

§ 2556.610

(b) At least one full term of service as a full-time AmeriCorps State and National member;

(c) At least one full term of service as a member of the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC); or

(d) At least one traditional term of service as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

§ 2556.610 What is the application process to apply to become a leader?

(a) *Application package.* An eligible individual must apply in writing to AmeriCorps to become a leader. The sponsor's recommendation must be included with the individual's application to become a leader.

(b) *Sponsor recommendation.* A sponsor with which an individual is seeking to serve as a leader must recommend the individual to become a leader, in writing, to AmeriCorps.

(c) *Selection.* AmeriCorps has sole authority to select a leader. The criteria considered for selection include the individual's experience, special skills, and leadership, as demonstrated in the application and the sponsor's recommendation.

§ 2556.615 Who reviews a leader application and who approves or disapproves a leader application?

AmeriCorps reviews the application package for the leader position, considers the recommendation of the sponsor, and approves or disapproves the individual to serve as a leader.

§ 2556.620 How does a leader differ from other VISTAs?

(a) The application process to become a leader, as described in § 2556.610, is separate and distinct from the application process to enroll as a VISTA in the VISTA program.

(b) A leader may receive a living allowance computed at a higher daily rate than other VISTAs, as authorized under section 105(a)(1)(B) of the DVSA.

(c) A leader is subject to all the terms and conditions of service described in § 2556.625.

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§ 2556.625 What are terms and conditions of service for a leader?

Though not exhaustive, terms and conditions of service as a leader include:

(a) A leader makes a full-time commitment to serve as a leader, without regard to regular working hours, for a minimum of one year.

(b) To the maximum extent practicable, a leader must live among and at the economic level of the low-income community served by the project.

(c) A leader aids the communication of VISTA policies and administrative procedures to VISTAs.

(d) A leader assists with the leadership development of VISTAs.

(e) A leader is a resource in the development and delivery of training for VISTAs.

(f) A leader may assist the sponsor with recruitment and preparation for the arrival of VISTAs.

(g) A leader may advise a supervisor on potential problem areas and needs of VISTAs.

(h) A leader aids VISTAs in the development of effective working relationships and understanding of VISTA program concepts.

(i) A leader may aid the supervisor and sponsor in directing or focusing the VISTA project to best address the community's needs.

(j) A leader may serve as a collector of data for performance measures of the project and the VISTAs.

(k) A leader is prohibited from supervising VISTAs. A leader is also prohibited from handling or managing, on behalf of the project, personnel-related matters affecting VISTAs. Personnel-related matters affecting VISTAs must be managed and handled by the project and in coordination with the appropriate AmeriCorps Region Office.

Subpart H—Restrictions and Prohibitions on Political Activities and Lobbying

§ 2556.700 Who is covered by this subpart?

(a) All VISTAs, including leaders and summer associates, are subject to this subpart.

(b) All employees of VISTA sponsors and subrecipients whose salaries or

other compensation are paid, in whole or in part, with VISTA grant assistance are subject to this subpart.

(c) All VISTA sponsors and subrecipients are subject to this subpart.

§ 2556.705 What is prohibited political activity?

For purposes of the regulations in this subpart, “prohibited political activity” means an activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.

§ 2556.710 What political activities are VISTAs prohibited from engaging in?

(a) A VISTA may not use their official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the result of an election.

(b) A VISTA may not use their official authority or influence to coerce any individual to participate in political activity.

(c) A VISTA may not use their official VISTA program title while participating in prohibited political activity.

(d) A VISTA may not participate in prohibited political activities in the following circumstances:

(1) While they are on duty;

(2) While they are wearing an article of clothing, logo, insignia, or other similar item that identifies AmeriCorps, the VISTA program, or one of AmeriCorps’ other national service programs;

(3) While they are in any room or building occupied in the discharge of VISTA duties by an individual employed by the sponsor; and

(4) While using a vehicle owned or leased by a sponsor or subrecipient, or while using a privately-owned vehicle in the discharge of VISTA duties.

§ 2556.715 What political activities may a VISTA participate in?

(a) Provided that paragraph (b) of this section is fully adhered to, a VISTA may:

(1) Express their opinion privately and publicly on political subjects;

(2) Be politically active in connection with a question that is not specifically identified with a political party, such as a constitutional amendment, referendum, approval of a municipal ordi-

nance, or any other question or issue of similar character;

(3) Participate in the nonpartisan activities of a civic, community, social, labor, professional, or similar organization; and

(4) Participate fully in public affairs, except as prohibited by other Federal law, in a manner that does not compromise their efficiency or integrity as a VISTA, or compromise the neutrality, efficiency, or integrity of AmeriCorps or the VISTA program.

(b) A VISTA may participate in political activities set forth in paragraph (a) of this section as long as such participation:

(1) Does not interfere with the performance of, or availability to perform, their assigned VISTA project duties;

(2) Does not interfere with their provision of service in the VISTA program;

(3) Does not involve any use of VISTA assistance, resources or funds;

(4) Would not result in the identification of the VISTA as being a participant in or otherwise associated with the VISTA program;

(5) Is not conducted during scheduled VISTA service hours; and

(6) Does not interfere with the full-time commitment to remain available for VISTA service without regard to regular working hours, at all times during periods of service, except for authorized periods of leave.

§ 2556.720 May VISTAs participate in political organizations?

(a) Provided that paragraph (b) of this section is fully adhered to, and in accordance with the prohibitions set forth in § 2556.710, a VISTA may:

(1) Be a member of a political party or other political group and participate in its activities;

(2) Serve as an officer of a political party or other political group, a member of a national, State, or local committee of a political party, an officer or member of a committee of a political group, or be a candidate for any of these positions;

(3) Attend and participate fully in the business of nominating caucuses of political parties;

(4) Organize or reorganize a political party organization or political group;