



Independent Service Hours Policy 2018/19 AmeriCorps Promise Fellows

This policy strives to ensure greater member transparency and accountability regarding independent member service activities and hours. The policy creates a system for program staff and site supervisors to easily verify independent member service activities so they can confidently approve member hours as accurate and allowable.

Independent member service activities can be defined and categorized as:

1. Telecommuting and/or offsite hours: Service activities members complete within the scope of their program and service site(s) that can be completed remotely.
2. Member initiated hours: Service and training activities the member independently identifies and pursues unassociated to their program, service site(s) and the primary duties of their position.

1. Telecommuting/Off-Site Hours: Independent Service Hours Blanket Policy

AmeriCorps Promise Fellows are allowed to serve telecommuting and/or off-site hours that relate to the primary duties of their position. These hours can include student data tracking in OnCorps, program planning, reviewing training materials provided on the PF Toolbox page, assignments provided at Alliance trainings, working with community partners or serving at secondary service locations as directed by their host site, meeting with Focus List students, other activities directly related to fulfilling essential program and service site expectations, or as defined by the member's Position Description. This includes any host site directed training or professional development activities that are deemed essential or cover integral knowledge members will need in order to complete their service. Telecommuting/off-site independent service hours, as defined above, are pre-approved for the member's entire service term by the program through this blanket policy.

The Promise Fellow program includes a limited amount of hours (20 total) that a member can dedicate to preparing for life after AmeriCorps and provides members and sites with a pre-approved program list of Life After AmeriCorps activities that members can draw from; these activities are limited to 20 hours total and tracked in timesheets.

Promise Fellows will be trained on the Independent Member Service Hours blanket policy and process during training at the beginning of their service at Kickoff! and during Small Corps #1.

Supervisors are trained during August Supervisor Orientation and equipped to recognize and reconcile pre-approved independent service activities to those recorded in member timesheets each time period. Supervisors are directed to develop a process with their members in order to pre-approve and verify any off-site hours; this can include any accountability measures needed in order for the supervisor to be able to confidently approve member hours as accurate and allowable. Supervisors are directed to reject any timesheet containing unverifiable hours and meet with the member to discuss. Supervisors will notify the Alliance immediately and take any necessary disciplinary actions should the hours be determined to be falsified.

This policy will be reviewed once per program year to ensure that the above activities are still necessary, pertinent, and accurately reflect the independent service hours being performed.



2. Member Initiated Hours (MIH)

Member Initiated Service Hours

For member initiated service hours which are not essential duties of their service, Promise Fellows must request and receive written pre-approval from their host site supervisor and Alliance Trainer through the Alliance's MIH Plan. The request will need to include the date(s) of occurrence, organization name, first and last name of an appropriate contact at the organization, and a valid phone and/or email address for the contact. All off-site service hours must be documented in OnCorps timesheets under the corresponding date it occurred and include the name and description of the activity corresponding to the plan. Supervisors are responsible for verifying all member initiated service hours with the contact information provided in the plan or description section of the timesheet before approving.

Member Initiated Training Hours

For member initiated training hours, Promise Fellows must receive written pre-approval from their host site supervisor and Alliance Trainer through the Alliance's MIH Plan. The request must include the desired training activities, date(s) of occurrence, training source (organization, website link, and other verifying information) and how the hours relate to their service. All member initiated training hours must be documented in OnCorps timesheets under the corresponding date it occurred and include the name of activity in the description. Supervisors should verify all member initiated training hours with the information provided in the plan or description section of the timesheet before approving.

For the first month of service, members are not allowed to complete Member Initiated Hours. Members are trained on the MIH policies and process during Small Corps #1. Supervisors receive additional instruction regarding Member Initiated Hours (MIH) during the October Supervisor Training. Upon completion, supervisors and members can work together to create MIH Plans as needed. MIH Plans are pre-approved by supervisors and submitted to the Alliance for review prior to members being allowed to engage in any MIH activities.

Supervisors are trained and equipped to recognize and reconcile pre-approved independent service activities to those recorded in member timesheets each time period. Should a supervisor question the validity of any recorded member initiated service or training hours, they are encouraged to verify the contact or source information provided in the MIH Plan. Supervisors will be directed to reject any timesheet that they cannot verify the hours served by the member and meet with the member to discuss. Supervisors will notify the Alliance immediately and take any necessary disciplinary actions should the hours be determined to be falsified.