

# Appendix C: Terms and Definitions

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**AmeriCorps**  
Seniors

**Advisory Council:** A group of persons that the project sponsor formally organizes to ensure community participation in the project. Projects may also use other organizational structures to achieve this goal.

**Agency-Wide Performance Measure:** AmeriCorps' Performance Measurement framework provides a common focal point for AmeriCorps' work across all programs and initiatives. Every AmeriCorps program contributes to the Agency-Wide Performance Measures.

**AmeriCorps-Supported:** Any organization that receives an AmeriCorps grant award or AmeriCorps national service members and volunteers.

**Capacity Building:** A set of activities that expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness of programs and organizations. Activities may also leverage resources for programs and/or organizations. For example, capacity building activities may expand services, enhance delivery of services, or generate additional resources. These activities achieve lasting positive outcomes for the beneficiary populations served by AmeriCorps-supported organizations.

**Competition:** Every AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP grant goes through competition once every six years, as required by law (2009 Serve America Act). This is distinct from the AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP administrative renewals and continuations.

**Complementary Program Measures:** Standardized National Performance Measures that allow AmeriCorps to measure results of important programmatic activities not collected in the Agency-Wide Priority Measures, and to assess the individual and collective results of programs and continue to enhance program effectiveness.

**Continuation:** An administrative process that provides funding for a new budget period within one project period. Grants are generally continued, given satisfactory performance, capacity and compliance, and appropriations.

**Evidence-Based Programs:** Interventions that have been consistently demonstrated through rigorous studies. The results of these studies then establish the causal impact of the program on beneficiaries.

**Graduated Volunteer Stations:** Volunteer stations that were part of the incumbent grant but will not be included as active volunteer stations for the proposed grant because the stations do not align with the new application's program design. Volunteers associated with graduated volunteer stations as part of the incumbent grant can be provided other service opportunities through other volunteer stations or may continue to volunteer outside of the AmeriCorps Seniors program.

**Geographic Service Area:** The counties in which volunteer stations are located and services are provided.

**Incumbent:** An organization that currently has an AmeriCorps Seniors grant and is reapplying for the same program.

**Indian Tribal Government:** Any Indian Tribe, Band, Nation, or other organized group or community (including any Alaskan Native Village or Regional Village Corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act) that is recognized by the United States or the state in which it resides as eligible for special programs and services provided to Indians because of their status as Indians.

**Indirect Costs:** Costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot readily be associated with a particular budget line item. The cost of operating and maintaining facilities, depreciation, and administrative salaries are examples of the types of costs that may be treated as indirect. Grantees may use the rate as set by an approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement or the *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs. Grantees must enter the approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement information or the *de minimis* rate in eGrants if indirect costs are included in the budget.

**In-Kind Contributions:** Budgeted amounts representing the value of non-cash contributions that may be provided by (1) the sponsor; or (2) public agencies and organizations, including Native American organizations; or (3) private organizations or individuals. They represent the value of real property, equipment, goods, maintenance, and services that directly benefit the project. Requirements for in-kind contributions are found in 45 CFR 2541.420 and 45 CFR 2543.23.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** A written statement prepared and signed by the sponsor and the volunteer station, which identifies project requirements, working relationships, and mutual responsibilities.

**Objective:** A more specific focus and action plan within each Focus Area.

**Outcome:** A type of measure that indicates progress toward achieving the intended result of a program, which usually represents a change in the situation of beneficiaries of service, such as educational achievement or housing attainment.

**Outcome-based Work Plan:** A task plan that includes both a measurable output target and a measurable outcome target. Outcome-based work plans describe a longer term or permanent change or improvement expected in the community due to the volunteers and their services. Other Community Priorities work plans are not outcome-based.

**Output:** A type of measure that tabulates, calculates, or records the actual products or services delivered by a program, such as students receiving tutoring or houses built.

**Performance Measure:** A value or characteristic that measures progress toward goals, and is also used to improve progress, reduce risks, or improve cost-effectiveness.

**Primary Focus Areas:** One of a set of six core priority issue areas identified in the Serve America Act where AmeriCorps focuses national service and measures its impact. The Primary Focus Areas are Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and Veterans and Military Families.

**Project Period:** The three-year period of a grant.

**Proprietary health care facilities:** Private, for-profit health care organization that serves one or more vulnerable populations.

**Renewal or Administrative Renewal:** An administrative process that allows a grant to begin a new three- year project period. The process is more extensive than a continuation, as organizations must re-apply for renewal. AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Program grantees submit a renewal at the end of each three-year project period. "Administrative renewal" is used specifically with AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP to denote its connection to competition. AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP grantees apply for an administrative renewal after the first three-year project period and enter competition at the end of the second three-year project period.

**Required Non-Federal Share:** The percentage share of non-Federal cash and in-kind contributions required to be raised by the sponsor in support of the grant, including non-AmeriCorps Federal funds as permitted by law, state and local governments and privately raised contributions. This is also called grantee share or match.

**Rural:** AmeriCorps uses rural-urban commuting area (RUCA) codes to classify program addresses as either rural or urban for analytic purposes. RUCA codes classify U.S. census tracts using measures of population density, urbanization, and daily commuting. Census tracts with an urban cluster population less than 50,000 are considered rural (RUCA codes 4 – 10). Applicants are encouraged to designate themselves as serving rural communities if some or all service locations are in rural areas as defined by RUCA codes or if the program can provide other compelling evidence that the program is rural in the narrative portion of the application. This self-designation will be considered in grant-making decisions. For more information about RUCA codes, please visit the USDA website found here: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-commuting-area-codes.aspx>. The Office of Grant Administration uses Beale Codes when assessing alternative match requirements.

**Service Area:** Geographically defined area in which AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers are recruited, enrolled, and assigned. AmeriCorps Seniors requires Services Areas to be listed as counties.

**Sponsor:** A public agency or private non-profit organization, either secular or faith- based, which is responsible for the operation of an AmeriCorps Seniors project. This is also called a grantee.

**Unduplicated Volunteer:** An individual AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer. Each volunteer can only be counted once when assigned to a service activity. The volunteer should be counted in the area where he or she will make the most impact: in terms of the focus area (such as primary focus area vs. other community priority), in terms of the type of service (regular service vs. one-time or sporadic service), or in terms of the scope of service (such as the greatest number of hours served).

**Volunteer Service Year (VSY):** A budget term which equals 1,044 hours of service. The standardized stipend cost per VSY as reflected in the budget is calculated by multiplying 1,044 hours times the current stipend amount per hour. See the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the current stipend amount per hour.

**Volunteer Station:** A public agency, secular or faith-based private non-profit organization, or proprietary health care organization that accepts the responsibility for assignment and supervision of AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in health, education, social service, or related settings such as multi-purpose centers, home health care agencies, or similar establishments. Each volunteer station must be licensed or otherwise certified, when required, by the appropriate state or local government. Private homes are not volunteer stations.

**Work Plan:** Task plans with actions steps to address a specified community need. In the grant application, work plans form the basis for a proposed project plan: the need the volunteers will address, what they will do, and what their service should accomplish.