

(1) A VISTA is eligible to elect to receive an education award if they are a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States.

(2) A VISTA who elects an education award is eligible to request forbearance of a student loan from their loan-holder. A VISTA who elects an education award may, upon successful completion of service, be eligible to receive up to 100 percent of the interest accrued on a qualified student loan, consistent with the applicable provisions of 45 CFR part 2529.

(3) A VISTA is not eligible to receive more than an amount equal to the aggregate value of two full-time education awards in their lifetime.

(4) Other than for a summer associate, the amount of an education award for the successful completion of a VISTA term of service is equal to the maximum amount of a Federal Pell Grant under Section 401 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a) that a student eligible for such grant may receive in the aggregate for the fiscal year in which the VISTA has enrolled in the VISTA program.

(h) A VISTA who does not elect to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award upon successful completion of service receives an end-of-service stipend in an amount prescribed by AmeriCorps.

(i) In the event that a VISTA does not successfully complete a full term of service, they may not receive a pro-rated Segal AmeriCorps Education Award or a pro-rated end-of-service stipend, except in cases where the appropriate VISTA Case Manager determines the VISTA did not successfully complete a full term of service because of a compelling personal circumstance. Examples of a compelling personal circumstance are: Serious medical condition or disability of a VISTA during VISTA service; critical illness or disability of a VISTA's immediate family member (spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, child, or guardian) if this event makes completing a term of service unreasonably difficult; or unusual conditions not attributable to the VISTA, such as natural disaster, strike, or premature closing of a project, that make completing a term

of service unreasonably difficult or infeasible.

(j) In the event of a VISTA's death during service, their family or others that they named as beneficiary in accordance with section 5582 of title 5, United States Code will be paid a pro-rated end-of-service stipend for the period during which the VISTA served. If the VISTA had elected to receive the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award for successful completion of a full term of VISTA service, AmeriCorps will, prior to payment to the named beneficiary, convert that election to an end-of-service stipend and pay the VISTA's family, or others that they named as beneficiary, a pro-rated end-of-service stipend accordingly.

§2556.325 May a VISTA be provided coverage for legal defense expenses related to VISTA service?

Under certain circumstances, as set forth in §§2556.330 through 2556.335, AmeriCorps may pay reasonable legal defense expenses incurred in judicial or administrative proceedings for the defense of a VISTA serving in the VISTA program. Such covered legal expenses consist of counsel fees, court costs, bail, and other expenses incidental to a VISTA's legal defense.

§2556.330 When may a VISTA be provided coverage for legal defense expenses related to criminal proceedings?

(a) For the legal defense of a VISTA member who is charged with a criminal offense related to the VISTA member's service, up to and including arraignment in Federal, State, and local criminal proceedings, AmeriCorps may pay actual and reasonable legal expenses. AmeriCorps is not required to pay any expenses for the legal defense of a VISTA member where they are charged with a criminal offense arising from alleged activity or action that is unrelated to that VISTA's service.

(b) A VISTA member's service is clearly unrelated to a charged offense when:

(1) The activity or action is alleged to have occurred prior to the VISTA member's VISTA service.

(2) The VISTA member is not at their assigned project location, such as during periods of approved leave, medical