

Corporation for National and Community Service

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Overview of VISTA Member Benefits 2020 - Pennsylvania

The Corporation for National and Community Service provides a number of benefits to support VISTA members throughout their terms of service. Please review this information along with the [Benefits of Service](#) page and the [VISTA Member Handbook](#) on the VISTA Campus at vistacampus.gov so you can make an informed decision as you consider becoming a VISTA.

Living Allowance

You'll receive your VISTA living allowance biweekly, at a rate determined by your service site's county:

- \$14,136/year in Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Pike, and Montgomery Counties
- \$13,293/year in Monroe County
- \$12,490/year in all other PA counties

If you're a VISTA Leader, you'll get an additional \$2,400 per year. We withhold federal taxes from living allowance payments. You are responsible for your own state and local taxes, and we recommend you budget and save for any tax obligations you may have.

End-of-Service Benefit

Before you begin service, you'll choose between a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award and an end-of-service stipend, which you'll receive when you successfully complete your service term.

- **Segal AmeriCorps Education Award:** This education award is \$6,195 for qualified classes, student loans, and other educational expenses. You can use the award up to seven years after you complete service, and is payable only to a lender or educational institution. You can earn up to the full value of two education awards if you complete multiple service terms. You cannot transfer your education award, and it's taxable when used. For more information, see the [Segal AmeriCorps Education Award Website](#).
- **Stipend:** The stipend is a cash award of \$1,800 (for members) and \$3,000 (for leaders). We issue the stipend at the end of the service term and withhold federal taxes at that time.

Please note, if you initially choose the education award, you may change your election to the stipend any time before the end of your tenth month of service on your My AmeriCorps home page under the "Edit End of Service Option." You may not change from a stipend to the education award.

Relocation Assistance

If you relocate from more than 50 miles from your service site in order to start your term of service, you may receive a settling-in allowance of up to \$750 and relocation travel allowance of \$0.40/mile. We will review your eligibility for these benefits before you begin service. Your supervisor can confirm the amount of any approved settling-in allowance and the VISTA Member Support Unit will confirm the relocation travel allowance. For details on relocation assistance, see [VISTA Travel Fact Sheet](#).

Training

All VISTAs receive orientation through the Virtual Member Orientation (VMO) a self-directed online orientation where you will learn about the VISTA Program and prepare to become members. Members will then participate in the sponsor's on-site orientation and training, which acquaints new members with their projects and communities and trains them on relevant skills.

Ongoing learning and training opportunities can be found on the [VISTA Campus](#) throughout your term of service. Online courses and webinars are offered on a variety of topics to enhance your skills and make the most of your VISTA year. Be sure to look under Connect & Learn for these training opportunities.

Leave

Each VISTA receives ten days of personal leave and ten days of medical leave to use during a one-year term. Discuss personal leave plans with your supervisor to get approval in advance, and communicate proactively with your supervisor when you need to use medical leave.

Health Benefits

AmeriCorps VISTA provides an optional Healthcare Allowance benefit to members who maintain health insurance coverage, and a basic Health Benefit Plan for those who are exempt from the requirement to have insurance.

- VISTA members who maintain health insurance during their service term may enroll in the AmeriCorps VISTA Healthcare Allowance. This allowance is a reimbursement program that covers out-of-pocket costs associated with healthcare, such as charges for qualified medical expenses and limited dental and vision services. The Healthcare Allowance will help offset these expenses up to \$7,900 in 2019. The Healthcare Allowance does not cover costs associated with purchasing insurance, costs for non-essential health expenses, or charges associated with dependents or other individuals covered under your healthcare plan.
- VISTA members who are legally exempt from maintaining health insurance coverage during their term of service are eligible to enroll in the AmeriCorps VISTA Health Benefit Plan. The plan is available to eligible members at no cost and covers eligible expenses for medical office visits, limited dental and vision, medical emergencies, surgical and hospitalization expenses, and certain prescription drug costs. It does not cover pre-existing conditions or care for dependents, including your spouse.
- If you ignore the legal requirement to have health insurance, you will be responsible for your own healthcare costs. You may be subject to removal from the VISTA program and may face a penalty under the Affordable Care Act.
- Both starting and ending VISTA service qualify you for a special healthcare enrollment period for the Health Insurance Marketplace. As a VISTA, you can buy insurance through the Health Insurance Marketplace within 60 days of your service start date as well as 60 days after your end date.

Please review the resources on [VISTA Healthcare Options](#) available on the VISTA Campus.

Childcare Benefits

You may be eligible for child care benefits if you have a child under 13 and need childcare to serve as a VISTA. For details, see the [VISTA Child Care Benefit Tutorial](#).