



Oregon Health Authority/AmeriCorps VISTA Partnership Project



Host Site Application Information and FAQs

Version: 4/10/2024

Note: The award of all VISTA resources as well as the approval of all VISTA sites and final project application is subject to the availability of funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service and approval of Federal Appropriations.

General Guidelines for AmeriCorps VISTA Projects & Host Sites

- AmeriCorps VISTA Members must be placed in a capacity-building role for the entire term of service. Proposals must demonstrate that the position provides a direct benefit valued by the community at large. Activities cannot duplicate routine functions of staff or displace paid employees.
The project may not include administrative duties that support general organizational goals such as clerical responsibilities, answering phones, or data entry.
The impact of service provided to the community and organization must be measurable and fit within the goals and activities of the AmeriCorps VISTA Program.
Placement sites must be able to effectively recruit, train, support, and supervise the AmeriCorps VISTA Member(s).
Placement sites are eligible to have an AmeriCorps VISTA Member serve with their organization, in the same position, for up to three years. Each year is meant to build upon the previous year:
Year 1 - AmeriCorps VISTA Member establishes and creates a program or project
Year 2 - AmeriCorps VISTA Member continues to implement project and begins to create structure for sustainability
Year 3 - AmeriCorps VISTA Member focuses on making the project sustainable
Year 4 proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must address a significant community need or new project focus. Subject to scrutiny by AmeriCorps.
Note that beyond year 1, renewals are not automatic. Sites will be re-evaluated and must re-apply each year.
The placement must not include any of the activities prohibited for AmeriCorps VISTA Members.

Program information

Table with 2 columns: Question/Category and Answer. Rows include Contact Information and Application Submission, Service period, Application website, Host Site Eligibility, and Intent to apply.

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| Review process | <p>Rolling application review and approval process. We help revise and submit applications to AmeriCorps as they arrive from sites. The current review calendar does not permit us to wait for all applications to arrive and be reviewed in one competitive process.</p> |
| Application Due Dates | <p>View the full August 2024 recruitment timeline on the OHA VISTA Host site application page. Host sites need to become familiar with the full timeline and due dates.</p> <p><u>Project plan application</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit drafts of applications as soon as possible so the OHA team can provide feedback and support and submit to the national VISTA program for early approval. • Last day to submit a host site application: n/a <p><u>Opportunity Listing and VISTA Assignment Description</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final/OHA Approved OL and VAD due date: N/A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Position listing on AmeriCorps portal can be live as soon as the OL is approved by the OHA VISTA leadership team. <p><u>Other Recruitment due dates to note</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site Orientation and Training Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Due date: July 12, 2024 • Detailed Workplan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Due date: September 12, 2024 |
| OHA Selection Criteria for host sites | <p>Selection Criteria for all VISTA project application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision, training, and support of AmeriCorps VISTA Member(s) • Project design and connection to the goals and activities of the program • Identified community need and demonstrated partnerships • Strong VISTA Assignment Description with clear activities, tasks, and timelines • Clear assessment and evaluation plan measuring project impact on community and host site • Host sites must be able to effectively recruit, onboard, train, support, and supervise the AmeriCorps VISTA Member(s). • Host sites must be able to provide secure and timely funding for projects. |
| Approval Notification | <p>Rolling notification of provisional approval by OHA and AmeriCorps. Final approval notification is subject to the availability of funding from AmeriCorps and approval of Federal Appropriations.</p> |
| Examples of positions, service projects, and activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate partnerships with community-based organizations that address the needs of low-income individuals. • Support or facilitate community-wide public health dialogs, assessments and improvement plans. • Support funding development activities to build institutional capacity to serve persons living in poverty. • Build a volunteer program for long term sustainability of public health initiatives. |
| Prohibited Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VISTAs cannot displace staff, endorse, or promote religion or a specific religious belief during service hours, provide direct service to clients, participate in political activities or labor or anti-labor activities, or lobby. Sites cannot select VISTAs that are in the immediate family or are close relatives of project site staff or board of directors. (Details around prohibited activities are available in the VISTA Member Handbook on page 123) |

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| <p>Cost to host sites</p> | <p>The OHA AmeriCorps VISTA Partnership Project offers 2 cost options; both options include the basic Site Support Payment (SSP) which covers OHA program costs including but not limited to training, professional development, and program staff salary:</p> <p>Cost share: \$26,132. The host site pays a larger amount to cover the members' subsistence allowance and the SSP. Choose this type to greatly increase your approval by OHA and the national AmeriCorps program. Larger organizations with significant funding are asked to provide this level of support. This cost is subject to change based on the living allowance determined by AmeriCorps VISTA in the VISTA Living Allowance Rates.</p> <p>Standard: \$3,250. These highly competitive positions are more heavily subsidized by the national AmeriCorps program. These positions are intended for organizations and communities with very limited resources. This amount is the Site Support Payment (SSP) which covers costs associated with the members' training, orientation, team meetings, professional development and program staff salary.</p> <p>Note: Metro area host sites are required to pay an additional \$1,200 to pay for a 1-year transit pass for the member.</p> |
| <p>Key project requirements</p> | <p>The project must address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public health 2. Poverty 3. Building long-term organizational and/or community capacity 4. Support the national VISTA program's Healthy Futures Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Obesity and Food (Food Resources): Improving access to nutritious food. And/or: b. Access to Health Care: Connecting economically disadvantaged individuals to preventative and primary health care services. <p>The VISTA must have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Dedicated supervisor, project leads, mentors 6. Clear VISTA assignment description |
| <p>Mandatory Supervisor Orientation</p> | <p>Attend one of the mandatory virtual supervisor orientations on Zoom. Please register in advance: July 16, 2024 – 1pm-3:00pm – Register here (option 1) July 23, 2024 – 1pm-3:00pm – Register here (option 2) After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. If you are unable to attend one of the orientation options, reach out to Caroline Tydings, program coordinator ASAP.</p> |

Frequently Asked Questions

What is next if our project is approved?

Member recruitment: OHA provides general recruitment for all OHA VISTA members and prescreens the applicants. Host site recruitment efforts also have a great impact on candidate pool. We encourage host sites to use their networks to recruit locally for candidates to apply to their project.

Host sites select which candidates to interview, participate in all interviews, and make final selection of their candidate. OHA makes a formal offer and, if the candidate accepts, AmeriCorps officially hires the member. OHA and AmeriCorps coordinate onboarding to VISTA and the OHA program. AmeriCorps works with the member on relocation benefits. Host site will develop an onsite orientation and training plan for the member prior to the start of service and will develop a workplan for or in conjunction with the member during the first month of service.

Is housing support provided to AmeriCorps VISTA members?

No. Housing is not a member benefit of AmeriCorps VISTA.

Members who are relocating for service will likely need support to find housing. Host sites are encouraged to use their networks to support the member in acquiring affordable housing. If you know someone from your organization or elsewhere who is willing to house a member for free or a discounted rate, that can be very helpful for recruitment purposes as well. All AmeriCorps members go through a background check and are dedicating a year of their life to service in their community.

What are the member benefits for a year of VISTA service?

National AmeriCorps VISTA program benefits:

- relocation allowance
- poverty level stipend paid bi-weekly
- basic health benefits
- post-service Segal AmeriCorps Education Award of \$6,895 **or** cash stipend of \$1,800
- student loan forbearance or deferment for qualified federal loans
- childcare benefits (if needed)
- one year of noncompetitive status for federal government jobs.

OHA provides the following benefits:

- Ongoing professional development financial and resource procurement support
- Technical assistance in locating and navigating Oregon low-income benefit requests
- Peer leadership from the AmeriCorps VISTA leader(s)
- Paid travel, lodging, and per diem to attend OHA VISTA team meetings around the state roughly 4-5 times per year to meet as a cohort and team, gain professional development, and learn about the state of Oregon through cultural experiences.

Host Sites:

- Host sites are encouraged to provide additional benefits during the year, especially in hard to recruit areas.
- Host sites in the Portland metro area are required to provide transportation support in the form of TriMet passes or gas cards.

Are there VISTA member Age and Education Requirements?

Applicants must be 18 years and older.

OHA and host sites can set their own age and education requirements (such as: age 21 with bachelor's level education). However, the OHA VISTA Leadership team acknowledges the value of lived experience and encourages individuals without a college degree to apply and for host sites to reflect on the