



**AmeriCorps  
Seniors**



Dear AmeriCorps Seniors Grantees,

Thank you for your service to people facing barriers in communities around the country.

Leaders from AmeriCorps Seniors and the Social Security Administration (SSA) have been strengthening collaboration between our agencies and support for our mutual customers. As AmeriCorps Seniors grantees, you provide essential services to people at critical moments in their lives. Many of these people receive, or may be eligible for, Social Security benefits. Your support is critical as we work to ensure equity and improve accessibility to Social Security programs and services. There are several ways that this collaboration also enhances awareness of AmeriCorps Seniors and supports your recruitment efforts.

Our new collaboration will focus on:

- raising awareness of, and expanding equitable access to, SSA services and benefits;
- reaching underserved communities;
- fighting Social Security-related scams; and
- building productive connections at the local level.

Your volunteers may already be engaged in these areas, and we want to provide opportunities to enhance that support.

### **Raising Awareness and Expanding Equitable Access**

SSA invites AmeriCorps Seniors grantees to join its People Facing Barriers Initiative. This initiative seeks to reach underserved populations, including people facing homelessness; and people who may have low income, limited English proficiency, or mental illness.

An important focus of the initiative is to increase awareness of, and access to, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. SSI provides monthly payments to adults under age 65 and children with a disability or blindness who have income and resources below specific financial limits. SSI also provides payments to people aged 65 and older without disabilities who meet the financial qualifications.

You can help by ensuring that those people who may be eligible in your community are aware of this benefit. As you engage in education efforts about SSI, you also encounter people who are eligible as volunteers for your projects. We invite you to visit SSA's webpage, [Outreach Materials for People Facing Barriers](#), to learn more about the initiative and share this information with people who may need it.

### **Fighting Social Security Scams**

In recent years, Social Security scams have been the top government impostor scam reported to the Federal Trade Commission. These scams target Social Security beneficiaries and can cause untold harm and rob people of needed resources. We want you to join forces with us to combat these scams and protect the public — including older adults and people in underserved communities — from this serious threat. Grantees and volunteers can help by learning to recognize common signs of a scam and educating the people you serve.

Unfortunately, scammers frequently change their tactics and messages. Stay up to date on the latest Social Security scam information by visiting [www.ssa.gov/scam](http://www.ssa.gov/scam). It's also important to [report Social Security-related scams to SSA's Office of the Inspector General](#) right away, especially when someone has shared personal information or suffered a financial loss.

Scammers use psychological tricks to steal money and personal information – that means anyone could be vulnerable if we are not vigilant.

Scammers often:

- Gain trust by **pretending** to be from a familiar agency or organization.
- Convince people there is a **problem** or a prize.
- **Pressure** people to act immediately.
- Tell people to **pay** in a specific way.

Your volunteers or someone they serve have more than likely received a scam call or message at some point. Please share this information broadly in your service areas and help us [Slam the Scam](#).

### **Making Local Connections**

SSA has local representatives in most of the areas that you serve. These representatives would be delighted to visit your program and talk with your volunteers during your in-service trainings or other meetings. To request a meeting with an SSA representative, you can submit a request at the [Ask for a Speaker](#) link on SSA's website. This action will initiate a meeting request with a Public Affairs Specialist or other SSA representative, who can provide information on Social Security programs, benefits, and services. During these meetings you may share information about the services you provide in your communities.

This meeting can occur virtually or in person and may include: (a) an overview of the Social Security program; (b) a virtual tour of SSA's website and online services; (c) publications and other public information materials for use in high traffic areas; and (d) answers to questions you may have about Social Security.

You in turn may want to provide information about: (a) your experience helping people facing barriers who historically relied on in-person help; (b) recent program news like fraud or complex case trends; (c) your program materials and website; and (d) how you communicate and interact with the community and potential event collaboration. Following this initial meeting, the SSA


representative will remain your point of contact and can address any issues or concerns, conduct presentations, and provide informational materials for the local community outreach efforts.

If escalation is required on a crucial issue, please submit an email request directly to the SSA [Regional Communications Director](#) who supports your state or territory. This contact will initiate a response from the local or Regional SSA Office.

We believe that these opportunities will strengthen our working relationships and increase access to services for people facing barriers. Thank you for your continued support and dedication. We look forward to connecting with you and sharing more information about this exciting collaboration.

  
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