benefits during this period.
  - The member has two years to return to service. The member then has the remaining part of the "original year time period" to complete their service, e.g. If the member left after six months of service, they have six months to complete their service after being reinstated.

Members must apply for Compelling Personal Circumstances in writing, using the following method:

- Clearly state a concise request for release from service due to a compelling personal circumstance. This request must be signed and dated.
- Provide detailed information. What is the situation? How has the situation affected your ability to complete a term of service?
- Provide back-up documentation such as doctor's records or letters, legal records, and/or letters from "experts." Documentation needs to clearly relate to the situation.

**Any member who leaves MAI without obtaining a release for Compelling Personal Circumstances is considered released for cause and will not receive an education award.**

## **HOLIDAYS**

MAI observes most standard holidays except for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, which is an AmeriCorps National Day of Service and is a mandatory service event. MAI supports members who wish to observe holidays of their own religion or faith; however, these days will need to be taken in exchange for regularly scheduled holidays. Members are required to notify their Leader/appropriate MAI staff of all exchanges they wish to take within three weeks of their start date. **No service hours are received for holidays unless you work.**

## **JURY DUTY**

AmeriCorps members selected to serve as jurors continue to accrue normal service hours and continue to receive all benefits, including living allowance, regardless of any reimbursement received from the court.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

MAI AmeriCorps Grant programs, its Sub-Grantees, and its Sponsors shall comply with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, or use of a trained guide dog or service animal, or which prohibit the release of confidential student information (the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) or which require child abuse reporting. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the Executive Director or Board President.

## **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION**

MAI and its Sub-Grantee programs will provide reasonable accommodation to the known mental or physical disabilities of members. Member selection and project assignments are made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation.

## **ARMED FORCES RESERVES**

To the extent possible, MAI seeks to minimize the disruption in members' service because of discharging responsibilities related to service duties. If members have a choice of when to fulfill their annual two-week active duty requirement, they should do so when it will not disrupt their AmeriCorps service. In instances where the dates of active duty are inflexible and conflict with MAI service, members will be granted a leave of absence for the two-week period of active duty in the Reserves.

Members may not receive time off for additional Reserves-related service beyond the two-week active duty period. No service credit is earned for once-a-month weekend service in the Reserves.

MAI credits members for service hours during their two-week active duty in the Reserves if it occurs during their service year. The member receives credit for the number of hours s/he would have served during that period had there been no interruption.

MAI continues to pay the living allowance and provide health care and child care coverage for the two-week active duty period.

## **UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

AmeriCorps members are considered to be volunteers, not employees. Therefore, members are not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits based on their AmeriCorps service.

## **VOTING**

MAI allows members to register during service hours, and the time spent on registering yourself to vote is counted as member development hours.

## **REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

### **HOURS OF SERVICE**

All full-time AmeriCorps members are required to serve a minimum of either 1700 hours in 9 to 12 months, or 900 hours in six months or less. However, MAI schedules and recommends that all full-time members serve a minimum of 1724 hours or 915 hours respectively to allow for any post-program discrepancy in hours. Full-time members serve an average of 40 hours a week. Part-time members are scheduled to serve 300, 450 or 675 hours.

Members are required to successfully complete all of their specific program requirements and to serve for the entire term of service, even if the hours requirement has been satisfied before the end of the term of service. Members who serve more than the required number of hours of service do not receive additional compensation.

Members must receive a 30 minute lunch daily and/or a 30 minute break for every 6 hours worked. These hours cannot be counted as service hours.

## **TYPE OF HOURS**

A term of service consists primarily of Service and Member Development/Training activities. On Timesheets, these activities are recorded as Service or Training Hours. Members can devote up to 20% of their term of service to Member Development/Training. Additionally, members can, but are not required to, participate in Fundraising activities (see Prohibited Activities for guidelines). Fundraising is limited to a maximum of 10% of their term of service.

**Members Serving “On-Call” Hours (e.g. answering crisis lines):** Members receive service hours for time spent on call *at the service agency site, but not while sleeping*. If the member is on-call from another location or by cell phone, only the time actually spent on the phone with a caller will count as service hours.

Individual Placement members only—within the 10% maximum fundraising option, members can use up to 2% of this amount towards their Community Action Project (CAP).

## **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING**

MAI is committed to providing members with opportunities to develop both personally and professionally during their service year. Full-time members participate in a Member Development Program with the following goals:

- Gain a greater appreciation and understanding of American democracy, government and various cultures, while learning to be an effective participant.
- Explore the community and its resources and plan successful service projects that respond to real community needs and emergencies.
- Coordinate, implement and evaluate a service project addressing an important community need.
- Increase life, leadership, and/or employment skills and foster positive attitudes that value lifelong citizenship and service.

Members can expect to spend between 10% and 20% of their service year in activities involving training and development. Member Development will be explained in detail during the member’s Pre-Service Orientation. Sponsors are encouraged to work with their member in examining the member’s individual development goals as the site may have opportunities available that a member can explore and develop.

## **TIMESHEETS**

Members are responsible for filling out timesheets through America Learns, providing appropriate backup documentation and handing them in by the last day of each month. Please refer to MAI staff for specifics about paperwork deadlines for your program.

## **MAI HOURS BENCHMARK POLICY**

In order to assist members to successfully meet their hours requirement within the time frame outlined in their MAI Member Agreement, MAI will provide monthly benchmark forms and training on its use to members so they may plan their service hours accordingly. It is ultimately the responsibility of the member to make sure s/he has or will have enough hours to complete their term of service. When members are not on track to complete hours, they are not fulfilling their member responsibilities to MAI. Progress will be defined by the weekly average benchmark which is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Weekly Average Benchmark} = 1724 - \text{Actual Hours} / \text{Weeks remaining in the Program}$$

Staff will offer assistance in creating a plan to make up low hours. The following outlines MAI procedure.

1. If a member’s weekly average benchmark is between 40-42 hours/week, it is the member’s responsibility to increase their hours.

2. If a member's weekly average benchmark is 42+ hours/week the member will create a plan to make up these hours. The plan must be submitted to MAI and include the following:
  - a) Date that the member and staff agree is feasible to have the hours made up;
  - b) Ideas of where and how these hours will be made up;
  - c) Next date for check in; and
  - d) A written and verbal understanding between staff and member of what steps will be taken next if the plan is not followed.
3. If a member has not followed the plan and continues to fall below the weekly average benchmark, the disciplinary procedure will be followed.

### **MAKE-UP POLICY**

Completion of the required service hour commitment is the responsibility of the individual member. Members who fall behind in hours are expected to organize and serve in special approved projects on their own time. There may be authorized make-up opportunities scheduled throughout the service year for members who are not up to date on their hours. Some opportunities may be mandatory for members who are deficient in hours. Members may be required to make-up hours on weekends or during scheduled program breaks.

Make-up time is to be served with a community or environmental program consistent with the mission of MAI. For members placed with one sponsoring site, the sponsoring site is the priority site for serving make-up hours. If a member is unable to serve these hours at her/his placement (e.g., the supervisor has no additional projects for the member or if the organization is closed for a holiday), s/he may request to serve the hours at a different organization.

Please refer to your appropriate Program staff for make-up hour policy. **Make-up forms/logs are turned in with timesheets for the month in which the make-up time was completed.**

### **HOURS COMPLETION**

To complete the required service hour commitment by the end of the term of service, absences must be held to a minimum. Some flexibility is built into the calendar to accommodate sick and personal leave. These hours do not count toward service accomplishment. All sick leave and personal leave from service or training must be made-up in accordance with the Make-Up Policy.

Please contact your program coordinator with questions about making up missed work.

**Staff provides service hour benchmarks to guide your progress. A member who falls significantly behind may be placed on a Disciplinary Contract and be required to make-up hours missed within a certain time frame.**

### **SERVICE AND TRAINING PROGRAM EVENTS**

Attendance is required at all MAI and AmeriCorps events marked as such on the calendar. These events may be scheduled on a weekend or a holiday.

SERVICE events promote community within MAI, with other AmeriCorps programs, and throughout the community at large. These events are also great opportunities to share your service activities with the public.

TRAINING events provide members with the skills and knowledge necessary to complete their service. Hours spent at these events count as member development hours. Please refer to your specific program for training agenda and make-up procedures.

### **EVALUATION**

Evaluations provide members with valuable feedback on their service, help members improve skills and performance, improve program quality and assess progress toward achieving goals.

Members are evaluated twice per year by MAI staff and sponsors, when applicable. Members and sponsors evaluate MAI once per year, though continuous feedback is encouraged throughout the year.

Evaluations are both written and verbal. Members complete evaluation forms and bring relevant forms to meetings with Leader/appropriate MAI staff and sponsors. Completed evaluation forms are kept in the member's file at the MAI offices.

## **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

A member's service performance is evaluated based on the following:

- Reports to service site punctually and prepared;
- Effectively communicates with MAI staff and members, project partners and community members, including appropriately directing concerns and suggestions;
- Exhibits professional behavior demonstrating respect, preparedness and enthusiasm for service;
- Completes all MAI project goals and member paperwork in a timely and effective manner;
- Utilizes good judgment in service sites including the safe care and use of tools, assessment of potential hazards and safe driving practices;
- Identifies as an MAI AmeriCorps member and represents self in a professional manner including wearing AmeriCorps attire/identifiers;
- Attends all required member trainings, service days and meetings;
- Seeks out and utilizes learning opportunities;
- Works independently and is self-motivated;
- Takes initiative when appropriate and exhibits creative thinking;
- Works well in a team setting, creating a positive service experience for self and others;
- Utilizes conflict resolution skills and demonstrates respect for others; and
- Adheres to all provisions and procedures as outlined in the Member Handbook.

At no time may the member:

- Engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state or federal law;
- Engage in prohibited activities, as outline in Prohibited Activities section of the Member Handbook; or
- Engage in activities that pose a significant safety risk to self or others.

## **ENROLLMENT PAPERWORK**

The member will complete all mandatory enrollment requirements. Failure to complete and submit all forms may result in release from the program.

Enrollment forms include:

- CNCS Enrollment Form – Online in My AmeriCorps
- Payroll paperwork to include:
  - Copy of Social Security card
  - W-4 (federal and state)
  - I-9 Forms
  - Direct Deposit Authorization Form (w/ VOIDED check)
- Food Stamp eligibility letter
- Driver's license or government ID (proof of identity)
- Birth certificate or U.S. Passport (proof of citizenship, naturalization or resident alien status)
- Medical Release Waiver w/ Emergency Contact
- High School Diploma Agreement
- Authorization/Eligibility
  - Criminal Background Check
  - Loan Forbearance Eligibility
  - Child Care Agreement
  - Publicity Release Agreement

- Permission to Release Information
- Health Insurance Eligibility Agreement
- MAI Member Agreement

## **EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

AmeriCorps programs require members to have a high school diploma or a GED or agree to obtain one before using their AmeriCorps Education Award. Members unable to complete this requirement will not be able to use their AmeriCorps Education Award. MAI will assist members who need to obtain a GED by directing them to the necessary resources.

## **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE**

While most situations can be resolved through communication, cooperation and respect, there may be circumstances that necessitate disciplinary action, suspension or release for cause. Because of the serious nature of some infractions, the MAI Supervisor may, at his or her discretion, omit the disciplinary action steps and move directly to suspension or release for cause.

### **Disciplinary Action**

#### **Step 1:**

The MAI supervisor issues a written warning to the member that states the problem and possible solutions. The member receives a copy of the written warning, and the original is placed in the member's file. The MAI supervisor and member hold a follow-up meeting within 30 days of the date the warning is issued. If the problem has been resolved, a letter stating so will be placed in the member's file.

#### **Step 2:**

If the problem has not been resolved or if it reoccurs, the member will be put on a Disciplinary Contract. The member receives a copy of the Disciplinary Contract, and the original is placed in the member's file. If the problem reoccurs, the member may be placed on a Disciplinary Contract without a written warning. Failure to comply with the terms of a Disciplinary Contract may lead to suspension or release for cause. At 30 days past the start of the Disciplinary Contract, the MAI supervisor will meet with the member. If the problem has been resolved, a letter stating so will be placed in the member's file.

A Disciplinary Contract will include:

- Statement of the problem
  - Reference to the previous written warning
  - Statement of responsibility of the member to correct the problem
  - Statement of the consequences if the problem is not resolved
- If necessary, follow-up meetings may be scheduled to monitor the member's progress in addressing the problem.*

#### **Step 3:**

If the terms outlined in the disciplinary contract are not fulfilled, or in the case of serious misconduct, the MAI Supervisor determines whether to release the member for cause or revise the Disciplinary Contract. Because certain infractions of MAI rules require a more serious response, the MAI Supervisor may, at his/her discretion, omit the disciplinary action steps and move directly to suspension or release for cause.

The following is a partial list of circumstances that will result in **disciplinary action**, which may lead to suspension and/or release for cause:

- **Persistent irresponsibility** *Examples of irresponsibility include, but are not limited to: excessive absences or absences without notification; chronic truancy; failure to turn in timesheets and other required paperwork on time; persistent use of profane or obscene language; disruption of the project site; dress code violations; irresponsibility towards residential duties; and unsafe habits that may endanger the members or project partners.*
- **Sponsor releases member from project site;**
- **Damage, destruction, or misuse of MAI private or external agency property;**
- **Threats to or harassment of another person;**

- **Violation of rules and/or policies** *Examples include, but are not limited to: disrespectful behavior; sexual harassment; possession or use of alcohol on the residential campus or during MAI sponsored events; negligent possession of weapons; dormitory infractions; violation of community relations policies, smoking policy, or disregard of visitor/guest policies.*
- **Inappropriate or unprofessional behavior** *Examples include, but are not limited to: behavior which could reasonably compromise MAI's reputation, whether such conduct occurs on "MAI time" or the member's own time, such as public fighting, public indecency, public intoxication, or being a minor in possession of alcohol;*
- **Member dissatisfaction with required duties that interfere with performance;** and
- **Violation of a Disciplinary Contract**

## Suspension

Members **may be suspended** if charged with any other criminal offense or pending investigation of violations of MAI Policy or Code of Conduct. The MAI Supervisor has the discretion to suspend a member for any reason if he/she feels the violation may compromise the safety and well-being of an individual or the program. If the member is found not guilty or the charge is dismissed, the member may be eligible to resume his/her term of service.

The following is a partial list of circumstances that will result in immediate **Suspension** and possible Release for Cause:

- Stealing or possession of stolen property
- Assault on another person
- Serious safety violation
- Charged with a violent felony such as rape or homicide
- Charged with a sale or distribution of a controlled substance

While suspended, a member of this program may not participate in or receive the following:

- Living allowance for the duration of the suspension
- Earn service hours
- Use of MAI equipment
- Transportation rights in MAI vehicles
- Attend any MAI function
- Members living on the residential campus will be asked to leave the site until the suspension has been served.

## Release for Cause

A member who is released for cause from the program will immediately lose all privileges as it relates to AmeriCorps or MAI. Listed below is a partial list of circumstances that will result in immediate Release for Cause.

- Possession of a weapon at the project site, in an MAI vehicle, or on the residential campus
- Possession of, or use of, any illegal drugs or alcoholic beverage at the project site, in MAI vehicles, or on the residential campus. (In most cases this action will result in immediate Release for Cause.)
- Conviction of sale or distribution of a controlled substance
- Conviction of a felony during the member's term of service
- Leaving the program without obtaining a release for Compelling Personal Circumstances
- Falsification of any information during the application process or during one's term of service

MAI is required to release any member who is convicted of a felony during his/her term of service. MAI may release anyone convicted of a lesser offense. Members will be suspended, pending resolution of charges, if charged with violent felonies such as rape, homicide, etc., or sale or distribution of a controlled substance.

Members who are released for cause are subject to the following consequences:

- Member will not receive any portion of the education award;
- Corporation for National and Community Service will not pay any accrued interest on a loan in forbearance;

- Member must disclose the terms of his/her release for cause to any AmeriCorps program he/she applies to in the future. Failure to do so will render the member ineligible to receive the AmeriCorps Education Award, whether or not that individual successfully completes the term of service.

### **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

In compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (as set forth in 45 C.R.F.), no member shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use on or in the workplace, in an MAI vehicle, or at any MAI site any alcoholic beverage, narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance. Doing so will result in immediate Release for Cause in almost any case.

MAI staff are required to report any violations of the Drug-Free Workplace Act to the Executive Director. Members are expected to report any violations to MAI staff or their Team Leaders.

Drug possession or use before, after or during service time, or near the service site can affect the service a member is able to provide and the reputation of MAI. The following is a partial list of circumstances that will result in investigation which may lead to suspension and/or release for cause:

- Any use, distribution, or manufacture of alcohol or drugs during non-service time when such use adversely affects one's efficiency on projects, training or community events, including attendance, conduct, performance or safety;
- Use of alcohol or drugs during non-service time if such use jeopardizes the reputation or credibility of MAI, its members, or its staff.

### **Cases Where a Member Is Involved In Legal Action Around Drug Use or Possession**

Any member arrested for or convicted of a drug offense must notify the MAI Supervisor in writing within **five** days. The MAI Supervisor will then take appropriate disciplinary action, including possible suspension and referral to a drug rehabilitation program, or release for cause.

### **Mt. Adams Residential Campus Drug and Alcohol Policy**

The residential site is an MAI site and a drug and alcohol free zone. All members who join the Mt. Adams Institute residential program agree to abide by and are subject to policies of the campus.

- Any member found to have unlawfully possessed, used, manufactured, dispensed or distributed any alcoholic beverage, narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance will, in almost any case, be immediately released for cause.
- Members are asked to report any violations of the residential Drug and Alcohol Policy to MAI staff or their Team Leader.
- Any member who visits the Mt. Adams Institute is required to follow the Mt. Adams Institute Residential Campus Drug and Alcohol Policy while on campus.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Mt. Adams Institute is committed to the quality of service experience each member receives. Every attempt is made to assist members in settling problems related to their AmeriCorps service experience or residential life. In most cases, issues are resolved informally using the following Informal Resolution Procedure.

#### **Informal Resolution Procedure**

- First, attempt to settle the problem with the other party on a one-to-one basis.
- If this attempt is unsuccessful, attempt to settle the problem by involving your Leader/appropriate program staff.
- If involving your Leader/appropriate program staff is unsuccessful, attempt to solve the problem by working with your direct supervisor.
- If this attempt is unsuccessful, address the issue with the MAI Supervisor.
- If the problem is not resolved by involving the MAI Supervisor, arrange for a meeting with the Executive Director.

In the event that informal efforts to resolve disputes are unsuccessful, AmeriCorps Member may seek resolution through the following grievance procedures. These procedures are intended to apply to service

related issues, such as assignments, evaluations, suspension, or release for cause. In addition, individuals who are not selected as AmeriCorps Members or labor unions alleging displacement of employees or duplication of activities by AmeriCorps may utilize these procedures.

State and local applicants that receive assistance from the Corporation must establish and maintain a procedure for the filing and adjudication of grievances from participants, labor organizations, and other interested individuals concerning programs that receive assistance from the Corporation. A grievance procedure may include dispute resolution programs such as mediation, facilitation, assisted negotiation and neutral evaluation. If the grievance alleges fraud or criminal activity, it must immediately be brought to the attention of the Corporation's inspector general.

(a) *Alternative dispute resolution.* (1) The aggrieved party may seek resolution through alternative means of dispute resolution such as mediation or facilitation. Dispute resolution proceedings must be initiated within 45 calendar days from the date of the alleged occurrence. At the initial session of the dispute resolution proceedings, the party must be advised in writing of his or her right to file a grievance and right to arbitration. If the matter is resolved, and a written agreement is reached, the party will agree to forego filing a grievance in the matter under consideration.

(2) If mediation, facilitation, or other dispute resolution processes are selected, the process must be aided by a neutral party who, with respect to an issue in controversy, functions specifically to aid the parties in resolving the matter through a mutually achieved and acceptable written agreement. The neutral party may not compel a resolution. Proceedings before the neutral party must be informal, and the rules of evidence will not apply. With the exception of a written and agreed upon dispute resolution agreement, the proceeding must be confidential.

(b) *Grievance procedure for unresolved complaints.* If the matter is not resolved within 30 calendar days from the date the informal dispute resolution process began, the neutral party must again inform the aggrieving party of his or her right to file a formal grievance. In the event an aggrieving party files a grievance, the neutral may not participate in the formal complaint process. In addition, no communication or proceedings of the informal dispute resolution process may be referred to or introduced into evidence at the grievance and arbitration hearing. Any decision by the neutral party is advisory and is not binding unless both parties agree.

(c) *Time limitations.* Except for a grievance that alleges fraud or criminal activity, a grievance must be made no later than one year after the date of the alleged occurrence. If a hearing is held on a grievance, it must be conducted no later than 30 calendar days after the filing of such grievance. A decision on any such grievance must be made no later than 60 calendar days after the filing of the grievance.

(d) *Arbitration—(1) Arbitrator—(i) Joint selection by parties.* If there is an adverse decision against the party who filed the grievance, or 60 calendar days after the filing of a grievance no decision has been reached, the filing party may submit the grievance to binding arbitration before a qualified arbitrator who is jointly selected and independent of the interested parties.

(ii) *Appointment by Corporation.* If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator within 15 calendar days after receiving a request from one of the grievance parties, the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer will appoint an arbitrator from a list of qualified arbitrators.

(2) *Time Limits—(i) Proceedings.* An arbitration proceeding must be held no later than 45 calendar days after the request for arbitration, or, if the arbitrator is appointed by the Chief Executive Officer, the proceeding must occur no later than 30 calendar days after the arbitrator's appointment.

(ii) *Decision.* A decision must be made by the arbitrator no later than 30 calendar days after the date the arbitration proceeding begins.

(3) *The cost.* The cost of the arbitration proceeding must be divided evenly between the parties to the arbitration. If, however, a participant, labor organization, or other interested individual prevails under a

binding arbitration proceeding, the State or local applicant that is a party to the grievance must pay the total cost of the proceeding and the attorney's fees of the prevailing party.

(e) *Suspension of placement.* If a grievance is filed regarding a proposed placement of a participant in a program that receives assistance under this chapter, such placement must not be made unless the placement is consistent with the resolution of the grievance.

(f) *Remedies.* Remedies for a grievance filed under a procedure established by a recipient of Corporation assistance may include—

(1) Prohibition of a placement of a participant; and

(2) In grievance cases where there is a violation of non-duplication or non-displacement requirements and the employer of the displaced employee is the recipient of Corporation assistance—

(i) Reinstatement of the employee to the position he or she held prior to the displacement;

(ii) Payment of lost wages and benefits;

(iii) Re-establishment of other relevant terms, conditions and privileges of employment; and

(iv) Any other equitable relief that is necessary to correct any violation of the non-duplication or non-displacement requirements or to make the displaced employee whole.

(g) *Suspension or termination of assistance.* The Corporation may suspend or terminate payments for assistance under this chapter.

(h) *Effect of noncompliance with arbitration.* A suit to enforce arbitration awards may be brought in any Federal district court having jurisdiction over the parties without regard to the amount in controversy or the parties' citizenship.

§ 2540.630 What information must I provide to contest a proposed action?

Your written response must include specific facts that contradict the statements made in the notice of proposed action. A general statement of denial is insufficient to raise a dispute over the facts material to the proposed action. Your response should also include copies of any documents that support your argument.

## **GUIDELINES ON PROJECT SITE**

### **FIELD SAFETY**

Safety is of utmost importance to MAI, and members are expected to assume a maximum commitment to personal and team safety. Jeopardizing one's own safety or the safety of the group will not be tolerated at any time and is grounds for immediate Release for Cause.

Members should be aware that they might:

- Use a variety of tools and equipment in the course of service;
- Serve in adverse weather conditions such as rain, wind, snow and fog;
- Be exposed to poisonous plants, insects or reptiles;
- Serve on steep slopes, on loose surfaces and/or at high altitudes; and
- Walk, hike and/or camp on difficult and steep areas.

### **Hard Hats**

Hard hats are provided for all Field Team members and staff. A hard hat must be worn at all project sites where there are overhead hazards, when wire is being stretched for fencing, or at the request of a sponsor.

### **News Releases**

News and press releases issued by members on behalf of their site should follow the procedures outlined by the sponsoring agency's media guidelines. Members and sponsors are highly encouraged to include AmeriCorps and MAI information in their release. Such information and other staff support are available through MAI staff. If a member chooses to develop news releases through MAI, then those news releases must receive prior approval from the MAI Supervisor before they can be issued.

### **Office Safety**

There are numerous hazards that exist in our offices and our indoor spaces. Be aware of potential office safety hazards and take appropriate steps to avoid accidents.

### **On-the-Project Injuries**

All members are covered by Workers' Compensation insurance for on-the-project injuries.

- Members who have any physical limitations or special medical conditions, including allergies and reactions to stings, should notify their Leader/appropriate MAI staff as soon as possible.
- Members must report all service project-related injuries to their Leader/appropriate MAI staff immediately. This includes all minor cuts, bruises, blisters, etc.
- All injuries should be reported on an accident/incident report even if no medical treatment is necessary at the time.

### **Overnights and After Hours**

Members are expected to follow all Standards of Conduct and other MAI Policies while representing MAI at overnight and after hours retreats, meetings and spike outs. Meeting sites, retreat sites and camping sites are service sites and are off limits for alcohol consumption.

### **Physical Training**

MAI provides service that can be physically demanding. Field Team members will lead and take part in stretching and warm-up exercises before the project day begins in order to prevent unnecessary strains and other muscular injuries.

### **Professionalism**

As a member of MAI, you will be in the spotlight at many different levels as it relates to your AmeriCorps experience. Personal hygiene and appropriate language, dress and behavior are all-important components of professionalism. Members who are serving in local schools or specific agencies will be required to follow their employee dress codes. For field team projects, we require members to wear long pants and close-toed boots with ankle support. Members are expected to follow the standards that will be outlined during orientation.

### **Snow Days and Inclement Weather**

In the event of a hazardous weather closure or delay, Individual Placement members shall follow the procedure established by their sponsor. Field Team members shall follow delays and closures as detailed by staff, or sponsors at their service site or local public schools.

### **Swimming**

Requirements: Swimming during service hours or while on development trips is a privilege and should be treated with respect. For members to swim safely the team leader must determine that the requirements have been met in the following three areas:

1. Location selection

For a swimming site to be acceptable it must meet the following criteria:

- (a) Have little or no current; slower than a slow walk.
- (b) No undertow.
- (c) The water, swimming area, and area downstream are free of obstructions, underwater hazards, and sharp objects.
- (d) Be of warm enough temperature as not to cause hypothermia.

## 2. Swimming buddy or observer

To meet MAI requirements, members must swim with a buddy or with a capable swimmer observing them. The following requirements also apply:

- (a) If the buddy system is not being used, the swimmer to observer ratio must not exceed 5:1.
- (b) Swimmers must stay within conversation distance of the observer and their buddy.

## 3. Swimming rules

The team leader and/or the observer are responsible for ensuring that the following rules are adhered to:

- (a) All people who are swimming are capable swimmers.
- (b) No diving.
- (c) Only thigh deep wading is permitted in swift water and the ocean.
- (d) No swimming alone.
- (e) A flotation device is on hand.

## Uniforms

It is important for MAI and AmeriCorps to create a positive identity in the community. Wearing MAI uniforms and identifiers increases knowledge of MAI/AmeriCorps and the service we provide. Members are expected to wear uniforms or an approved identifier visibly and maintain a high level of professionalism while participating in any MAI project, training or special event.

The uniform policy is as follows:

- Members will dress appropriately for safety and the professional requirements of their service site.
- Members will wear MAI/AmeriCorps identifier during all service hours. They are strongly encouraged to wear the full uniform while serving, especially when they are serving in public places and/or with other volunteers.
- Members will wear uniforms when attending any MAI or AmeriCorps event or any public relation function or opportunity that provides visibility for AmeriCorps and MAI.
- As the uniform represents MAI and AmeriCorps, members are expected to maintain a high level of professionalism while wearing the uniform and to keep their uniforms in good condition.
- Members are prohibited from wearing the uniform to political events and any other locations where it may reflect poorly on MAI.

Maintenance of uniforms and gear is the responsibility of the member. All clothing needs to be in good repair with no holes. Members are responsible for any items that need replacing. Items provided by MAI must be returned in good condition (less ordinary wear and tear) upon release from MAI. Items not returned, or returned in unusable condition, will result in deductions from the member's final living allowance. Members who successfully complete their term of service are allowed to keep their AmeriCorps shirts, jacket and pins.

## Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is a violation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and is prohibited by MAI. All members and staff in the MAI program will attend training on sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment, as used in this handbook, is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or placement; or
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or placement decisions (training, promotion, assignments, etc.) affecting such individual; or

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or MAI environment.

What is funny or permissible to one person may be offensive to another. *Unwelcome* sexual attention on a project, during MAI functions, or on MAI premises is prohibited. It is not the intent of MAI to regulate *mutual* social interaction or relationships freely entered into by members or employees.

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the professional relationship. All members must be allowed to work in an environment free from unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures. **Sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct at MAI or project sites and will not be condoned or tolerated by MAI members and staff.** Members or staff involved in the sexual harassment of other members or staff will be subject to disciplinary action.

Members or staff who become aware of informal complaints and reports of sexual harassment are responsible for directing complainants to a MAI supervisor.

All members and staff are responsible for receiving informal complaints and reports of sexual harassment and informing supervising staff of the complaint or report so that it can be investigated and resolved. Supervising staff will be responsible for notifying the Executive Director in writing of informal and written complaints.

Retaliation against any person who makes, or is a witness in, a sexual harassment complaint is prohibited and will result in appropriate discipline. It is a violation of this policy to knowingly report false allegations of sexual harassment. Persons found to knowingly report or corroborate false allegations will be subject to appropriate discipline.

### **Informal Complaint Process**

Anyone may use informal procedures to report and resolve complaints of sexual harassment. Informal reports may be made to any staff person. Staff persons shall always inform complainants of their right to, and the process of, filing a formal complaint. They shall also direct potential complainants to an appropriate supervisor or administrator who can explain the informal and formal complaint processes.

Informal remedies include, but are not limited to:

- An opportunity for the complainant to explain to the alleged harasser that his or her conduct is unwelcome, offensive or inappropriate, either in writing or face-to-face;
- A statement from a staff person or administrator to the alleged harasser that the alleged conduct is not appropriate and could lead to discipline if repeated; or
- A general public statement from MAI administration reviewing MAI's sexual harassment policy.

Informal complaints may become formal complaints at the request of the complainant or because MAI believes the complaint needs to be more thoroughly investigated.

### **Formal Complaint Process**

Anyone may initiate a formal complaint of sexual harassment, even if the informal complaint process is being utilized. The Executive Director may determine that MAI needs to conduct an investigation based on information in his/her possession regardless of the complainant's interest in filing a formal complaint.

Upon receipt of a written, signed complaint or information that the Executive Director believes requires further investigation, s/he will promptly carry out a thorough investigation and will endeavor to protect the rights of both the complainant and the alleged harasser while doing so.

When the investigation is completed, the Executive Director shall compile a full written report of the complaint and the results of the investigation.

Any member who has been found, after appropriate investigation, to have been in violation of this policy will be subject to Disciplinary Action, up to and including Release for Cause.

## **PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES AND INELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS**

AmeriCorps Members are prohibited from certain activities during service time. Members are not prohibited from engaging in any of these activities in their personal capacities and on their own time; however, Members cannot receive service time while engaging in such activities nor can they associate such activities with AmeriCorps or MAI. If there is any question about whether a certain activity is permissible, please contact MAI.

Federal law and the Corporation for National and Community Service policy prohibits AmeriCorps programs and their members from engaging in certain activities while using Corporation funds or on Corporation time. Examples of such activities include, but are not limited to:

### **Prohibited Activities**

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and Members may not engage in the following activities or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities:

- Attempting to influence legislation;
- Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- 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;
- 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;
- Providing a direct benefit to—
  - A business organized for profit;
  - A labor union;
  - A partisan political organization;
  - A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
  - An organization engaged in the religious activities described in bullet (7) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
- Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
- Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services;
- 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; and,
- Such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

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-Corporation funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

The Host Site may not assign to the following to the Member:

- activities that pose a significant risk to you or other participants
- assignments that displace employees
- internships with for-profit businesses

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

### **ACCOUNTABLE PROPERTY POLICY**

MAI is responsible for a great deal of equipment. Members must check out equipment through established guidelines and are accountable for all equipment. If any items are lost or negligently damaged, individuals and/or teams are responsible for the monetary reimbursement to MAI. Members may submit an appeal to the MAI Supervisor if they believe the items were lost or damaged under circumstances beyond their control.

### **TOBACCO USE**

Smoking is prohibited in all MAI buildings and vehicles. Individual Placement members and Interns follow the tobacco use policy enforced at their placement. Field Team members, Individual Placement members, and Interns in field-type placements shall adhere to the following:

- Smoking at project sites is allowed during scheduled breaks and lunch only and in designated areas determined in consultation with Leaders.
- Smoking in unauthorized areas is a serious offense. Since careless smoking causes many fires, members must strictly adhere to the smoking regulations to protect themselves, others, and MAI.
- During extreme fire conditions or at a sponsor's request, absolutely no smoking is allowed in the field.

### **FRATERNIZATION**

Due to the nature of our program, MAI staff in supervisory roles and Leaders who are in a position of authority should refrain from intimate relationships with members of this program. Conflicts that revolve around fraternization can be avoided if members, Leaders and staff take an active role in discouraging relationships of this nature. To avoid fraternization conflicts, we ask that staff and members report violations around this policy to their Leader and/or appropriate staff.

### **VEHICLE USE AND SAFETY**

Members may drive MAI vehicles **only if authorized**. Such authorization is given to members who:

- are 21 years of age;
- have a valid driver's license;
- passed a written examination;
- passed a defensive driving course;
- passed a driving practicum;
- signed a drug and alcohol agreement; and
- passed a driving abstract screening.

### **Service Hours for Travel Time**

MAI members can **only** accrue service hours for travel time if they are conducting MAI business and one of the following:

- They are traveling in a work vehicle to or from an MAI event.
- They have obtained explicit permission and training from their sponsor to travel in a sponsor vehicle in order to fulfill the needs of the placement, and the sponsor explicitly assumes the member's travel liability.
- They have obtained explicit permission from their sponsor to travel in a personal vehicle and the sponsor provides mileage reimbursement; and

- They have obtained explicit permission from their appropriate MAI staff to drive in a personal vehicle to attend an MAI event. If driving a personal vehicle they must meet MAI minimum insurance requirements.

Regular travel to and from the member's "primary duty station" (for IP members, their placement site; for FT members, the established staging area) and his/her residence shall not be "credited" with service hours. MAI vehicles are used to support service projects, to provide transportation to relevant training and events or to provide support to the residential program. Use of the vehicles by members must be approved in advance by the appropriate MAI staff, unless it is a medical emergency. Members must understand that all liability falls on the member's automobile insurance when driving their personal vehicle.

### **Rules for Driving MAI Vehicles**

- Drivers are to perform a thorough vehicle check before driving the vehicle.
- Seatbelts must be worn at all times.
- Non-authorized personnel are not to be transported in MAI vehicles.
- There is to be no smoking in MAI vehicles.
- Alcohol cannot be consumed, stored or transported in MAI vehicles.
- Vehicles are to be driven by authorized personnel only.
- Personal belongings or equipment are not to be stored in vehicles.
- Suspended members may not use vehicles while suspended.
- Any accidents, damage to the vehicle or maintenance requests need to be reported to staff either before departing the Center or, for items occurring during the day, upon return to the Center.
- Drivers are prohibited from using cell phones while driving.
- In such cases as #3 on the previous page under Vehicle Use and Safety, members will receive travel reimbursement compensation from MAI at the federally approved rate.

### **Suspension or Revocation of Driving Privileges**

The following violations will result in a member being placed on driving suspension or the total loss of his or her MAI vehicle driving privileges:

- Repeated disregard of safe driving practices;
- Personal deficiencies that make driving unsafe;
- Abuse of vehicle and/or equipment;
- Unauthorized use of vehicles;
- Serious traffic violations; or
- Documented complaints by members, passengers or general public.

The MAI Supervisor may reinstate a member's driving privileges if the member meets requirements as outlined by the Supervisor. The MAI Supervisor may, at his/her discretion, omit the disciplinary steps and suspend or revoke a member's driving privileges at any time.

### **Unsafe Driving Resolution Procedure**

Step One: Communicate to the driver when safety is being compromised.

Step Two: Communicate to your Leader or staff of instances when safety has been compromised. Your Leader or staff will issue a written warning and initiate Disciplinary Action as outlined on page 9 of this handbook.

### **Transportation of non-MAI passengers**

At no time may AmeriCorps members transport non-MAI passengers in MAI vehicles, unless the passenger is a registered MAI volunteer and travel in a MAI vehicle is necessary for his/her participation in a MAI service project. At no time may persons under the age of 18 ride in MAI vans unless there is preauthorization from the MAI Program Director.

**Members must complete Member Personal Vehicle Use Form** and have a staff member's approval before transporting youth, other members, or volunteers in their personal vehicle. Under certain circumstances, AmeriCorps members may transport youth (persons under the age of 18) in their private

vehicles to or from schools, agencies or service sites. Members must understand that all liability falls on the member's automobile insurance.

Approval to use MAI vehicles to support the residential program will be given based on the following considerations:

- the purpose of the trip and how it meets MAI goals;
- the distance to the destination; and
- the number of members or staff going.

Events that use MAI transportation must be open to all MAI members, unless there are limiting factors inherent in the activity.