

Quick Guide to CNCS & AmeriCorps Branding Requirements

Compiled by America's Service Commissions

Below is a compilation of various branding requirements that state service commissions and their AmeriCorps State programs must adhere to upon accepting AmeriCorps funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). Please note that these are *minimum* branding requirements. State service commissions have the right and ability to develop, require, and enforce additional branding requirements beyond these minimum requirements for their own state portfolios and part of your commission-specific Grant Award Terms & Conditions.

If you have questions about branding requirements, contact one of the following:

- General Questions about State Service Commission Branding and Communications - Emily Steinberg, Director of External Affairs, America's Service Commissions - esteinberg@asc-online.org
- CNCS Digital and Social Media - digitalmedia@cns.gov
- CNCS Logo Permissions or Customization Requests - logos@cns.gov
- CNCS Press Office - pressoffice@cns.gov

From 2016 Terms and Conditions for AmeriCorps State and National Grants (Effective May 1, 2016)

III. AFFILIATION WITH THE AMERICORPS NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAM

- A. **Identification as an AmeriCorps Program or Member.** The recipient shall identify the program as an AmeriCorps program and members as AmeriCorps members. All agreements with subrecipients, operating sites, or service locations, related to the AmeriCorps program must explicitly state that the program is an AmeriCorps program and AmeriCorps members are the resource being provided.
- B. **The AmeriCorps Name and Logo.** AmeriCorps is a registered service mark of CNCS. CNCS provides a camera-ready logo. All recipient and subrecipient websites shall clearly state that they are an AmeriCorps recipient and shall prominently display the AmeriCorps logo. Recipients and subrecipients shall use the AmeriCorps name and logo on service gear and public materials such as stationery, application forms, recruitment brochures, on-line position postings or other recruitment materials, orientation materials, member curriculum materials, signs, banners, websites, social media, press releases, and publications related to their AmeriCorps program in accordance with CNCS requirements.

To publicize the relationship between the program and AmeriCorps, the recipient shall describe their program as “an AmeriCorps program.” Recipients shall provide information or training to their AmeriCorps members about how their program is part of the national AmeriCorps program and about the other national service programs of CNCS. Recipients are strongly encouraged to place signs that include the AmeriCorps name and logo at their service sites and may use the slogan “AmeriCorps Serving Here.” AmeriCorps members should state that they are AmeriCorps members during public speaking opportunities.

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The recipient may not alter the AmeriCorps logo, and must obtain written permission from CNCS before using the AmeriCorps name or logo on materials that will be sold, or permitting donors to use the AmeriCorps name or logo in promotional materials. The recipient may not use or display the AmeriCorps name or logo in connection with any activity prohibited by statute, regulation, or CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and these specific award terms and conditions.

From 2016 GENERAL GRANT AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS (Effective December 1, 2015)

L. AWARD PRODUCTS

1. **Sharing Grant Products.** To the extent practicable, the recipient agrees to make products produced under the award available at the cost of reproduction to others in the field.

2. **Acknowledgment of Support.** Publications created by members, volunteers or award-funded staff must be consistent with the purposes of the award. The appropriate program CNCS logo shall be included on such documents. The recipient is responsible for assuring that the following acknowledgment and disclaimer appears in any external report or publication of material based upon work supported by this award:

“This material is based upon work supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) under Grant No. __. Opinions or points of view expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of, or a position that is endorsed by, CNCS or the CNCS Program.”

From AmeriCorps State and National Policy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

D. 1. What is the policy regarding the purchase of member service gear?

Grantees are encouraged to provide the basic AmeriCorps service gear package for each member (t-shirt, sweatshirt, hat, lapel pin). The grantee should direct members to wear their service gear at officially designated AmeriCorps events and may allow members to wear their service gear at other times consistent with Corporation guidelines. All member service gear purchased with federal funds is required to include the AmeriCorps logo.

From the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)

45 CFR §2520.65 - What activities are prohibited in AmeriCorps subtitle C programs?

(b) 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.

45 CFR §2522.100 - What are the minimum requirements that every AmeriCorps program, regardless of type, must meet?

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(n) Agree to identify the program, through the use of logos, common application materials, and other means (to be specified by the Corporation), as part of a larger national effort and to participate in other activities such as common opening ceremonies (including the administration of a national oath or affirmation), service days, and conferences designed to promote a national identity for all AmeriCorps programs and participants, including those participants not receiving AmeriCorps educational awards. This provision does not preclude an AmeriCorps program from continuing to use its own name as the primary identification, or from using its name, logo, or other identifying materials on uniforms or other items.

Subpart E—Restrictions on Use of National Service Insignia

SOURCE: 73 FR 53761, Sept. 17, 2008, unless otherwise noted.

§2540.500 What definition applies to this subpart?

National Service Insignia. For this subpart, *national service insignia* means the former and current seal, logos, names, or symbols of the Corporation's programs, products, or services, including those for AmeriCorps, VISTA, Learn and Serve America, Senior Corps, Foster Grandparents, the Senior Companion Program, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, the National Civilian Community Corps, and any other program or project that the Corporation administers. This consolidated document is a reference to facilitate searching for particular topics. While efforts are made to keep information current, please consult the primary sources for the most up-to-date information and for confirmation.

§2540.510 What are the restrictions on using national service insignia?

The national service insignia are owned by the Corporation and only may be used as authorized. The national service insignia may not be used by non-federal entities for fundraising purposes or in a manner that suggests Corporation endorsement.

§2540.520 What are the consequences for unauthorized use of the Corporation's national service insignia?

Any person who uses the national service insignia without authorization may be subject to legal action for trademark infringement, enjoined from continued use, and, for certain types of unauthorized uses, other civil or criminal penalties may apply.

§2540.530 Are there instances where an insignia may be used without getting the approval of the Corporation?

All uses of the national service insignia require the written approval of the Corporation.

§2540.540 Who has authority to approve use of national service insignia?

Approval for limited uses may be provided through the terms of a written grant or other agreement. All other uses must be approved in writing by the director of the Corporation's Office of Public Affairs, or his or her designee.

§2540.550 Is there an expiration date on approvals for use of national service insignia?

The approval to use a national service insignia will expire as determined in writing by the director of the Office of Public Affairs, or his or her designee. However, the authority to use an insignia may be

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revoked at any time if the Corporation determines that the use involved is injurious to the image of the Corporation or if there is a failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the authorization.

§2540.560 How do I renew authority to use a national service insignia?

Requests for renewed authority to use an insignia must follow the procedures for initial approval as set out in §2540.540.

From the 2017 AmeriCorps State and National NOFO:

Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification (2 points)

- Members will know they are AmeriCorps members.
- Staff and community members where the members are serving will know they are AmeriCorps members.

From the 2017 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Application Instructions:

AmeriCorps Identity/Co-branding Questions. Select Yes or No

(Applicants should have selected “Yes” to agree to the following to be eligible for a grant):

- AmeriCorps members will wear the AmeriCorps logo every day.
- AmeriCorps members will create and deliver elevator speeches.
- The AmeriCorps logo will be prominently displayed on the front page of the organization's website.

E. Supplies

AmeriCorps members must wear an AmeriCorps logo on a daily basis – preferably clothing with the AmeriCorps logo. The item with the AmeriCorps logo is a required budget expense. Please include the cost of the item with the AmeriCorps logo in your budget or explain how your program will be providing the item to AmeriCorps members without using grant funds. Grantees may add the AmeriCorps logo to their own local program uniform items using federal funds. Please note that your program will be using the AmeriCorps logo in the budget description.

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials, including member service gear and equipment that does not fit the definition above. You must individually list any single item costing \$1,000 or more. Except for safety equipment, grantees may only charge the cost of member service gear to the federal share if it includes the AmeriCorps logo. All safety gear may be charged to the federal share, regardless of whether it includes the AmeriCorps logo. All other service gear must be purchased with non-CNCS funds.
