

GUIDANCE ON THE EDUCATION AWARD & SERVING MULTIPLE TERMS

The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act allows members to serve multiple terms of service that add up to the value of two full-time education awards. Therefore, AmeriCorps members who may have already served more than one summer, part-time, and/or full-time term of service and earned education awards may remain eligible to serve a full time term of service in Community HealthCorps as long as the following conditions hold true:

1. The total number of education awards Individual has earned do not equal and do not exceed the aggregate value of education awards for two full time terms of service (see Maximum Education Award section below); and
2. The individual agrees to waive all or a portion of the education award and has not served more than the maximum allowable number of terms (see Maximum Number of Terms section below).

Maximum Education Award

An individual may not receive more than the amount equal to the aggregate value of two education awards for full-time service. To determine the amount of an education award that a member may receive, programs must first determine the value of the education award earned. The value of the education award earned is based on the amount of an award received for a service term divided by the amount of a full-time award in the fiscal year for which the position was approved. In other words, when a member completes a full-time term of service, a year of eligibility is used. It doesn't matter if the member received a \$4,725 or \$5,350 award; it still counts as a full term.

To determine the value of a single education award earned use the following formula:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Amount of Education Award Received} \\ \div \\ \text{Amount of Full-time Award in the Fiscal Year for which the Position was approved} \\ = \\ \text{Value of the Education Award Earned} \end{array}$$

For Example: Member Josh Patson received an education award in the amount of \$2,362.50 for serving a half time term in an AmeriCorps State Program in the 2009-10 Program Year. This position was approved for the 2009 Fiscal Year. The value of the education award earned by Josh is determined as follows:

$$\begin{array}{r} \$2,362.50 \\ \text{(Amount of education award received)} \\ \div \\ \$4,725 \\ \text{(Amount of Full Time Award in the Fiscal Year for which the Position was approved)} \\ = \\ 0.5 \\ \text{(Value of the education award earned)} \end{array}$$

To determine the **aggregate value** of all education awards earned use the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{The value of each AmeriCorps education award} \\
 &\quad + \\
 &\text{The value of each Silver Scholar education award} \\
 &\quad + \\
 &\text{The value of any award received by transfer} \\
 &\quad = \\
 &\text{The aggregate value of education awards received}
 \end{aligned}$$

For Example: Member Josh Patson received an education award in the amount of \$2,362.50 (Value of 0.5) for serving a half time term in an AmeriCorps National Program in the 2008-09 Program Year, and an education award in the amount of \$4,725 (Value of 1) for serving a full time term in AmeriCorps State and National in the 2009-10 Program Year. These positions were approved for the 2008 and 2009 Fiscal Years, respectively. Using the formula above for determining the aggregate value of the education awards earned by Josh, his program coordinator determines the aggregate value to all education awards earned to be 1.5.

If a member chooses to enroll in a new term that exceeds their eligibility for the education award, they can do so and receive a discounted (pro-rated) education award, representing that portion of the award for which the member is eligible. The amount of the award will be determined by the full-time award amounts in the years served, and will bring the total award to the amount of two full-time awards. To determine the amount of the discounted education award, use the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned}
 &(2 - \text{Aggregate value of education awards received}) \\
 &\quad \times \\
 &(\text{Amount of full-time award in the year the position was approved}) \\
 &\quad = \\
 &\text{Amount of the Discounted Education Award}
 \end{aligned}$$

For Example: Member Josh Patson wants to serve a full time term in Community HealthCorps (an AmeriCorps National Program) during the 2010-11 Program Year. This position was approved for the 2010 Fiscal Year. The amount of the discounted education award for Josh is determined as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 &0.5 \\
 &(2 - \text{Aggregate value of education awards received}) \\
 &\quad \times \\
 &\quad \$5,350 \\
 &(\text{Amount of full-time award in the year the position was approved}) \\
 &\quad = \\
 &\quad \$2,675 \\
 &(\text{Amount of the Discounted Education Award})
 \end{aligned}$$

Prior to enrolling an individual who wishes to serve a term in which the individual will waive a portion of the education award, the program coordinator must inform the member of the amount of the discounted education award for which the individual will be eligible upon completion of a successful term of service. Member must meet all other eligibility requirements including disclosure of all previous terms of AmeriCorps service.

Transfer of the Education Award

The education award can be transferred under the following conditions:

- The member must be age 55 or older on the day service begins
- The member must be enrolled in an AmeriCorps State/National or Silver Scholar position
- The education award can be transferred to a child, grandchild, or foster child of the member.
- The designated individual must be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States.

Note that if an individual receives a full or partial education award from a parent, grandparent, or foster parent, the amount received will reduce the amount of awards for which the member is eligible in the future through the individual's own service.

Maximum Number of Terms

An individual may receive in-service benefits (a living allowance, child care, and health care) for no more than four terms of service in an AmeriCorps State and National program, regardless of whether those terms were served on a full-time, part-time, or reduced part-time basis. In each stream of service a member can serve a maximum:

- 4 terms with AmeriCorps State and National (i.e. 1 FT term, 3 QT terms = 4 terms of service)
- 2 terms with VISTA (a 3rd term can be done with VISTA if the member elects not to receive an Education Award.)
- 2 with NCCC

If a member serves the maximum number of terms with one stream of service, the member can start a new term with another stream of service and receive additional education awards, as long as the member has not reached the full value of two full-time awards. A member can also serve terms and elect not to receive an education award up to the limits listed above.

If a member exits a term for cause and does not receive an award, it counts as a term of eligibility.