Prohibited AmeriCorps*VISTA Activities

There are certain activities, including lobbying, political, religious or advocacy activities that VISTA members may not perform in the course of their duties while charging time to the VISTA program, or at the request of sponsoring organization staff. Furthermore, members and staff may not engage in conduct in a manner that would associate the national service program or the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) with the prohibited activities. Programs must become familiar with specific provisions described in the Corporation’s formal regulation (45 C.F.R. 2520.65) and the grant provisions. The list of prohibited activities includes:

(a) Electoral Activity. Volunteers shall not engage in any activity which may, directly or indirectly, affect or influence the outcome of any election to public office. Volunteers are prohibited from engaging in activities such as:

   (1) Any activity in support of, or in opposition to a candidate for election to public office in a partisan or nonpartisan election;

   (2) Participating in the circulation of petitions, or the gathering of signatures on nominating petitions or similar documents for candidates for public office.

   (3) Raising, soliciting, or collecting funds for a candidate for public office;

   (4) Preparing, distributing or providing funds for campaign material for candidates, including leaflets, pamphlets, brochures and material designed for the print or electronic media;

   (5) Organizing political meetings or forums;

   (6) Canvassing voters on behalf of a candidate for public office;

   (7) Raising, soliciting or collecting funds for groups that engage in any of the activities described in paragraphs (a) (1) through (6) of this section.

(b) Voter Registration. Volunteers shall not engage in any voter registration activity, including:

   (1) Providing transportation of individuals to voter registration sites;

   (2) Providing assistance to individuals in the process of registering to vote, including determinations of eligibility;

   (3) The dissemination of official voter registration materials; or

   (4) Raising, soliciting or collecting funds to support activities described in paragraphs (b) (1) through (3) of this section.

(c) Transportation to the Polls. Volunteers shall not engage in any activity to provide voters or prospective voters with transportation to the polls, nor shall they collect, raise, or solicit funds to support such activity, including securing vehicles for such activity.
(d) Efforts to Influence Legislation. Except as provided in ? 1226.9, volunteers shall not engage in any activity for the purpose of influencing the passage or defeat of legislation or any measures on the ballot at a general or special election. For example, volunteers shall not:

1. Testify or appear before legislative bodies in regard to proposed or pending legislation;

2. Make telephone calls, write letters, or otherwise contact legislators or legislative staff, concerning proposed or pending legislation for the purpose of influencing the passage or defeat of such legislation;

3. Draft legislation;

4. Prepare legislative testimony;

5. Prepare letters to be mailed by third parties to members of legislative bodies concerning proposed or pending legislation;

6. Prepare or distribute any form of material, including pamphlets, newspaper columns, and material designed for either the print or electronic media, which urges recipients to contact their legislator or otherwise seek passage or defeat of legislation;

7. Raise, collect or solicit funds to support efforts to affect the passage or defeat of legislation;

8. Engage in any of the activities set forth in paragraphs (d) (1) through (7) of this section for the purpose of influencing executive action in approving or vetoing legislation.

9. Circulate petitions, gather signatures on petitions, or urge or organize others to do so, which seek to have measures placed on the ballot at a general or special election.

10. Engage in any of the activities enumerated in paragraphs (d) (1) through (9) of this section in regard to the passage or defeat of any measure on the ballot in a general or special election.

Washington Service Corps prohibited activities:

11. Participating in activities that pose a significant safety risk to participants;

12. Preparing any part of a grant proposal or performing other fundraising functions to help the program achieve its match requirements, or to pay the program’s general operating expenses;

**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-Corporation funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.**