



GOVERNOR NATIONAL SERVICE & VOLUNTEERISM POLICY MENU

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION & TRAINING ACCESS

- 1. Reduced Tuition (In-State or Tuition Waiver) at State Public Colleges/Universities:** Several states currently provide some level of reduced cost at colleges or universities in their states to those who have completed a year of service. This can take the form of reduced tuition, in-state tuition, or, in the case of West Virginia, a 100% tuition waiver for each year of service.
- 2. Preferential Admission for Service Alumni at State Public Colleges/Universities:** Many states are seeing dropping enrollment in their higher education system. Giving service members preference in admissions is a way states can attract or retain high quality, service-oriented students in their state.
- 3. State Match for Education Award:** Around the nation, 60 public colleges and universities (and 180 total) match the value of the education award earned by individuals completing an AmeriCorps term of service. AmeriCorps members earn an education award after completing a full-year term of AmeriCorps service.
- 4. Community College Apprenticeship Programs:** If a postsecondary education institution which is approved to offer federal financial aid offers an apprenticeship program, that program can accept AmeriCorps Education Awards from members.
- 5. Award Prior Learning Credit for Terms of Service:** Members can be awarded academic credit for their participation in the program or credit for their participation and prior learning experience toward professional credentials, trade or vocational certifications, and apprenticeship programs.

FINANCIAL/CAREER SUPPORT FOR SERVICE MEMBERS

- 1. Exempt Member Living Allowance from State Taxation:** Service members often earn less than state minimum wage for their service, so they need every dollar to survive. Providing state and local income tax relief costs the government very little while helping those in service meet their day-to-day needs.
- 2. Exempt Education Award from State Taxation:** Service members receive an end-of-service education award they can use to pay for college or pay off student loans. Many,



however, don't realize these awards are taxed as income in many states and face a daunting tax bill if they try to use their award.

3. **State Match or Supplement Education Award:** States can supplement or match the federal AmeriCorps Segal Education Award for in-state tuition at an approved education or training provider to encourage enrollment, further education/training, and retention.
4. **State Hiring Preference for Service Alumni:** Virginia, Montana, and Nevada are among the states providing a state-level hiring preference for service alumni. This preference benefits both service members and states by providing state government with access to workers who have already demonstrated their professional skills and dedications to public service.
5. **Retirement Service Credits:** States such as California provide individuals completing a service year the opportunity to purchase retirement service credits in the state public retirement system.
6. **Tax Relief for Home-sharing for Service Members:** This tax relief lets people with extra space in their homes rent those empty rooms to service members without counting the rent as income.
7. **“Contracting” Preference on Priority State Projects:** States can give preference to service corps programs that provide or perform certain services/projects for state projects that align with their expertise.

STATE SERVICE COMMISSION & ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

1. **Create Cabinet Secretary for Service/Chief Service Officer:** Governors in California and Maryland have signed executive orders creating Cabinet-level secretaries of service to oversee state service commissions, lead state-level service programs, and advise the Governor and other members of his Cabinet on strategies to integrate service year opportunities into state initiatives and programming.
2. **Create an Interagency Council on National Service to Engage Other State Agencies in Service:** In 2014, Iowa Governor Terry Branstad (R) directed the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service to support the creation of the Governor's Council on National Service to develop a set of recommendations to expand service and volunteering opportunities in the state of Iowa. Through implementation of the recommendations, Iowa has increased the number of national service programs and participants by approximately 20 percent.



- 3. Provide State Funding Match for Commission Support Grant:** State service commissions play a critical role in supporting the development of high-quality service year opportunities. By providing state funding to secure the required match for federal administrative funds available to state service commissions, governors ensure that sufficient resources are available to explore and build partnerships that lead to new service year opportunities.

- 4. Develop MOU Between National Guard & State Service Commission:** A Memorandum of Understanding can be brokered by the Governor between the National Guard and the state service commission to expand recruitment channels, foster increased awareness of public and military service and career pathways, and opportunities for individuals seeking to serve their communities through national, public, and military service.

- 5. Create Incentives for School Districts to Support National Service Recruitment:** One of the top reasons why those graduating from high school don't do a year of service is no one has ever told them it is an available option for them. States can ensure all students can decide for themselves if they wish to serve by providing financial incentives for school districts to make graduating seniors aware of service programs.

NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAM IDEAS

- 1. Disaster Response, Recovery, and Coordination:** Include service as part of disaster response or emergency management plan, and coordinate volunteer organizations. In nearly half the states, state service commissions are actively involved in disaster response activities, often serving as the designated lead organization for volunteer and donations management in partnership with the state emergency management agency.

- 2. Create & Fund Innovative Service Programs that Address State Priorities**
 - Youth Mental Health Corps
 - Math Corps
 - Reading Corps
 - Veteran Corps
 - Conservation/Resilience Corps
 - Energy Corps
 - Refugee RISE AmeriCorps
 - Service Fellowship
 - Urban Safety Corps



Service programs can receive funding from the federal AmeriCorps funds in collaboration with the state service commission, but also sustainable funding from the state through tax revenue, special assessments, fines or fees.

- 3. Establish and Fund Youth Service-Learning Programming:** Service-learning takes the idea of community service one step further by connecting service with classroom learning. This approach provides an opportunity for students to put knowledge and skills they learn in the classroom into practice in the real world, while simultaneously making meaningful contributions to their communities.
- 4. Create & Fund “Service Year” Programs:** Service year programs align state support with AmeriCorps program support to “match” or supplement federal resources and provide additional benefits at the state-level. Often they are focused on addressing priorities identified at the state level and providing career pathways into public service.

NATIONAL SERVICE & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- 1. Service-to-Career Pathways:** Prioritize the development of national service programs that have intentional linkages to workforce pipelines in high-need workforce areas and associated credentials/certificates. The National Governors Association (NGA) recently created a [Service to Careers Pathways project](#) and selected six states to participate in a policy academy.
- 2. Pre and Registered Apprenticeship Service Models:** Direct workforce development agency to work with state service commission on the development of pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programming in coordination with service programs.
- 3. State Service Commission & State Workforce Board Partnership:** Encourage partnerships between commissions and the workforce board to identify workforce and training needs and how national service programs, workforce development programs, and industry sectors can work collaboratively.

NATIONAL SERVICE & VOLUNTEERISM AWARENESS

- 1. Make a Call to Service:** Governors can feature service and volunteerism as a key policy platform and encourage residents to serve and/or volunteer



- 2. Service Recognition Programming:** Governors can support annual service recognition events for their states' outstanding service year participants and volunteers in addition to daily, weekly, and/or monthly recognition programming.
- 3. Encourage Companies, Philanthropy, and Local Government to Support Service Programs:** Through their interactions with corporate and philanthropic leaders, governors can encourage private investment to expand service year opportunities, especially in areas of critical importance for the state.
- 4. Recognize National Days of Service, AmeriCorps Week (March), and National Volunteer Week (April):** Issue proclamations or Executive Orders for designated service recognition opportunities.
- 5. Host a Statewide Service and Volunteering Conference:** Governors and state service commissions around the country host statewide service and volunteering conferences to highlight best practices, encourage growth and innovation strategies, and raise the profile of programs and activities that are achieving demonstrable impact in local communities.
- 6. Communications:** Create dedicated space for State Service Commissions to promote national service news/activities in the administration's newsletter/alerts/bulletins