



## **West Virginia AmeriCorps Tuition Waiver FAQs**

### **What is the WV AmeriCorps tuition and fee waiver?**

In 2022, the West Virginia legislature enacted Senate Bill 228 to create the WV AmeriCorps tuition and fee waiver. This means that if you completed a term of national service in West Virginia, you can be eligible for up to 8 semesters of tuition waivers for undergraduate or graduate programs at public colleges and universities in West Virginia.

### **I understand the tuition waiver provides "last dollar in" funding. What does that mean?**

This means that after you have accepted every other form of financial aid available to you (not including loans and work study), the WV AmeriCorps Tuition Waiver can be applied to cover your remaining balance of tuition and fees. You are not required to accept offers of student loans or work study assistance before applying the tuition waiver.

### **When does the WV AmeriCorps tuition waivers go into effect?**

The waiver goes into effect beginning in the fall semester of 2022.

### **Does this waiver apply to all colleges in WV?**

This applies to all public institutions of higher education in West Virginia, including community and technical colleges.

### **Do other states offer AmeriCorps tuition waiver programs?**

No. West Virginia is the first and only state in the nation currently offering AmeriCorps tuition and fee waivers.

### **What is the benefit of the WV AmeriCorps tuition waiver when awarded for my service?**

You can apply to receive a waiver for one semester's tuition and fees if you successfully complete a service term (or multiple terms combined) of at least 600 hours of service.

You can apply to receive a waiver for two semesters' tuition and fees if you successfully complete a service term (or multiple terms combined) consisting of at least 1,200 hours of service.

### **Is there a limit to the number of waivers I can receive?**

Yes. You can earn up to 8 semesters of WV AmeriCorps Tuition Waivers.

### **Can I use this for undergraduate and graduate programs?**

Yes.

### **Can this be for any major?**

Yes.

**Will I ever have to pay this waiver back?**

No. This is a waiver.

**Can I use my WV tuition waiver for my children or grandchildren?**

No, the WV AmeriCorps Tuition Waiver are only for members who have completed service.

**Who is eligible to apply for the WV AmeriCorps Tuition Waiver?**

Students who have successfully completed national service terms of at least 600 hours.

**Can I complete two or more terms of service to reach the 600 hour threshold?**

Yes.

**If I am a VISTA, am I eligible to participate?**

Yes, any member who meets the requirements and completes a national service program in West Virginia, including VISTA, are eligible.

**Does the program only apply to full-time members?**

No. The program applies to AmeriCorps full-time members (1700 service hours), half-time members (900 service hours), reduced-half time members (675 service hours), quarter-time members (450 service hours), and minimum time members, and other national service programs. However, quarter-time and minimum time members must serve multiple terms to meet the 600 hour threshold to be eligible to apply.

**Must the AmeriCorps service be completed in West Virginia?**

Yes, your service must be completed in West Virginia or through a national service program based in West Virginia.

**Can I earn a tuition waiver if I am in college while I am serving?**

Yes. You may successfully complete additional terms of service while enrolled at an institution of higher education or between semesters.

**If I completed my service in the past, or I am currently serving, am I eligible to apply for the WV AmeriCorps Tuition Waiver?**

Yes, any member, current or past, who meets all the criteria outlined in the law and can provide supporting documentation is eligible to apply.

**If I have completed service, am I guaranteed a waiver?**

No, some colleges may limit the number of vouchers. Contact your financial aid office to learn more about your college waiver process.

**What do I need to do to apply for the tuition waiver?**

First, you must apply and be accepted to the college or university. Then file the FAFSA and contact your college's financial aid office to apply for the waiver. Your college's financial aid office will need paperwork to consider the waiver.

If you served with AmeriCorps VISTA you will submit your Service Letter.

Login to the portal at <https://my.americorps.gov/mp/login.do>

Once logged in, click on "my service letter" on the left menu, and simply enter the applicable service term, address where verification is being sent, and print.

If you served with AmeriCorps State and National you will need to contact the program you served with for a letter to provide to your financial aid office. If you are unable to reach your program, contact Volunteer West Virginia.

**What do I need to do to accept my tuition waiver?**

Provide proof that you accepted your Segal Education award(s) or that you have already used your Segal Education award(s) to your financial aid office and provide a certification to your financial aid office of successful national service in WV from your national service program. If you are a VISTA member you can find this information in the AmeriCorps portal. If you are an AmeriCorps State Member you will need to have your AmeriCorps program submit a letter to your education institution verifying your service.

**What if I have already used my Segal Education award?**

You can provide proof to your financial aid office that you have already accepted and used your Segal Education Award.

**How do I maintain my WV AmeriCorps tuition waiver if I receive it?**

You must maintain academic standards set by your institution.

**My public college/university financial aid office needs more information about the WV AmeriCorps Tuition Waiver. Where do I direct them?**

Your financial aid office can refer to WV Code 18 B- 10 7 D. and reach out to Hawley Carlson, Executive Director of Volunteer West Virginia/AmeriCorps West Virginia at [Hawley.r.carlson@wv.gov](mailto:Hawley.r.carlson@wv.gov).