

## MEMORANDUM

FROM: Leslie Lenkowsky  
Chief Executive Officer

DATE: January 7, 2003

RE: Summary of New Enrollment Procedures

Today, the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress is convening and we are optimistic that it will take action that will enable us to end the pause on AmeriCorps enrollments. We will let you know when that occurs.

In order to correct the problems that led to the pause, the Corporation is implementing a set of new procedures for awarding AmeriCorps grants and monitoring AmeriCorps enrollments. A summary of these procedures is attached. Our goal in adopting these new procedures is to ensure we have timely reporting and tracking of member enrollments, thereby enhancing our ability to forecast enrollment and avoid another pause in the future.

Although these procedures will chiefly affect how the Corporation's Washington, D.C. headquarters staff operates, I want to call your attention to one that will directly affect all of the Corporation's AmeriCorps grantees.

One of the new procedures (see AMERICORPS #4) will establish new requirements for timely reporting of actual AmeriCorps enrollments by grantee programs. Once a program year has begun and throughout the year, we must regularly track whether or not the enrollment projections, on which the budget for the National Service Trust is based, are accurate. The Director of AmeriCorps will soon be announcing new enrollment procedures designed to allow us to forecast demand and monitor actual enrollments throughout the program year. These procedures will be effective as soon as we are able to end the pause.

As always, thank you very much for your partnership in our ongoing effort to expand and enhance opportunities to meet vital community needs through national service.

## New Procedures

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation) has directed that the following new procedures will go into effect immediately with regard to the AmeriCorps program:

### AMERICORPS

1. All program officer recommendations for Federal obligations in the AmeriCorps program (National and State (N&S), NCCC, and VISTA) shall be accompanied by projections of the number of AmeriCorps positions that would result if the grant awards are made.
2. The Director of AmeriCorps shall tally and compare those projections with the number of positions that were agreed upon with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) prior to the award process, not to exceed the budgeted level supported by actual appropriations for the year in which awards will be made (see CFO items 1 and 2). This tally and comparison will occur before submission to the CEO for approval.
3. The Director of AmeriCorps shall report monthly to the CEO and CFO. No positions will be approved that exceed the amount budgeted, justified, and supportable through program and trust budgets for the program year, plus a contingency reserve based on a conservative estimate of fill-rates.
4. The Director of AmeriCorps will develop procedures for earlier reporting of actual enrollments to Corporation headquarters and will clarify for grantees the steps that constitute an enrollment (and thereby a Federal obligation) before lifting the AmeriCorps enrollment pause.
5. The Director of AmeriCorps shall report bi-weekly to the CEO and CFO on the number of approved program slots actually filled, specifying by program (NCCC, N&S, VISTA) and type of placement (full-time, part-time, reduced part-time). In the event enrollment differs from projected figures, the Director of AmeriCorps may request changes in approved slots during program year, subject to approval of the CEO, but in no case to exceed the number of positions supportable through appropriations for AmeriCorps grants and the Trust.
6. All AmeriCorps grants (with approved enrollment numbers), including continuations, shall be subject to approval by the CEO, after consultation with the CFO.

7. The CEO will establish new procedures to ensure that the Corporation properly records National Service Trust Fund “obligations,” i.e., the maximum legal liability of the Trust Fund. These obligations shall be reported on a quarterly basis in financial reports to the United States Treasury and appear in all relevant budgetary documents produced by the Corporation.

#### CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

1. In developing budget requests for transmittal to Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the CFO shall use the proposed number of AmeriCorps positions to be filled as the basis for amounts to be requested for the Trust, using the updated forecasting model, revised as necessary (and with a contingency reserve for unanticipated developments). An analysis of the Trust model’s methodology for projecting Federal obligations and budgetary resource requirements for Education Awards will accompany the Budget submission. Based on Congressional action, the CFO will transmit the budgeted number of AmeriCorps positions to the AmeriCorps Director prior to approval of any AmeriCorps commitments considered by the CEO in the approval cycle.
2. The CFO and Director of AmeriCorps will meet prior to each grant review and approval cycle and determine the appropriate number of Education Awards and program funds to be considered by the CEO in the approval cycle.
3. The Director of the National Service Trust shall monitor the number of enrollments in AmeriCorps throughout the program year, reporting bi-weekly to the CEO, CFO, and AmeriCorps Director, disaggregating by program and type of placement. The Director of the Trust shall also continuously monitor other factors relevant to the model for forecasting Trust liabilities (such as award usage and interest rates) and report regularly to the CFO, highlighting any deviations from assumptions in the model. The CFO shall establish a threshold for determining when deviations are significant enough to warrant updating of forecasts.
4. Each month, the CFO shall use actual enrollment data (and data for other relevant parameters, such as award usage rates and interest rates) to re-estimate the model for forecasting Trust liabilities. The CFO shall notify the CEO and AmeriCorps Director immediately if such re-estimate indicates a need to change enrollment targets (up or down) for the program year in order to ensure that obligations do not exceed available appropriations. The CEO will take appropriate action within one week of

such notification and report any such action to Congress, the Corporation's Board, and OMB.

5. The CFO and Director of AmeriCorps will meet at least monthly to reconcile any discrepancies in actual enrollment figures between WBRS (the AmeriCorps data base) and SPANS (the Trust data base.)
6. All AmeriCorps grant awards shall be subject to review by the CFO.

**Effective January 7, 2003**