



AmeriCorps Member Background Check Policy
Project Ayuda
Adopted: 2006-07
Revised: August 2009

AmeriCorps Members who are seeking enrollment into the Project Ayuda AmeriCorps program, and AmeriCorps Staff, must adhere to the guidelines of the Criminal Background Check (CBC).

AmeriCorps Member means an individual:

- 1) Who is enrolled in an approved national service position (i.e. AmeriCorps)
- 2) Who is a U.S. citizen, U.S. national or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States
- 3) Who is at least eighteen (18) years of age at the commencement service

Staff means an individual:

- 1) Or individuals who are paid through AmeriCorps State grant funds.

Consecutive Term of Service means:

- 1) That there are no intervening breaks in service of more than thirty (30) days in which the applicant did not serve within the same AmeriCorps program.

MANDATORY:

*Project Ayuda, the parent organization, shall conduct National and State criminal registry background checks for all applicants applying for a position as an Project Ayuda member or employee funded by the AmeriCorps grant. Project Ayuda will also conduct a background check on all applicants through the Family WatchDog Sex Offender Website. Project Ayuda **may not at anytime** require that AmeriCorps program applicants or staff obtain and/or pay for a criminal registry check as a condition of service or employment.*

Project Ayuda will use the following websites:

Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Registry <http://www.nsopr.gov>

Arizona Department of Public Safety <http://az.gov/app/sows/home.xhtml>

Family Watchdog www.familywatchdog.us

Project Ayuda members may have their CBCs completed in one of two ways: through their campus program or through AZ DPS, the AZ contractor running fingerprint clearance and CBCs. Students are checked through their campus if a CBC is legally required by their academic program or by the community site in which they will be serving. Members can make a copy of their fingerprint clearance cards and submit with enrollment booklet. All other members who are not legally required to be checked prior to service will go through the Project Ayuda system.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- 1) Anyone appearing on the NSOPR is automatically disqualified from serving with or being employed by the Project Ayuda program.
- 2) An applicant that refuses to consent to the State criminal registry check, or who makes a false statement in connection with the inquiry concerning the individual's criminal history, may not serve with or be employed by the AmeriCorps Project Ayuda program.

The following criteria will be considered when conducting background check results:

- 1) Sexual abuse of a minor
- 2) Incest
- 3) First or Second Degree Murder
- 4) Kidnapping
- 5) Arson
- 6) Sexual Assault
- 7) Sexual exploitation of a minor
- 8) Felony offenses including contributing to the delinquency of a minor
- 9) Felony offenses involving sale, distributing, or transportation of, offer to sell, transport or distribute, or conspiracy to sell transport or distribute marijuana, dangerous or narcotic drugs
- 10) Felony offense involving the possession or use of marijuana and dangerous drugs
- 11) Burglary in the first, second or third degree
- 12) Aggravated or armed robbery
- 13) Robbery
- 14) Child Abuse
- 15) Sexual conduct with a minor
- 16) Molestation of a child
- 17) Voluntary manslaughter
- 18) Assault or aggravated assault
- 19) Homicide
- 20) Trafficking controlled substances
- 21) Rape, criminal sexual penetration, criminal sexual contact, incest, indecent exposure or other related sexual offenses

If any AmeriCorps applicant or staff member with the Project Ayuda AmeriCorps Program has been convicted of any of the above said crimes, MCCCCD or Project Ayuda **has the right to deny membership and will deny membership** in the AmeriCorps program or involvement with the AmeriCorps program.

DOCUMENTATION:

Project Ayuda shall maintain background check documentation for both members and staff in a secure location only accessible by individuals who have an official need to review the information to interpret the results. This includes copies of fingerprint clearance cards from AZ DPS. The persons eligible to review the results are the Program Director and the Program Coordinator. This documentation shall demonstrate that in selecting an individual, Project Ayuda reviewed and considered the background check's results. Any AmeriCorps member or staff associated with AmeriCorps may view the results *of their* criminal history background check at any time.

PROCEDURES:

- 1) The Program Coordinator and/or Program Director shall conduct and review the results of the National Service Criminal History Check after the applicant or staff member has applied to the AmeriCorps program, but prior to enrolling the member or staff member.
- 2) AmeriCorps program member applicants and staff applicants have the right to contest and correct any information on their criminal background check that is inaccurate.
- 3) Member applicants and staff applicants of the Project Ayuda program may be permitted to start service prior to review of the State background check results as long as he/she is serving under the supervision of the site supervisor or program director. He/she will not be permitted to have access to vulnerable populations i.e. children, elderly adults or persons with disabilities, without being accompanied by an authorized supervisor. For AmeriCorps members, this would be the site supervisor and for AmeriCorps staff members, this would be the Program Director.
- 4) The Project Ayuda program has the following procedures to conduct the required National Service Criminal Background History Check:
 - a) Verification of the applicant's identity by examining and obtaining a copy of a government-issued photo identification card.
 - b) Prior written authorization by the applicant authorizing Project Ayuda AmeriCorps program to conduct a State Criminal History Check, as well as authorization to share the results of that check within Project Ayuda AmeriCorps program, as appropriate. The Project Ayuda Program application will have a disclaimer on the application for applicants to sign, giving the program authorization to conduct the background check and share the results with the appropriate program staff.

- c) The Project Ayuda application will have a disclaimer for applicants to sign stating that the applicant understands selection in the program is contingent upon the organization's review of the background check results.
- d) Results of all AmeriCorps background checks will be kept in a secure location only accessible to the Program Director and Program Coordinator. These results will be kept in member files.