

**AARP** Foundation®

**EXPERIENCE  
CORPS**

Guiding the next generation of readers

**Twin Cities**

**Tutor  
Handbook  
2017-2018**

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## Welcome to AARP Foundation Experience Corps

Dear AARP Foundation Experience Corps Tutors,

It is with much excitement that we welcome you to your position as a Literacy Tutor for the upcoming academic year. We know you will have a tremendous impact on the students you work with this school year, and we cannot wait to see how you are able to help them achieve. Last school year, 110 AARP Foundation Experience Corps volunteers tutored 767 students to academic success!

This resource manual is meant to provide you with information you will need throughout the year. Please feel free to contact any of the AARP Foundation Experience Corps-Twin Cities staff if you have any questions.

We are very excited to have you as part of the team. Have a great year!

*“Being a Literacy Tutor is the most important job I’ve ever had! More important than the position I retired from as a Senior Manager at a Fortune 500 company, managing a department, budget, and people. I originally thought that tutoring would be a one way “street”— me giving knowledge and sharing what I’ve learned from life-long experiences, instilling self-esteem and marshaling the raw skills the kids had to the forefront. What I found out is that it isn’t one-way giving. The kids have given me the opportunity to play an extraordinary role in their lives: shaping, molding, and laying a foundation, hopefully, that they can internalize and find that they can achieve some measure of success. They have also given me the opportunity to heartily laugh at their implicit innocence.”*



-AARP Foundation Experience Corps  
Literacy Tutor



## Introduction to AARP Foundation Experience Corps

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**Mission:** *A just society where all children have an equal opportunity to succeed and older adults are valued.*

**Vision:** *Experience Corps engages highly trained adults 50+ who help children attain literacy proficiency by the end of 3rd grade so that children succeed and older adults thrive.*

### **AARP Foundation Experience Corps**

AARP Foundation Experience Corps<sup>®</sup> (EC) engages well-trained volunteers age 50 and older help struggling K-3 students catch up to their peers by helping them to improve their reading skills, confidence, concentration, and attendance. Experience Corps volunteers provide individual tutoring, small group work, and some classroom literacy assistance alongside teachers. Research demonstrates that Experience Corps is one of the most effective K-3 literacy interventions, generating enduring positive outcomes for students, volunteers age 50 and older, schools and communities. With its intergenerational approach, the program not only helps students at a critical juncture in their education, but also engages volunteers in their communities, putting their wisdom to work while guiding the next generation of readers.

- Visit AARP Foundation Experience Corps online at [www.aarp.org/experience-corps](http://www.aarp.org/experience-corps).
- Visit Experience Corps Twin Cities online at <http://expcorpsmn.org>.

### **AmeriCorps**

AmeriCorps is a national service movement that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to address the most critical problems in our nation's communities in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, and other human needs. In exchange for a term of service, AmeriCorps members earn a taxable living allowance/stipend and an education award to pay for higher education. AmeriCorps provides significant funding for AARP Foundation Experience Corps Twin Cities program. Visit the AmeriCorps website at [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov).

## **AARP Foundation Experience Corps-Twin Cities K–3 Literacy Tutor Position Description**

**Position summary:** Literacy tutors serve in local schools in grades Kindergarten through Third, under the direction of the classroom teacher/site coordinator, by providing tutoring in essential early reading skills. Additionally, tutors build positive relationships that support, encourage and motivate students. Duration of service is September 2017-June 2018 on a weekly basis.

**Reports to:** AARP Foundation Experience Corps-Twin Cities Volunteer Coordinator and Executive Director.

### **Qualifications:**

- Adults 50+ with a high school diploma (or equivalent)
- U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident alien
- Satisfactorily complete a series of background checks
- Professional in appearance and conduct
- Speak, read, and write English fluently
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to learn and apply a variety of literacy tutoring techniques
- Healthy condition to work with children in a fast-paced school setting
- Ability to get to school site independently
- Ability to get to classrooms without assistance
- Ability to exercise flexibility, initiative, good judgment, and discretion
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Ability to relate to individuals from diverse ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds and to work with them in a fair and cooperative way

### **Responsibilities:**

- Attend 20-25 hours per year of required training provided by AARP Foundation Experience Corps
- Establish and maintain a weekly tutoring schedule of 4 to 10 hours per week
- Follow teacher/site leader direction and school curriculum to conduct 1:1 tutoring sessions
- Establish and maintain a positive working relationship with AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff, schoolteachers, and other AARP Foundation Experience Corps members
- Respond promptly to communication from AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff and schoolteachers
- Accept feedback based on observations and implement recommendations
- Accurately and promptly complete paperwork, including timesheet and tutor log
- Develop positive tutoring and mentoring relationships with students
- Arrive on time (at least 10-15 minutes prior to first tutoring session) and be prepared to serve student
- Adhere to AARP Foundation Experience Corps Tutor Handbook

### **Benefits:**

- Taxable AmeriCorps stipend for members who volunteer 10 hours/week for a total of 300 hours of service over the course of the school year. AmeriCorps Educational Award after completion of 300 hours of service.
- Help students reading below grade level reach academic benchmarks
- Ability to make a measurable impact on students' literacy
- Learn and develop new skills
- Inspire, educate, and motivate future generations
- Opportunity to serve as a role model for students
- Work with a team making strong social connections

## Pre-Volunteering Responsibilities

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- Attend all scheduled trainings throughout the school year.
  - Pre-service training and orientation is **required** for all tutors.
  - All members **MUST** complete **20-25 hours** of training throughout their service.
  - If you are unable to attend a scheduled training, you must call the AARP Foundation Experience Corps Volunteer Coordinator to set up a time to discuss other options for acquiring the needed training hours.
- Complete any necessary paperwork.
- Read and review the Tutor Handbook.
- Work with the EC Volunteer Coordinator and school to set up a weekly tutoring schedule.

## School Year Responsibilities

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### Tutoring Dos:

- Arrive on time.
- Be respectful in words and actions to all site staff, students, and other volunteers.
- Build a relationship with your students showing you care about their success.
- Offer individual enthusiasm.
- Promote child's enthusiasm for reading and writing.
- Manage the session times.
- Build rapport with the classroom teacher/site coordinator.
- Abide by the confidentiality policy regarding information learned about the students.
- Refrain from participation in gossip, rumors, and negativity about any issue relating to the school site.
- Accept direction from teachers or supervisory staff (even when you disagree).
- Accept cultures that are different from yours without criticism or judgment.

### Tutoring Don'ts:

- **NEVER** raise your voice to speak to anyone at the site, including students.
- Discipline a student.
- Assume the role and responsibilities of the classroom teacher/site coordinator. You are there to help, not replace him/her.
- Discuss personal matters.

### Daily Duties

- Arrive on time.
- Sign in and out daily in the school's volunteer log (if applicable).
- Wear ID badge at all times.

- Check the AARP Foundation Experience Corps binder/notebooks for notes and information from AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff/other members/school staff/site coordinators.
- Complete AARP Foundation Experience Corps timesheet.
- Greet the student and classroom teachers/site coordinators.
- Ask the classroom teacher/site coordinator what you will work on with the student.
- Complete Tutor Logs for all sessions daily.
- Understand the duties and expectations of your assignment.
- Follow the policies and procedures of program, site, and school district.

### **Weekly Duties**

- Double-check that Tutor Logs are accurately completed.
- Communicate any foreseen absences with your classroom teacher(s)/site coordinator and EC Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible.

### **Monthly Duties**

- Attend any site meetings scheduled (in advance) by the EC Volunteer Coordinator. The site meetings are opportunities for training, networking, and idea gathering.
- Attend any other training hosted by AARP Foundation Experience Corps.
- Turn in completed Tutor Logs and Timesheets. See pages 9-10 for additional detail.

### **School Family Involvement Activities**

AARP Foundation Experience Corps is required by funders to support each school's/community site's family involvement plan. AARP Foundation Experience Corps members are required to participate in program activities to support family involvement, such as sending home student success notes at least once per month. Activities vary by school/site so your EC Volunteer Coordinator will explain family involvement activities at your school. Members must document on their timesheet all family involvement activities for end-of-year reporting purposes.

## **Professional Development Training**

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### **Trainings**

AARP Foundation Experience Corps may offer or require trainings throughout the year to provide additional skills to members. ***Members are required to attend mandatory trainings planned by AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff even if the meeting is on a regular service day or a day that you would not otherwise be scheduled.***

### **Site Meetings**

Site meetings will be a time to provide additional training to volunteers, troubleshoot any problems, support each other, and share stories. The EC Volunteer Coordinator will schedule site meetings in advance and attendance is expected.

## **Outside Training Hours**

Other training opportunities in the community may be counted toward the required 20-25 training hours with *prior approval* from AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff. For example, trainings offered by the school district, Minnesota Literacy Council, and other similar organizations may be approved.

## **Attendance and Maintaining Service Hours**

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Once your schedule has been set with the EC staff and school/community site, you are expected to arrive on time every day you are scheduled.

- **Planned Absence**

If you know that you will be absent for all or part of your scheduled time, notify both the EC Volunteer Coordinator and classroom teacher(s)/site coordinator in advance.

- **Unplanned Absence**

If you are sick or cannot otherwise make it to school/community site on a regularly scheduled day, call the front desk receptionist or teacher(s)/site coordinator directly to notify them of your absence. Write “sick,” “snow day,” or other explanatory note on your timesheet on that day.

- **Making Up for an Absence**

If you are receiving an AmeriCorps stipend and you fall behind on hours (i.e., not averaging 10 or 15 hours per week), arrangements must be made with the AARP Foundation Experience Corps Volunteer Coordinator and site staff to make up the deficit hours or you risk termination from the program.

*AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff will periodically check in with you regarding the number of hours completed. The Volunteer Coordinator is able to, at any time, ask a member to make up hours missed.*

## **Transportation**

It is the responsibility of each member to get to school/community site on his/her scheduled day.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps members who receive a stipend will not be reimbursed for traveling expenses or mileage. Members who do not receive a stipend are invited to complete a mileage reimbursement request and may receive partial mileage reimbursement.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps members are not allowed to drive program participants in their personal vehicles. You are not insured through AARP Foundation Experience Corps or your site.

## **Reporting – Timesheets and Tutor Logs**

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### **Recording Service Hours on Your Timesheet**

1. Complete your timesheet everyday with the number of direct service hours and indirect service hours you completed that day:
  - Direct Service Hours: hours you spend working directly with students, such as one-on-one or small group tutoring AND Literary Assistance: meeting a specific lesson-related goal, rather than individual student goals (Example: assisting children in the classroom at the direction of the teacher/site coordinator or assisting in the library or computer lab).
  - Indirect Service Hours: Site meetings and any training held by AARP Foundation Experience Corps, Minneapolis Public Schools, Minnesota Literacy Council, etc. that you attend, either required or optional. Indirect hours cannot exceed 20% of your total service hours for the year (60 hours for AmeriCorps members).

If you have Indirect Service Hours for the day, please include a brief description of the meeting or the training you attended (Example: AARP EC Cultural Competency Training or Site Meeting) on your timesheet.

2. Please use either black or blue ink to complete your timesheet. If you make an error, please cross out the incorrect information and initial and date the change.
3. Enter hours as decimal of the hour (15 minutes = .25, 30 minutes = .5, 45 minutes = .75)
4. Round the time in/out to the nearest quarter hour (e.g., 8:50 = 8:45, 8:55 = 9:00)
5. At the end of the month:
  - You do NOT need to total your hours—EC staff will take care of this.
  - Your signature and your teacher's/site coordinator's signature should be at the bottom of the timesheet. DO NOT sign your timesheet until after you have completed your final tutoring hours for the month (If you tutor on the 31st of the month, do not sign and date on the 30th).
  - If you want a copy, make your own on last day of month.
  - Leave completed timesheet in your school's/site's EC binder. It will be picked up by EC Staff.
6. A member should not be asked to perform indirect services that are not training related. This includes answering phones, grading papers, supervising the classroom, overseeing

7. Community Service Activities: AARP Foundation Experience Corps will occasionally partner with other community and/or faith-based organizations in a community service activity. Participation by AARP Foundation Experience Corps members will be encouraged, but not required, and time spent in the activity may be recorded on the timesheet.
8. Jury Duty: During weeks served on jury duty, regular service hours may be recorded. Notify the EC Volunteer Coordinator in advance of jury duty obligations.

### **Completing Tutor Logs for Every Focus List Student**

Tutors are also asked to complete Tutor Logs to keep track of the students they work with each month.

1. The names of the students you are assigned should be written in the left-hand side columns. If you are given a new student in the middle of the month, please add their name to your log.
2. For each day that you tutor this student, write the number of minutes you spend with him or her under the correct day of the month.
3. There are a few circumstances under which, if you do not tutor a student, something should still be recorded for the day. This includes a student's absence, your absence, or if there is a special event that bars you from tutoring that day. A key is included on the log for your reference.
4. If you are performing Literary Assistance Tutoring and one of your focus list students is a part of that class, please indicate this time under their name/names in the tutor log for the day. If a non-focus list student is worked with more than four times, contact the EC Volunteer Coordinator.
5. As with your timesheet, please complete the log in blue or black pen. If there are any errors you need to complete, cross it out and initial and date the change.
6. Your Tutor Log will also be picked up by the EC Volunteer Coordinator on the last day of the month.

### **Member and Program Evaluation**

- Volunteer tutors will be asked to complete training and program evaluations.
- AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff will conduct observations and provide coaching to volunteers at least twice per year. Criteria for evaluation include ability to work with students, following teacher direction, punctuality, attendance, completion of timesheets and tutor logs, cooperation, and communication.

## Experience Corps Member Stipend or Mileage Reimbursement Options

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Volunteers who commit to 300 hours of service are eligible to serve as an AmeriCorps National Service Member and can receive a living allowance and Education Award.

### **AmeriCorps Stipend-Taxable Living Allowance**

The total amount of the stipend is determined by the Corporation for National and Community Service, and it is a taxable stipend. **Receiving a stipend from Quality Education Services of MN (host of the Experience Corps Twin Cities program) does NOT mean that you are an employee.** The program can provide you with a letter verifying the stipend term and income, if needed. You are not eligible for unemployment insurance because you are NOT an employee. It is your responsibility to know if receiving a stipend can affect any benefits you receive.

AmeriCorps volunteers will receive a payment every two weeks. You **MUST** choose one of two options for the payroll stipend: direct deposit or a debit card. **No** paper checks will be authorized.

*Note: When EC members self-enroll in the online My AmeriCorps system, the system generates an automatic email “invitation” to the new member. You will be prompted to finalize your enrollment and confirm your participation in AmeriCorps.*

### **AmeriCorps Education Award (Eligible when hours are completed)**

To qualify for an education award, a member must successfully complete the required 300 hours of direct service (based on the 10 hour/week commitments) and complete the term of service. The term of service is the school year. (If you don't finish 300 hours in the school year, you will have the opportunity to finish your hours in summer school). Members must also attend training and meet the performance standards established by AARP Foundation Experience Corps. Education awards are administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) in Washington, D.C. AARP Foundation Experience Corps have no control over the time period in which this happens but will help members contact the CNCS when questions arise.

The award may be used to pay off qualified student loans or pay tuition at any qualified institution of higher education. It may only be used for tuition or fees for courses in a degree program, certificate program, or continuing education program. Please reference the following website for more information about what constitutes a qualified “loan or institution”: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameriCorps/segal-ameriCorps-education-award/using-your-sega-education-award>.

The education awards are considered taxable income in the year they are used.

The education award is transferable to children, grandchildren, and foster children. The education award is valid for 7 years for the member who received the award and 10 years if it is transferred to a child, grandchild, or foster child. The award cannot be split and transferred to multiple people. All education awards for member terms enrolled prior to

October 1, 2009, are not transferable. **If you have further questions, call 1-888-507-5962.**

### **Transfer Process for Education Award**

The first step in the transfer process is that the member **MUST** be sure that he/she is eligible to transfer the education award. Members with questions regarding their eligibility should directly contact the **National Service Hotline (1-800-942-2677)**. If eligible, the member will need to go online and create a log-in for his/her **My AmeriCorps account**. Once the recipient has an account, he/she has the option to accept the full amount of the award or a partial amount, or he/she can choose to decline the full award.

### **How to log on and create an account:**

1. Log on to [www.my.americorps.gov](http://www.my.americorps.gov).
2. Create a username and password (12 characters with a number, capital letter, and ! at the end of the password).
3. Log in to your account.
4. Click on **My Education Award** on the left-hand side. *Then you will see the amount of money you have to transfer.*
5. On the left-hand side, click on **Create Education Request Award Transfer**. The screen will show how much you have and allow you to indicate how much you want to transfer. Type in the amount of the whole award.
6. In the middle of the page, click on **Search for Institutions** and enter the name of the college or loan company to see if that name comes up. If it does, then it is an approved place to transfer the money.
7. Go to bottom to **Certify and Submit**. Check the four boxes and click **Submit**.
8. Fill out the information for whom you want the award to go to. **It can only be transferred to children, grandchildren, or foster children.** It cannot be transferred to a spouse.
9. Give the recipient's name, address, telephone number, age, Social Security number, and email address.
10. Click **Submit**. The recipient will be contacted by email and asked to accept the award. The recipient then will enter the name and address of the loan company or school he/she wants the money to go to.
11. **REMEMBER** to apply early and allow ample time for this transfer of money. Money is not transferred immediately.

### **Dept. of Justice 100 (DOJ 100) Volunteers**

Members who do not receive a stipend are eligible to receive partial travel reimbursement traveling to or from your volunteer site. Complete a DOJ 100 Mileage/Transit Reimbursement Request and turn in to the Volunteer Coordinator for reimbursement.

## **Program Policies and Procedures**

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### **Background Checks**

AARP Foundation Experience Corps believes that working with qualified individuals contributes to the overall strategic success and safety of the program. As such, individual background checks serve as an important part of the AARP Foundation Experience Corps recruitment process of employees and members. Background information is reviewed as a means of promoting a safe environment for current and future students, members, and employees. Conducting background checks also ensures that we are meeting the necessary requirements and guidelines to provide services to the students and children we serve as well as the older adults we engage in our work.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps requires that all employees and volunteer members clear the following background checks to participate in or maintain employment and volunteer opportunities within the AARP Foundation Experience Corps program:

- Two personal or professional references
- U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Registry
- State Criminal History Check
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Criminal Background Check
- Applicable school or community background check requirements

Failure to clear the National Sex Offender Public Registry will bar participation in or will result in automatic dismissal from the program. Convictions of murder, child abuse, and sexual assault will also result in separation from the program. Failure to clear other background checks may not automatically result in immediate dismissal from the program. Instead, the following factors may be taken into consideration before making a final determination regarding fitness for participation in the program:

- The significance of risk reported in a personal or professional reference
- The status of a criminal or civil charge (pending or convicted)
- The length of time since a criminal or civil conviction
  - The nature of the crime
  - The relationship between the job to be performed and the crime committed
  - The number of convictions
  - Rehabilitation efforts and recommendations
  - Subsequent employment history

While the background check process will be initiated prior to the applicant's anticipated start date, the complete list of results may not be available by the time placement occurs.

The applicant will be permitted to begin work with the program, but in accordance with program guidelines, at no time will the applicant be left unsupervised with a child. The applicant will be immediately removed from the program if unsatisfactory background check results are received. No member will be allowed to sign an AmeriCops member agreement prior to the initiation of all background checks.

Furthermore, if a current employee or volunteer member is charged with a felony or misdemeanor crime, the employee or volunteer member will be removed immediately from having contact with students and/or children until the charge has been resolved. A conviction may result in immediate dismissal from the program in accordance with the guidelines above.

To ensure that current employees and members continue to be eligible for contact with students and children, the National Sex Offender Public Registry, State Criminal History Check and FBI Criminal Background Check may be conducted annually in accordance with applicable regulations and requirements. If an employee or member is found to have been charged with a crime at the time of review, the individual will be removed immediately from having contact with students and/or children. If the employee or member is found to be convicted of a crime, the individual may be immediately dismissed from the program in accordance with the guidelines above.

The background check process begins when a candidate is extended a conditional offer of employment or participation in the program. The candidate must immediately complete the background check application and authorization form and return to the issuing party.

The applicant's two references will be asked to verify applicant's character, previous employment, and fitness for inclusion in the program. AARP Foundation Experience Corps reserves the right to ask for additional references if the information provided by the first two is not sufficient to make a determination of satisfactory employment or participation.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps will check the applicant's name against the National Sex Offender Public Registry within 30 days of the applicant's anticipated start date. An applicant must clear this stage of the process to maintain eligibility for employment or participation in the program.

Each applicant's information will next be run through the State Criminal History Check based on current residence and AARP Foundation Experience Corps location. AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff is responsible for initiating this check with the appropriate state agency and for monitoring the results. An individual's conviction will not automatically disqualify an applicant from employment or participation in the program. Rather, the aforementioned criteria will be used by AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff to make a determination of continued consideration for employment or participation in the program.

Following the initiation of the State Criminal History Check, a candidate's application will be submitted for the FBI Criminal Background Check. AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff will be responsible for initiating this check with the FBI and monitoring the results. A conviction will not automatically disqualify an applicant from employment or volunteer participation in the program. Rather, the aforementioned criteria will be used by AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff to make a determination of continued consideration.

If at any time during the process information is received that precludes an individual from employment or volunteer participation in the program, the EC Branch Administrator or affiliate EC staff will send a letter and supporting required documentation to the individual and the national office explaining the reason for disqualification in accordance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), Fair and Accurate Credit Transaction Act (FACTA), and Consumer Credit Protection Act (CCPA). The EC Branch Administrator or affiliate EC Program Manager will be responsible for handling such FCRA, FACTA, and/or CCPA requirements as necessary. AARP Foundation Experience Corps will follow all applicable regulation requirements throughout the background check process. Any questions regarding regulation requirements must be directed to the EC Branch Administrator, affiliate EC staff, or national office.

If an AARP Foundation Experience Corps branch or affiliate receives comparable background checks for their members or employees through the methods listed above, but from a non-AARP Foundation Experience Corps source, the EC Branch Administrator or affiliate EC staff may submit a request to the national office requesting an exemption from conducting the checks through the local office. In this instance, the branch or affiliate must provide the national office the appropriate contact information of the non-AARP Foundation Experience Corps entity and documentation from the entity to prove that the background check requirements have been met. The national office will verify and approve that the results are comparable and sufficient and provide a background check waiver notification to the local office.

For EC branch or affiliate EC program employees, background check information will be maintained in a file separate from personnel files. Documentation regarding member background check completion will be maintained by the local branch or affiliate.

### **Liability and Safety**

An accident resulting in an injury to a volunteer at the school/community site must immediately be reported to the site. A copy of the accident report should also be sent to the EC Volunteer Coordinator. VOA provides insurance coverage after the school/community site limits are reached.

## **Cell Phone Usage**

While in the schools/community sites and participating in training sessions, please turn cell phones off or place in silent mode. Refrain from answering your phone while in the classroom or in a training session. Use break time to make phone calls. In case of an emergency, excuse yourself from the classroom to use your phone.

## **Relationships with Program Participants**

It is prohibited for members to engage in an intimate relationship with a program participant (anyone utilizing any of the programs/services offered by your site). If a volunteer member is found to be in an intimate relationship with a participant, the member will be terminated immediately.

## **Data Privacy**

All information about students and other individuals in the program shall remain private. Information about students may be shared with staff at sites who need to know the information in order to do their jobs, but shall not be discussed outside of the site or with other volunteers.

## **Maltreatment of Minors Reporting Act**

Any AARP Foundation Experience Corps member who has reason to believe a student has been neglected or abused by a parent or caretaker must report this to the classroom teacher/site coordinator or school social worker. Further action will be handled by school/site staff if needed. If a member has reason to believe that a student has been abused by a teacher or other school/site employee, please discuss this with the EC Volunteer Coordinator.

Any AARP Foundation Experience Corps member who is a professional working in social work, child care, education, law enforcement, or who is ordained clergy, is a mandated reporter of child maltreatment and must follow a different set of requirements. Call AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff for clarification.

## **Civil Behavior and Proper Sexual Conduct**

The information that follows is designed to provide a clear understanding of expectations and outcomes of both EC employees and members with regard to peaceful civil behavior and proper sexual conduct.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps is committed to providing working and learning environments that promote proper and peaceful civil behaviors. EC environments will be free of all forms of abuse, assault, harassment, and coercive conduct, including sexual misconduct. AARP Foundation Experience Corps does not tolerate behaviors that may discriminate against others or those that may represent as sexual misconduct of any type. Improper behavior and/or sexually abusive behavior within the learning community will be considered harmful to both the learning environment and the sense of trust we build amongst our peers, members, children, other older adults, and EC partners.

All EC employees and members have an obligation to act responsibly in the realm of civil behavior and sexual conduct. This behavior and conduct will include accepting personal responsibility for choices made about alcohol and drug consumption that can lead to behavior that violates another person's safety or well-being. Additionally, all EC employees and members have the responsibility to recognize and/or to challenge any improper behaviors or sexual misconduct. The purpose of this policy and associated procedures is to encourage all parties to take responsibility for individual behavior, to hold others accountable for peaceful civil behavior and proper sexual conduct, to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal regulations, and to fairly discipline and sanction behavior that is inconsistent with EC policies.

### **Peaceful Civil Behavior**

Appropriate peaceful civil behavior entails demonstrating loyalty to the organization and its mission, showing respect for management and subordinates alike, and promoting fairness and tolerance within the organization. Examples of peaceful civil behavior include:

- Taking a proactive approach to problems and encouraging others to be effective problem solvers.
- Being discreet and concerned about protecting the privacy of fellow employees, peers, members, children, other EC partnerships, and proprietary information.
- Maintaining confidentiality at all times.
- Projecting a positive, can-do attitude that welcomes challenges.

### **Sexual Misconduct**

Sexual misconduct encompasses a range of behavior used to obtain sexual gratification against another's will or at the expense of another. Sexual misconduct includes sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any conduct of a sexual nature that is without consent, or has the effect of threatening or intimidating the person against whom such conduct is directed. State laws vary on defining acts that constitute sexual misconduct. Generally sexual misconduct can involve any of the following acts: intentional touching without consent; exposing his or her genitals under circumstances likely to cause affront or alarm; having sexual contact in the presence of a third person or persons under circumstances likely to cause affront or alarm; having sexual intercourse or deviant sexual intercourse in a public place in the presence of a third person; soliciting or requesting another person to engage in sexual conduct under circumstances in which an individual(s) knows that one's requests or solicitation is likely to cause affront or alarm; forcing a victim to touch, directly or through clothing, another person's genitals, breast, groin, thighs, or buttocks; vaginal or anal intercourse; fellatio or cunnilingus; sexual penetration with any object.

### **Child Abuse**

Child sex abuse is a form of child abuse in which an adult or older adolescent uses a child for sexual stimulation. The offense of child sex abuse takes various forms, such as asking or pressuring a child to engage in sexual activities, indecent exposure of the genitals to a child, displaying pornography to a child, actual sexual contact against a child, physical contact with the child's genitals, viewing of the child's genitalia without physical contact, or using a child to produce child pornography.

The result of such abuse to a child is depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, propensity to further victimization in adulthood, and physical injury.

Child sexual abuse includes a variety of sexual offenses, such as sexual assault; sexual exploitation; and sexual grooming.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where (1) submission to such conduct is made a condition of employment or learning; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment or learning decisions; or (3) such conduct creates a hostile work or student learning environment. This may include, but is not limited to: making unsolicited and unwelcome written, verbal, physical, and/or visual contact with sexual overtones; posting sexually explicit materials in the workplace, on school property, other learning environment, or through a technology-based media; making unwelcome sexual advances; making reprisals, threats of reprisal, or implied threats of reprisal following a rejection of a sexual advance; engaging in implicit or explicit coercive sexual behavior which is used to control, influence, or affect the employment or learning conditions and/or environment of another; and offering favors of any type or benefit in exchange for sexual favors.

### **Policy**

AARP Foundation Experience Corps employees and members are prohibited from engaging in any form of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, immoral sexual conduct, sexual harassment, or child abuse including, but not limited to, the information provided above. Training is provided to employees and volunteers to assist in identifying and reporting instances of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, immoral sexual conduct, sexual harassment, or child abuse. AARP Foundation Experience Corps maintains a zero-tolerance policy in this regard, and offenders are subject to disciplinary action up to and including permanent dismissal and reporting to appropriate authorities.

### **Complaint Procedure**

If you believe that you are victim to or in witness of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, immoral sexual conduct or sexual abuse of a child, or sexual harassment, you are required to provide a written complaint to your Program Manager and the Affiliate/Branch Relations Office as soon as possible following any incident that you believe is a violation of this policy. If the EC Program Manager is involved in the complaint, you may submit your complaint to the national Affiliate/Branch Relations Office only. Your complaint should include the dates and details of the incident(s), the names of the individuals

involved, and the names of any witnesses. AARP Foundation Experience Corps will promptly undertake an internal investigation of the notification. AARP Foundation Experience Corps will first notify appropriate authorities immediately if an adult-child accusation has been reported. All employees and volunteers will be expected to cooperate with the internal investigation. Once the internal investigation is completed, AARP Foundation Experience Corps will determine whether sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, immoral sexual conduct or sexual abuse of a child, or sexual harassment has occurred, and AARP Foundation Experience Corps will take effective remedial action commensurate with the severity of the offense and in cooperation with appropriate authorities. Appropriate action will also be taken to deter any future violations of this policy. Whatever action is taken against the employee or volunteer who violated this policy will be made known to AARP Foundation Experience Corps employees and volunteers according to the security of employment or learning environment and as may be required by law.

All AARP Foundation Experience Corps employees or members who suspect or have knowledge of an incident of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, immoral sexual conduct or sexual abuse of a child, or sexual harassment that has occurred shall comply with any applicable reporting and/or other requirements of federal, state, and/or local laws.

Should a parent, student, teacher, principal, site coordinator or a school district staff member wish to file a complaint, they may do so following the complaint procedure. If the complaint is found to involve school district/community site personnel, AARP Foundation Experience Corps reserves the right to enter into mediation with the school and the involved parties.

### **Retaliation**

AARP Foundation Experience Corps prohibits retaliation against any employee or member who rejects, protests, or complains about sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, immoral sexual conduct or sexual abuse of a child, or sexual harassment of any type. The complaint procedure above is available for employees and members to report all types of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, immoral sexual conduct or sexual abuse of a child, or sexual harassment so that AARP Foundation Experience Corps can obtain knowledge of the event and take action as it determines to be appropriate. An employee or member who believes that he or she has been a victim of or in witness of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, immoral sexual conduct or sexual abuse of a child or sexual harassment in violation of this policy or law shall follow the compliant procedure outlined above and promptly file a written complaint with a his/her immediate EC supervisor and through the EC national hotline. Every complaint of improper behavior, child abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, immoral sexual conduct or sexual abuse of a child, or sexual harassment will be thoroughly investigated without bias or premature judgment.

Such an investigation will include but will not be limited to interviews with the complaining employee or member, student, the subject of the complaint, coworkers, former employees or members, school district or school personnel, community site staff,

parents, and other individuals who may have knowledge of the situation. The investigation may also include a review of files and other tangible evidence as appropriate. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in cases where the complaint is determined to have merit.

### **Administration**

All inquiries, complaints, and investigations are treated confidentially. Information will be revealed strictly on a need-to-know basis. Information contained in a formal complaint will be kept confidential. The procedures available under this policy do not preempt or supersede any legal procedures or remedies otherwise available to a victim of child abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, immoral sexual conduct, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment under state or federal law.

### **Prohibition of Harassment**

Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile work environment is not tolerated by Volunteers of America of Minnesota and Wisconsin. Harassment that is based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or status with regard to public assistance is expressly prohibited. Any individual engaging in such conduct will be subject to appropriate action, including discipline or termination.

Any member who feels he/she has been harassed or discriminated against should bring such a complaint to the attention of the EC Program Manager.

### **Drug-Free Workplace**

As part of its continuing effort to protect the health, safety, and security of employees, clients, visitors, and volunteers, Volunteers of America of Minnesota and Wisconsin strictly prohibits the use, possession, manufacture, sale, solicitation, distribution, dispensation, or transfer of controlled substances or alcohol at any Volunteer of America of Minnesota and Wisconsin work site, including parking lots or grounds, or while operating Volunteers of America of Minnesota and Wisconsin equipment or vehicles, or while engaged in Volunteers of America of Minnesota and Wisconsin business off premises. It is a condition of continued enrollment that AmeriCorps members abide by this policy.

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

All selections and assignments are made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation. Accommodations that impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the operation of the program or fundamentally alter its nature are not reasonable accommodations.

## **Prohibited Activities**

As part of a federally funded program, there are certain activities that members and staff are prohibited from doing *while claiming hours for AARP Foundation Experience Corps*.

**You are permitted to take part in these activities *outside* of your AARP Foundation Experience Corps hours.**

- Fundraising. This includes, but is not limited to, activities such as selling church or benefit raffle tickets, selling Girl Scout cookies or any other fundraising item, such as wrapping paper, candy bars, or coupon books, and selling products of any kind (such as Avon, Mary Kay, Tupperware, etc.) while you are at the site or at an AARP Foundation Experience Corps training or event.
- Participating in efforts to influence legislation, including site or local ballot initiatives, letter-writing campaigns, or lobbying for your program. For example, if you want to contact politicians about preserving funding for AmeriCorps, you cannot do this while at your school site. You CAN do this on your day off, after school, in the evenings, and on the weekends.
- Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office, including voter registration drives.
- Participating in or doing events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials.
- Organizing or participating in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes.
- Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing.
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
- Conducting worship services. The best practice is to avoid any and all talk about religious affiliations and beliefs.
- Providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship.
- Constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship.
- Providing a direct benefit to a for-profit entity, a labor union, a partisan political organization or an organization engaged in religious activities.
- Participating in activities that pose a significant safety risk to participants.

## **Distracted Driving Policy**

I understand that AARP Foundation Experience Corps appreciates the efforts of those traveling for business purposes. Volunteers should be comfortable and safe while traveling. Distracted driving can lead to unsafe driving conditions. AARP Foundation Experience Corps therefore prohibits volunteers from texting, emailing, web surfing, gaming, accepting phone calls without a hands-free device, and engaging in any other

form of electronic data retrieval/communication whenever operating a vehicle while volunteering with the program.

### **Non-Discrimination**

This program is available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, political affiliation, or religion. It is also unlawful to retaliate against any person who, or organization that, files a complaint about such discrimination. If you believe that you or others have been discriminated against, or if you want more information you can file a complaint with local and state agencies that are responsible for resolving discrimination complaints or you can contact:

Director of Field Services

AARP Foundation Experience Corps

601 E Street, NW

Washington D.C. 20009

202-434-6400 (PHONE)

202-434-6480 (FAX)

[lchambers@aarp.org](mailto:lchambers@aarp.org)

## **Suspensions and Leave of Absence**

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### **Suspension/Leave of Absence**

AARP Foundation Experience Corps members may be put on suspension from the program for non-disciplinary circumstances, e.g., due to a medical condition, injury, serious illness, or other personal circumstance lasting more than two weeks.

If you need to take a leave of absence, you must notify the EC Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible. If the leave of absence is based on a doctor's recommendation, an official document from the doctor stating this must be submitted to AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff.

**While on a leave of absence, members do not receive a stipend check until able to return to service.** During non-disciplinary suspensions, the times suspended will not count as part of the year of service, but will be added on to the ending date to extend the year of service. However, all terms of service must be completed by August 31, 2017.

### **Returning to School After a Medical Leave of Absence**

At the conclusion of a medical leave of absence, members must submit a note from a doctor to AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff indicating the date they are able to return to tutoring for their scheduled hours/week. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis by the Program Manager. Speak with the Experience Corps staff about acceptable documentation.

### **Termination from Program**

Service is at the discretion of the program. Volunteers agree that the program may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the member's relationship with the program or to make changes in the nature of their tutoring assignment.

In the Memorandum of Understanding that the school/community site and AARP Foundation Experience Corps both sign to establish their partnership, the school/community site retains the right to reassign an AARP Foundation Experience Corps member to another position or ask AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff to remove a member from the school. *A school's/community site's decision to remove a volunteer from the school is grounds for automatic termination from the AARP Foundation Experience Corps program.*

### **Release from Service Due to Compelling Personal Circumstances**

The program may release the member from the term of service for compelling personal circumstances, such as:

- The member's disability or serious illness
- Disability, serious illness, or death of the member's family member
- Military service obligations
- The member's opportunity to make the transition from welfare to work
- Other unforeseeable circumstances beyond the member's control, such as natural disaster, strike, relocation of spouse, or program termination

If the program releases the member for compelling personal circumstances, the member will receive a prorated education award, provided the member has completed at least 15% of the hours needed to complete the term of service. A term that ends early for compelling personal circumstances is still considered a term, and the education award that the member receives will count toward the total of four education awards an individual may receive through service with AmeriCorps.

Compelling personal circumstances do not include leaving the program to enroll in school; obtain employment, other than in moving from welfare to work; or because of dissatisfaction with the program.

### **Voluntary Termination**

A member may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever the member's relationship with AARP Foundation Experience Corps. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the EC Volunteer Coordinator and/or Program Manager. If a member chooses to sever his/her relationship with AARP Foundation Experience Corps midyear for any reason that is not considered a "compelling personal circumstance," the member will not receive an education award.

## Discipline Policy

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If a member violates any of the program expectations and policies outlined in this handbook or the Member Agreement, disciplinary steps will be taken. Violations include failure to report to site without notifying the site or for reasons other than compelling personal circumstances and failure to respond to communication attempts by the EC Volunteer Coordinator over a period of two weeks about any operational issue relating to program quality and effectiveness.

Disciplinary steps are:

1. Verbal Warning – 1<sup>st</sup> incident

The EC Volunteer Coordinator will verbally discuss the concern and needed changes with the member. Written documentation will be put into the member's file.

2. Written Reprimand – 2<sup>nd</sup> incident

A meeting will be convened between the site supervisor, member, and EC Volunteer Coordinator. Areas of concern will be discussed, problems clearly identified, and the necessary changes in behaviors described in writing with a time period established for corrective action. Written documentation will be put in the member's file.

3. Suspension

If a member's behavior does not improve within the determined time period, the member will be suspended. The member will again receive a written explanation of what needs to change and a time period in which change must occur. Stipend checks will not be issued during the suspension period. If the issue is not resolved within two weeks, the member may be terminated from the program.

4. Termination

If the behavior that led to suspension continues, the member will be terminated from the program at the next incident. The remaining stipend and education award are cancelled at that time.

Depending on the seriousness of the violation, AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff reserves the right to terminate a member for gross and/or intentional violation of policies without completing the above disciplinary procedures.

Legal charges and convictions: In addition, if a member is charged officially with a violent felony or the sale or distribution of a controlled substance, the member must be suspended without a living allowance and without receiving credit for missed hours. This is a minimum requirement. He/she may resume service if found not guilty or if the charge is dropped. If convicted, he/she must be released from the program for cause. A member convicted for possession of a controlled substance must be suspended without a living allowance and without receiving credit for hours missed. If convicted of a first offense, the member may resume service only after successfully completing a rehabilitation program.

## **Member Grievance Procedures**

Any grievance that alleges fraud or criminal activity will immediately be brought to the attention of the Corporation's (CNCS) inspector general.

If you have a personal problem with a supervisor, another member, or AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff, you must be committed to working toward an acceptable resolution. Members of AARP Foundation Experience Corps may contact the EC Volunteer Coordinators or Program Manager at any time during their term of service with questions, concerns, or for advice on service issues.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff, together with members and school/site liaisons, is responsible for taking steps to address issues and concerns as they arise. It is expected that the member will be able to ask the teacher/site coordinator for a meeting if clarification is needed regarding how to best conduct the targeted 1:1 literacy tutoring sessions. If for some reason the member is not able to arrange such a meeting or receive satisfactory answers from the teacher/site coordinator, he/she should make an appointment with the EC Volunteer Coordinator and the school/community site coordinator to discuss the issue(s).

Regarding other grievance issues, the informal procedure for resolving differences is as follows:

1. The member presents a timely complaint (within 30 days) of the incident in writing to the EC Program Manager and the Executive Director.
2. The Manager and Director will investigate the matter within five business days and issue a decision to the member in writing.

In the event that informal efforts to resolve issues are unsuccessful, the grievant may seek resolution through alternative means of informal Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR), such as mediation or facilitation. ADR is optional and the grievant may opt out of ADR at any point of the process.

1. The opportunity of ADR must be provided within 45 days of the alleged occurrence.
2. At the initial session, the grievant must be informed in writing of his/her right to file a grievance and of the right to arbitration.
3. A neutral third party must facilitate the proceedings and function specifically to aid the parties in resolving the matter through a mutually achieved and acceptable written agreement. The neutral third party may not compel a resolution.
4. The proceedings must be informal, confidential, and not binding (unless both parties agree), and the rules of evidence do not apply.
5. A decision must be rendered within 30 days of commencement of ADR.
  - a. If the matter is not resolved within 30 days, the aggrieved must again be informed in writing of his/her right to file a formal grievance. If the matter is resolved and a written agreement is reached, the grievant will agree to forgo filing a formal grievance.

## **Filing a Formal Grievance**

The person wishing to file a grievance must submit the grievance using the procedure explained below:

1. Except for complaints alleging fraud or other criminal activity, complaints must be filed within one year of the date of the alleged occurrence.
2. The grantee (site) will conduct a hearing no later than 30 days after the filing of a formal grievance.
3. A formal decision on any such filed grievance will be made no later than 60 days after the filing.
4. Complaints must be in writing and filed with the grantee (site).
5. Complaints should include, to the best extent possible, the following information:
  - a. The full name, telephone number, and address of the person making the complaint.
  - b. The full name and address of the party against whom the complaint is made, or other information sufficient to identify the party against whom the complaint is made.
  - c. A clear and concise statement of the facts, as alleged, including pertinent dates constituting the alleged violations.
  - d. The provision of the act, regulations, grant, contract, or other agreements under the act believed to have been violated.
  - e. The relief or remedy requested.
6. If ADR was used, the facilitator may not participate in the formal hearing.
7. No communication or proceeding from ADR may be referred to or used as evidence.

## **Binding Arbitration**

1. If there is an adverse decision against the party who filed the grievance, or if 60 calendar days after the filing of a grievance no decision has been reached, the filing party may submit the grievance to binding arbitration before a qualified arbitrator who is jointly selected and independent of the interested parties.
2. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator within 15 calendar days after receiving a request from one of the grievance parties, the CNCS will appoint an arbitrator.
3. An arbitration proceeding must be held no later than 45 days after the request for arbitration. If the arbitrator is appointed by the CNCS, the proceeding must occur no later than 30 calendar days after the arbitrator's appointment.
4. A decision must be made by the arbitrator no later than 30 calendar days after the date the arbitration proceeding begins.
5. The decision of the arbitrator is final.
6. The cost of arbitration proceedings must be divided evenly between the parties of the arbitration. If, however, the aggrieved party prevails, the grantee (site) must pay the total cost of the proceeding and the attorney's fees of the prevailing party.

7. A suit to enforce arbitration awards may be brought in any federal district court having jurisdiction over the parties without regard to the amount in controversy or the parties' citizenship.

### **Suspension of Placement**

If a grievance is filed regarding a proposed placement of a participant in a program that received assistance under this chapter, such placement must not be made unless the placement is consistent with the resolution of the grievance.

### **Remedies**

Remedies for a grievance filed under a procedure established by the grantee (site) may include:

1. Prohibition of a placement of a participant; and
2. In grievance cases where there is a violation of non-duplication or non-displacement requirements and the employer of the displaced volunteer is the grantee (site):
  - a. Reinstatement of the volunteer to the position he or she held prior to the displacement.
  - b. Payment of lost wages and benefits.
  - c. Reestablishments of other relevant terms, conditions, and privileges of volunteer placement.
  - d. Any other equitable relief that is necessary to correct any violation of the non-duplication or non-displacement requirements or to make the displaced volunteer whole.

## **Contact Information**

### **AARP Foundation Experience Corps Twin Cities**

Paul Simone, Executive Director

Quality Education Services of MN, Host of the Experience Corps Twin Cities Program

Phone: 612-202-7209

Email: [pjsimone@expcorpsmn.org](mailto:pjsimone@expcorpsmn.org)

### **Affiliate/Branch Relations Office**

AARP Foundation Experience Corps

401 9th Street NW, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

Washington DC 20004

Phone: 202.434.6426

Email: [HOTLINE@AARPEXperienceCorps.org](mailto:HOTLINE@AARPEXperienceCorps.org)

AARP Foundation Experience Corps reserves the right to modify this policy at any time without notice.

### ***Equal Opportunity Employer***

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*AARP Foundation Experience Corps-Twin Cities is an equal opportunity employer. In accordance with applicable laws, the organization does not discriminate against employees or volunteers because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, public assistance status, or any other characteristic protected by law. Any volunteer who feels that he or she has been the target of discrimination should immediately contact the program supervisor or director.*