

NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT

ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

FOR

NEW MEMBERS APPOINTED TO THE

**NORTH DAKOTA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL – STATE COMMISSION ON
NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

AUGUST 2005

NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT OF 1993

As a new member of the North Dakota Workforce Development Council – State Commission on National and Community Service, becoming familiar with the National and Community Service Act of 1993 and its implementing regulations is critical.

North Dakota Workforce Development Council – State Commission on National and Community Service (State Commission) members, who are appointed by the Governor, aid in planning how North Dakota can best fulfill the community service needs of communities and the purposes of the National and Community Service Act around the state. You will help make decisions that impact both the program’s operation and the people the programs serve in North Dakota. You will also help make important decisions on how North Dakota’s limited AmeriCorps*State Formula and Learn and Serve America resources are used.

This orientation handbook gives you a brief overview of the basic functions of the State Commission and your role as a member of that body. This handbook also summarizes the National and Community Service Act legislation itself.

Thank you for taking time to serve the people of North Dakota.

NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT OF 1993

NORTH DAKOTA STATE COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

An Overview

“The National and Community Service Act of 1993 is to: 1) meet the unmet human, educational, environmental, and public safety needs of the United States, without displacing existing workers; 2) renew the ethic of civic responsibility and spirit of community throughout the United States; 3) expand educational opportunity by rewarding individuals who participate in national service with an increased ability to pursue higher education or job training; 4) encourage citizens of the United States, regardless of age, income, or disability, to engage in full-time or part-time national service; 5) reinvent government to eliminate duplication, support locally established initiatives, require measurable goals for performance, and offer flexibility in meeting these goals; 6) expand and strengthen existing service programs with demonstrated experience in providing structured service opportunities with visible benefits to the participants and community; 7) build on the existing organizational service infrastructure of Federal, State, and local programs and agencies to expand full-time and part-time service opportunities to all citizens; and 8) provide tangible benefits to the communities in which national service is performed.”

The National and Community Service Act of 1993 provides the Governor with significant opportunity to lead a partnership of non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, and state and local agencies in addressing the service needs of communities and problems of underemployment, demographics, and economic change in North Dakota.

The National and Community Service Act of 1993 gives the Governor strategic responsibilities as the recipient of AmeriCorps*State formula resources.

Consistent with the Act, the Governor and State Commission jointly establish basic cooperative relationships in carrying out the state’s responsibilities under the Act.

The Governor and the State Commission jointly delegate the authority to operate AmeriCorps*State formula programs and carry out other responsibilities under Act to the grant recipient and administrative entity and other sub-recipients, as appropriate.

Under the National and Community Service Act of 1993, the Governor assumes key oversight and management responsibilities for AmeriCorps*State formula funding.

The National and Community Service Act of 1993 have five titles which are summarized below:

- Title I - National and Community Service State Grant Program
- Title II - Modifications of Existing Programs
- Title III - Points of Light Foundation
- Title IV - Repealed by P. L. 104-210
- Title V - Authorization and Appropriations

The National and Community Service Act of 1993 established the Corporation for National and Community Service to oversee three national initiatives:

- AmeriCorps
- Senior Service Corps
- Learn and Serve America

Each of the three national initiatives has three separate program funding streams:

- AmeriCorps
 - VISTA
 - National Community Conservation Corp
 - State/National/Tribal

- Learn and Serve America
 - K-12
 - Higher Education
 - Community-Based Organization

- Senior Corps
 - RSVP (Retired Service Volunteer Program)
 - Foster Grandparents
 - Senior Companions

The State Commission receives and administers the funding under the AmeriCorps*State Program (\$500,000 per year in North Dakota). As a result of having a State Commission, the State Education Agency (ND Department of Public Instruction) is eligible to receive approximately \$48,000 per year for K-12 - Learn and Serve America projects.

Title I – National and Community Service State Grant Program is the section that created the requirement for each state to have a State Commission in order to receive formula funding under the AmeriCorps*State Program and Learn and Serve America.

Title I – National and Community Service State Grant Program

Title I provides the overall framework for the AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America programs.

Subtitle A - General Provisions

Subtitle B - School-Based and Community-Based Learning Programs

Part I - Serve America Programs

Subpart A - School Based Programs for Students

Subpart B - Community Based Service Programs for School Aged Youth

Subpart C - Clearinghouse

Part II - Higher Education Innovative Programs for Community Service

Subtitle C - National Service Trust Fund

Part I - Investment in National Service

Part II - Application and Approval Process

Part III- National Service Participants

Subtitle D - National Service Trust and Provision of National Service Educational Awards

Subtitle E - Civilian Community Corps

Subtitle F - Administrative Provisions

Subtitle G - Corporation for National and Community Service

Subtitle H - Investment in Quality and Innovation

Subtitle I - American Conservation and Youth Service Corps

NORTH DAKOTA STATE COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE GOVERNANCE

North Dakota's State Commission Structure:

The Governor has authority and responsibility to establish a State Commission on National and Community Service. The Governor appoints members to the State Commission. The Governor establishes statewide goals for civic engagement and volunteerism with recommendations from the State Commission.

North Dakota State Commission on National and Community Service:

The North Dakota State Commission on National and Community Service was created by Governor John Hoeven under Executive Order 2002-02 on March 25, 2002.

The North Dakota State Commission on National and Community Service is a 17 member statewide advisory body appointed by the Governor. The State Commission is responsible for planning, managing, and evaluating the AmeriCorps*State formula program.

The Commission s responsibilities include:

1. Development of a three-year comprehensive national and community service plan and establishment of state priorities;
 - a. Plan must be developed through an open and public process.
2. Review the Subtitle C program (AmeriCorps) and prepare application to the Corporation;
3. Preparation of Service Learning applications;
4. Administration of grant programs (AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve);
5. Evaluation and monitoring of programs;
6. Technical Assistance to sub grantees, non-profits, and faith-based organizations;
7. Program Development Assistance Training for AmeriCorps programs;
8. Recruitment and placement; and
9. Benefits

Voting members on the State Commission represent the following constituencies:

One Representative of a community-based agency or organization;

The Head of the state education agency;

One Representative of local government;

One Representative of local labor organizations in the state;

Two Representative(s) of business;

One Individual with experience in promoting the involvement of older adults (age 55 and older) in service and volunteerism;

One Individual between the ages of 16–25, inclusive, who is a participant or supervisor of a service program for school-aged youth, or of a campus-based or national service program;

One Individual who is a representative of a National Service Program;

Five Individual(s) with expertise in the educational, training, and developmental needs of youth, particularly disadvantaged youth;

One Representative from Indian Tribes

Other composition requirements: To the extent possible, the Chief Executive Officer of a state shall ensure that the membership of the State Commission is balanced with respect to race, ethnicity, age, gender, and disability characteristics. Not more than 50% plus one of the members of a State Commission may be from the same political party. In addition, the number of voting members of a State Commission who are officers or employees of the state may not exceed 25% of the total membership of that State Commission.

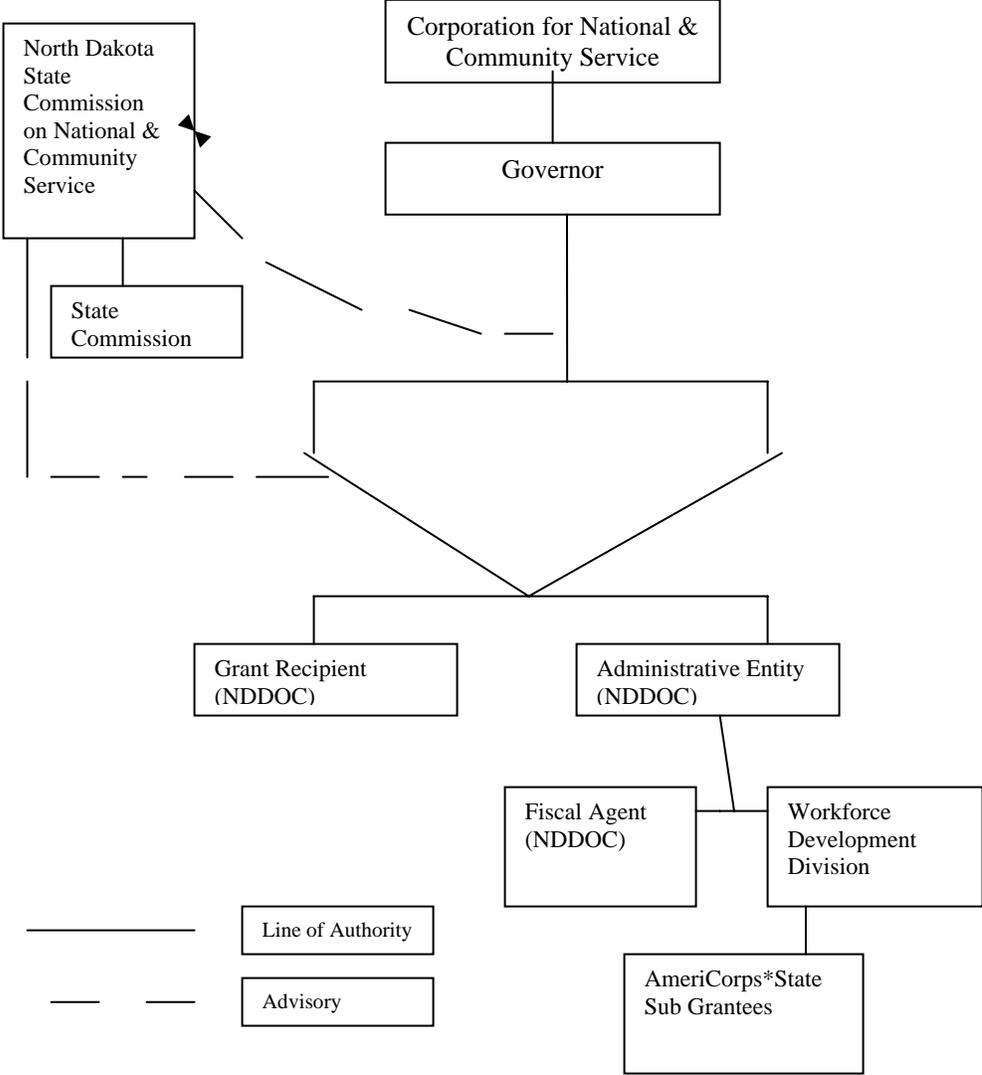
The chairperson is elected by the voting members of the State Commission. To be eligible to serve as a chairperson, an individual must be an appointed, voting member of the Commission.

In addition, the Council has two Ex-Officio non-voting members:

Director of the North Dakota State Commission

State Director - Corporation for National and Community Service

STATE COMMISSION STRUCTURE



NORTH DAKOTA STATE COMMISSION STANDING COMMITTEES

The State Commission has two standing committees handling the Commission's main business. Standing committee recommendations, actions, and operating procedures are presented to the Council for review and action.

The Executive Committee:

The Executive (Governance) Committee is a standing committee of the State Commission, headed by the Commission Chairperson, and is responsible for assisting the Commission in carrying out the governance responsibilities related to clear strategic and policy direction, Commission member development, and providing monitoring of the Commission's and Executive Director's performance.

Members of the Executive (Governance) Committee are appointed to a three-year term by the State Commission Chairperson. The Executive (Governance) Committee voting membership will include:

- State Commission Chairperson
- State Commission Vice-Chairperson
- Head of the State Education Agency
- Representative of National Service Program
- Two Private Sector Representatives
- The State Commission Director

Responsibilities:

- a. Propose an annual budget and work program (policy issues, special studies or plans) to the State Commission.
- b. Establish the meeting agendas for the State Commission.
- c. Track all outstanding actions of the State Commission and recommend actions that would assure successful completion of all tasks and objectives.
- e. Recommend policy positions for the State Commission's review and approval.
- f. Establish task groups when needed - design purpose and role, obtain and appoint members, designate chair and establish operating parameters, and completion time subject to approval of the State Commission.

- g. Draft the State Commission's Annual Report for review and approval by the State Commission.
- h. Prepare the annual performance appraisal of the State Commission Director.
- i. Handle the Commission's human resources for development of members.
- j. Develop and provide orientation to new Commission members.
- k. Appoint mentors to assist new Commission members with their orientation and training.
- l. Set Commission performance targets and regularly monitor Commission performance.
- m. Performance Oversight (programmatic, financial, and administrative).
- p. Prepare Executive Director's Performance Review.

The Grants Committee:

The Grants Committee will assist the State Commission staff in development of policy, procedure, and Request for Proposal Guidelines governing the awarding of AmeriCorps*State formula funding. This will include responsibility for approving the Request for Proposal packets, announcement, solicitation, advertisement, PEER Review process, proposal rankings, and notification of successful and non-successful projects.

Members are appointed to two-year terms by the State Commission Chairperson. Grants Committee membership will include a minimum of three and a maximum of five State Commission members.

Goal(s):

The overriding goal is to conduct a grant award process and make grant awards consistent with the State Administrative Standards.

- Goal I. Develop Request for Proposal guidelines to insure an appropriate, fair, and timely process for awarding of AmeriCorps*State Formula funded grants, to include timely public notification of the availability of funds, access to the Request for Proposal guidelines and packets and a log-in procedure to document timely proposal submission.
- Goal II. Insure the Request for Proposal is accessible to project sponsors electronically on the North Dakota Department of Commerce website or in hard copy by written or telephone request.

- Goal III. Establish a Peer Review process and documentation of the process to meet the requirements established by the Corporation for National and Community Service.
- Goal IV. Develop for recommendation to the State Commission a criterion-based selection process for awarding grants.
- Goal IV. Review the results of the Request for Proposal process and the results of the Peer Review. Rank and prepare recommendations to the full State Commission on which projects to fund.

The Grants Committee is responsible for overseeing the competitive process used by the State Commission to make awards under the AmeriCorps*State formula programs. The Grants Committee makes funding recommendations to the State Commission and reviews the notification letter to those applicants who do not receive funding to insure that they have rational reasons for decisions made.

MAJOR FUNDING CATEGORIES UNDER THE NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT OF 1993

There are three major funding streams for the Corporation for National and Community Service programs under the National and Community Service Act of 1993:

AmeriCorps

Senior Corps

Learn and Serve America

The State of North Dakota receives formula funding under AmeriCorps*State and Learn and Serve America K-12. In addition, the State Commission receives funding for the State Commission Administration, provision of program development, and training assistance for AmeriCorps sub grantees and to promote disability inclusion in AmeriCorps projects.

The North Dakota State Commission receives funding from the following sources to support the Commissions activities:

State Commission Administration:

Federal funds provide 100% of the salary and benefits of one .50 full time equivalent permanent position and one temporary hourly position, along with the operating budget for the State Commission. **The federal funds require a non-federal match of a maximum of 50% for the 2005-2007 Biennium.** This non-federal match will be leveraged by using the State General Funds salary appropriation included in the budget for the Workforce Development Division and the North Dakota Workforce Development Council.

Staff:

0.5 FTE Program Officer - 100% Federal Funds

0.5 FTE Director - 100% State General Funds (match)

0.5 FTE Administrative Officer – 100% State General Funds (match)

Operations Budget:

100% Federal Funds

State Commission Program Development Assistance and Training (PDAT):

States receive federal Program Development Assistance and Training (PDAT) funds to support building capacity and infrastructure consistent with Administrative Standard Eight, *Implementing Training and Technical Assistance*, and the *Characteristics of a Successful Training and Technical Assistance Program*, established by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The Program Development Assistance and Training activities must be consistent with these guidelines provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service and with the State Commission's Administrative Plan. PDAT funds are the principal resource available to Commissions for enhancing and sustaining high quality, effectively-functioning AmeriCorps*State and National Service programs.

Federal funds provide 100% of the salary and benefits of one .50 full time equivalent permanent position, along with the operating budget. No non-federal match is required.

Staff:

.05 FTE Program Officer - 100% Federal Funds

Operations Budget:

100% Federal Funds

State Commission Disability Placement

The federal Disability Placement Funds which are available to State Commissions are for the placement, reasonable accommodation, and auxiliary services for members and potential members with disabilities, serving in AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*National Direct programs.

Federal funds provide 100% of the salary and benefits for a temporary hourly position, along with the operating budget. No non-federal match is required.

Staff:

.04 FTE Program Administrator - 100% Federal Funds

Operations Budget:

100% Federal Funds

State Commission AmeriCorps*State Formula Funds

The federal AmeriCorps*State Formula funds which are available to the State Commission are for sub grant awards to non-profits, community-based, faith-based, and state and local government agencies to conduct allowable community service activities under AmeriCorps funded programs. (No non-federal match is required).

Operations Budget:

100% Federal Funds (Sub Grantee Contracts)

NORTH DAKOTA'S SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM

In North Dakota, the AmeriCorps*State formula funding is administered through the North Dakota Department of Commerce. North Dakota receives approximately \$500,000 annually to support AmeriCorps projects around the state.

For the 2004-2005 funding period, there were a total of 7 projects with 117 AmeriCorps members providing community service across the state.

The Learn and Serve America K-12 funding is administered through the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. North Dakota receives approximately \$48,000 annually to support Learn and Serve projects in secondary schools.

The Corporation for National and Community Service, through their State Directors, administer the AmeriCorps VISTA, RSVP, Foster Grandparent, and Senior Companion programs.

The AmeriCorps National and Tribal funding and the Learn and Serve America Higher Education and Community-Based Organization funding is made available through national competitive grants.

North Dakota's success:

North Dakota has had some success in weaving the many threads of federal employment and training programs and civic engagement and volunteerism into a relatively seamless fabric of services.

Having the membership of the North Dakota Workforce Development Council and the Youth Development Council in a dual appointment status with membership on the State Commission on National and Community Service allows for closer coordination of civic engagement and volunteerism with the economic development goals, youth retention goals, and the workforce development goals of the state.

STAFF SUPPORT RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff Responsibilities to the Governor:

Advise the Governor on civic engagement and volunteerism activities.

Write the Unified State Plan.

Assist in statewide promotion of civic engagement and volunteerism.

Prepare annual report to the Governor.

Develop policy guidance.

Review, comment, and make recommendations to the Governor, and state legislator on civic engagement and volunteerism activities.

Review and comment on proposed federal laws and regulations affecting civic engagement and volunteerism.

Staff Responsibilities to the North Dakota State Commission:

Perform oversight and program compliance responsibilities.

Provide technical assistance.

Help develop research information to improve program coordination and planning.

Coordinate agendas and other arrangements for the Commission and committee meetings.

Develop policy for AmeriCorps funds.

Coordinate training for Commission members and sub grantees.

North Dakota Department of Commerce (Administrative Entity and Grant Recipient) Responsibilities:

Prepare and publish implementing instructions and internal policy.

Design and maintain automated Management Information System.

Provide Technical Assistance and Training to sub grantees.

Reimburse sub grantees.

Prepare contracts for AmeriCorps projects.

Monitor program delivery and contracts.

Fiscal, accounting, and reporting functions.