



AmeriCorps
A Program of the Corporation for National & Community Service

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My AmeriCorps

The My AmeriCorps website provides a one-stop-shop for AmeriCorps State and National, VISTA and NCCC members and alumni - presenting a wealth of information and self-service capabilities, including access to the former AmeriCorps Online Payment System.

Visit My AmeriCorps now! [Learn more](#)

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Using the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award; Financial Aid

You can use your Segal Education Award, Silver Scholar Education Award, or Summer of Service Education Award in any of the following ways—or a combination of them.

After successfully completing your AmeriCorps term of service, you are eligible to receive a Segal Education Award. You can use your AmeriCorps Education Award to repay qualified student loans and to pay education costs at qualified institutions of higher education and training programs. You can access the entire award or part of it until the total amount has been used or the award expires. You can take up to seven years after your term of service has ended to claim the award.

You can use your education award to repay qualified student loans and to pay for certain current education expenses. You may use your awards for both purposes.

Use the Education Award to Repay Qualified Student Loans

The national service legislation defines qualified student loan as a loan backed by the federal government under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (except PLUS Loans to parents of students), or under Titles VII or VIII of the Public Health Service Act.

You may also use your Segal Education Award to repay a student loan made to you by a state agency, including state institutions of higher education.

Segal Education Awards may not be used to repay any other type of loan, even if the loan was obtained for educational purposes. You can use your Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to repay defaulted student loans as long as the loans meet the definition of qualified student loan.

Use the Education Award to Pay Current Educational Expenses at a Qualified School

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Use the Education Award to Pay Current Educational Expenses at a Qualified School

Qualified schools are:

- higher educational institutions that currently participate in the Department of Education's Title IV student aid programs (referred to as Title IV schools) or
- education institutions or training establishments that have been approved for educational benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill (referred to as GI-approved schools)

These categories include most post-secondary colleges, universities, and educational programs.

Additional expenses that can be paid include:

- The "Cost of Attendance" (COA) for a degree- or certificate-granting program of study at a Title IV school
- Educational expenses for non-degree courses, such as continuing education courses or workshops offered by Title IV schools
- Courses or training programs approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs for GI Bill educational benefits

For credit or degree courses, the COA may include tuition, books and supplies, transportation, room and board, and other expenses. Each Title IV school's financial aid office determines their students' COA based upon standard U.S. Department of Education guidance.

For non-degree programs, educational expenses that can be paid normally include tuition & fees, books, and supplies, as determined by the school's administrative office.

Courses and programs eligible for payment through the Montgomery GI-Bill are eligible for education award payments. The institution or training establishment will have a VA-approved Certifying Official who will determine the eligible expense.

Covered educational expenses are:

Expenses that were incurred after you became an AmeriCorps member. Educational expenses that pre-date your AmeriCorps service are not considered "current." If you took out a qualified student loan to pay for the expenses before you entered AmeriCorps, you can use your education award to repay that loan. But you cannot use the award to repay an old debt to a school, such as for an outstanding student bill that you incurred before you entered AmeriCorps.

For More Information on Your AmeriCorps Education Award (these need to have links)

- Amount, Eligibility, and Limitations
- Postponing Student Loan Payments & Getting Interest Paid
- Tax Implications
- Frequently Asked Questions

How to request payments online from your My AmeriCorps Account

Accessing and managing your Segal Education Award has never been easier. My AmeriCorps provides a one-stop shop for AmeriCorps members and alumni - presenting a wealth of information and frequently requested forms and services. By registering to use the system, you can check your award balance, access important financial forms, request for a forbearance, and, most importantly, easily make payments to your educational or financial institution.

After you have completed your service and received notification of the availability of your award, you can begin to use your education award. Go into your account in My AmeriCorps. In your home page, under "My Education Award" click on the "Credits Education Award Payment Request" link to bring up the screen to request the payment. Follow the instructions and complete the form. You will select the purpose of the payment (loan or current educational expenses), the amount of the payment, and identify the holder of your student loan. When you click on "submit", a notice will be sent electronically to your educational or loan institution. A record of your request will appear in your account home page.

The school or loan holder will complete their portion of the form and return it electronically to the Corporation. They will file it in the amount for which you are eligible if the request is for current educational expenses or they will provide the payoff amount and loan type if the request is for a student loan. The institution will certify the accuracy of the information and submit it to the Corporation for payment.

When the payment has been made, your account will reflect the deduction. It should also show up in the loan account statement that your loan company makes available to you. If for some reason the institution denies the request for payment, they should have entered comments explaining the reason for the denial.

If your school or loan company has not registered in My AmeriCorps, they will not be on the list of institutions in the system. After you do a search and your institution does not appear on the list, click on the "Not Found" link. The next screen will ask you to enter as much information as you know about the school or loan company. You will need to enter information in each of the extended fields and then submit the form. These requests may be processed manually and can take several weeks to complete.

The Importance of Using My AmeriCorps

In order to prevent a delay in the processing of Segal Education Award payments, individuals must request payments electronically using the on-line system, My AmeriCorps. This is a secure, user friendly and fast method for requesting payments to be sent to qualified schools or loan holders. It also provides electronic records of payments requested and there are no forms to mail.

The Corporation for National & Community Service cannot guarantee the prompt and accurate processing of requests for payments using paper forms. Payments requested by paper can take up to six months or more for processing and are less secure.

It is fast and easy to access your National Service Participant account in My AmeriCorps. To register, go to <http://my.americorps.gov/nplogin.do> and click on "Register to create a new Member/Alum account". Then, follow the instructions.

Financial Aid

Determining the amount of financial aid for which a student is eligible can be a complicated process. The rules governing financial aid may vary from year to year, and can be hard to understand. Financial Aid Officers are trained to keep up with the ever-changing rules and legislation affecting federal student aid. Your school's Financial Aid Office can assist you in planning your financial aid over your college years.

Below we are providing some basic guidance in making the most of your education award during your educational expenses. We are also providing important information that you can pass on to Financial Aid Counselor which may help when he or she advises you on when and how to use your education award.

If you intend to apply for student financial aid as well as use your education award, payments from your education award, interest payments on your student loans, and the living allowance you received during your service can affect your eligibility for some student aid in the school year after the payments were made.

- Under certain circumstances, your education award, living allowance, and Trust payments on accrued interest can be excluded from calculations determining your eligibility for student aid based on financial need. This could increase the amount of "need-based" aid for which you are eligible.
- Under different circumstances, using the education award can reduce the amount of other need-based student aid for which you are eligible.

Many schools will require you to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (commonly known as FAFSA) if you use your education award, even if you do not intend to apply for financial aid. The FAFSA can be completed online. If you are required to complete this form, complete it early and correctly. A section of the form asks about your income from the previous year. If you used your education award in the previous year, had interest payments made by AmeriCorps, or received a living allowance, be sure to include those amounts on the line where it asks for "AmeriCorps benefits (awards, living allowances and interest payments)".

Information You Can Give to Your Financial Aid Counselor

Dear Financial Aid Officer:

We are providing this information to assist you in understanding the relationships between AmeriCorps and FAFSA. An AmeriCorps member receives three types of benefits that are relevant to completing the FAFSA.

Living Allowance: AmeriCorps members may receive a living allowance to cover living expenses during their term of service.

Segal Education Award: After successfully completing a term of service, AmeriCorps members who are enrolled in the National Service Trust are eligible to receive an education award. The education award can be used to pay education costs at qualified institutions of higher education or training, or to repay qualified student loans. Members can use any portion of their education award and a member has up to seven years after his or her term of service has ended to claim the award.

Payment of Interest on Loans: The Corporation for National and Community Service pays interest on postponed qualified student loans for AmeriCorps members who successfully complete their term of service.

The member may also be earning Federal Work Study wages for serving in an AmeriCorps project. All of these benefits should be included on the "income exclusion worksheet" of the FAFSA.

With respect to the education award and interest payment, the IRS has determined that these payments are subject to income taxes in the calendar years in which the payments are made. That taxable amount is reported on a 1099 form. When the student files a FAFSA for the following year, the amount of the Segal Education Award paid in the base year and included in that year's AGI, is to be excluded from the need analysis calculation. In most cases, the entire education award amount that was paid is taxable, as the entire amount that was paid is included in the AGI. Thus the filer is to report the entire amount that was paid, not just the amount in excess of tuition, fees, books, and supplies.

When students use their education awards as a resource, it may reduce their eligibility for campus-based aid. Financial aid offices must consider the Segal Education Award as a resource, or funds that you have available toward your cost of attendance, when considering your eligibility for campus-based aid. This includes the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), the Federal Work Study Program, and Perkins Loans. (See 34 C.F.R. § 473.50(c))

AmeriCorps VISTA members have some additional benefits. Whether they have elected the education award or the stipend, AmeriCorps VISTA members may be eligible for other types of loan postponements. Those who choose the stipend are also uniquely eligible for partial cancellation of Perkins loans.

VIEWED On: Friday, May 06, 2011

THIS PAGE IS FOR PRINTING PURPOSES ONLY. ALL LINKS HAVE BEEN DISABLED.

LINKS TO BE CREATED FOR BULLETED ITEMS

Amount, Eligibility, and Limitations

http://www.americorps.gov/for_individuals/benefits/benefits_ed_award_details.asp

Postponing Student Loan Payments & Getting Interest Paid

http://www.americorps.gov/for_individuals/benefits/benefits_ed_award_payment.asp

Tax Implications

http://www.americorps.gov/for_individuals/benefits/benefits_ed_award_taxes.asp

Frequently Asked Questions

http://www.americorps.gov/for_individuals/benefits/benefits_ed_award_details.asp

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