

Good afternoon

I want to start by saying *thank you* for supporting your members and communities during this unprecedented turn of events. We are impressed with your efforts to adjust, and continually readjust, based on a quickly changing situation. Your Program Officer is diligently working remotely to support you and your program. Thank you for your continued communication and updates.

All programs have been impacted by this pandemic, one way or another. Members should continue to serve as long as feasibly possible in order to maximize the amount of educational award they could be eligible to receive. That being said, we want to work with you to identify creative alternative service activities to support members in the coming weeks and, if needed, months.

We have notified CNCS of some potential alternative service activities that would be *in addition* to continuing the approved teleservice and, when feasible, direct service activities related to your program goals. I've included a few examples below but, first, I want to reiterate some important reminders:

- Plan with safety first! Here is the state's [COVID-19 website](#) for more information including the latest developments and additional resources.
- Prohibited activities are still in effect. Alternative service activities should NOT include any prohibited activities.
- Many programs are expanding professional development and training opportunities. The requirement still stands that a member's training hours cannot exceed more than 20% of their total service hours.
- Get creative with virtual and technology-based activities that allow your members to stay connected with you, their team, students, clients, families, etc. Establish a regularly scheduled check-in time with your members and/or as a Corps either over the phone or via a visual technology like Skype or Zoom.
- Consider where your members could potentially serve in the coming weeks – home, off-site, new location, etc. – and please make sure your program has sufficient liability coverage for your members to serve in the location(s).
- Some new activities will require additional resources which can be approved budget expenses. The key is to fully document how the members' service activities have changed due to COVID-19.
- That being said, document, document, document. All changes, deviations, additions to service activities need to be documented in every member's file that includes a member's acknowledgment and acceptance of the new/additional/revised activities. I also suggest placing a copy of the [Governor's Declaration of State of Emergency](#) in every member's file.

Below are examples of alternative service activities and we welcome other ideas since you know your communities best. All alternative services activities must be approved by your Program Officer if they are not already included in your approved teleservice plan.

The types of alternative service activities members could perform in response to COVID-19 are:

- supporting the local community with food insecurity, social isolation, including collaboration with Senior Corps, and social distancing appropriate service, including environmental or housing support services and identifying local, regional and statewide resources in response to local impacts.
- assisting community organizations or schools in maintaining a safe and educational environment for displaced students, developing and implementing distance learning solutions for students, as well as engaging in these activities for the wider community affected by coronavirus closures.
- assisting with public health initiatives, directives or departments and emergency responses within social distancing appropriate services.

Discuss any plans for alternative service activities with your Program Officer in the coming weeks. Remember, any deviation or inclusion of activities not previously approved in your teleservice plan requires your Program Officer's approval.

Be well and take care of each other.

Sincerely and respectfully yours,
Mary

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