Frequently Asked Questions for Applicants

Program Details & Expectations

When does the NYCHA Health Corps (NHC) program start and end?
October 17, 2022 – June 30, 2023

How long do members serve?
Members will serve approximately 30-35 hours per week, requiring at least 1,200 hours of service by the program end date.

Is this program hybrid, virtual, and in-person?
NYCHA Health Corps members are expected to conduct work fully in-person, however depending on the host site on a case-by-case basis, some will be operating under a hybrid schedule. This will be noted in the host site position descriptions.

Does this program require the COVID-19 vaccination?
The NYCHA Health Corps will follow the City of New York’s health guidelines and protocols regarding COVID-19 policy. NYCHA Health Corps members are considered City employees when it comes to the City’s Covid-19 Vaccination mandate.

As of August 2, 2021, all new hires must be vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus, unless they have been granted a reasonable accommodation for religion or disability. All NYCHA Health Corps member must have their first dose of any Covid-19 vaccine by October 17, 2022 and be able to provide proof. Following October 17, 2022, members will have 30 days to acquire the second dose of a Covid-19 vaccine and again will have to provide proof.

I am enrolled in school. Can I serve?
Candidates can still attend school providing it does not interfere with their service schedule and/or host site expectations and commitment.

What is the application process like?

Optional: Attending an info session by NYC Service and NYCHA

The application process consists of:
(1) Completing the NYCHA Health Corps pre-screen form following an info session
(2) Submit your application via nyc.gov/servenyc (applications open in early-mid August)
(3) Conduct virtual/phone interview with potential supervisors (up to 3 interviews)
(4) Accept or decline the position offer within 2 business days
(5) Undergo background check and onboarding for October 17, 2022, start date

Where can I find the AmeriCorps prohibited and unallowable activities list?
You can find the list under the related documents section of nyc.gov/servenyc OR you can google the list on the official AmeriCorps website: HERE

What if I am behind in hours to meet the 1200 hours requirement?
You can find outside opportunities through NYC Service newsletters, and mandatory learning and development trainings and projects will count towards your 1200 service hours.
Can an applicant apply to more than one position at a host site?
Yes, NYCHA Health Corps applicants can apply to up to 3 positions at the same or different host site(s). Applicants only need to submit one application a year and note which one to three positions they are interested in. They do not need to fill out an individual application for each position they are applying for.

**Program Qualifications:**

Can I serve with a Work Visa?
No. AmeriCorps regulations are such that all members must be either a U.S. Citizen, U.S. National or Lawful Permanent Resident.

Is AmeriCorps just for younger people? Do I need any specific skills to apply?
No, AmeriCorps values the experience of all Americans, including older Americans. Whether you want a career change or have just retired, it’s never too late to serve. In addition to NYCHA Health Corps, you can also check out the AmeriCorps Seniors programs. Most programs look for people with a passion for service and do not require specific skills. Some programs list desired skills or look for applicants with specific education, volunteer, or job experience.

How old do I have to be to serve?
All applicants must be 18 years or older by the start of the program.

What is the minimum education requirement for serving?
The minimum education requirement to apply and serve in our NYCHA Health Corps Program is a high school diploma or its equivalent prior to the start date of the program.

AmeriCorps requires that all members are required to pass a background check called the National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC). What does the NSCHC entail?
All successful NYCHA Health Corps candidates must undergo a criminal background check. There are three parts to the check – FBI, statewide repository, and sex offender registry. Fingerprinting will be required, but pre-paid by the program.

Do I need to pass a drug test to serve in AmeriCorps?
While NYC Service does not require passing a drug test, drug testing is up to the discretion of your host site for that service year.

Will my race, sexual orientation or disability affect my application?
The City of New York is an inclusive equal opportunity employer committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce and providing a work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment based upon any legally protected status or protected characteristic, including but not limited to an individual's sex, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, gender identity, or pregnancy.

What offences could disqualify a candidate from serving?
An individual is ineligible to serve if they:
1. refuse to consent to National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC);
2. make a false statement in connection with NSCHC;
3. are registered, or are required to be registered, on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; or
4. have been convicted of murder, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 1111
All other disqualifications are at the discretion of the program upon review of the criminal background of the applicant.

Do you have to be a NYCHA Resident or Section 8 Tenant to apply?
Program partners are primarily recruiting NYCHA residents (both public housing and/or Section 8), however other applicants will be considered and are welcome to apply.

**Does the application require a letter of recommendation?**
While the application doesn’t require a letter or letters of recommendation to be submitted, it does require the applicant to submit the names and contact information for two references to be contacted at the discretion of the host site/your supervisor.

**Does the application require a cover letter?**
While the application does not require a cover letter, there is a short answer section.

**Does the application require a C/V or resume?**
We do require a c/v or resume to be submitted along with your application.

## Program Benefits

**What are the member benefits?**
- Living stipend – Up to $23,800 (dispersed evenly every two weeks)
- Eli Segal Education Award ~ $4,546 pre-tax
  (Awarded to all applicants who have successfully completed the program)
- Student Loan Deferral and or Forbearance
- Monthly Unlimited MetroCard, if qualified
- AmeriCorps gear and branded merchandise
- Optional Healthcare
- Optional Childcare Assistance
- 200+ hours of professional development, and training opportunities, including Cornell University’s Public Health Essentials Certification Program

**What is the “living stipend” and how do I get paid?**
The living stipend is considered a “living stipend” and not a wage, but it is taxed as income for federal and state tax purposes the year of the program 2022-2023. For the 2022-2023 NYCHA Health Corps cohort, the living stipend will be **$23,800.00 pre-tax**.
The living stipend will be distributed evenly over the course of the term usually every other week on Mondays or Fridays by check or direct deposit (~$2,644.44 each month before taxes) **If you are paid bi-weekly you will receive $1,322.22 every two weeks before taxes are taken out.**

**What is the Cornell University Public Health Essentials Certification Program?**
This certificate program is available to NYCHA Health Corps members and is designed for people who work — or want to work — to improve the health and well-being of communities. Valued at $3,600 per person, you’ll study fundamental public health principles and practices to enable you to be part of push for health equity for all. Overall, it is five courses, with each course taking about 2 weeks to completed self-paced, conducted 100% virtually/online.

**Do I need any specific tech skills?**
There are no specific technical skills that are necessary to apply, however if you have experience with Microsoft Outlook, and Word, you will be in good shape.

**Can the NYCHA Health Corps team guarantee a position at one of my top choices?**
No, the NYCHA Health Corps team **cannot** guarantee selection at any of the host sites one is applying for. All applications are reviewed on a rolling basis.

**Can an applicant apply to work a position at a host site they also reside at?**
Yes, applicants who are offered a position at a host site they currently live at can also serve there should they want to, they just will not be eligible for the monthly MetroCard benefit.

**Does this position guarantee future host site employment?**
No, placement in our program(s) does not guarantee any employment post-service at your designated host site.

**How many paid days off do members have?**
In addition to federally recognized holidays, NYCHA Health Corps members will have up to 15 paid days off.

**What is the Eli Segal AmeriCorps Education Award?**
The Eli Segal AmeriCorps Education Award is only provided to NYCHA Health Corps members who have successfully completed the program meeting the 1200-hour minimum requirement.

The Eli Segal AmeriCorps Education Award is held in the National Service Trust attached to your MyAmeriCorps.gov portal account and will be directly submitted to your desired loan provider or educational institution upon your request.

The AmeriCorps Education Award is subject to taxes in the year that it is used and can be used up to 7 years after a member’s service term and can be used to pay back qualified public student loans or reduce future tuition costs for higher education. Schools must be Title IV and certificate programs do count in addition to typical degree programs. You can request an Education Award Use Extension past 7 years, but conditions apply.

For the 2022-2023 term, NYCHA Health Corps members will receive an Education Award in the amount of $4,546.00. You can use this award in full or in smaller increments, but each new balance will be subject to taxes that year. The AmeriCorps Education Award is transferable if the Corps Member is at least 55 years old at the start of the program.

Members also qualify for loan forbearance or deferral when they are serving as an AmeriCorps member.

**Does AmeriCorps provide Childcare Assistance?**
Optional Childcare Assistance is available to cohort members each year. A childcare allowance is available to members who are custodial or joint-custodial parents. The allowance is used for expenses related to child day care services. Once the program begins, members who qualify for this benefit need to complete the necessary forms, application, and provide proof of dependent (e.g., birth certificate) [http://www.americorpschildcare.com/](http://www.americorpschildcare.com/) or call 1-855-886-0687.

**What is covered in the healthcare insurance package?**
While it is highly recommended that if a member has a health insurance plan they remain on it, AmeriCorps does offer a limited minimal health insurance plan that does not include premiums, dental, and vision.

**How does the living stipend impact my SNAP and other public benefits?**
The living stipend does not count towards income for SNAP or WIC benefits; however, you should check with your benefits case manager if you have questions about the effects the AmeriCorps living stipend may have on other public benefits. *This goes for both NYCHA development residents and Section 8 Tenants.*
To break this down further:

The AmeriCorps State and National program was authorized by the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (NCSA), 42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.

Both the NCSA and US Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidance both state that, “payments received under AmeriCorps State and National Program are to be excluded from gross income calculations when determining the amount of or eligibility for SNAP benefits” -- e.g., the members SNAP eligibility should not be affected by their AmeriCorps living allowance. We can also provide letters of service to attach to your current account or new application that can verify your AmeriCorps member status.

Where can I find more information on the program?
You can find out more about the NYCHA Health Corps on the NYC Service Website

What if I have further questions? Who can I contact?
Please direct all questions to: nationalservice@cityhall.nyc.gov

Apply HERE