

#CaliforniansForAll

College Corps

2026–2027
College Corps
Program Handbook
FELLOW VERSION



As a #CaliforniansForAll College Corps Fellow,
I am committed to make change in my community.
I will serve with humility, compassion and integrity.

Faced with apathy, I will take action.

Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity, I will persevere.

I will carry this commitment with me throughout my life.

I am part of a corps,

Connected by a common mission—

To build a California for all.

I am a College Corps Fellow, and I will get things done!



Table of Contents

Section I.....	4
Introduction & General College Corps Information.....	4
Section II.....	4
Roles and Responsibilities.....	4
Role of California Volunteers	4
Role of Fellows	4
Role of the District	5
Role of the Community Host Partner	5
Section III.....	6
Eligibility and Code of Conduct	6
Eligibility to Apply	6
Selection Criteria for Fellows	6
Maintaining Eligibility	6
Fellow Code of Conduct	7
Section IV	8
Fellow Training and Development	8
Orientation & Training Overview	8
Career Development	9
Statewide Cohort Experience	9
Section V	10
Fellow Service Placements.....	10
College Corps Focus Areas	10
Service Placement Guidelines	10
Establishing a Schedule	11
Site Supervisor Role	11
Performance Evaluations	11
Prohibited Activities	12
Section VI	13
Financial Benefits	13
Living Allowance	13
Education Award	13
Slot Type A Fellows	13
Slot Type B Fellows	14
Summary of College Corps Financial Benefits	15

Tax Implications	15
Financial Aid Implications	15
Public Assistance Programs & Benefits	15
Section VII	16
Technology Platforms	16
America Learns Overview	16
MyAmeriCorps	17
Alumni Network	17
Computer, Internet Usage, and Social Media	17
Section VIII	17
Program Evaluation and Measurement	17
Section IX.....	18
Administrative Policies.....	18
Attendance	18
Timesheets	18
Payment Suspension Plan	19
Breaks	19
Discipline Procedure	19
Release for Cause	20
Release Due to Compelling Personal Circumstances (CPC)	20
Service Abandonment	21
Unscheduled Absences	21
Resignation	22
Issues and Complaint Process	22
Grievance Procedure	22
Prohibition of Nepotism	22
Fraternization	23
Jury Duty	23
Dress Code	23
Transportation Stipends	24
Section X.....	24
Human Resource Policies.....	24
Appendix 1: AmeriCorps Human Resource Policies.....	25
Reasonable Accommodations	25
Self-Identification	25

Confidentiality	25
Appendix 2: Progressive Discipline Policies	26
Verbal Warning	26
Written Warning Action Plan	26
Suspension	26

Section I

Introduction & General College Corps Information

About #CaliforniansForAll College Corps

#CaliforniansForAll College Corps (College Corps) is a Governor's Initiative administered by California Volunteers in partnership with California colleges and universities with a strong commitment to civic and community engagement. College Corps helps students from diverse backgrounds graduate college on time and with less debt. The program is building the next generation of civic leaders by engaging students in meaningful community service that builds leadership skills, while providing them with a path toward reducing college debt. Fellows will support the work of community-based organizations focused on key local priorities K-12 Education, Food Insecurity, Climate Action, and other locally identified areas.

Section II

Roles and Responsibilities

California Volunteers implements the College Corps program with multiple partners: higher education institutions and systems, community-based organizations, and college students. Each partner has a distinct set of roles and responsibilities, as outlined below.

Role of California Volunteers

- Selects and funds partner colleges and universities (hereafter referred to as a College Corps Partner Campus, or "Partner Campus"), to run the program for their students .
- Provides ongoing policy guidance and program support.
- Supports student recruitment through statewide marketing, storytelling, and communications.
- Provides a statewide technology platform to facilitate timekeeping and data collection.
- Offers College Corps events and programming to connect Fellows at a statewide level.
- Connects Partner Campuses for peer learning and regional collaboration.
- Provides statewide onboarding for community-based organizations (hereafter referred to as Community Host Partners or "CHP's").
- Conducts statewide program evaluation to better understand College Corps results and inform future improvements.

Role of Fellows

- Meets Community Host Partner expectations and makes a positive contribution to the work of their host organization.
- Develops and maintains a schedule that allows them to complete 450 service hours in one academic year, as per the Hours Completion Plan in the Fellow Service Agreement.
- Maintains full-time enrollment status at partner campus for full academic year.
- Communicates with their Partner Campus AND host site supervisor, in a timely manner, when facing challenges or if they will miss any of their shifts.

- Completes and submits accurate timesheets regularly (bi-weekly or monthly based on Partner Campus schedule) to ensure living allowance payments and qualification for the Education Award.
- Responds to periodic surveys from California Volunteers or its evaluation partner.
- Participates in on-campus cohort-building, as well as statewide cohort-building events and opportunities.
- Adheres to policies outlined in the Fellow Code of Conduct provided in this document and agreed to in the Fellow Service Agreement.

Role of the District

- Recruits and selects students (hereafter referred to as College Corps Fellows or "Fellows").
- Selects and supports the Community Host Partners that will host Fellows.
- Manages academic coursework and other forms of reflection.
- Pays Fellows' living allowance and manages the program using California Volunteers funding.
- Provides initial orientation and ongoing training for Fellows and Community Host Partners.
- Builds a cohesive College Corps cohort at the campus-level.
- Reports metrics and narratives to California Volunteers, as requested.
- Participates in statewide evaluation, as requested.
- Supports continuous improvement of both Fellows and Community Host Partners, including providing regular feedback and implementing corrective action, as needed.
- Conducts Community Host Partner site visits.
- Provides ongoing communication with Fellows, site supervisors and other stakeholders.
- Responsible for upholding the Fellow Rules of Conduct.
- Responsible for overseeing accurate Fellow timekeeping and timely submission of hours.

Role of the Community Host Partner

- Plays an integral role in the quality of the Fellow experience.
- Collaborates with Partner Campuses to:
 - Clearly define each Fellow's roles and responsibilities with a focus on direct service and interaction with community members.
 - Develop a check-in schedule with Fellow's (weekly) and Partner Campus (at least monthly) to facilitate ongoing communication toward continuous program improvement.
- Identifies a site supervisor to manage the Fellow's day-to-day service and provide ongoing mentoring and support.
- Works with Partner Campus and Fellows to create a consistent schedule that supports Fellows in completing the required 450 service hours over the course of an academic year. To be reviewed, as Fellows schedules change, each quarter or semester.
- Provides trainings and skill-building opportunities for Fellows.
- Reports data and requested information to the Partner Campus and/or California Volunteers.
- Conducts Fellow performance evaluations.
- Responsible for having a system in place to accurately track and verify Fellow hours.

- Verifies and approves Fellow timesheets in America Learns platform in a timely manner to ensure Fellows receive their living allowance and education awards.

Section III

Eligibility and Code of Conduct

Eligibility to Apply

To participate in College Corps, students must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Full-time, enrolled undergraduate student at a College Corps Partner Campus.
- Has a high school diploma or its equivalent by start of program year.
- No minimum GPA but must be and remain in good academic standing.
- Ability to commit to the program for the full academic year.
- Must be a US Citizen, US National, legal permanent resident, or AB 540 CA Dream Act student.

Financial Need: This program is designed to support low- to moderate-income students. Students selected to join College Corps should meet **at least one** of the following criteria:

- Qualifies for a [Federal Pell Grant](#).
- Qualifies for a [State Cal Grant](#).
- Qualifies for a [Middle Class Scholarship](#).
- Needs to work part time and/or borrow student loans to meet educational costs.

Selection Criteria for Fellows

College Corps has a competitive selection process. Given the high demand for Fellowship slots, Partner Campuses establish their own criteria and process for selecting students. To be selected, students must demonstrate a willingness to fully commit to the program, complete the required number of service hours, and fully engage in all program activities throughout the entire academic year. In addition, successful applicants should demonstrate:

- Passion for working in partnership with communities to make positive change.
- Flexibility to work in different areas and adapt to changing circumstances.
- Growth mindset and eagerness to try new things.
- Interest in connecting with and learning from other students and partners across the state.
- Willingness to be an ambassador for the Fellowship on campus and beyond.

Maintaining Eligibility

To remain eligible for College Corps, Fellows are expected to maintain full-time enrollment and remain in good academic standing for the entire academic year. Fellows understand that service hours should be spread evenly throughout the year, allowing the Fellow to serve at a reasonable pace of service that fits their schedule and supports the needs of their Community Host Partner. Fellows should continually progress toward completing their 450 hours of service by 5/31/2027, and no later than July 31, 2027. Finally, Fellows must comply with the Fellow Code of Conduct below.

Fellow Code of Conduct

Fellows are expected to comply with all policies and requirements outlined in the Fellow Service Agreement, this Program Handbook, and any additional requirements communicated by the Partner Campus and/or Community Host Partner.

- A. While acting in an official capacity in the College Corps program, the Fellow is expected to:
1. Comply with the rules and standards of their community host partner
 2. Comply with rules and standards of the partner campus, and the program, as outlined by [AP5500 Standards of Student Conduct](#), the Fellow Service Agreement, and in this handbook
 3. Demonstrate mutual respect toward others
 4. Follow directions
 5. Direct concerns, problems, and suggestions to program staff.
- B. The Fellow understands that the following acts constitute a violation of the Program's rules of conduct:
1. Unauthorized tardiness
 2. Unauthorized absences
 3. Repeated use of inappropriate language (i.e., profanity) at a service site
 4. Failure to wear appropriate clothing to service assignments
 5. Stealing or lying
 6. Falsely reporting of hours served or recording false hours on the timekeeping platform (see Section IX, Timesheets)
 7. Engaging in any activity that may physically or emotionally damage other Fellows in the program or people in the community (see Civil Rights & Harassment Policy Section X) Types of activities include, but are not limited to, sexual harassment or unwanted advancements, physical altercations, and verbal pressuring or disrespect
 8. Unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of any controlled substance or illegal drugs during the term of service
 9. Consuming alcoholic beverages during the performance of service activities or at College Corps sponsored events
 10. Being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs during the performance of service activities or at College Corps sponsored events
 11. Failure to notify the program of any criminal arrest or conviction that occurs during the term of service

Below is a non-exhaustive list of requirements, which if not followed, may result in coaching, discipline, and/or release from the program. Fellows are expected to:

- Arrive on time for scheduled trainings, meetings, and shifts at their service site, and should be ready to meet the expectations outlined in their Fellow Service Agreement. Use appropriate language, wear professional clothing and act in a manner consistent with the expectations of the College Corps Program and their own institution.
- Have a full understanding of their Community Host Partner's workplace policies and procedures and act in accordance with these policies at all times.
- Consistently serve hours as detailed on their Service Hours Completion Plan.

- Communicate with the service site supervisor, in a timely manner, if they will be late or miss a scheduled shift.
- Treat all College Corps staff, other Fellows, and partners with respect and not act in a manner that could physically or emotionally harm any other Fellows or program partners.
- Abstain from consuming or being in possession of drugs or alcohol during their service hours, while at service site, or while attending any College Corps events.
- Be truthful in all conversations and on all records and documents, including but not limited to eligibility criteria, program documentation, criminal history, timesheets, and professional communications.
- Notify the Community Host Partner and Partner Campus immediately should any of the following occur during the term of service:
 - Criminal charge of any kind
 - Detainment of any kind
 - Arrest of any kind
 - Conviction of any crime

Section IV

Fellow Training and Development

Orientation & Training Overview

A core objective of the College Corps program is to provide Fellows with ample opportunity for personal and professional growth. Partner Campuses, Community Host Partners, and California Volunteers will provide Fellows with orientations and trainings, including a combination of mentorship and coaching, skill-building workshops, and peer learning and exchange.

In close collaboration with campus program staff, Fellows are permitted to track and count up to 90 training hours toward their 450-hour service requirement (no more than 20%). To be counted as training hours, the activity should be directly related to the Fellow's area of service and/or specific objectives of the College Corps program. Training hours will be provided by the Partner Campus, the Community Host Partner, or California Volunteers. Each Partner Campus will help Fellows determine which training hours should be counted toward the Fellow's service hour requirement.

All Fellows should receive some combination of the following training:

- Initial in-person Fellow orientation from program staff at Partner Campus.
- Ongoing training and reflection with their campus-level cohort on topics such as identity, community asset mapping, power and privilege, etc.
- Training and/or coursework specific to the focus area in which they will be serving.
- Onboarding, ongoing training and/or professional development opportunities from Community Host Partners.
- Coaching and mentoring from site supervisor, on a consistent and ongoing basis.
- Opportunities to participate in California Volunteers statewide cohort activities.

Career Development

Partner Campuses will work with Fellows to ensure they are prepared to serve in a professional setting and to leverage their College Corps experience to strengthen their resume and job interviewing skills, as well as to help inform their future career path. California Volunteers will also offer opportunities for Fellows to begin building a professional network through the Statewide Cohort Experience and access to an alumni network for those Fellows who complete the program.

Statewide Cohort Experience

College Corps is a part of greater statewide network called the California Service Corps. In addition to your campus cohort experience, ensuring that Fellows from across the state feel a shared sense of identity and a common sense of purpose is a priority for the California Service Corps. Statewide Cohort Experience seeks to inspire and prepare College Corps Fellows, as integral members of California Service Corps, to be community change agents, bridge builders, and civic-minded leaders. California Service Corps aims to promote the following priority outcomes through the Statewide Cohort Experience:

1. Foster a shared sense of connection and collective identity among Fellows across campuses and regions.
2. Support Fellows in reflecting on their service and connecting lessons to person well-being, career, and community goals.
3. Strengthen Fellows' ability to engage across differences.
4. Deepen Fellows' understanding of civic engagement and inspire action through applied skill-building.
5. Connect Fellows with local and state leaders to showcase their impact.

To advance these outcomes, California Volunteers will offer Fellows the opportunity to participate in the following activities and events:

- Fellow Ambassador Program is focused on connecting returning fellows from across the state to share ideas around service, generate thoughtful dialogue, and build meaningful peer connections.
- Mid-Year Leadership Workshops bring regional cohorts of Fellows together, in-person to build relationships, learn new skills, and share what they are learning through their own service experience.
- California Service Corps Regional Service Days will offer College Corps Fellows the opportunity to gain service hours serving side by side with other California Service Corps members.

Section V

Fellow Service Placements

College Corps Focus Areas

Communities will benefit from the support of College Corps Fellows in tackling California's most pressing challenges. Fellows will serve in nonprofit and governmental organizations in three primary focus areas identified by California Volunteers:

- K–12 Education
- Climate Action
- Food Insecurity
- AI & Digital Literacy

Not all Partner Campuses will offer all three focus areas, and some may offer opportunities for Fellows to serve outside of these three areas. Fellows should consult directly with their Partner Campus for information on their chosen focus areas.

Service Placement Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that Fellows have a meaningful service and learning experience. Community Host Partners play an important role in mentoring Fellows, ensuring they are doing meaningful work, and gaining practical job skills. California Volunteers shared the following guidelines with Partner Campuses and Community Host Partners.

College Corps Fellows must:

- Serve primarily with one Community Host Partner throughout their term of service.
- Spend the majority of service hours engaging directly with beneficiaries in the community, not conducting desk research or performing administrative tasks. ([Link to Direct Service Hours Guidance](#))
- Conduct service directly aligned with their program's stated focus area(s) and performance measures.
- Accurately log service and training hours in America Learns on a daily or weekly basis.
 - Please be aware that any hours recorded that are in any way dishonest, can be considered fraud due to their connection to the federal grant that funds this program and the education awards. Dishonest timekeeping can lead to severe penalties as well as be subject to campus policy for misconduct including expulsion. It could also lead to the requirement to pay back the living allowance.
- Be assigned a dedicated supervisor at their service site.

College Corps Fellows may:

- Serve at secondary placements as determined and approved by Partner Campus.
- Do a combination of direct service (at least 50 percent) and capacity-building (i.e., volunteer mobilization) for their community host organization, as agreed upon by the Partner Campus, Community Host Partner and Fellow.
- Serve with on-campus organizations, provided the above requirements are met.
- Serve additional service hours at other sites through a process defined by Partner Campus.

Partner Campus manages the process to match College Corps Fellows with their service placement. All questions about the matching process should be directed to Partner Campus staff, as each institution has a unique approach to matching student interest with community need.

Establishing a Schedule

Fellows are required to develop a plan at the start of each academic term as to how they will consistently meet the College Corps service hours requirement over the course of the academic year and how they will manage this with their coursework and other obligations. It is highly recommended Fellows establish a consistent schedule where they serve an average of **14 hours per week**, or the minimum required in their Fellow Service Agreement. This is important both to ensure Fellows successfully complete the program, and to ensure that the Community Host Partner will be able to assign them meaningful and time-sensitive projects. Fellows are required to complete a Service Hours Completion Plan each semester (or quarter) and track progress toward completing their service hours in America Learns. If Fellows have not completed 50% of their service hours by the midpoint of the program **January 2027**, they will need to work with their Partner Campus staff to develop a detailed plan for how they will complete their hours before the program end date, and no later than **May 31, 2027**. Fellows who are not consistently meeting the average hours requirement risk being exited early from the program.

Site Supervisor Role

Fellows will be matched with a site supervisor at their Community Host Partner site. The supervisor will manage the Fellow's day-to-day tasks, provide coaching and support, ensure the Fellow meets the expectations outlined in the Fellow Service Agreement, and enforce program policies and Fellow Code of Conduct, as needed. Fellows should have at least one hour of direct interaction with their supervisor each week during the service term unless the supervisor's absence prevents this meeting.

Some topics to discuss could include:

Questions about the Community Host Partner's work or the local context.

- Clarifying program objectives, expectations, and policies.
- Goal setting and progress toward assigned tasks.
- Confirming the weekly/daily schedule.
- Discussing overcoming barriers and challenges.
- Celebrating successes

Performance Evaluations

Fellow development is an important component of the College Corps program. With honest feedback, Fellows can make improvements to enhance their performance, both now and as they prepare for future careers. Fellows are encouraged to request regular feedback on their progress as part of their weekly meetings with site supervisors. At the end of their service term, each Fellow's site

supervisor is expected to provide a brief written evaluation of the Fellow's overall performance and to set aside time to talk through this feedback individually with each Fellow under their supervision.

The site supervisor's performance evaluation is expected to address the following topics:

- What progress has been made on assigned projects? Were expectations met?
- What are the Fellow's strengths?
- What are areas for growth and development?
- What is the Fellow's level of initiative, follow-through, judgement, collaboration skills, etc.?
- Describe the overall performance of the Fellow.

Prohibited Activities

Per federal regulations, Fellows may not participate in any of the following activities as part of their College Corps service placement:

- **Supplantation:** Fellows may not be used to replace State and local public funds that had been used to support programs of the type eligible to receive AmeriCorps support.
- **Legislative Advocacy:** Fellows may not be used to assist, provide, or participate in direct or indirect attempts to influence passage or defeat of legislation or proposals by initiative petition.
- **Religious Activities:** Fellows may not be used to assist, provide, or participate in religious instruction, conduct worship services, engage in any form of proselytization, or any other religious activity as an official part of a Fellow's duties.
- **Political Activity:** Fellows may not be used to assist, provide, or participate in partisan and non-partisan political activities associated with a candidate, including voter registration.
- **Labor Organizations:** Fellows may not be used to assist, provide, or participate in labor or anti-labor organization or related activities.
- **Nonduplication:** Fellows may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless the non-displacement requirements listed below are met, will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.
- **Non-displacement:** A Fellow may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.

A complete listing and additional details on prohibited activities and restrictions can be found at the links below:

[eCFR :: 45 CFR 2520.65 -- What activities are prohibited in AmeriCorps subtitle C programs?](#)

[eCFR :: 45 CFR 2540.100 -- What restrictions govern the use of Corporation assistance?](#)

Section VI

Financial Benefits

All Fellows who complete their 450-hour term of service will receive a total maximum financial benefit of \$10,000, paid in the form of a living allowance during service, plus an educational award upon completion of required service hours.

Living Allowance

Each Fellow will receive a living allowance to cover living expenses throughout their term of service. The living allowance is not an hourly wage and will not fluctuate based on the number of hours served (The Fellow must log at least one service hour and be fully enrolled in all applicable platforms to be considered fully enrolled and for payments to begin). Throughout the year, Fellows should consistently progress toward completing their total 450 service hours, serving an average target of 14 hours per week with a minimum average of 13 hours per week required to receive the living allowance. The Partner Campus will pay each Fellow a living allowance in regular increments, either bi-weekly or monthly, throughout their term of service. The living allowance will cease when the Fellow reaches the end of their service term or is released from their term of service. Fellows will receive more details from their college or university regarding how frequently the living allowance will be paid, what the payment amount will be, and which entity on campus will be issuing those payments. Fellows should review and be familiar with the Living Allowance Suspension Policy included in their Fellow Service Agreement. Fellows who exit early from the program will no longer be eligible to receive their living allowance. Fellows who reach the hours completion milestone prior to the service end date on their Hours Completion Plan are required to continue to log hours and to continue to participate in the program in order to be eligible to continue to receive the balance of their living allowance.

Education Award

Upon successful completion of the College Corps Program all Fellows will receive an education award. This requires completing service hours by May 31, 2027 or no later than July 31, 2027. There are four types of education awards, based on the category of student receiving the award: AmeriCorps (Segal Education Award), California Student Aid Commission (Dream Act Service Incentive Grant), the State of California (State Supplemental Education Award), and an Institutional Education Award. Partner Campuses will inform Fellows as to which education award(s) they will be receiving as part of the Fellow Service Agreement and will provide detailed instructions on the process to access the education award(s).

Slot Type A Fellows

AmeriCorps members will receive a \$7,000 living allowance paid throughout the term of service and education awards totaling \$3,000 upon completion of service, for a maximum financial benefit of \$10,000 for those who complete the College Corps program.

The education awards will be provided through two different funding sources. A federal award of \$1,956.35 will be provided as a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award. Based on the AmeriCorps guidelines, Fellows can utilize the Segal Education Award to pay current or future educational expenses, including paying off student loans from past years or paying for tuition in a future term. AmeriCorps guidance does permit the award of a full or prorated Segal Award, in line with the AmeriCorps compelling personal circumstance (CPC) exit policy outlined in the [AmeriCorps Terms & Conditions](#). Fellows will access the Segal Award on their [MyAmeriCorps portal](#). Additional resources on how to access, use, and understand the Segal Education Award can be found in the [Segal Education Award Fact Sheet 2025](#).

Californians For All Education Award: To augment the Segal Education Award, Fellows will also receive the Californians for All Education Award, a supplemental education award in the amount of \$1,043.65, funded by the State of California. The Partner Campus will pay this supplemental state award to Fellows upon completion of the program.

Compelling Personal Circumstances Exit: Fellow may qualify for a pro-rated Segal and Californias For All Education Awards if exited under a Compelling Personal Circumstance Exit. Per [eCFR :: 45 CFR 2522.230](#) the Program may release a Fellow from their term of service for **compelling personal circumstances** if the Fellow has completed at least 15% of required hours and demonstrates circumstances beyond the Fellow's control that prevent the individual from completing their term of service. Additional information on Compelling Personal Circumstances can be found in the Fellow Service Agreement. This information should be reviewed, by Fellow, prior to signing the Fellow Service Agreement of which this document is a part.

Slot Type B Fellows

Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG) Eligible Fellows

Slot Type B students who are eligible for the Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG) administered by the California Student Aid Commission will apply through the California Student Aid Commission with the guidance of their Partner Campus for the DSIG award. To be eligible for DSIG, students must be either Cal Grant A or B recipients, and must be eligible for Cal Grant B. This award provides up to \$4,500 in an education award to students who complete the College Corps program. Eligible Fellows will receive a \$5,500 College Corps living allowance, paid throughout the term of service, for a maximum financial benefit of \$10,000 upon completion of the program.

Fellows should contact their Partner Campus for instructions on the California Student Aid Commissions process to apply for and to request payments for the DSIG award. The award can be accessed in up to two installments for Fellows on the semester system and up to three installments for Fellows on the quarter system. Payments are based on minimum number of hours served. The compelling personal circumstances exit policy does not apply to the DSIG award. If a Fellow does not complete the required hours for the DSIG award, they will not be eligible to access this award on a prorated basis. Additional information on the DSIG award can be found here [CA Dream Act Service Incentive Grant FAQ's](#)

[Institutional Education Awards for Non-DSIG Eligible Slot Type B Fellows](#)

Slot Type B Fellows who are not eligible for the DSIG award, but were selected as College Corps Fellows, will receive a \$7,000 living allowance paid throughout the term of service and an institutional education award in the amount of \$3,000, paid by Partner Campus, upon completion of service, for a total financial benefit up to \$10,000 for those who complete the College Corps program. A Fellow must complete 450 hours to receive this education award. Fellows in this category should verify with the College Corps staff at their college or university when and how they will receive this award, as payment mechanisms vary by campus.

[Summary of College Corps Financial Benefits](#)

	Living Allowance	Education Award
Slot Type A Fellows	\$7,000 <i>Paid throughout term of service</i>	\$1,956.35 Segal Education Award \$1,043.65 State Supplemental Award <i>Paid upon completion of service</i>
Slot Type B Fellows DSIG Recipients	\$5,500 <i>Paid throughout term of service</i>	\$4,500 DSIG Education Award <i>Paid in 2 installments: mid-service and at completion</i>
Slot Type B Fellows NOT eligible for DSIG	\$7,000 <i>Paid throughout term of service</i>	\$3,000 education award <i>Paid upon completion of service</i>

[Tax Implications](#)

Because payment mechanisms vary across institutions and funding for the living allowance and education awards are provided through various sources, Fellows are advised to consult with their college or university and/or a tax advisor regarding the tax implications for the payments of the living allowance and education awards.

[Financial Aid Implications](#)

Fellows are encouraged to consult with the Financial Aid Advisor on campus, regarding the coordination and impact of the College Corps Living Allowance and Education Award(s) on their current or future financial aid package. The education award(s) that Fellows receive are treated differently than the living allowance, as they are provided through various funding sources. Depending on the type of education award and when it is disbursed, it may be possible for certain award(s) to be used toward educational expenses in future academic years. FAQ's on financial aid impacts can be found in the [Financial Benefit FAQs for Fellows](#) folder in Box.

[Public Assistance Programs & Benefits](#)

Fellows acknowledge that their eligibility for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) could be impacted by their living allowance; however, they

have the option to lower their living allowance rate, if they feel it will maintain eligibility for the benefits they wish to receive.

- o **SSI, SSDI:** The HEART (Hero Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax) Act of 2008 specifies that any cash or in-kind benefit paid to a participant in the AmeriCorps Program is excluded from the SSI income calculation. This means that SSI recipients can freely serve as AmeriCorps Fellows without the fear of losing their SSI. HOWEVER, there is no exemption for SSDI benefits so the stipend could impact said benefits.
- o **Food Stamps (Cal Fresh):** The AmeriCorps State and National Program was authorized by the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (NCSA), 42 U.S.C. § 12501 et seq. The NCSA states allowances, earnings, and payments to participants in AmeriCorps Programs “shall not be considered income for the purposes of determining eligibility for and the amount of income transfer and in-kind aid furnished under any Federal or federally assisted Program based on need, other than as provided in the Social Security Act.” 42 U.S.C. § 12637(d).
- o **Temporary Assistance to Needy Families:** Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) is one of the programs that may be affected by the living allowance. By signing this service agreement, the member acknowledges their understanding that their eligibility for SSDI and TANF could be impacted by their stipend; however, they have the option to lower their stipend rate, or waive the stipend entirely, if they feel it will impact eligibility for benefits they wish to receive. They may also ask that the stipend be reinstated if things change but would not be eligible for previously waived stipend payments.
- **Unemployment Insurance:** The U.S. Department of Labor ruled on April 20, 1995, that federal unemployment compensation law does not require coverage for Fellows because no employer-employee relationship exists. California Labor law also states AmeriCorps Fellows are not eligible for unemployment as they are not employees.
- **Financial Aid:** Fellows also acknowledge their understanding that their financial aid could be impacted by the financial benefits of this program. The impact will vary per individual. It is recommended that all Fellow who are receiving financial aid meet with their campus financial aid advisor to understand the possible impact and options for their individual situation.
- California Volunteers has created [CV Member Benefits Exemption Letter 2025](#) to support AmeriCorps members who may have or be applying for public benefits such as **Cal Fresh** (food program), **Medi-Cal**, or **HUD housing**. These programs should not be counting the living allowance/stipend as income when determining eligibility.

Section VII

Technology Platforms

America Learns Overview

America Learns is an online platform provided by California Volunteers. All College Corps partners and Fellows will use America Learns for timekeeping and data collection.

Fellows will use the platform to:

- Input service and training hours on a weekly basis.
- Submit accurate timesheets to their supervisor for approval.
- Participate in surveys to provide feedback and help improve the program.

- Timesheets from America Learns will be used to demonstrate Fellow's eligibility for Living Allowance payments, education awards and completion of the program.

Prior to service, Fellow's will be required to complete asynchronous timesheet training provided by America Learns. Partner Campuses will provide supplemental training to Fellows on how to access America Learns, complete their Fellow profile, and submit their timesheets. Fellows who need support using America Learns should first contact the appropriate person at their Partner Campus. If Fellows are not able to resolve their issues with the support of their Partner Campus, they can contact California Volunteers technical assistance through this link: CCTechSupport@CV.CA.Gov.

MyAmeriCorps

Slot Type A Fellows who are AmeriCorps members and are eligible for the Segal Education Award will receive an email invitation to register in MyAmeriCorps. Fellows need to create an account on the MyAmeriCorps Portal, in a timely manner, in order to complete enrollment prior to the start of service. Once registered, Fellows will receive an automated email from myamericorps@americorps.gov containing a link to complete enrollment. Fellows must complete this process to be successfully enrolled in the National Service Trust and to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award. Upon completion of the program, Fellows can access their Segal Education Award through the MyAmeriCorps portal. Fellows must complete this process prior to serving any service or training hours. Once earned, Segal Award funds are available to be transferred directly from the National Service Trust to the qualified educational agency or loan holder. There is no option to receive a direct case award in lieu of the Segal Education Award. Additional information about the use and limitations of the Education Award can be found [here](#).

Alumni Network

Fellows who complete the program will be invited to participate in the [California Volunteers Alumni Network](#). The Alumni Network brings together all California Service Corps alumni from #CaliforniansForAll College Corps, California Climate Action Corps, Youth ServiceCorps, and AmeriCorps California, to connect and engage beyond their service term. Alumni of California Service Corps programs will be able to access career development resources, connect with other service alumni, become ambassadors of their service program, and take advantage of networking opportunities.

Computer, Internet Usage, and Social Media

Fellows may reference [AP 3720 Computer and Network Use](#).

Section VIII

Program Evaluation and Measurement

The College Corps program is committed to understanding and tracking the impact of this program for participating students. The program has identified the following key desired outcomes. Fellows will:

- Report finding their experience meaningful and positive.
- Experience financial relief and reduced debt burden as a result of their participation.
- Persist toward graduation and attain their academic goals.
- Help clarify their career and/or academic goals through experiences in the program.

- Develop confidence, self-efficacy, and build career readiness competencies.
- Gain an increased sense of civic responsibility and remain committed to civic engagement.
- Feel better prepared to collaborate with people from different backgrounds.
- Feel connected to the statewide College Corps cohort.

California Volunteers has contracted with an external evaluator to track these outcomes from the time Fellows begin the program, through program completion and beyond. The goal is to better understand the benefits Fellows receive, any challenges encountered, and to identify potential improvements for future programming. All surveys will be conducted through America Learns and individual responses will be kept confidential.

Fellows will be asked to complete the following:

- **Fellow Profile Information** [in America Learns] to disaggregate program information and survey results to provide insight on the extent the program is reaching the intended student population and whether program benefits are experienced equitably.
- **Fellow Pulse Checks** will be administered occasionally in America Learns and will consist of a few short questions used to gauge Fellows' satisfaction in the program. Fellows will be prompted to complete these when submitting their timesheets.
- **Fellow Entrance and Post-Program Surveys** [in America Learns] will take no more than 15-20 minutes to complete and are voluntary. The survey data will provide California Volunteers with important information needed to improve the program for future participants.

California Volunteers will also work with Partner Campuses to collect information on Fellows' contributions to the work of Community Host Partners, including community-level results such as the number of students tutored, number of trees planted, and number of meals served.

Section IX

Administrative Policies

Attendance

Fellows are expected to show up on time for scheduled training and shifts. Fellows should work with Partner Campus staff and the site supervisor to create a predictable schedule that works with the Fellows academic commitments while meeting the needs of the Community Host Partner. Fellows should contact the site supervisor as soon as they know that they will be late or will not be able to make a scheduled shift. Throughout the year, they should continually progress toward completing their total 450 service hours, serving an average target of **14 hours** per week.

Timesheets

Timekeeping is a critical responsibility, since every Fellow must document their service hours to continue receiving their living allowance, complete the program and be eligible to receive their education award(s). Fellows are responsible for tracking both their training and service hours in America Learns. Timesheets should be completed accurately (daily or weekly) and submitted on a biweekly basis for approval by site supervisors (service or training hours completed at the CHP) or by the College Corps lead on the Fellow's campus (training hours completed through the campus and additional service hours). This data will help both Fellows and Partner Campuses monitor their progress towards meeting the 450-service hour requirement. It is the responsibility of the Fellow to

accurately track and record their service hours. Please be aware that any hours recorded that are in any way dishonest, can be considered fraud due to their connection to the federal grant that funds this program and the education awards. Dishonest timekeeping can lead to severe penalties as well as be subject to campus policy for misconduct including expulsion. It could also lead to the requirement to pay back the stipend.

Payment Suspension Plan

- If a Fellow does not log a minimum 26 hours per 2-week pay period (average 13 hours per week) for two consecutive pay periods, or has more than 2 unexcused absences in a pay period, their living allowance payment will be temporarily withheld until the Fellow is again meeting the minimum hours required and working toward the goals outlined in the Fellow Hours Completion Plan included in the Fellow Service Agreement.

Fellow is in danger of being exited early from the program if:

- They are 50 hours or more behind the total target hours served for the time period, as per the Fellow Hours Completion Plan included in the Fellow Service Agreement and they are not making progress toward making up those hours.

OR

They have logged 0 hours for two consecutive months.

Breaks

If serving for a period of more than five (5) hours in one (1) day, Fellows must be provided with a meal period of between thirty (30) minutes and sixty (60) minutes, during which time Fellows are to be relieved of all service-related duties. *Exception:* If a period of no more than six (6) hours will complete the day, and the meal period has been waived by both the Fellow and the Community Host Partner at the beginning of the shift, then the Fellow does not need to take a meal period. The meal period cannot be taken at the beginning or the end of the service day. Fellows are expected to clock out for meal periods, so this time will not count towards hours served. Fellows are authorized to take a fifteen (15) minute break for every four (4) hours of service.

Discipline Procedure

There will be consequences for continued issues with a Fellow's performance or violations of the Fellow Code of Conduct (see Section III). Community Host Partners and Partner Campuses will work together to implement progressive discipline -- a system of incrementally escalating responses to correct a Fellow's negative behaviors or violations of the Code of Conduct. Discipline may take the form of verbal warnings, written warnings, suspension, or termination. The process is designed for Community Host Partner Supervisors to collaborate with their Partner Campus to determine the appropriate response under the circumstances. Because it is based on communication and collaboration, progressive discipline also helps Fellows improve and succeed in the program.

Fellows cannot be treated in the same way as "at will" employees. They commit to providing service, and there is no employer/employee relationship. Under no circumstances can a Community Host Partner take action to dismiss a Fellow from their term of service; the decision to exit a Fellow from the College Corps program can only be made by Partner Campus staff. However, when warranted,

supervisors may suspend a Fellow from service at their host site; this option can be used when there is a safety concern, or when the severity of a situation is such that it is not appropriate for the Fellow to remain at their current host organization.

Fellows must be made aware that if behaviors do not improve to meet program expectations and requirements, they are jeopardizing their position with the College Corps Program, as well as continued payment of their living allowance. It is the goal of the College Corps Program to provide clear communication to Fellows so that each Fellow can correct, and thereby improve, their behavior and/or performance. Refer to Appendix 2 for more details about progressive discipline policies and procedures.

Release for Cause

The Program may release the Fellow for **cause**:

A release for cause encompasses any circumstances *other than* compelling personal circumstances that warrant an individual's release from completing a term of service. **This includes both release for misconduct and for a Fellow deciding to leave the program.**

- Programs must release for cause any participant who is convicted of a felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance during a term of service.
- A Fellow who is released for cause may not receive any portion of the education award or any further payment from the College Corps Program.
- A Fellow who is released for cause must disclose that fact in any subsequent applications to participate in an AmeriCorps or State service program. Failure to do so disqualifies the individual for an education award, regardless of whether the individual completes a term of service.
- A Fellow who is released for cause may contest the program's decision by filing a grievance in accordance with their institution's Grievance Procedure below. Pending the resolution of this grievance procedure, the individual's service is considered to be suspended and they should not receive any financial benefits.
- An individual's eligibility for a subsequent term of service in AmeriCorps will not be affected by release for cause from a prior term of service so long as the individual received a satisfactory end-of-term performance review as described in § 2522.220(c)(2) for the period served in the prior term.
- For College Corps Fellows who are AmeriCorps members, a term of service from which an individual is released for cause counts as one of the maximum AmeriCorps terms needed to attain 2 full-time education awards.

Release Due to Compelling Personal Circumstances (CPC)

The Partner Campus may release a Fellow from their term of service for compelling personal circumstances if the Fellow has completed at least 15% of their required hours and demonstrates circumstances beyond the Fellow's control that prevent them from completing their term of service.

Fellows must provide campus with required supporting documentation in order to qualify for this option.

Compelling personal circumstances include those that are beyond the Fellow's control, such as, but not limited to:

- A Fellow's disability or serious illness.
- Disability, serious illness, or death of a Fellow's family member if this makes completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible.
- Conditions attributable to the program or otherwise unforeseeable and beyond the Fellow's control, such as a natural disaster, strike, relocation of a spouse, or the non-renewal or premature closing of a project or program, that make completing a term unreasonably difficult or impossible.

Additional circumstances may include:

- Military service obligations.

Compelling personal circumstances **do not** include leaving a program:

- Due to an increased courseload.
- To obtain employment.
- Because of dissatisfaction with the program.

Service Abandonment

The term "service abandonment" refers to situations where a Fellow has not reported for service for a period of three (3) days or more without providing an explanation, not returned to service from a leave of absence, or not returned to service from a period of suspension. Service abandonment can be cause for dismissal. If a Partner Campus terminates a Fellow from the College Corps program for service abandonment, the Fellow will not continue to receive the living allowance, will not receive any portion of the Education Award for that term of service and will not be eligible to serve any future terms as a College Corps Fellow.

Unscheduled Absences

The Community Host Partner supervisor will report to the appropriate Partner Campus staff, within 24 hours, the unscheduled absence or departure of an assigned Fellow. Repeated absences or early departures will result in disciplinary action. Site supervisors must also keep the Partner Campus informed of changes in Fellow status, such as arrests, medical emergencies, hospitalization. Similarly, Partner Campus staff should keep site supervisors apprised of any changes in the Fellow's status as they become aware.

Resignation

A Fellow may choose to resign from the College Corps program for personal reasons. Resignations must always be in writing. When practicable, written notice of resignation should be given at least two weeks in advance to ensure that the departure will be minimally disruptive to the Community Host Partner. Fellows who intend to resign early from College Corps service should notify the appropriate staff at their Partner Campus, who will contact the Community Host Partner site supervisor.

Issues and Complaint Process

While Fellows may experience moments of challenge in this program, we anticipate that most will be able to resolve any problems they face. For some Fellows, these barriers will require assistance from campus staff, campus administrators, or possibly, the California Volunteers College Corps staff. Before a Fellow brings an issue of complaint to the attention of the California Volunteers, they should first start with the College Corps program staff at their campus and keep in mind the following:

- Ensure they have contacted the appropriate campus staff to address issues and complete all the steps to give campus staff a chance to address the issue.
 - Before contacting the campus staff, Fellows should have all the necessary information regarding the complaint, including, written documentation, a rough timeline of events, and the outcome or resolution they are seeking. Fellows will be asked to submit this information in writing.
- Resist the temptation to go “right to the top.”
 - In large complex organizations, like colleges/universities/California Volunteers, elevating complaints right to the top may delay the response time, as the inquiry or complaint must be forwarded to the office/department/agency that can best address the issue and respond to the complexities and technicalities involved.
- Utilize the chain of communication, on campus to appeal an outcome.
 - It is most efficient to initiate an inquiry or complaint at the level of the organization that has the appropriate expertise to resolve the situation.
- Advocate on their own behalf.
 - It is not recommended to ask a parent, family member, or another individual to escalate a concern of question on the Fellow's behalf.
 - Federal privacy laws, known as FERPA, make it virtually impossible to share information about a Fellow's participation in the College Corps program, unless the Fellow signs a written release.
 - You have the answers needed to best understand your situation.

Grievance Procedure

Fellows may reference [AP 5530 Student Rights and Grievances](#).

Prohibition of Nepotism

To avoid actual or apparent favoritism, the College Corps program prohibits certain Fellow placement and assignment arrangements, as follows below.

A Fellow cannot be placed or assigned to a Community Host Partner, if the Fellow is:

- In the immediate family (e.g., spouse, domestic partner, parent or guardian whether by blood or adoption, child whether by blood or adoption) of a Community Host Partner staff member or a member of its Board of Directors.
- A close relative, whether by blood or adoption, (e.g., grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, first cousin) of a Community Host Partner staff member or a member of its Board of Directors.

Fraternization

To maintain a standard of professionalism and responsibility in leadership, it is necessary to establish guidelines for personal relationships between Fellows, program staff, and service recipients.

Fellows have a responsibility to notify their Community Host Partner supervisor of any family or social relationship with staff, co-members, and service recipients who they interact with during their College Corps position. It is at the discretion of the Partner Campus staff as to what action will be taken. Actions include discussing confidentiality and clearly setting expectations or possibly transferring the Fellow to an alternate Community Host Partner. The actions taken are intended to best support the Fellow's success in their service position. Every effort must be made for the potential service recipient to receive service through another avenue, while simultaneously providing the Fellow with the opportunity to successfully complete their term of service.

Jury Duty

Partner Campuses must allow the Fellows to serve on a jury without being penalized for doing so. During the time Fellows serve as jurors, they will continue to receive credit for their normal service hours and a living allowance.

Dress Code

Fellows are expected to maintain a professional and appropriate appearance while representing the College Corps program at host sites, meetings, trainings, workshops, presentations, and community events. Dress expectations may vary by host site or service activity, and Fellows should follow any additional guidelines provided by their host site supervisor.

The following items are generally not appropriate for professional office settings unless approved by the host site:

- Clothing with offensive language or graphics
- Pajamas, slippers, or sleepwear
- Athletic wear or gym clothing
- Flip-flops or unsafe footwear

Fellows may reference AP [5500 Standards of Student Conduct](#).

Transportation Stipends

Fellows who travel more than 15 miles one way from their campus to their assigned Host Partner site are eligible for a \$50 transportation stipend.

To receive the stipend, Fellows must submit their monthly timesheet and complete the minimum required average of 13 service hours per week for the month. The transportation stipend will be paid as a separate payment from the living allowance and will follow the same disbursement schedule.

Transportation stipends will not be awarded retroactively. Fellows who do not meet the eligibility requirements for a given month will not receive the stipend for that month.

Section X

Human Resource Policies

Fellows will reference the applicable SBCCD Administrative procedures linked below:

- [AP 3420 Equal Employment Opportunity](#)
- [AP 3410 Nondiscrimination](#)
- [AP 3430 Prohibition of Harassment](#)
- [AP 3433 Prohibition of Sexual Harassment Under Title IX](#)
- [AP 3434 Responding to Harassment Based on Sex Under Title IX](#)
- [AP 3435 Discrimination and Harassment Resolution Procedures](#)
- [AP 7348 Accommodations](#)
- [AP 3550 Drug Free Environment and Drug Prevention Program](#)
- [AP 5530 Student Rights and Grievances](#)

Appendix 1: AmeriCorps Human Resource Policies

Reasonable Accommodations

As part of the College Corps program, the Partner Campus and Community Host Partner shall make reasonable accommodations in policies, practices, or procedures when the accommodations are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the program can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity, and/or impose an “undue hardship”. A reasonable accommodation may include making facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities; job restructuring; part-time or modified schedules; acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, training materials, or policies; etc.

Fellows may request reasonable accommodations through their Partner Campus by completing the [Reasonable Accommodation Request Form](#).

Self-Identification

A potential Fellow or current Fellow with a disability is not required to disclose information about any physical or mental limitations, whether or not they believe it will interfere with their capability to perform the essential functions of the position sought or held. If a Fellow would like, however, for the program, to consider any special arrangements to accommodate a physical or mental impairment, they may identify that impairment, describe the functional limitations that result from that impairment, and suggest the type of accommodation that they believe would be appropriate. Medical verification of the condition may be requested for the Fellow to be protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Confidentiality

Information provided regarding a Fellow's disability, by a potential Fellow or a current Fellow shall be kept confidential, except that appropriate supervisors, managers, and safety and health personnel may be informed regarding any restrictions in service duties or necessary accommodations.

Appendix 2: Progressive Discipline Policies

Verbal Warning

A verbal warning may be appropriate for a first-time, minor infraction of a College Corps Program policy or procedure, rules of the Community Host Partner/Partner Campus, or certain performance deficiencies. A verbal warning is typically delivered in a meeting between a Fellow and their Community Host Partner supervisor, as soon as possible after observation of the issue. The verbal warning may be accompanied by a performance improvement plan to guide the conversation and set clear expectations. During the meeting, the site supervisor will:

- Provide specific examples of the unacceptable behavior or situation.
- Specifically state how the behavior or situation is to be corrected and provide a time frame for improvement; complete a Performance Improvement Plan as necessary.
- State the consequences if the behavior or situation is not corrected.

Written Warning Action Plan

If the unacceptable behavior persists after a verbal warning, or if the severity of an action or situation cannot be corrected by a verbal warning, a Written Warning Action Plan may be appropriate. The Community Host Partner should consult with the Partner Campus to identify next steps. A Written Warning Action Plan is typically delivered in a meeting between a Fellow and the Community Host Partner supervisor, as soon as possible following observation of the Fellow's performance, conduct, or attendance issue. It is recommended that a Partner Campus representative also join this meeting. During the meeting, the Community Host Partner supervisor and Partner Campus staff person will:

- Establish the seriousness of the behavior or situation.
- Review the Written Warning Action Plan and any accompanying documentation with the Fellow.
- Provide specific examples of the unacceptable behavior or situation.
- Specifically state how the behavior or situation is to be corrected and provide a time frame for improvement.
- State the consequences if the behavior or situation is not corrected.
- Obtain the Fellow's signature on the Written Warning Action Plan. If the Fellow refuses to sign, this will be noted on the form.
- The Written Warning Action Plan must be sent to the Partner Campus staff for review, signature, and record.

Suspension

There may be performance, conduct, or safety incidents so problematic or harmful that the most effective action may be the temporary removal of the Fellow from the Community Host Partner. Community Host Partner supervisors may suspend Fellows pending the results of an investigation for reasons including, but not limited to, when: immediate action is necessary to ensure the safety of the Fellow or others; the Fellow has falsified documentation (including time sheets); or the Fellow has intentionally violated a policy or procedure. Community Host Partner supervisors must immediately

inform Partner Campus staff if they are recommending the suspension of a Fellow. Fellows may not receive a living allowance or other benefits during a period of suspension if the suspension encompasses an entire living allowance period.

Unless an immediate suspension is appropriate, the Community Host Partner supervisor and Partner Campus representative will schedule a meeting with the Fellow as soon as possible following observation of the Fellow's performance, conduct, or attendance issue. During the meeting, the site supervisor and Partner Campus staff Lead will:

- Establish the seriousness of the behavior or situation.
- Provide verbal and written communication directly to the Fellow.
- Provide specific examples of the unacceptable behavior or situation.
- State the consequences of the outcome of the pending investigation.
- Provide the Fellow with information regarding the length of the suspension, if known, and any items with which they are required to comply during the suspension period.

Following the initiation of the suspension, the Community Host Partner supervisor will communicate any changes in the suspension period with the Fellow as quickly as possible. For example, if a required investigation has been completed earlier than expected, the Community Host Partner supervisor may ask the Fellow to return to service to begin the next steps in the discipline process, if any. If a Written Warning Action Plan is completed as part of the suspension process, the steps above for Written Warning Action Plans will be followed. A Partner Campus representative should be informed and consulted throughout all stages of the progressive discipline process.



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