Host Site Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

**Position Descriptions:** Provide the AmeriCorps Member with a well developed and specific position description listing, approved by VHCB AmeriCorps. The position description should list “essential duties” of the position and having measurable outcomes that reflect the achievement of grant objectives. The Supervisor will use the position description to guide the member’s daily activities and should notify the VHCB AmeriCorps Program Director before modifying any AmeriCorps Member’s position description, and send a new, clean copy of the updated version to for approval.

Provide each ACM with responsibilities for a minimum of 1,700 service, training, and fundraising hours (900 hours for half-time Members; 450 hours for Quarter Time) averaging 35.5 hours per week for full-time Members (20 hours per week for part-time Members) for the duration of the ACM’s stated contract term dates. Holiday, sick, and personal hours are not counted towards the 1700 (or 900 or 450) required hours. The member’s hours should be filled with a challenging and engaging work flow, while not overwhelming the member.

**Regular Check-ins:** VHCB AmeriCorps requires that members and Supervisors check in on a regular basis. The program sets a minimum of once per week in which the member and supervisor have set aside time to discuss assigned tasks and any factors affecting the member’s service. Shared office space, regular communication, nor unscheduled check-ins meet this requirement.

**Direct Service:** The ACMs will be performing direct service to fill a need that the host organization has, and this need must fall within the limits of the mission, objectives and allowable activities of the VHCB AmeriCorps program. The supervisor should support the ACM in carrying out the direct services, and ensure the member is not regularly performing administrative tasks nor engaging in prohibited fundraising activities.

**Reporting and Documentation:** Assist members in completing required AmeriCorps paperwork and documentation. Ensure members are submitting timesheets on time on a bi-weekly basis, and approve them within 48 hours. Assist members with periodic reports detailing the member’s activities, and the successes and challenges that each ACM is experiencing. The supervisor may need to provide support for and assistance to the ACM for their respective data collection and activities reports as required by the Program. Make sure the member has time built into daily scheduling to complete required AmeriCorps paperwork and requirements.

**Member Recruitment:** The supervisor will recruit, interview, and select the member that the host site believes is the best fit for the position. Hosts agree to follow the Member selection guidelines as outlined in the VHCB AmeriCorps recruitment guidelines found online at www.vhcb.org/americorps.

**Member Retention:** The Supervisor should keep in mind that as a service position, the Member is not held to the exact same standards as an employee, and that it is not possible to ‘dismiss’ a Member after a trial period. VHCB AmeriCorps is committed to member retention and does not dismiss a member unless the Member has had access to due process (which might include more than one three-way meeting to attempt to resolve issues or investigate situations with the Program Director, Supervisor, ACM and sometimes the Executive Director of the host organization as necessary). Members will be
dismissed immediately if they are clearly performing illegal or unsafe acts, or their attitude warrants it. In these cases, **clear documentation** from the Host Site is imperative.

**AmeriCorps Rules, Regulations, & Policies:** The supervisor should be reasonably aware and knowledgeable of all AmeriCorps rules, regulations, policies, and practices put in place by CNCS, The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and SerVermont.

**Provide Appropriate Training:** Supervisors should provide any training necessary for each ACM to successfully complete their service term and carry out assigned duties. In addition to the technical skills that will be required for the member to complete tasks, VHCB requires that hosts assist each ACM in the development of basic professional skills such as phone etiquette, writing, time management, computer usage and any other applicable areas.

**Workspace:** Supervisors must ensure that each ACM has an appropriate office space and the equipment and supplies necessary to perform to the best of her/his abilities. Hosts should provide the necessary office supplies, phone access, computer and internet access for the success of each ACM’s project(s). Additionally, as email is the main form of communication within the AmeriCorps program, all members should be allowed time and access to daily to check the email account listed with VHCB AmeriCorps.

**Host Site Orientation:** Provide a thorough, on-site orientation for your ACM, including any emergency protocols the host organization follows. This will include providing an outline of your organization’s philosophy, policies and procedures. In addition, we request that Hosts introduce each ACM to the organization’s staff and make them an active part of the daily life and culture of the office.

**Performance Review:** Complete ACM performance reviews two times per Member service term, with evaluations midway and at the end of the ACM’s term, and provide regular feedback on the members progress and placement.

**Member Safety:** Comply with VHCB AmeriCorps’ commitment to practicing effective risk management to ensure the safety, dignity, and legal rights of its participants. Properly manage any incidents that occur so as to minimize injury and other forms of loss.
Top 10 Tips for Effective AmeriCorps Supervision:
Advice from VHCB AmeriCorps Alumni

1. **Provide a clear position description with goals and expectations.** Be flexible when possible and willing to change them as necessary, but makes sure they are in place to serve as a guide for the term.

2. **Meet with the member regularly.** While it's easy to get distracted by busy schedules, regular check-ins are critical for exchanging timely feedback to ensure the member is on course. Set aside one-on-one time with the member at least once a week.

3. **Ensure members receive a full orientation to the site, including protocols, staff introductions, and the mission of the organization.** A comprehensive introduction to your organization will allow them to be more effective early on in their term.

4. **Pride members with tangible, meaningful tasks that can be completed over the course of their term.** This will help them feel satisfied they have made a lasting contribution to the organization and helps your organization tackle "wish list" projects.

5. **Trust that the member is highly motivated and wants to be challenged.** Provide an appropriate level of challenge: too little and they feel undervalued and too much leads to burn-out and dissatisfaction.

6. **Understand the difference between AmeriCorps members and interns or volunteers.** AmeriCorps members bring both advantages and constraints that differ from volunteers and interns (see the "What's the difference?" handout in the Supervisor Handbook). Give a copy of "Understanding Our AmeriCorps Members" handout to all staff at your organization.

7. **Honest, open communication is key.** Effective communication in the present prevents problems later.

8. **Give feedback.** Members want to learn and become a competent professional. Provide as much constructive feedback as possible—both areas for improvement as well as what they're doing right.

9. **Create opportunities for the member to network.** Invite members to attend meetings, conferences, site visits, and events.

10. **Approve member timesheets and complete AmeriCorps paperwork on a timely basis.** In order to ensure successful placements, VHCB needs both members and supervisors to do their part in meeting the administrative requirements.
Understanding Our AmeriCorps Members

What’s the program?
Our AmeriCorps members belong to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board AmeriCorps Program (VHCB AC). The program’s overarching goals are to create more stable affordable housing opportunities for Vermont residents while fostering a greater appreciation of and responsibility for the environment. Funding comes from the federal government, VHCB, and its sponsoring organizations (i.e. our organization) and can fluctuate from year-to-year.

Who are the members?
VHCB AC’s membership is made up of an impressive and demographically diverse group of socially conscious, engaged citizens. These members are committed to making a difference in Vermont. They have ranged in age from 18 to 72 years old, with varying educational and professional backgrounds. They bring lots of energy, passion, and commitment to our mission. Often, they are early in their careers or are making a career-shift, and have lots to learn!

What do they get?
AmeriCorps members gain valuable work experience, learn about your organization’s approach to [affordable housing or homelessness or conservation, etc.] and connect with other [housing or environmental] professionals. They receive an education award for school expenses, health insurance, trainings, and a taxable living allowance of. Many members enroll in 3SquaresVT or hold additional jobs to make ends meet. Holiday, sick, vacation and personal hours do not count toward their 1700 (or 900) hours of service (they are “unpaid”). Members also gain life-long friendships with their co-members.

What do we get?
To many host organizations, AmeriCorps Members are critical and could not accomplish the work that they do without them. They put in 1700 (or 900) hours of service overall. Sites get fresh ideas and perspectives, skills and experiences that staff members may not have, a community liaison, great energy and curiosity, and dedication. We provide a cash match per member, training, and reimbursement of travel expenses, conference fees, office space, etc.

How can YOU support our AmeriCorps members?

Honoring their commitment to our mission by:
- Getting to know them: learn their names and ask about their backgrounds
- Being willing to explain “how things are done” in your organization
- Treating him or her as a colleague and valued team member
- Recognizing his/her dedication to service and to housing/conservation work, and the challenges of living for a year on a very small stipend.
- Helping them to develop professionally by providing coaching and mentoring whenever appropriate.
Member On-Site Orientation Checklist

Please complete and return this form to VHCB AmeriCorps by ________________.

Member Name:__________________________ Superviser Name:________________________

A thorough orientation to the host site is crucial for setting the tone of the member’s service year. It can assist the supervisor in more accurately assessing the training needs of the new member in order to increase their skills, competence, and expertise. At the end of the on-site orientation, members should have a basic knowledge or understanding of the following:

- Background, purpose and structure of the host organization.
- Background of community and identification of important community leaders.
- Nature of the population served by the VHCB AmeriCorps project.
- Potential resources that can be applied to achieve project goals.
- Specific member assignments and skills needed to accomplish tasks.
- Specific goals and purpose of ACM (AmeriCorps Member) position at the host site organization (organization staff should also be made aware of this)

**Onsite Orientation Checklist**

Member should initial each item once completed. Both member and supervisor should Sign at bottom when all items have been reviewed and return to VHCB AMERICORPS.

_____ The member’s position description has been reviewed and member and supervisor have strategized an initial service plan. The member has been set up the for successful completion of first tasks with deadlines, including an order of priorities.

_____ Expectations and protocols around punctuality, calling-in late, breaks, personnel policies, drug-free workplace, requesting time off, reporting sexual harassment, dress code, etc., have been reviewed.

_____ Any organizational practices or policies that will apply to the member have been covered.

_____ The member is aware of what to do in the case of a fire or emergency, knows the evacuation procedure, and has any safety training and/or gear that necessary for the position.

_____ Confidentiality practices and how sensitive information is communicated at the host site has been reviewed.

_____ A regular check-in time for feedback, discussing issues, and planning (2-way; minimum of 15 minutes per week) has been established.

    *When will the meeting take place:__________________________________________________*

_____ A system for regular review of timesheets has been established.
Member has been made aware of office procedures for mileage and expense reimbursement.

Member has been informed on practices for accessing, acquiring, and re-ordering supplies, etc.

Member has been provided with materials about the mission/vision, goals and objectives of the nonprofit where the member will be serving (annual reports/brochures, website, etc.).

Member has been introduced to all staff, their role/position, as well as how the member might interface/work with them, and contact information.

Member has been given a tour of the site, including common areas, supplies, copier, fax, postage, first aid, kitchen, storage space, etc., supplying directions for the use of all equipment.

Reasonable special accommodations needed are supplied. (Members should not feel compelled to disclose health or other conditions; that is a voluntary decision and action on their part.)

All known VHCB AmeriCorps training & events dates have been blocked out on the calendar.

Member and supervisor have discussed a plan to ensure the member does not serve with vulnerable populations until the member’s background check results have been received.

Other information about the community or assignment/project that is relevant has been shared.

Member has taken the online Mandated Reporter training session through the Vermont Department of children and families, and attached the certificate of completion to this form. The webinar can be accessed at http://dcf.vermont.gov/protection/reporting/mandated.

Member and supervisor have reviewed the quarterly reporting requirements together, and set up a system for tracking the needed information, including orienting them to any systems that already exist for doing so. A plan for tools and process is in place for pre/post testing, surveying, or other verification required. Please briefly describe your data collection process below:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

---------------------------------------------------------------
Member signature Date

---------------------------------------------------------------
Supervisor signature Date
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board AmeriCorps
Mid-Term Member Performance Review

Instructions
1. Member completes self-review and gives completed review to supervisor by March 1st.
2. Supervisor responds and adds to member review, and rates the performance in each category.
3. Both supervisor and member meet to discuss review.
4. Completed and signed evaluation is returned to VHCB AmeriCorps Staff by March 15th.

Member Name: ___________________________________________
Member Signature: ________________________________ Date: ________________

Supervisor Name: ___________________________________________
Supervisor Signature: ________________________________ Date: ________________

______________________________________________________________________________

HOURS FULFILLMENT AND PERFORMANCE (To be completed by supervisor)

• Overall, Member has performed satisfactorily: ____Yes  ____No

• Number of approved hours member has completed at the time of this review: _________

• If the member has not yet completed all the hours, is s/he on track to complete them by his/her end date? ____ yes  ____ no

Please share a brief story, highlight, or favorite memory from your member’s service:
1. **QUALITY OF WORK** (accuracy, timeliness, organization, thoroughness, attention to detail, results, care taken, etc.)

   Member:

   Supervisor:

   ___ unacceptable   ___ needs improvement   ___ good   ___ very good/notable   ___ exceptional

   Comments:

2. **QUANTITY OF WORK** (productivity, pace, steadiness of work, amount of “slacking”, willingness to take on additional responsibility, personal understanding of boundaries and limits, etc.)

   Member:

   Supervisor:

   ___ unacceptable   ___ needs improvement   ___ good   ___ very good/notable   ___ exceptional

   Comments:
3. **DEPENDABILITY & MOTIVATION**: attendance, punctuality, reliability, work relationships, communication, cooperation, positivity, helpfulness, teamwork, attitude, takes initiative, etc.

Member:

Supervisor:

___ unacceptable  ____ needs improvement  ____ good  ____ very good/notable  ____ exceptional

Comments

4. **TECHNICAL UNDERSTANDING and PROBLEM SOLVING** (has project knowledge and understanding, knows agency and program procedures and abides by them, recognizes and identifies problems, contributes ideas for improvement, shows innovation, follows directions, etc.)

Member:

Supervisor:

___ unacceptable  ____ needs improvement  ____ good  ____ very good/notable  ____ exceptional

Comments
5. **FACTORS SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE WORK** Identify the factors that you believe help the member be effective in his/her role. For example, weekly check-ins with supervisor, having clear expectations, deadlines, being able to discuss ideas with co-workers, autonomy, frequent feedback, etc.

Member:

Supervisor:

6. **FACTORS CHALLENGING EFFECTIVE WORK** Identify factors you believe may create barriers (occasional or on-going) for the member to achieve more effective work. For example, lack of access to co-workers, lack of knowledge, insufficient time, communication issues, not enough resources, etc.

Member:

Supervisor:

7. **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT** Please describe the skills learned or expanded in this position, training you’ve received, and motivation to take advantage of professional growth opportunities.

Member:

Supervisor:
8. COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS PROGRAM Please describe your commitment to the AmeriCorps Program including: training and events attendance, use of program initiatives (book club, peer site visits, ISP), collaborative efforts with other members, meeting program requirements (reporting and paperwork), and other ways in which you’ve helped engage or enhance the program.

Member:

Supervisor:

9. ACHIEVEMENT OF GOALS (Member Only) Please review your goals and for your service year and describe the progress you’ve made toward them. What were the major achievements during the first half of the program? Describe any obstacles preventing goals from being met. Have your goals altered or have you added new goals since the beginning of your service? Let us know if you’d like a copy of your goals sheet for review.

Member: