

AmeriCorps JD Program Manual 2016-2017

Equal Justice Works

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Introduction

The mission of Equal Justice Works is to create a just society by mobilizing the next generation of lawyers committed to equal justice. For more than 20 years, Equal Justice Works has partnered with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to manage AmeriCorps programs for lawyers and law students.

This manual describes the policies and procedures of the AmeriCorps JD Program. As Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps JD Members and supervisors, you represent three important entities: your host organization (host site), Equal Justice Works, and AmeriCorps. Equal Justice Works has six strong values that guide the program, which we expect host sites and Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps JD Members to uphold:

1. Equal Justice Works expects host sites to provide effective and rewarding service experiences for AmeriCorps JD Members. We understand that a supportive site is critical for a successful term of service.
2. Equal Justice Works expects AmeriCorps JD Members to be leaders in their communities and organizations, and to advocate for their clients with all of their skills and passion.
3. AmeriCorps JD Members, site staff, and Equal Justice Works are all part of the national service movement. We are proud of our affiliation with other programs, state commissions, and the 100,000 AmeriCorps Members across the country who share the value of “getting things done.”
4. Equal Justice Works insists on excellence in program management and compliance. We consider management of taxpayer dollars to be a sacred trust, and we strive to operate the most effective and efficient program in the country.
5. Equal Justice Works also strives for the creation of a national community of public interest lawyers and peer networks to ensure quality experiences. Equal Justice Works aspires to advance the careers of law students and the capacities of host site organizations.
6. As an AmeriCorps JD Member, you are responsible for contributing to the quantifiable outcomes of the AmeriCorps JD program.

Thank you for your commitment to filling the justice gap as the next generation of public interest lawyers and law professionals. We are delighted to partner with you in the program. We want to hear from you! Please contact us to let us know how things are going.

Sincerely,

The Equal Justice Works Team

Overview of Relevant Organizations, Programs, and Resources

Equal Justice Works

The mission of Equal Justice Works is to create a just society by mobilizing the next generation of lawyers committed to equal justice. We provide leadership to ensure a sustainable pipeline of talented and trained lawyers are involved in public service. Equal Justice Works maintains a continuum of programs that begin with incoming law school students and extend into professional careers. We administer the nation's leading public interest law Fellowship program and offer more postgraduate, full-time legal positions in public service than any other organization.

Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)

CNCS is the agency that oversees AmeriCorps and grants funds to Equal Justice Works, along with hundreds of other organizations. The Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps JD program is a National Direct Program. CNCS offers competitive AmeriCorps National Direct grants to nonprofits operating in more than one state. The National Direct Program also grants AmeriCorps funds to state and local programs, serving as a compliance agent and manager.

Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps JD Program

Supported by CNCS, the Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps program was created in 1993 to address gaps in the legal aid community through direct representation and community outreach and collaboration. AmeriCorps JD Members provide legal services to thousands of people across the country. Members have worked in a variety of issue areas including veterans' assistance, foreclosure prevention, and disaster relief.

The Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps JD Program engages 880 law students around the country to deliver critically needed legal assistance in low-income and underserved communities. AmeriCorps JD Members can earn a \$1,230 AmeriCorps Segal Education Award (\$1,538 if participating in justice AmeriCorps) upon completion of 300 or 450 hours of service, which can be used to pay current educational expenses or qualified student loans.

The Student Application Manager (SAM)

[SAM](#) is a web-based system hosted by Equal Justice Works that manages all member paperwork related to application, enrollment, time logs, and exiting procedures. The system is secure, efficient, and nearly paperless. Equal Justice Works uses SAM to manage member files completely electronically. Unless specifically requested by staff, members should submit required documents via SAM.

Criminal History Checks and Accompaniment

It is an AmeriCorps requirement that all members initiate and complete a fingerprint-based FBI and state(s) criminal history check. **All of the checks must be initiated and uploaded to SAM prior to an AmeriCorps member's start date.** State criminal history checks are required for the state the member lived in when they applied to the AmeriCorps JD program, as well as the state the member will be servicing in this year.

Please be aware that **members are responsible for consenting to criminal history checks prior to their start dates, and may not count any hours worked before the initiation of these checks.** It is pertinent that the member initiate each check and upload the documentation to SAM as soon as possible. Please see the "Processing Criminal History Checks" section for more detail.

Although a criminal record does not exclude you from AmeriCorps service, Equal Justice Works will take results into consideration when considering your eligibility for AmeriCorps service. The required criminal history checks are: a nationwide, name-based check of the Department of Justice's [National Sex Offender Public Website](#) (NSOPW); state criminal history check(s); and an FBI fingerprint-based criminal history check.

Please note that you will be ineligible to serve in AmeriCorps if you:

- Are listed on the NSOPW (therefore, this check must be completed before a position offer can be extended)
- Have been convicted of murder as defined and described in Section 1111 of Title 18, United States Code
- Refuse to undergo any of the criminal history checks outlined above

If the member does not have the results of a completed state or FBI background check by their first day of service, a host site staff representative is required to physically accompany the member when interacting (whether by phone, email, or in-person communication) with a person of a vulnerable population.

Vulnerable populations are defined as children age 17 and younger, persons age 60 or older, and individuals with disabilities.

The host site staff representative accompanying the member must have received the background checks required by the host site. Host sites must document the accompaniment using a time log, ledger, or some other form of documentation that ensures accountability and oversight for this provision. Host sites will be required to complete documentation in SAM to certify the dates, times, and the member's accompaniers during this period.

Processing Criminal History Checks

Please be sure to review the Criminal History Checks section on your SAM profile to identify whether the responsibility of processing the state background check is of Equal Justice Works or the member. If it is the responsibility of Equal Justice Works, proceed to the next section on FBI background checks. If it is the responsibility of the member, review the steps below for more information on how to process a state criminal history check.

State Criminal History Check(s)

Step 1: State Criminal History Check Database

Reference the [State Background Checks Database](#) on the Equal Justice Works website to receive instructions regarding how to complete a criminal history check for your state(s). This includes both the state you applied in and the state where you will be working.

Step 2: Schedule Appointment

Follow the instructions to schedule an appointment for your criminal history check(s). Be sure to receive a confirmation with the scheduled appointment date. Confirmation can be a form, receipt, or other document confirming a request for a criminal history check, and must include the date. This confirmation is considered proof of initiation, and should be uploaded to SAM as soon as possible.

AmeriCorps JD Members may not start counting hours served until both the state and FBI criminal history checks have been initiated with documentation uploaded to SAM.

Step 3: Appointment

Attend the appointment. Be sure to receive instructions on how to obtain the results, either by mail or electronically*. Depending on your state, results can be returned within the week or month. Equal Justice Works staff will be following up regularly until the results are received to SAM.

*If receiving electronically, be sure to check your email often (including your spam folder) for the confirmation.

Step 4: Reimbursement

Upload any itemized receipts you acquired during the process to the “Reimbursement” section on SAM. Equal Justice Works will reimburse you for any expenses you incur during the criminal history check process. We process reimbursements monthly.

Step 5: Results Received

Once you receive your results, they must be uploaded to SAM via the “Upload Document” button in the Criminal History Checks section. You will electronically sign the “Chain of Custody” agreement that certifies you did not alter the results. Equal Justice Works highly recommends you upload your results immediately to ensure proof of completion. Equal Justice Works staff will be following up regularly until the results are received to SAM.

FBI Fingerprint-based Criminal History Check(s)

Step 1: Schedule Appointment

Follow the instructions on SAM for [Scheduling FBI Fingerprint Appointments](#) to schedule an appointment to complete your fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check. At the end of the online process, print the confirmation page to bring to your appointment. You will receive a confirmation via email with the scheduled appointment date. This confirmation is considered proof of initiation, and must be uploaded to SAM as soon as possible.

AmeriCorps JD Members may not start counting hours served until both the state and FBI criminal history checks have been initiated, with documentation uploaded to SAM.

Step 2: Appointment

Attend the appointment to have your fingerprints taken. Bring the confirmation page and two forms of identification with you to your appointment.

Step 3: Results Received

Results of the FBI criminal history check will be sent to both the member and Equal Justice Works. Equal Justice Works will upload the results to SAM.

AmeriCorps JD Member Orientation and Training

All AmeriCorps JD Members are required to participate in training to help familiarize them with their host site, issues impacting their communities, cultural competence, documentation of project activities, and project sustainability. Training also furthers their knowledge about the local community and effective outreach activities.

AmeriCorps JD Webinar

All AmeriCorps JD Members must participate in the mandatory AmeriCorps JD webinar prior to start of service. This webinar will cover orientation topics related to service requirements, member responsibilities and expectations, the criminal history check process, and the Segal Education Award. This webinar is a valuable tool for Equal Justice Works staff to ensure members receive the correct information regarding their term of service.

Training Hours

AmeriCorps JD Members may participate in training for a maximum of 20% of their required hours during their term period. You are encouraged to work with your host site supervisor to develop a training plan for your term period. You will also receive notifications about training that Equal Justice Works provides periodically through webinars and technical assistance sessions.

Qualifications to be a Project Supervisor

To be a Supervisor for an AmeriCorps JD Member, you must meet the following qualifications:

- **Not** be a current AmeriCorps Member yourself (including Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Legal Fellows)
- Be a current employee of the member's host site
- Intend to be in regular contact with the member and have knowledge of their hours logged, clients served, and activities
- Be aware of the responsibilities outlined below

Responsibilities of the Project Supervisor

Reviewing the AmeriCorps JD Member's Project Description and Submitting the Application

If the applicant designated you as the "host site supervisor," you must review and edit the applicant's project description, if needed. After a careful review of the applicant's project description, you, the supervisor, will submit the completed application for review.

Read the Stipulations in the AmeriCorps JD Member Service Agreement

If the applicant listed you as the "signing authority" for the Member Service Agreement, you must certify the AmeriCorps JD Member Service Agreement before the application will be considered complete. If you are not listed as the Host Signing Authority in the application, you as the supervisor are nevertheless responsible for knowing the contents of the Member Service Agreement. Please ask the member to view the Member Service Agreement, or contact us for a copy.

The AmeriCorps JD Member Service Agreement summarizes important AmeriCorps regulations and program requirements, including:

- The required hours of service for the member to complete the program and receive the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award
 - The requirement that at least 4 hours and no more than 20% of the required hours be spent in training, including the required orientation described below
 - The requirement that the AmeriCorps Member may spend no more than 10% of his or her required hours performing fundraising activities
- The project description
- The list of prohibited activities which members must not engage in during their term of service in AmeriCorps JD (listed below)
- The requirement to notify Equal Justice Works immediately if the member stops performing service (for example, if the host organization and member decide to end the term of service, if the member has a personal emergency, or any other circumstance where the term of service has ended)

Pre-service orientation

Supervisors are responsible for providing their AmeriCorps JD Member(s) with an orientation to the host site and available resources during the first week of their service. The orientation

should provide the member with the training, skills, knowledge, and supervision necessary to perform the tasks required for the assigned project positions, including specific training in a particular field and background information on the community served. You and the AmeriCorps JD Member(s) must also review the supervisor guide.

Accompaniment Requirement

If the AmeriCorps JD Member's State or FBI criminal history checks are not completed at the time of the member's service start date, a host site staff representative is required to **physically accompany** the member when interacting (whether by phone, email, or in-person communication) with a person of a vulnerable population. **Vulnerable Populations are defined as children 17 and under, persons age 60 years or older, or individuals with disabilities.**

The host site staff representative accompanying the member **must** have received their background checks required by the host site organization. Host sites must document the accompaniment of the Member using a time log, ledger, or some other form of documentation that ensures accountability and oversight for this provision.

Exception: A host site is not required to accompany the member if the person of a vulnerable population is accompanied by an authorized representative such as a parent for a minor.

Supervision

The supervisor should provide regular and adequate supervision to the Member (e.g. weekly meetings).

Time Logs

Equal Justice Works requires AmeriCorps JD Members to maintain an electronic time log in the Student Application Manager (SAM), which the supervisor will have to certify monthly. Please certify the month's work by 5 PM Pacific Standard Time by the final business day of the month. Members should also follow any timekeeping procedures required by you or your organization.

Supervisors must work with the member to encourage they complete the required hours of service by August 31, 2017. At least 3.5 hours, and no more than 20% of these hours, may be spent in training. Additionally, no more than 10% of the member's required hours may be spent performing fundraising activities. After the member's term of service is complete, you will receive an email asking you to certify their time log. This must be signed **immediately** to ensure we can exit the member from the program.

Reporting

The overall goal of AmeriCorps JD is to provide direct legal services to low-income individuals and communities, while furthering law student commitment to public interest work. As a result, we are required to track outcomes related to specific issue areas and we ask that you ensure that a system is in place for the member to track the information. Members are encouraged to track this information weekly to ensure they have the data to complete a Final Report to Equal Justice Works at the end of their term of service. Please refer to Appendix A of this manual for more detailed information on the specific outcomes regarding reporting.

AmeriCorps JD Member Evaluation

Supervisors must complete a brief end-of-term evaluation of the performance of the member in the exit section of SAM. This is required by the AmeriCorps grant. The evaluation will focus on the following factors:

- Whether the member has completed the required number of hours

- Whether the member has satisfactorily completed assignments, tasks, or projects
- Whether the member has met other performance criteria that were clearly communicated at the beginning of the term of service

Equal Justice Works does not require supervisors to submit these evaluations at the end of the member's term(s). **However, we may call on you to provide a copy of the evaluation at a later date, and at the end of the term, you will be asked to certify that this evaluation was completed.**

Exit Procedures

For a member to successfully complete the program and be eligible for the Segal Education award, s/he **must complete the exit procedures within one week of the member's the last day of service.** If all of the steps are not completed on time, the member will forfeit their education award, and may become ineligible for other AmeriCorps opportunities. Equal Justice Works is also penalized for every late exit, and high numbers of late exits could result in the loss of the AmeriCorps grant. Both the supervisor and AmeriCorps JD member must work together to complete the following steps by the deadline:

- Review and certify the exit form which includes:
 - The member time log
 - Certification of non-participation in prohibited activities
 - Certification that an AmeriCorps JD Member evaluation was completed
- Complete the Final Report

AmeriCorps-Prohibited Activities

AmeriCorps JD is an AmeriCorps program. As such, there are restrictions placed by Congress on members' activities during their term of service. Members cannot engage in certain "prohibited activities" during their service hours. Pursuant to the regulations of CNCS, 45 C.F.R. 2520.30, members of AmeriCorps programs, including AmeriCorps JD, are prohibited from performing certain activities in the course of their duties, at the request of program staff, or in a manner that would be associated with the activities of the AmeriCorps program or CNCS.

Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed below on their own initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time and using non-Corporation funds. The AmeriCorps logo must not be worn while doing so. **At the end of the term, supervisors will be asked to certify that the member(s) did not engage in these activities.**

AmeriCorps-prohibitedactivitiesinclude:

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:
 - a. A business organized for profit
 - b. A labor union
 - c. A partisan political organization
 - d. 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 amounts of lobbying, except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative
 - e. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in line (7.) above, unless CNCS assistance is not used to support those religious activities
9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive
10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services
11. Such other activities as CNCS 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. Members 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-CNCS funds. Members should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

Code of Conduct

The AmeriCorps JD Member understands that the following acts will also constitute a violation of the host site's rule of conduct:

1. Repeated absenteeism or tardiness
2. Repeated use of inappropriate language (i.e., profanity)
3. Failure to wear appropriate attire to service assignments
4. Stealing or lying
5. Activity that may physically or emotionally damage others
6. Possessing or using illegal drugs during the term of service
7. Consuming, abusing, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages—or any illegal drugs—during the performance of service activities. Failure to notify the host site immediately of any criminal arrest or conviction that occurs during the term of service as required by the Drug-Free Workplace Act. See *41 U.S.C. 701 et seq.*

Tracking Time

AmeriCorps regulations require certified time logs for each AmeriCorps JD Member. To ensure that the time log is accurate, please complete the time log in the Student Application Manager (SAM) weekly throughout the term of service. Please certify the month's

work by 5 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on the last day of the month. The time log will break the member's time down between service hours, training hours, and fundraising hours.

Service Hours vs. Training Hours

Training hours include the AmeriCorps JD webinar, host site orientation, and other training at the beginning of service. Thus, the first hours recorded will be training hours. No more than 20%, and no fewer than 4, of the member's requirement hours may be counted as training by the end of service.

Service hours are the hours the member spends working at the organization (e.g., intakes, conducting research, preparing for a presentation, etc.) The majority of hours logged will be service hours. Do not record hours that you do not work because you are taking a lunch break, sick, or on vacation. Do not record any hours spent doing prohibited or unallowable activities.

Reminder: AmeriCorps JD Members must serve a minimum of 300 or 450 hours, depending on the program (service plus training hours) to be eligible for the Segal Education award.

Exception: If the member has elected to end their term of service early for "compelling personal circumstances," as described in Section D of the AmeriCorps JD Member Service Agreement, they may be eligible for a prorated education award. Please contact us if you believe this situation applies to you.

Time Log

The time log must be completed by logging into the SAM account and scrolling to the "Time Log" section. Once you've clicked the bar and expanded that section, you can select "Time Logger" to enter the time worked, divided into service and training hours.

Within the week following the last day of service, members must certify their time log by clicking "View and Accept" in the Time Log Certification & Exit Form section of the SAM page. Once you have certified the time log, SAM will automatically send an email to your Supervisor asking him or her to certify it as well. Please remind your supervisor to do so immediately so that we can exit you from the program.

Mandatory Reporting Requirements

CNCS requires every AmeriCorps program to establish and record measurable outcomes for each program year along with the total hours served. At the end of service, the member will be required to submit a Final Report, available through SAM. The member will be asked to detail the accomplishments and challenges of their service experience in the final report.

Tracking Impact (Outcomes) of Service

AmeriCorps JD Members should use the AmeriCorps JD Tracking Log (see Appendix A) or a similar database at their host site to document the various indicators listed, such as the number of individuals to whom you provided direct legal assistance, number of documented positive outcomes, and number of volunteers recruited. Members should complete the Tracking Log weekly to gather data points that will be needed for the final report submission. The Tracking Log should be filed in a place where it can be referenced as needed by the AmeriCorps JD Member and/or at the request of Equal Justice Works.

Outcomes of Service

When tracking accomplishments and preparing the Final Report, keep in mind that the main objective of the AmeriCorps JD program is to provide direct legal services to low-income individuals and communities. Direct legal services may include any and all of the following:

- Conducting intake of individuals to identify and assess legal problems, regardless of whether they become clients
- Providing supervised advice and/or referrals to individuals, regardless of whether they become clients
- Assisting clients (anything from making a phone call on their behalf to actual legal representation in an administrative hearing or in court)
- Helping a host site staff member (paralegal, attorney, etc.) assist a client (e.g., research and writing, preparation for administrative or court hearings)
- Conducting outreach to grow the capacity of your host organization, or to spread awareness about the issue it serves
- Leading “know your rights” community education sessions
- Capacity building and program development for your host site
- Tracking intake of priority-area clients, such as veterans, victims of natural disasters, clients with barriers to employment, or clients seeking immigration legal services

Clients can be counted in this category if they achieved a positive outcome as a result of services the member provided or helped their supervisor provide. For example, the client’s goals were partially or fully met due to legal representation, or the client’s situation improved due to legal assistance. “Documented” does not mean that you have an official letter from a court; verbal notification from the client is fine.

Examples of documented positive outcomes include: increased income, foreclosure delayed or avoided, or a civil protection order granted. Partial victories count (e.g., requested 100 percent disability rating and received 50 percent disability rating).

We understand that, as law students, members are under the supervision of an attorney and are frequently contributing to, but not solely responsible for, the outcomes below. If you contributed to the outcome, you may report it. Most of the information we are asking about pertains to our focus areas of veterans and disaster and, to a lesser extent, expungement and immigration issues. Not all students will have data to report in all sections, so ONLY complete what is applicable to your project.

Success Stories

The member will be asked to provide success stories from their term of service. When writing these stories, it is important to describe the outcomes for the client and/or the community as much as possible. An outcome is a tangible, measurable (ideally with a number – a dollar value or percentage) benefit to the client, community, or office. To convey outcomes effectively, it is often beneficial to write from the client’s or community’s perspective rather than the lawyer’s. These narratives are intended to put a legal victory in a non-legal context for a general audience.

For example: Instead of, “The case required drafting four separate complex motions which each required hours of legal research,” try, “We convinced the judge to expunge Mr. Smith’s criminal record and, as a result, he received a higher paying job that increased his annual income by 25 percent. This additional income saved his home from foreclosure, preventing his three children from transferring school districts halfway through the school year.”

Here are a few examples of stories from past AmeriCorps JD Members to give the member a sense of what to send to us:

- For three days in July some of our AmeriCorps JD Members had the opportunity to participate in the 24th annual [San Diego Stand Down](#), the largest event of its kind in the country. The three-day event provided holistic services to more than 1,000 veterans. One of the services offered to veterans is an onsite homeless court where veterans can have their cases resolved immediately. The services are a joint collaboration of the San Diego Public Defender Office, District Attorney, City Attorney, and the San Diego court system. Volunteer attorneys from Judge Advocate General (JAG), legal services attorneys, and our AmeriCorps Fellows assisted the veterans from initial intake through hearings held under a tent on a handball court.
- In the process of working with a community organization trying to address homelessness, I helped a community group further its efforts to develop an affordable housing complex in its neighborhood by identifying properties and researching land use laws. At the end of the summer, the community group had identified three properties and was applying for financing for one of them. The property had 100 units of housing, which would be offered at affordable rates to qualifying families.

Segal Education Award

When the member completes their term of service and finalizes required documents for exiting, they will be eligible to receive the Segal Education Award within 30 days.

To do so, follow these instructions:

1. Log into the [My AmeriCorps Portal](#)
2. Request disbursement of the Segal Education Award to your school or lender. You can use the award to pay back student loans or to pay your tuition bill for the upcoming semester
3. Please note that payments are made directly to your school or loan company. You will not receive a check or a deposit to your bank account

You have up to seven years after the end of your term of service in which to use the Segal Education Award. You can use it all at once or in parts. The award is subject to taxation in the year it is used, and AmeriCorps does not withhold taxes from the award.

Leaving Service Early

It is imperative that you let Equal Justice Works staff know immediately in the event that you stop working with your host site for any reason. While we want everyone to have a productive term of service and to take advantage of the AmeriCorps Segal Education Award, we understand that changes can occur. If you need to leave early, we must be notified immediately as there are limited capacities in which you can leave early and still receive a portion of the Segal Education Award. We ask for your full cooperation in keeping us informed. We will be communicating with you throughout the year to ensure compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations so that we may continue to provide these funds and support law students like you.

Grievance Procedures

CNCS requires AmeriCorps programs to have a grievance procedure in place to resolve disputes between AmeriCorps Members and host sites, AmeriCorps Members and Equal Justice Works, or host sites and Equal Justice Works. By participating in the program and signing the Member Service Agreement, members and host sites agree to abide by this procedure in the event of a dispute regarding service-related issues such as assignments, evaluations, suspension, or release for cause. The following six steps constitute the grievance procedure:

1. Pre-Complaint Process
Aggrieved parties should attempt to resolve any problems or disputes with the other party directly. Any issues should be clearly stated and understood by both parties. The

aggrieved party may file a written grievance complaint if the informal process does not resolve the matter, or if the party chooses not to pursue an informal resolution process

2. Written Grievance Complaint

Aggrieved parties who have attempted to resolve their grievance under the pre-complaint process without success may file a written grievance complaint with Equal Justice Works no later than one year after the date of the alleged occurrence

3. Hearing

Except when a grievance alleges fraud or criminal activity, Equal Justice Works will designate a neutral official within 30 days of the filing of a written grievance complaint to hold a hearing regarding the dispute

4. Hearing Decision

A decision on any such grievance will be made no later than 60 days after filing the grievance

5. Arbitration

If the hearing decision is averse to the aggrieved party, or if no decision has been reached within 60 days after the filing of a grievance, the filing party may submit the grievance to binding arbitration before a qualified arbitrator who is jointly selected and independent of the interested parties. An arbitration decision will be made no later than 30 calendar days after the commencement of the arbitration proceeding

6. Costs of Arbitration

If the arbitration decision is averse to the filing party, then the cost of the arbitration proceeding must be divided evenly between the parties of the arbitration. If, however, the filing party prevails under a binding arbitration proceeding, then Equal Justice Works must pay the total cost of the proceeding and the reasonable attorney's fees of the prevailing party

Reasonable Accommodations

The host site must be accessible to persons with disabilities. The host site has agreed to provide reasonable accommodation to the known mental or physical disabilities of otherwise qualified AmeriCorps Members. An AmeriCorps Member who needs reasonable accommodations may make a written request to the host site supervisor. AmeriCorps Members agree to submit a copy of the request to Equal Justice Works' Director of Federal Programs.

Non-Discrimination

Additionally, the host site's program must be available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, political affiliation, or religion. The host site understands that it is unlawful to retaliate against any person or organization filing a complaint about such discrimination. In addition to filing a complaint with local and state agencies that are responsible for resolving discrimination complaints, the host site understands that anyone, including the AmeriCorps Member, may bring a complaint to the attention of the CNCS.

If either the host site or the member believes that there has been unlawful discrimination, or if they want more information, contact:

Toya Lynch, Senior Program Manager
Equal Justice Works
1730 M Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 466-3686 ext. 127 or tlynch@equaljusticeworks.org

Or:

Office of Civil Rights and Inclusiveness Corporation
for National and Community Service
1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20525
(800) 833-3722 or eo@cns.gov

Progressive Discipline, Release, and Suspension

Except where immediate release or suspension of the AmeriCorps Member is mandatory (as outlined below), or in the event of extraordinary circumstances, the host site will engage in progressive discipline for violations of the Rules of Conduct before releasing or suspending the AmeriCorps Member. The following sequence below is suggested to host sites, but not required. Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Members should request a copy of their host sites' progressive discipline policies.

1. For the first offense, an appropriate host site representative will issue a verbal warning to the AmeriCorps Member
2. For the second offense, an appropriate host site representative will issue a written warning and reprimand to the AmeriCorps Member
3. For the third offense, the AmeriCorps Member may be suspended for one day or more without compensation
4. For the fourth offense, the host site may release the AmeriCorps Member for cause

The AmeriCorps Member can be terminated or suspended from the host site "for cause." "For cause" circumstances that may, in the discretion of the host site, result in the release of an AmeriCorps Member include:

1. Conduct that undermines the effectiveness of the host site or the assigned project
2. Conduct that constitutes inappropriate behavior or misconduct

“For cause” circumstances that will result in the release or suspension of the AmeriCorps Member from service include:

1. If the AmeriCorps Member has been convicted of a felony, or has been convicted of the sale or distribution of a controlled substance or illegal drug
2. If the AmeriCorps Member has dropped out of the program without obtaining a release for compelling personal circumstances from the appropriate host site representative
3. If the AmeriCorps Member has committed any of the offenses listed in paragraph Section C of the Member Service Agreement
4. Any other serious breach of the Member Service Agreement that, in the judgment of the host site, warrants dismissal

Upon the AmeriCorps Member’s request, the host site or program may release or suspend the AmeriCorps Member from service, due to compelling personal circumstances, if the AmeriCorps Member:

1. Has a disability or serious illness that makes completing the term impossible
2. Suffers a serious injury, illness, or death of an immediate family member of the AmeriCorps Member that makes completing the term unreasonably difficult or impossible for the AmeriCorps Member.
3. Has military service obligations
4. Experiences other unforeseeable circumstance(s) beyond the AmeriCorps Member’s control that makes it impossible, or unreasonably difficult, for the AmeriCorps Member to complete the term of service, such as a natural disaster, a strike, relocation of a spouse, or the nonrenewal or premature closing of a project or the host site, and the host site deems that circumstance(s) to be compelling

Compelling personal circumstances do not include leaving the host site:

1. To enroll in school
2. To obtain employment, other than in moving from welfare to work
3. Dissatisfaction with the host site

If the AmeriCorps Member discontinues the term of service for any reason other than a release for compelling personal circumstances as described above, the AmeriCorps Member will cease to receive the benefits described above and will receive no portion of the Segal Education Award or interest payments.

If the AmeriCorps Member discontinues the term of service due to compelling personal circumstances as described above, the AmeriCorps Member will cease to receive benefits described above. If, however, the AmeriCorps Member has completed at least 15 percent of the required service hours, the AmeriCorps Member can receive a prorated portion of the Segal Education Award or interest payments described above.

Questions?

If you have any questions about anything related to your AmeriCorps JD experience or Segal Education Award, please contact us at americorpsjd@equaljusticeworks.org.

Equal Justice Works

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AmeriCorps JD is an [AmeriCorps](#) program.

Appendix A:

AmeriCorps JD Final Report Client Outcomes Summary		
<p>We understand that as a law student you are under the supervision of an attorney and that you are frequently contributing to, but not solely responsible for, the outcomes below. If you contributed to the outcome, you may report it. A positive outcome is a financial or situational improvement that results from the service you provided or helped your supervisor provide.</p> <p>For example, count it as a positive outcome if the client's goals were partially or fully met due to legal representation or the client's situation improved due to legal assistance. Examples of documented positive outcomes include: increased income, foreclosure delayed or avoided, civil protection order granted. Partial victories count (e.g., requested 100% disability rating, received 50% disability rating).</p>		
General	Total number of individuals served:	
	Total number of client intake/witness interviews performed:	
	Total number of community legal meetings participated in (e.g. know your rights trainings, specific legal topic education, etc.):	
	If your host organization employs an Equal Justice Works Fellow, number of cases you provided support on with a Fellow:	
Hours of Service	Total number of hours spent on legal research:	
	Total number of hours spent providing direct legal clinic services:	
Priority Area Outcomes		
Veterans	Number of veterans to whom you provided legal assistance:	
	Number of active duty military to whom you provided legal assistance:	
	Number of family members of veterans or active duty to whom you provided legal assistance:	
	Number of Veterans who were given time to move out and secure other housing because of legal services:	
	Number of Veterans who are in permanent housing because of legal services:	
	Number of Veterans who had an employment barrier removed because of legal services:	
Employment	Number of individuals to whom you provided legal assistance related to employment (e.g. criminal records expungement, restoring a driver's license, unpaid wages, job loss, unemployment compensation, etc.):	
	Number and type of positive outcomes for individuals to whom you provided legal assistance related to removal of barriers to employment (e.g. driver's license reinstated/obtained, criminal record expunged, etc.):	
Housing	Number of individuals who obtained or maintained housing stability:	
	Number of clients who had a barrier to safe and secure housing removed through legal services:	
	Number and type of positive outcomes for individuals to whom you provided legal assistance related to barriers to housing (e.g. obtained permanent housing, etc.):	
Disaster	Number of individuals to whom you provided legal assistance related to disaster relief:	
	Number and type of positive outcomes for individuals to whom you provided legal assistance related to disaster relief (e.g. return on financial deposit to a contractor, etc.):	
Family	Number of individuals to whom you provided legal assistance related to child support:	
	Number and type of positive outcomes for individuals who obtained child support or had a child support modification:	
Immigration	Number of individuals to whom you provided legal assistance related to immigration services:	
	Number of Unaccompanied Children screened:	
	Number of Unaccompanied Children screened for human trafficking:	
	Number of trafficking victims referred to social services:	
	Total number of Unaccompanied Children identified with relief services:	
	Total number of pro bono attorneys matched to UC cases:	

	Number and type of positive outcomes for individuals to whom you provided legal assistance on their immigration-related issue (e.g. relief from deportation, connection to social services, voluntary departure vs. removal order, etc.):	
Organizational Partnerships		
Number of new partnerships you created that assisted with the provision of legal services to clients:		
Briefly describe the partnerships and the concrete benefits to clients (500 character limit):		
Program Summary Narrative		
This is an opportunity for you to tell us briefly about your overall experience at your host organization this year. Please be sure to highlight the impact of your work and outcomes achieved.		
Example: "Over the course of the summer, I was able to see 100 people, and I was able to close the cases of 20 of those individuals. Of the 20 cases closed, I recovered \$15,000 in unpaid wages and helped to prevent five evictions. I also educated 2,500 community members about enforcing the housing code and 80% of those who attended my presentations said they would use the information immediately. Finally, I helped my supervising attorney to author the first guide to pest-related housing code violations in our state."		
Describe your overall experience in no more than 200 words, including as much data as possible:		
Success Story Narrative		
This is an opportunity for you to tell us briefly about a specific project or success story this year. A success story brings hard data to life. When writing your success story, please describe the outcomes for the featured client and/or the specific community as clearly and descriptively as possible. An outcome is a tangible and measurable benefit to your client, community, or your host site (ideally with a number, a dollar value, or percentage). To convey a success story effectively, it is often beneficial to write from the client's or community's perspective, not the lawyer's. These success stories are intended to put a legal victory into a non-legal context.		
For example, instead of "the case required drafting four separate complex motions which each required hours of legal research," try: "We were able to convince the judge to expunge Mr. Smith's criminal record and, as a result, he received a higher paying job that increased his annual income by 25%. The additional income saved his home from foreclosure, preventing his three children from transferring school districts halfway through the school year."		
Describe your success story in no more than 200 words, including as much data as possible:		