

Illinois JusticeCorps



Program and Member Handbook

2018-2019

Welcome!

Thank you for deciding to be a part of Illinois JusticeCorps. Your volunteer service will help people in need during difficult times by delivering information and assistance to people without lawyers who are attempting to navigate the civil court system on their own.

This handbook will provide you with important information regarding the Illinois JusticeCorps program, policies and requirements.

We welcome your feedback. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions as the training and program unfold, please feel free to contact us. We look forward to working with you

Sincerely,

The Illinois JusticeCorps Team

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1. Overview of Illinois JusticeCorps, the IBF and The CBF

Illinois JusticeCorps is an innovative program through which AmeriCorps members and students serve as guides to make courts across Illinois more welcoming and less intimidating for people without lawyers. Illinois JusticeCorps recruits, trains and provides the necessary support for volunteers to provide this procedural and navigational assistance.

Originally established as a pilot program in Cook and McLean Counties by The Chicago Bar Foundation (CBF) and the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Access to Justice (ATJ Commission), JusticeCorps has proven to be a valuable program to help people without lawyers get the help they need to address vital civil legal problems. In 2014, the Illinois Bar Foundation (IBF) began overseeing the expansion of JusticeCorps into additional courthouses statewide while continuing to partner with CBF in Cook County and with the assistance of the ATJ Commission.

Over fifty years ago, a handful of visionary leaders founded the **Illinois Bar Foundation**. Their initial commitment was to provide aid to deserving members of the Illinois Bar who, because of age or infirmity, could no longer provide for their own care or support. Since then, the Foundation has expanded its scope to ensure meaningful access to the justice system, especially for those with limited means, and to assist lawyers who can no longer support themselves due to incapacity. With the vision to be the statewide leader in advancing equal justice, the IBF has established the following organizational objectives:

1. *Enhance the availability of legal aid to those of limited means.*
2. *Encourage pro-bono legal work.*
3. *Educate Illinois residents regarding their rights and responsibilities under the law.*
4. *Extend assistance to colleagues in need of support.*

As the charitable arm of the CBA, **The Chicago Bar Foundation** brings the legal community together to improve access to justice for people in need and make the legal system more fair and efficient for everyone.

The CBF's mission recognizes that taking a leadership role to ensure equal access to justice is our common cause as a profession, and that we can make a distinct impact in advancing that cause by the legal community coming together through the CBF.

The CBF pursues two overarching goals to improve access to justice:

- Increasing access to free and affordable legal assistance for people in need, and
- Making the courts and legal system more user-friendly and accessible for people without lawyers

Using a mix of grants, advocacy, pro bono and partnerships, the CBF pursues a two-pronged strategy to accomplish these goals:

1. Supporting proven solutions that have an immediate effect, such as the CBF's grants to establish pro bono and legal aid organizations made possible by the annual Investing in Justice Campaign.
2. Developing new and innovative solutions that drive long-term, systemic improvements, through initiatives such as the Justice Entrepreneurs Project, developing a network of Court-Based Advice Desks and the Legal Aid Academy.

2. Illinois JusticeCorps Member Overview

ROLE OF ILLINOIS JUSTICECORPS MEMBERS

- Each member will serve in a variety of capacities at court-based legal advice desks, legal self-help centers, and other locations in the courthouse. Tasks may include but are not limited to:
 - Providing litigants with information and referrals to appropriate services within or outside the courts;
 - Explaining legal processes and the various options available;
 - Assisting with the identification of and, when appropriate, completion of legal forms; and
 - Providing litigants with information about required next steps in their cases.
- In addition to the above, Illinois JusticeCorps Fellows will serve as the team leader at their service site. The additional tasks may include but are not limited to:
 - Working with the Site Supervisor and local stakeholders to manage the role of Illinois JusticeCorps in the courthouse and community.
 - Provide additional support for minimum-time members and part-time volunteers serving in the courthouse, not as a supervisor but as team leader and primary point person at the service site.
 - Develop, plan and execute service projects for required National Days of Service
 - Keep program staff up to date about any changes in operations or issues with members at the courthouse.
 - Collect member tally sheets and complete monthly program reports.
 - Participate in efforts to evaluate the program, including administering court patron feedback surveys and other measurement activities.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM ILLINOIS JUSTICECORPS MEMBERS

- Show up for your shifts.
- Be professional, on-time, and reliable.
- Notify your supervisor as soon as possible if you are unable to fulfill a shift so that they can make alternate arrangements. Repeated or unexcused absences may result in removal from the JusticeCorps program.
- Be respectful of the Circuit Court, legal aid partners, judges, lawyers, court patrons, and all other stakeholders in the courthouse.
- Review and learn the training materials in advance of volunteering.
- Ask questions when you have them.
- Always be mindful of the difference between legal information and legal advice.
- Complete tally sheets and review forms at the end of each volunteer shift.
- Let us know how we can improve our services and resources.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

- Training on the judicial process, the differences between legal information and advice, how to work with difficult or emotionally charged litigants and other substantive topics.
- Support both during and outside of your volunteer shifts with timely responses to your questions, concerns and suggestions.
- Supervision and feedback.
- Ongoing improvement on the quality, quantity and delivery of our resources.
- Respect and much appreciation.
- A supportive, flexible, friendly and worthwhile volunteer experience

ANSWERS TO BASIC QUESTIONS

Who are AmeriCorps members?

Illinois JusticeCorps members are AmeriCorps members and participants in a National Service Program. These members commit to a term of service between 300 and 1700 hours. In return for their service, they will receive an education award. A member making a 300-hour commitment is considered a “Minimum-Time Member” and a member making a 1700-hour commitment is considered a “Full-Time Member.” A member making a 900-hour commitment is considered a “Half-Time Member.”

Full and Half-Time Members are Illinois JusticeCorps Fellows who serve the role of being the team leader at their courthouse working with the Site Supervisor to manage the work of JusticeCorps in their courthouse as well as support minimum-time members and volunteers.

What is AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is a national service program that is similar to the Peace Corps. Citizens agree to serve a term of service and, after successfully completing service, they receive an educational award. There are AmeriCorps programs across the country meeting all kinds of community needs, ranging from tutoring children to refurbishing houses for the needy to doing environmental work. Besides GETTING THINGS DONE (the AmeriCorps motto), members also try to encourage citizens to give something back in their own community.

What is Illinois JusticeCorps?

Designed in part as a response to the justice gap across Illinois and the country, Illinois JusticeCorps is an innovative approach to addressing the growing needs of people without lawyers. The program leverages volunteers to assist people without lawyers in accessing the courts, facilitating the efficient processing of cases involving people without lawyers, and improving the delivery of justice to all.

Do AmeriCorps members get paid?

Not technically. An Illinois JusticeCorps Fellow receives a living allowance intended to help sustain them while they are committed to community service. This monthly stipend is not considered a paycheck because members are not considered employees. All Illinois JusticeCorps members will receive an education award at the successful completion of their term of service.

3. Program Requirements

Illinois JusticeCorps/AmeriCorps members must complete their hours within the term of service set by their member agreement.

We expect and understand that in some months members will serve more hours than in other months. However, members must demonstrate satisfactory progress toward their commitment to remain in the program.

SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF SERVICE TERM:

In order to successfully complete a term of service with Illinois JusticeCorps and receive the full Education Award; the member must meet the following requirements:

- Actively participate in the program throughout the duration of the term of service indicated in the Member Service Agreement.
- Complete the minimum number of hours indicated in the Member Service Agreement (i.e. 300 hours for minimum-time members).
- Attend pre-service orientation and additional required training throughout the service year. Up to 20% of the Member's hours can be utilized for training and educational activities as approved by the Program.
- Earn satisfactory or better end-year evaluations (and mid-year evaluations for full-time and half-time members).
- Complete and submit all Illinois JusticeCorps documentation which includes, but is not limited to, member timesheets (approved by member and Site Supervisor), member tally sheets, sign-in sheets, program assessments and evaluations, and all required enrollment and exit paperwork.

TRAINING

The program will provide each member with the training necessary to successfully engage in all service activities. Members are required to attend a two-day orientation and training where they will get a basic overview of the judiciary and court system, common areas of law, and important differences between legal advice and legal information as well as ongoing site specific training.

If at any point a member feels unprepared to fulfill the duties as an Illinois JusticeCorps member, they should raise the concern and ask for additional training and support from Site and Program staff.

Up to 20% of the members required service hours can be spent engaging in program-specific and on-site orientation, as well as professional development and community learning. Members are encouraged to seek out additional training related to their service and professional development. Members may accumulate training hours at approved community learning events using the Community Learning form. (See Allowable Activities Section)

EARLY COMPLETION OF HOURS

Members sign an agreement for both a minimum number of hours and a particular start and end date. Members who complete their hours prior to the end of the term set forth in their

member agreement may discuss exiting the program early with Program Staff. Early completion of a term of service is approved at the discretion of program staff based on the needs of the particular site and the member.

SERVICE HOUR UPDATES

The Illinois JusticeCorps Program Operations Director, Regional Program Coordinators, Site Supervisors and the member will be able to track completion of hours through the America Learns Timekeeping system. If a member is behind in hours, he or she is required to make up missed hours by coordinating extra shifts. Members are responsible for successfully completing the minimum-number of hours required by the member service agreement. If members wish to make up hours outside of regular service hours or program events, they must get approval from the site supervisor and the Regional Coordinator to take on extra projects outside of regular service hours.

4. Important Considerations for AmeriCorps Members

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of the Illinois Bar Foundation and Illinois JusticeCorps to grant equal opportunity to all qualified persons without regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation or any other status protected by applicable federal, state or local law. The program will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability in compliance with federal, state and local law. Any violation of this provision should be reported immediately to the Program Operations Director.

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Your Rights

- Participation in the Corporation and its programs and projects must be based on merit and equal opportunity for all, without regard to factors such as race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, political affiliation, marital or parental status, military service, or religious, community, or social affiliations.
- You have a right to reasonable accommodation for disabilities. Programs must furnish reasonable accommodations for the known physical and mental limitations of qualified AmeriCorps members.
- If you believe your rights have been violated, you may report such violations to the directors of your program, who must establish and maintain a procedure for filing and adjudicating certain grievances. You may also file discrimination-related grievances with the Equal Opportunity Counselor of the Corporation for National and Community Service at (202) 606-5000, ext. 312 (voice), or (202) 606-5256 (TTY).

Your Responsibilities

- To earn an education award, you must satisfactorily complete your program requirements and your full term of service, according to your member contract.

Adapted from material contributed by SEE West Monroe AmeriCorps (West Monroe, LA). An EnCorps resource.
Adapted for the use of the Illinois Bar Foundation and Illinois JusticeCorps. Rev. August 2018

- Satisfactory service includes attendance, compliance with applicable rules, a positive attitude, quality service, and respect toward others in the program and in the community.
- You must abide by your member contract and follow the rules of your program. You may be suspended or terminated if you violate the stated rules of behavior.

HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment or intimidation of any kind is prohibited by the IBF and Illinois JusticeCorps. This includes, but is not limited to, harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other protected category.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment can be unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to, or rejection of, such conduct:

- Is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's service;
- Serves as the basis for decisions affecting an individual;
- Results or intends to result in unreasonable interference with an individual's work or service; or
- Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or service environment.

Prohibited acts of sexual harassment can take a variety of forms. Examples of such conduct that would be considered sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Acts in which an individual explicitly or implicitly demands dates or sexual favors for job or service benefits;
- Preferential treatment or pressure for dates or sexual favors;
- Unwelcome flirting, sexual comments or sexual advances;
- Unwelcome notes, letters, emails, text messages, telephone calls, or interactions on social media;
- Sexually suggestive comments, gestures, looks, or sounds directed toward another;
- Discussion of sexually explicit content or experiences;
- Unwelcome sexual jokes, teasing, remarks, or questions;
- The open display of sexually oriented pictures, posters, or other material offensive to others;
- Unwelcome and deliberate touching, leaning over, slapping, or pinching;
- Physical assault of a sexual nature (sexual assault); and
- Continued offensive conduct, either verbal or physical, once an individual has indicated, either orally or in writing, that such conduct is offensive.*

*This list is not intended to be exhaustive; rather it is merely illustrative of the types of behavior which will be deemed sexually harassing, inappropriate, and grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge.

Sexual harassment is not limited to prohibited conduct by a male toward a female nor by a superior toward a subordinate. Examples of variations on sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A man, woman or gender nonconforming person can be the victim;
- A man, woman or gender nonconforming person can be the perpetrator;
- The victim does not have to be the opposite sex from the perpetrator;
- The perpetrator does not have to be the victim's supervisor;
- The perpetrator could be: (1) a supervisor who does not supervise the victim, (2) another member, (3) a volunteer, (4) a member of the program staff, (5) a member of a partner organization's staff, (6) a courthouse employee, (7) a courthouse independent contractor, (8) a visitor, or (9) any other individual connected with the service site; and
- The victim does not have to be the person toward whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed, but could be someone who is affected by such conduct even though it was directed toward someone else.

Other Forms of Unlawful Harassment

Unlawful harassment includes verbal, physical or visual conduct, including ethnic or racial jokes and remarks, used to criticize, stereotype, ridicule, insult, or show hostility towards another based on race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other protected category. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Using epithets or slurs, offensive jokes or pranks;
- Mocking, ridiculing or mimicking another's culture, accent, appearance or customs;
- Engaging in hostile or offensive acts or threatening to do so or otherwise intimidating others; and
- Posting or circulating offensive material in any form, including email, at either a site location or IBF property.*

*This list is not intended to be exhaustive; rather it is merely illustrative of the types of behavior which will be deemed harassing, inappropriate and grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge from the program.

Prevention & Elimination of Harassment

In order to prevent and eliminate harassment, including sexual harassment and other forms of unlawful harassment, the Illinois JusticeCorps Program Director and Regional Program Coordinators will:

- Provide training, guidance, and instruction on the prevention and elimination of harassment;
- Inform members that harassment: (1) is prohibited, (2) will not be tolerated, (3) will be investigated, and (4) that appropriate corrective action will be taken against any individual who performs such conduct, including possible dismissal from the program;

- Notify members that they should report, in a timely manner, all harassment to either: (1) a Regional Program Coordinator, (2) the Program Director, or (3) the Illinois Bar Foundation Executive Director, depending on whoever the member feels is the most appropriate person to report such conduct; and
- Immediately investigate all complaints of harassment brought to their attention.

In order to assist in the prevention and elimination of harassment, members will:

- Ensure that they understand all training, guidance and instruction on the prevention and elimination of harassment;
- Request additional training, guidance and instruction on the prevention and elimination of harassment from the Regional Program Coordinators and/or Program Director, if needed;
- Report, in a timely manner, conduct that they believe constitutes harassment to either: (1) a Regional Program Coordinator, (2) the Program Director, or (3) the Illinois Bar Foundation Executive Director;
- Assist program staff or program partners in investigating and resolving informal and formal complaints or reports of harassment;
- Ensure that their conduct does not harass other members, volunteers, program staff, partner organization staff, courthouse employees, courthouse independent contractors, visitors, or other individuals connected with the service site; and
- Cooperate with the IBF and Illinois JusticeCorps's efforts to prevent and eliminate harassment.

Disciplinary Measures

Any violation of the above rules will be investigated and if harassment is found to have occurred, disciplinary measures will be taken. Such disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Members may be suspended or dismissed from the program;
- Illinois JusticeCorps services may be withdrawn from the service site location; and
- Physical assaults of a sexual nature (sexual assault) will result in dismissal from the program and may be grounds for criminal prosecution.

Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any individual who in good faith reports or makes a complaint regarding harassment, including those who participate in any investigation of such complaints, is prohibited by the IBF and Illinois JusticeCorps. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment. Any individual who engages in retaliation is in violation of this policy and will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal from the program. Reports and complaints of retaliation are subject to the same investigation and remedial procedures as harassment claims.

SITE LOCATION SECURITY

The safety of Illinois JusticeCorps members is a high priority for the IBF and Illinois JusticeCorps. Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against members while at their respective site locations will not be tolerated. The IBF and Illinois JusticeCorps program will ensure that members understand safety policies and protocols at each site location so that members can act appropriately if they are the victim of, or witness to, a threat, threatening behavior, or act of violence by any individual at their site location.

TAX WITHHOLDING AND UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

By law, full-time and half-time members are “stipend participants” whose living allowances are subject to ordinary state and federal tax laws. Thus, the Illinois Bar Foundation will withhold applicable state and federal payroll taxes from living allowance checks. Members are not eligible for unemployment compensation since they are not employees.

WAGE GARNISHMENT

Any type of garnishment of the federal portion of a Member’s living allowance is not permitted due to issues of sovereign immunity. Sovereign immunity protects the property interests of the United States from suits to which it has not consented. The federal government has a continuing property interest in AmeriCorps grant funds until they are expended in accordance with the grant’s terms. With respect to the living allowance, the Corporation has a property interest in the federal share of the Member’s living allowance, until the AmeriCorps Member actually receives it, and this property interest is protected by sovereign immunity. Only Congress may wave this immunity.

JOB-RELATED INJURIES and WORKERS COMPENSATION

AmeriCorps members in Illinois are eligible for Worker’s Compensation for job-related injuries. Members must notify their site supervisor immediately of an injury and provide the Illinois Bar Foundation with a written report with 24 hours.

NON-DUPLICATION AND NON-DISPLACEMENT

Non-duplication:

Serve Illinois/AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless non-displacement requirements are met, Serve Illinois/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.

Non-Displacement:

- a. 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.
- b. An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- c. A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
- d. 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.
- e. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that –
 - i. Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
 - ii. Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
- f. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any –
 - i. Presently employed worker;
 - ii. Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
 - iii. Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
 - iv. Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
 - v. Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

LOAN FORBEARANCE/INTEREST ACCURAI**Loan Forbearance**

AmeriCorps Members who are earning a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award are uniquely eligible for one type of postponement of the repayment of their qualified student loan called forbearance. During the forbearance period, interest on the principle amount of the loan continues to accrue. If a Member successfully completes their term of service and earns an Education Award, the National Service Trust will pay all or a portion of the interest that has accrued on the qualified student loans during this period. This accrued interest paid by the Trust, like the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award itself, is subject to income taxes.

AmeriCorps Members enrolled in an AmeriCorps project are eligible for forbearance for most federally-backed student loans. For other types of student loans, Members must ask their loan holder if their AmeriCorps service qualifies for a deferment or forbearance. This postponement of the student loan payment (forbearance) is not automatic.

Members must request it from their loan holders by completing the National Service Forbearance Request Form. Members may complete the Forbearance Request Form online by accessing their My AmeriCorps Portal. The National Service Trust does not grant forbearances. Loan holders do. The Trust merely verifies Membership in AmeriCorps and forwards the

documents to the loan companies. The Trust is able to verify Membership only when it has proof from a project that the individual is an AmeriCorps Member.

Interest Accrual Payments

AmeriCorps Members who have earned a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award are eligible to have the Trust pay up to 100% of the interest that accrued on their qualified student loan during their service. To have the Trust pay all or a portion of the interest accrued on a qualified student loans, the Trust must receive verification from the Program indicating the Member has completed their service and are eligible for an award. A Member and their lender also must complete the Interest Accrual Form, which indicates the amount of interest accrued during your service period. The loan holder sends this completed form to the Trust for payment.

Defaulted Loans

Most student loans that are in default are not eligible for forbearance. If a Member has loans that have gone into default before they begin their AmeriCorps service, they can attempt to negotiate an arrangement with the loan holder or collection agency to bring the loan out of default so forbearance can be granted and interest paid. Also, Members can use their Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to repay defaulted student loans as long as the loans meet the definition of qualified student loans.

My AmeriCorps Portal

In order to prevent a delay in the processing of interest payments, individuals must request payments electronically using our on-line system, My AmeriCorps. This is a secure, fast, and user friendly method for requesting interest payments to be remitted to your loan holders. It also provides electronic records of payments requested and paid and there are no forms to mail in. The Corporation for National & Community Service cannot guarantee the prompt and accurate processing of requests for interest payments using paper forms. Payments requested by paper can take up to six months or more for processing and are less secure. It is fast and easy to access your National Service Participant account in My AmeriCorps. To register, go to <http://my.americorps.gov/mp/login.do> and click on “Register to create a new Member/Alum account” and follow the instructions.

5. Prohibited Activities

These activities are prohibited by the Corporation for National and Community Service and Illinois JusticeCorps during a member’s AmeriCorps service. These activities cannot be a part of a member’s service, nor should the member wear Illinois JusticeCorps or AmeriCorps uniforms, identification, buttons, etc., while participating in these activities, or otherwise identify or associate such activities with an AmeriCorps program.

(a) 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:

(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—
 - (i) A business organized for profit;
 - (ii) A labor union;
 - (iii) A partisan political organization;
 - (iv) 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
 - (v) An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
- (9) Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
- (10) Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services;
- (11) AmeriCorps members may not raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment;
- (12) AmeriCorps members may not write a grant application to the Corporation or to any other Federal agency; and
- (13) 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.

Finally – Illinois JusticeCorps members are prohibited from providing legal advice to court patrons and self-represented litigants.

6. Allowable Activities

After reading the list of prohibited activities there may still be questions about what kind of service work can be credited to the Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards hours.

The most important piece of information to relay to the Members is that at least 80% of their time must be spent doing direct service and the other 20% can be credited to education and/or training that they receive that relates to their work or to AmeriCorps. No more than 20 percent

of the aggregate of all AmeriCorps Member service hours in your program, as reflected in the Member enrollments in the National Service Trust, may be spent in education and training activities.

Direct service is work that addresses human need, the environment, public safety, and/or education in one form or another. It is working directly with people to make change, or doing work that is involved in making that direct change. It can be outreach, case management, training, teaching, tutoring, mediating, cleaning, counseling, recruiting volunteers, catching up on paperwork related to clients, preparing for class, coaching, listening, cooking, serving, providing health care, food, clothing, etc. Direct service hours should constitute 80% or more of an AmeriCorps Member's total hours served. The remainder will be indirect service hours.

Indirect service hours, or education and training, hours are only applicable when they reflect the AmeriCorps service that the Member credits to the education award he or she will receive. Any on-the-job training that refers to direct service would be part of this category. All orientations, including the AmeriCorps orientation, would be included, as well as any state or regional trainings, seminars, or workshops pertaining to issues related to direct service. Examples would be conflict resolution seminars, teacher development days, team-building exercises or a class on training techniques. Only 20% of all Member's credited service hours can be dedicated to education and training, even if more hours have been spent in this area.

Members may raise funds directly in support of service activities that meet local, environmental, educational, public safety, homeland security, or other human needs. This fundraising should not exceed 10% of their service hours. Examples of fundraising activities that Members may perform include, but are not limited to the following: a. Seeking donations for of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers tutor children to read; b. Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers; c. Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals; d. Securing financial resources from the community to assist a faith-based organization in launching or expanding a program that provides social services to the Members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the Members of the faith-based organization; or e. Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current Members. **Illinois JusticeCorps members do not generally engage in fundraising activities, and must have approval from Program Staff before engaging in raising funds for service activities.**

All AmeriCorps service activities will take place within the State of Illinois or Iowa only. Member questions should be directed to Program Staff.

7. Attendance Policy and Time-Off Requests

All JusticeCorps members are required to attend their sites on scheduled days at scheduled times for the scheduled hours. Illinois JusticeCorps has instituted the following policies and procedures to assure that each Member attains the required number of hours to complete their term of service. For Illinois JusticeCorps Fellows, we expect serving at your courthouse during

your year of service is your priority and all time off requests are approved at the discretion of the Regional Coordinator. If the Member does not adhere to the attendance policy, he or she may be released from Illinois JusticeCorps for cause.

A. Schedules

Each site will work with site supervisors and program staff to develop a shift schedule for the site team and the Illinois JusticeCorps Fellow is responsible for maintaining the schedule. We encourage members to work with one another in order to get their shifts covered in the event they need to be absent.

B. Absences and Time off Requests

Planned Absences: Planned Absences must be approved by the Member's Regional Program Coordinator. The member is also responsible for informing the site supervisor of any planned absences and working to insure the needs of the site are met in their absence. *A member must submit a request in writing at least 5 days in advance of the absence and receive permission in writing.*

Emergency Absences: In the case of illness or an emergency, *the member must notify the site supervisor and Program Staff by phone, email and/or text message as soon as possible, and at least 1 hour prior to the start of service.* No service hours may be accrued during an absence.

Unexcused Absences: Failure to provide appropriate notice for an emergency absence, or failure to get approval for a planned absence may result in an unexcused absence. *Members who have had more than 3 unexcused absences are subject to termination from the program for cause.*

C. Armed Forces Reserves

Members are allowed to serve in the Armed Forces Reserves with no penalty.

D. Voting

AmeriCorps members who are unable to vote before or after service hours will be allowed to do so during their service time. Members will not be allowed to count service hours for voting.

E. Lunch Breaks

Members are expected to work with site supervisors to schedule lunch and other breaks based on the needs of the service site. Lunch and other breaks are not allowed to count as service hours. Any member serving more than 5 hours in a given day is required to take a 30 minute lunch break. Members are not permitted to "work through lunch" to earn additional hours towards their service requirement.

F. Training and National Days of Service

Illinois JusticeCorps team meetings, trainings and service projects are mandatory. A Member must get an absence approved if they are unable to attend a day for training or participate in a National Day of Service, and the member must work with Program Staff to make up the training or service day.

8. Dress Code

Illinois JusticeCorps Member attire reflects directly upon the AmeriCorps Member as well the Illinois Bar Foundation, Chicago Bar Foundation, Court, and other partner organizations. Members are expected to present a professional and business-like appearance that reflects the dignity of the Court.

Members will be provided with JusticeCorps gear to make them easily identifiable to court staff and court patrons. Members are strongly encouraged to wear their JusticeCorps gear to all of their court-based shifts. If Members are unable to wear gear to any of their court-based shifts, then they must wear a JusticeCorps volunteer badge. The JusticeCorps logo must be visible at all times during court-based shifts.

The following items of clothing are not permitted:

- Athletic clothing;
- Shorts;
- Flip-flops;
- Beachwear;
- Suggestive attire;
- Torn, dirty, or frayed articles of clothing; and
- Clothing with large print or messages (other than the JusticeCorps logo).

Members will also be expected to follow any dress codes, guidelines, or rules set forth by each service location or court. Should you have any questions as to appropriate attire, please contact your Regional Program Coordinator or the Program Director.

9. Timesheets

Timesheets and reports are extremely important. Members will be trained in how to log their time in the America Learns system. Timesheets will be submitted for approval in a timely manner, twice per month.

Timesheets are the binding contract between member and staff and are the sole documentation of completed service. Timesheets are audited by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Reports are used to document members' direct service and the progress toward achieving Illinois JusticeCorps objectives.

- Members should complete the timesheets every shift and submit them the day following the end of the timesheet time period (The 1st-15th and 16th-last day of the month).
- Completing timesheets should not interfere with daily duties and responsibilities at member's service site.
- Consistent failure to complete and submit timesheets in a timely manner can lead to dismissal from the program for cause or suspension of living allowance.

CODE OF CONDUCT

A member's violation of the code of conduct may lead to their release for cause.

The member is expected to, at all times while acting in an official capacity as an AmeriCorps member:

- Demonstrate mutual respect towards others.
- Follow the directions of the AmeriCorps Program office and Host Site.
- Have a neat and clean appearance and wear attire appropriate including the AmeriCorps logo.
- Conduct himself or herself in a manner exemplary as a role model to others and in compliance with AmeriCorps standards.
- Direct concerns, problems and suggestions to his or her Site Supervisor or the Program Coordinator.
- Keep the Site Supervisor informed of his/her schedule and activities during service hours and report changes in a timely manner so the appropriate action can be taken to cover or reschedule activities.
- Keep confidential and proprietary information strictly confidential, consistent with state and federal laws.
- The member understands that the following acts also constitute a violation of the Program's rules of conduct:
 - Unauthorized tardiness.
 - Unauthorized absences.
 - Ingesting or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or any illegal drugs during the performance of service activities.
 - Repeated use of inappropriate language (i.e. profanity) at a service site.
 - Failure to wear appropriate clothing at worksite and when participating in service assignments.
 - Performing personal business, such as making excessive phone calls or running errands, during AmeriCorps service hours.
 - Stealing, lying or falsifying AmeriCorps reports.
 - Inappropriate or unprofessional behavior.
 - Destroying or defacing any Program property or service site property.
 - Refusing to follow the Site Supervisor or Program Director's instructions.
 - Failure to notify the Program of any criminal arrest or conviction that occurs during the term of service.
 - Assault on another person while on service assignment or off duty.
 - Possession of a weapon while on service assignment.
 - Failure to follow the rules and regulations set in the member contract.
 - Falsifying critical information (especially information related to eligibility) during the application process or during the term of service.

All Illinois JusticeCorps member are prohibited from providing legal advice. If you are unclear about the difference, please ask your Regional Program Coordinator or Program Director.

Adapted from material contributed by SEE West Monroe AmeriCorps (West Monroe, LA). An EnCorps resource.
Adapted for the use of the Illinois Bar Foundation and Illinois JusticeCorps. Rev. August 2018

11. Drug Free Workplace

Members will be expected to adhere to all provisions of service in a drug-free workplace in accordance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act, 41 U.S.C. 701 et seq., implementing regulations, 45 C.F.R. 2542;

As a member you are hereby notified that:

- The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and Program;
- Conviction of any criminal drug statute must be reported immediately to the Program Site Supervisor;
- The member's participation is conditioned upon compliance with the notice requirements; and
- Certain actions will be taken against members for violations of such prohibitions.

Criminal Drug Convictions

As a member you must notify the Program Coordinator in writing of any criminal drug convictions for a violation occurring in the workplace or during the performance of project activities no later than 5 days after such a conviction. The Program Site Supervisor must take appropriate action up to and including termination or member release for cause consistent with the Corporations' rules of termination and suspension of service

12. Discipline Policy

An AmeriCorps member should always address any staff at his or her site with the professionalism of a representative of Illinois JusticeCorps. Members are required to follow all policies set by Illinois JusticeCorps and their Service Site. All written disciplinary reports will be documented in the member's file and copies provided to the member.

A progressive discipline approach is used with members. Appropriate program officials include Site Supervisors, the Regional Program Coordinators, the Program Operations Director and the Executive Director of the Illinois Bar Foundation. An outline of this process follows:

- a. For the member's first offense, the Regional Program Coordinator (or other appropriate program official) will issue a verbal or written (email) warning to the member, documented in the member's file.
- b. For the member's second offense, the Regional Program Coordinator (or other appropriate program official) will meet with the member and issue a written warning, a copy of which will be put in the member's file. The member will participate in a corrective action plan to change the conduct at issue.
- c. For the member's third offense, the member may be suspended for one day or more and will not receive credit for any service hours missed, documented in the member's file. The member will be given a specific time period to alter the

conduct at issue and may be released from the program if the member fails to do so.

- d. For the fourth offense, the program may release the member for cause.

Suspension

The Program Staff may temporarily suspend a member for minor disciplinary reasons, such as chronic tardiness. If the member is charged with a violent Felony or sale or distribution of a controlled substance, or convicted of possession of a controlled substance, the Program Staff must suspend the member without any AmeriCorps benefits, including living allowance, and without receiving credit for hours missed.

13. Release from Terms of Service

A member who cannot complete their term of service with Illinois JusticeCorps will be exited early from the program. The member may be released from his or her term of service for the following reasons:

RELEASE FOR CAUSE

Members exiting the program for cause will cease to receive the living stipend, the health care benefits and the child care benefits and will receive no portion of their education award. If a member must leave the program and follows the appropriate procedures for exiting the program early, the early exit will not bar the member from future participation in a National Service Program. For example, if the member is no longer able to continue to do service in the program but does not have a compelling personal circumstance, the member must follow the procedure below for exiting the program early, but will not be prohibited from future service.

The program may terminate the member for cause. If a member is terminated from the program for cause, they will cease to receive the living stipend, the health care benefits and the child care benefits. They will receive no portion of their education award and they will be prohibited from future participation in any National Service program. The program may terminate a member for cause at any time for the following reasons:

- The member has stopped participating in the program without obtaining a release for compelling personal circumstances from the appropriate program official.
- During the term of service the member has been convicted of a violent felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance.
- The Host Site or Program Partner requests that the member be terminated from service at the site.
- The member has committed any of the offenses listed below:
 - Engaging in any activity that may physically or emotionally damage other members of the program or people in the community.
 - Unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of any controlled substance or illegal drugs during the term of service.
 - Consuming alcoholic beverages during the performance of service activities.
 - Being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs during the performance of service activities.

- Any other serious breach that in the judgment of the Program Staff or service site supervisor would undermine the effectiveness of the program.

RELEASE FOR COMPELLING PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Members exiting the program because of compelling personal reasons will cease to receive the living stipend, the health care benefits and the child care benefits, but members will receive a prorated education award, provided the member has completed at least 15 percent of the hours needed to complete the term of service. The Program may release the member from the term of service for compelling personal circumstances if the member demonstrates that:

- The member has a disability or serious illness that makes completing the term unreasonably difficult or impossible.
- There is a serious injury, illness, or death of a family member, which makes completing the term unreasonably difficult or impossible for the member.
- The member has military service obligations.
- The member has accepted an opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work; or
- Some other unforeseeable circumstance beyond the member's control makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for the member to complete the term of service, such as a natural disaster, relocation of a spouse, or the non-renewal or premature closing of the Program.

REQUIREMENTS FOR EARLY EXIT

The program has discretion to release a member from service if they cannot fulfill the terms set in the member service agreement. To request release from service early for any reason the member must complete the following:

- Provide a written letter outlining the reason the member wishes to be released from the program to their Regional Coordinator and the Program Operations Director;
- Discuss the reasons for exit and develop an exit plan with the Program Operations Director; and
- Complete an exit form.

Failure to comply with the procedure for early exit may prohibit the member from future participation in any National Service program.

14. Grievance Policy

Illinois JusticeCorps 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.

- **Informal Resolution Procedure**
- For minor issues between members, we encourage members to try to settle their differences together.
- Discuss the issue with the Site Supervisor and Regional Program Coordinator and ask their help in resolving the matter.

- If this is unsuccessful, address the issue with the Program Operations Director
- The Serve Illinois Commission mandates the following grievance procedure which is also available.

In the event that informal efforts to resolve disputes are unsuccessful, AmeriCorps members may seek resolution through the following grievance procedures. These procedures are intended to apply to service-related issues, such as assignments, evaluation, suspensions, or release for cause. All grievances that allege fraud or criminal activity must be brought to the attention of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

- A grievance must be filed within one year of the alleged occurrence.
- A grievance hearing will be held no later than 30 days after the filing of the grievance. This timeframe may only be extended by written agreement of both parties.
- Prior to the hearing, one or more pre-hearing conferences will be arranged by the Program. The pre-hearing conference is intended to facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution of the matter to make a hearing unnecessary or to narrow the issues to be decided at the hearing.
- The person conducting the hearing may not have participated in any previous decisions concerning the issue in dispute.
- A written decision to the hearing will be made no later than 60 days after the initial filing of the grievance.
- The grievant can request binding arbitration if decision is adverse to the grievant or if the decision is not reached within 60 calendar days. The arbitrator must be independent and selected by mutual consent of the parties involved. If the parties cannot agree on the arbitrator, the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (ICVCS) will appoint one within 15 days of receiving the request.
- The arbitration proceeding must be held no later than 45 days after the request for arbitration, and no later than 30 days after the arbitrator's appointment. An arbitration decision must be made within 30 days after the commencement of arbitration proceedings.
- The cost of arbitration must be divided evenly between the parties, unless the aggrieved party prevails, in which case the program must pay the total cost of the proceedings as well as the prevailing party's attorney fees.

15. Travel Policy

Members are responsible for their own transportation to and from the assigned service site. Travel time to and from a service site cannot be included in service hours, however, if there is transportation involved with traveling between service sites during a given day, those hours can be included.

When members are required to attend trainings or other service activities outside of their assigned service site, transportation will be provided or arranged with the Program. Members will be reimbursed for mileage if they drive a personal vehicle, but the Program reserves the

right to require that the member use alternative modes of transportation such as carpooling, train or public transportation if it is more cost effective.

16. Performance Reviews

Performance evaluations provide positive as well as constructive feedback through one-on-one meetings with AmeriCorps members. They provide opportunities for member growth, self-improvement, and self-reflection. AmeriCorps members must receive a satisfactory final evaluation to receive an education award.

Performance reviews will be completed by the Regional Program Coordinator and/or Site Supervisor.

All AmeriCorps members will complete a final performance review at the completion of his or her service. Full-time and Half-time members will also receive a mid-year performance review. The member's development will be measured by at least four areas of competency: Attendance and Professionalism, Communication Skills, Performance Skills like teamwork, use of judgment, and adaptability, and Overall Quality of Work.

17. Member Experience

An important part of our AmeriCorps program is the emphasis on the quality of the member's experience. We provide members with a variety of training opportunities, as well as team building sessions.

We encourage feedback and initiative from members with regards to their service, training and overall experience. We are committed to making member service terms a valuable and meaningful experience for members, providing them an opportunity to develop professionally and personally as they work to serve others.