



**Homes for All VISTA Member Service Agreement**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Member Service Agreement (MSA) is to delineate the terms, conditions, and rules of membership regarding the participation of \_\_\_\_\_ (hereafter called the “VISTA Member”) in the Homes for All AmeriCorps Program (hereafter called the “Program”). The agreement is between the Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky (“HHCK”) and the Member regarding the Member’s service activities to be performed with an organization in partnership with HHCK (hereafter called the “Service Site”), which has been selected by HHCK for placement of the Member and which has a contractual relationship for the same with HHCK. The Service Site designates a Site Supervisor, who is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the Member.

The Member understands that by participating in the Program, the Member does not become an employee of Homes for All thus unemployment compensation law does not require coverage for AmeriCorps members because no employer/employee relationship exists. Any benefits received by the Member or allowances paid to the Member are paid and provided only by and to the extent of the terms of a grant provided through the federal agency, AmeriCorps.

This agreement is in **effect for the period** \_\_\_\_\_ **through** \_\_\_\_\_ and is based on a Program-approved VISTA Assignment Description, which describes the service activities that will be performed by the Member.

**II. MEMBER ELIGIBILITY**

The Member certifies, under penalty of law, that they meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Are a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States;
- Are at least 18 years of age at the commencement of service;

**III. TERMS OF SERVICE**

The VISTA member agrees to make a full-time one-year term of service.

To be eligible to serve an additional term of service the Member must receive satisfactory performance for any previous terms of service, as well as complete the minimum number of hours in their term of service. The Member must also complete all trainings, service days, and reporting. Eligibility for an additional term of service does not guarantee selection or placement.

The Member will complete their hour requirements by following the Term of Service Outline:

**Term of Service Outline**

VISTA members are expected to serve in a full-time capacity or approximately 36-40 hours per week.

The exact schedule (i.e. Monday through Friday) will be agreed upon by the member and supervisor. If the VISTA member does not follow the schedule that is established, the VISTA member will be in violation of the terms of this position and may be subject to disciplinary action.

The Member will report all time served in America Learns on a **bi-weekly** basis. The Site Supervisor and Program staff will approve the Member's hours.

Three or more consecutive days off in a period will be considered an extended absence. Program staff may require documentation from the Member to demonstrate the leave is necessary (i.e. multiple sick days).

As per VISTA policy, leave in the first three months or last month if service is generally limited to emergencies or sick leave.

### ***Required Participation***

Member participation is mandatory for the following trainings and events:

- Homes for All Orientation (PSO)
- National Days of Service
- Spring Service Project
- End of Year Celebration

Attendance at these events are requirements of this Program and this agreement. The Member will **not** be authorized to take personal time during these events. The Member will **not** receive hours for serving at their Service Site while missing a required training. A Member who misses training for an emergency is required to submit supporting documentation to Program staff.

### ***Holidays***

HHCK requires the Service Site to grant the Member the following days off. A Member may choose to serve on any of the holidays listed below, but a Site may not require them to do so.

Labor Day	Christmas Eve	Memorial Day
Veteran's Day	Christmas Day	June 19 <sup>th</sup> (Juneteenth)
Thanksgiving Day	New Year's Eve	July 4 <sup>th</sup>
Thanksgiving Friday	New Year's Day	

Holidays that fall on a Saturday will be observed on Friday (the day before); holidays that fall on a Sunday will be observed on Monday (the day after).

Accommodations should be made for diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. For example: a Jewish Member may want to take off for Yom Kippur, rather than Christmas. Site Supervisors should make every effort to accommodate their Member's needs in this regard. It is the responsibility of the Member to communicate these needs at the beginning of the service year. If a Member chooses to serve on a holiday, the Service Site will allow the Member an alternate day off of their choosing.

Homes for All recognizes Martin Luther King, J. Day as a day of service. The Program requires

Members to participate by coordinating and leading service projects in regional teams. The Member will spend the day in service, away from their Service Site.

### ***Leave Policy***

VISTA members may take up to ten (10) sick days and ten (10) personal/vacation days in their twelve-month term of service.

Personal or vacation days must be scheduled in advance with the Site Supervisors and explicitly approved prior to taking them.

Reasons for using sick days include taking time for behavior or physical health issues, health care provide appointments, or for caring for the Member's immediate family. Unused sick days are not used as extra personal/vacation days. As soon as the Member realizes that they must take a sick day, the VISTA member should notify Site Supervisor.

Members that elect to take unauthorized absences after exhausting all sick and personal days will be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

## **IV. BENEFITS**

The following benefits are granted to VISTA members directly from the federal AmeriCorps agency. VISTA members should visit the VISTA Member Handbook to fully understand the benefits available to them.

- Living allowance
- Health benefits (not full comprehensive coverage)
- Childcare assistance (household income-eligible)
- End of service benefit
  - Education award
  - Cash stipend
- Student loan forbearance
- Student loan interest paid

The Homes for All program offers the following support services and benefits.

- Member Assistance Program
- Professional development opportunities
- Training
- Monthly meetings
- Guidance for life after VISTA and transitioning out of national service
- Open door policy for individuals to contact program staff during and after their term of service

## **V. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MEMBER EXPECTATIONS, AND CORRECTIVE ACTION PROCEDURES**

The Member, while acting in an official capacity as an AmeriCorps Member, agrees to:

- Demonstrate mutual respect towards others.
- Represent AmeriCorps, Homes for All, and the Site well.
- Demonstrate a service ethic indicative of AmeriCorps and honor the privilege of working

with and for those being served.

- Be open to new experiences, learning opportunities, new perspectives, and receiving constructive feedback.
- Conduct themselves in a manner exemplary as a role model and in compliance with AmeriCorps standards.
- Actively participate in Program trainings, service projects, Days of Service, and other events.
- Communicate with Program staff in a timely, appropriate, responsive manner.
- Wear attire appropriate for the service site and activity. When on AmeriCorps time, the Member should wear one or more pieces of service gear. Wearing AmeriCorps apparel is especially important during community service projects or public events. Program will provide Member with gear such as a t-shirt, pin, lanyard, etc.
- Direct concerns, problems, and suggestions to the Program.
- Keep proprietary information strictly confidential, consistent with state and federal laws.
- Follow the policies and procedures in the Member Service Agreement.

The Member is responsible for performing activities and responsibilities explained in their VISTA Assignment Description. The Member also agrees to meet the following base expectations:

- Responding to communications within 24 hours.
- Submit timesheets on a weekly basis in America Learns.
- Submit new and updated Performance Measure Reports monthly.
- Complete all components of the Member Development Plan, including quarterly reflections.

The Member understands that the following acts constitute a violation of the Program's rules of conduct and expectations:

Level 1 Violations:

- Unauthorized tardiness or absences
- Continued failure to serve written schedule
- Repeated use of inappropriate language
- Repeated failure to wear appropriate clothing (including PPE)
- Failure to communicate with program staff or service site staff (within a 48-hour period)
- Performing personal business repeatedly during service hours (excessive phone usage, running errands, or social media)
- Failure to attend a mandatory service assignment/schedule/event or program training
- Failure to submit timesheets in a timely manner (more than a month behind)
- Failure to submit progress reports
- Inappropriate or unprofessional behavior
- Inability to meet basic competencies or knowledge requirements of the position after a reasonable orientation and training period
- Failure to follow policies outlined in Member Service Agreement or Member Position Description

*Remedies:*

1<sup>st</sup> offense: program staff will issue a written warning and a copy will be sent to all parties.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense: program staff will issue another written warning and a copy will be sent to all parties.

3<sup>rd</sup> offense: the AmeriCorps Program Director will issue notice of intent to request the member be

released for cause to the federal AmeriCorps agency.

**Level 2 Violations:**

- Failure to abide by confidentiality expectations in the Member Service Agreement or site policies
- Serve under the influence of alcohol, non-prescription drugs, prescription drugs not intended for member
- Failure to notify Homes for All program staff of any arrest or conviction that occurs during the term of service
- Unauthorized contact with clients or beneficiaries (current, former, or potential) outside of normal service requirements
- Engaging in activities that pose a significant safety risk to self or others
- Engaging in activities that are illegal under local, state or federal law
- Assault on another person while serving or at any other time
- Possession of a weapon while serving

*Remedies:*

1<sup>st</sup> offense: program staff will issue a written warning; member will be given opportunity to submit a corrective plan of action and written intent to abide by the Standards of Conduct, Member Service Agreement, and any other relevant Homes for All or AmeriCorps policy.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense: the AmeriCorps program director issue notice of intent to request the member be released for cause to the federal AmeriCorps agency.

**Level 3 Violations:**

- Stealing, lying, or intentionally falsifying AmeriCorps timesheets, reports, or documents at the service site
- Engaging in activities that may physically, emotionally, or mentally harm other members of Homes for All, clients, service site staff, program staff, and/or the community
- Inappropriate relations with a client (current, former, or potential), volunteer, or any other individual that is unable to consent to a relationship due to real or perceived dual, unethical, or authority-role relationship
- Demonstrated a repeated or obvious pattern of misconduct of any Level 1 or 2 violations
- Any other violation or behavior or serious breach would seriously undermine the program in the judgment of Homes for All

*Remedies:*

Upon receipt of proper documentation or evidence, Homes for All will request the VISTA member's removal from the placement site or program.

**Note:** the Site may issue a corrective action warning upon approval from Program Staff. A warning from the Site, if warranted, will substitute for a program-issued warning when considering remedies.

**VI. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES**

**45CFR § 2520.65:** While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, members accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps

program or the Agency, staff and members may not engage in the following activities, and the grantee may not use grant funds to support 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 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these 9 provisions 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.) above, unless AmeriCorps assistance is not used to support those religious activities; and
- 9) Conducting a voter registration drive or using AmeriCorps funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
- 10) Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
- 11) Such other activities as AmeriCorps may prohibit.

AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. 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-AmeriCorps funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

VISTA members are also required to following the policies applicable to them in regards to the Hatch Act for federal employees.

## **VII. RELEASE AND SUSPENSION FROM SERVICE**

### ***Release from Service***

The member agrees that they may be released from Homes for All for the following two reasons –

1. For cause;
2. For compelling personal circumstances

Homes for All may request the release of the Member from the service term due to compelling personal circumstances:

1. The Member has a serious injury or illness that makes completing the term impossible.
2. There is a serious injury, illness, or death of an immediate family member and the Member is needed to care for that family member or take over the duties of the family member.
3. The Member is drafted by the Armed Services of the United States.
4. Some other circumstance occurs that make it impossible or very difficult for the Member to complete the term of service and the program deems that circumstance to be compelling (i.e. the Member's service site closes and alternative service site cannot be found)

Documentation explaining the compelling circumstance must be collected and submitted to program staff, who in turn will submit to Serve KY for approval. **NOTE:** HHCK does not regard enrolling in school, obtaining employment, or dissatisfaction with the program or Service site as compelling personal circumstances.

Only the federal AmeriCorps agency can remove a VISTA member from their term of service. Homes for All will provide documentation, if applicable, to the federal AmeriCorps agency if requesting a member be removed from their placement.

#### **VIII. DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

Members are 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.

You are hereby notified that:

- The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited while serving as an AmeriCorps Member.
- As a condition of AmeriCorps service, the Member must abide by the terms of this prohibition and must notify the Program Director of any conviction under a criminal drug statute no later than five days after such a conviction.
- Specific actions will be taken against members for violations of this prohibition, including personnel actions up to and including termination, and/or the requirement to satisfactorily participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

#### **IX. CIVIL RIGHTS REQUIREMENTS**

Homes for All seeks to include participants from local communities and is available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, political affiliation, or in most instances, religion. It is also unlawful to retaliate against any person who, or organization that, files a complaint about such discrimination. In addition to filing a complaint with local and state agencies that are responsible for resolving discrimination complaints, you may bring a complaint to the attention of the federal AmeriCorps agency. If you believe that you or others may have been discriminated against, or if you want more information, contact:

Office of Civil Right and Inclusiveness, AmeriCorps  
250 E Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024  
(800) 833-3722 (TTY and reasonable accommodation line)

**X. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

VISTA members should review the VISTA Member Handbook to understand the applicable grievance policies and procedures available to them.

**XI. Dress Code and AmeriCorps Branding \_\_\_\_\_ (please initial after reading)**

Members must wear attire that includes the AmeriCorps logo during all service hours (i.e. AmeriCorps lanyard, lapel pin/button, branded clothing).

**XII. Voting \_\_\_\_\_ (please initial after reading)**

Homes for All encourages active citizenship in all its members and wishes to remind members of their right to vote if available to them. Although Homes for All does not and cannot require members to register or to vote or attempt to influence how members vote, the Program strongly encourages them to vote. Members cannot count hours for time spent voting, but the Program and Service Sites will actively make the time available for members to vote.

**XVIII. Media Release**

The Program may take photos or videos throughout the service year. The media may be used on social media, websites, print media, television, or other media formats. Members will give or waive permission on a separate form completed in the member enrollment paperwork.

**XIX. AUTHORIZATION**

The Member and Program hereby acknowledge by their signatures that they have read, understand, and agree to all terms and conditions of this agreement

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AmeriCorps VISTA Member

Date

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AmeriCorps Program Director

Date