

First Week Checklist

Welcome to Service: Getting started

- Introduce member to the head of the organization (president/CEO/director). The head then briefly discusses the history and purpose of the organization, the project, and how the member fits in.
- Introduce member to co-workers during tour of facility.
- Show member his or her work area.
- Show location of rest rooms, lunch, and break rooms/space.
- Member attends regular staff meeting. Take time at staff meeting to remind everyone what the member's role will be. Help the member feel welcome and part of the team.
- Discuss basic terms of work, policies, procedures.
- Explain hours of work and overtime policies, holidays and leave days.
- Explain organization rules about absenteeism, tardiness, process for reporting absence or illness.
- Discuss timesheets, leave usage.
- Explain break policy and lunch hour (tell about restaurants in area).
- Explain use of telephone, mail services, copier (security code), computer network, etc.
- Explain standards of conduct, including rules of dress, personal grooming, smoking, housekeeping, etc.
- Explain parking practices and provide (or arrange for) building, office keys.
- Explain safety procedures.
- Explain how to order supplies.

Organizational purpose and mission and Promise Fellow Role

- Discuss in more detail the mission, background, and purpose of the sponsoring organization.
- Explain history and purpose of the organization.
- Review organization mission, goals, and objectives.
- Review organization structure.
- Provide copy of organizational chart and review staff duties.
- Explain departmental and divisional functions, goals, teams and team structure, major projects.
- Explain how the Promise Fellow role is integrated into the host site community.
- Explain project goals and objectives.
- Give the member time to read any materials given to him/her.

Member-supervisor relationship, and community investigation

- Clarify individual member assignment(s), how goals will be achieved, and how the member's progress in achieving project objectives will be assessed.
- Review the Promise Fellow Position Description, explain specific responsibilities.
- Important: Make it clear what the expected project outcomes are, what the member will help create and how it will help individuals or communities move out of poverty.
- Explain performance reviews (date for first review, frequency thereafter).
- Provide a copy of performance standards.
- Discuss performance expectations and standards and reporting requirements.
- Discuss specific performance objectives that will be reviewed during the initial period.
- Explain supervisory and support structure, communications, reporting, accountability.
- Discuss the working relationship between the member and direct supervisor, mutual expectations, communications style, work style, support needs, etc.
- Discuss and clarify communication procedures and practices.
- Review staff meeting and team meeting schedules.
- Explain steps in discipline procedure (verbal warning, written warning, etc.) and specify actions that result in disciplinary action.
- End on a positive, affirming note about how excited you are to have the member working on this project.
- Have the member interview other staff about work styles, communications, etc.

Tips for the first week

- Give the member time to take care of any additional basic needs related to, for example, housing, bank account, phone service, post office, etc. If a staff member is available to help, have her or him accompany the new member.
- Plan a lunch with a group of office colleagues.
- Plan a team building activity with staff, other members, project collaborators, other AmeriCorps members, etc.
- Plan a potluck dinner with office staff and AmeriCorps members.
- Save time for check-ins to answer questions about the organization or project.

Skill development

- The member accompanies staff member for the whole day out of the office - conducting community interviews, recruiting volunteer participation in project, managing volunteers on project, etc.
- The member accompanies staff member of another organization involved in similar or complementary efforts for the whole day, conducting community interviews, recruiting volunteer participation in project, managing volunteers on project etc.
- Informational/collaboration interviews with representatives from a variety of community agencies.

- Member drafts a one-month, member assignment, with clear and detailed activities and reviews it with the supervisor.

Tips for the first month

- Have member spend time with a tech tutor or on their own learning or refining computer skills he will need (e.g., Microsoft Word, Excel, Publisher, Access) for producing flyers, pamphlets and posters; writing grant proposals; building or using contact databases; etc.
- Empower the member to begin independent implementation of project with frequent check-in sessions with supervisor and other key organization staff to see how the work is going. Supervisor makes it clear to the member that this third week is still a period of learning, practice, testing, and adapting. He should not worry about making mistakes, asking lots of questions, and experimenting.
- Set up additional skill training for the member as needed: For example, the member could participate in a public speaking class offered by the community continuing education program; learn from an experienced staff member the key components of a quality grant proposal; or spend an afternoon with someone from the credit union to learn about the management of low-income loan programs, interest rates, and starting a small business.