Volunteer Iowa VISTA Benefits

2026

Living Allowance:
The gross annual subsistence allowance is $25,637 (*VISTA Leader: gross annual subsistence allowance is $28,039 per year*)

Health Benefit Program:
VISTAs are eligible to participate in one of two Health Benefit Programs: The AmeriCorps VISTA Health Benefits Plan and the AmeriCorps VISTA Healthcare Allowance. While these are excellent support for most VISTAs, they are not insurance and do not satisfy the individual responsibility requirement of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). For details about this benefit, please visit: americorpsvista.imglobal.com.

End of Service Benefit:
VISTA Volunteers must choose either the $7,395 Education Award or the alternative, the end-of-service cash stipend of $1,800 prior to their start of service. VISTAs who are at least 55 years of age at the start of their service may select the education award and transfer the award to their child, stepchild, grandchild, step-grandchild, or foster child. Prior to the VISTAs' 10th month of service, they have the option of changing from the educational award to the end-of service stipend. VISTAs are NOT able to change from the end-of-service stipend to the educational award. (*VISTA Leader: end- of-service stipend = $3,000*)

Child Care Benefits:
Child-care benefits are contingent on having a child under 13, meeting an income threshold, needing child-care assistance to complete the VISTA assignment, and having a financial need to pay necessary child-care expenses. More information can be found at https://www.americorpschildcare.com/

Loan Forbearance:
Student loan deferment or forbearance or forgiveness opportunities are available depending on the type of student loan. VISTAs are responsible to obtain information about whether they would qualify for these benefits as a result of VISTA service. This is not an automatic benefit of the program.

Leave:
Ten days of personal leave and ten days of medical leave are available during the year of service. Each can be used with the approval of the Host Site supervisor. Additionally, there are 5 emergency leave days that can be provided with the approval of Volunteer Iowa

Training and Professional Development:
AmeriCorps VISTA provides a variety of training and development opportunities. These include: VSO: Virtual Service Orientation, an online orientation that introduces VISTA Volunteers to the terms, conditions and benefits of service and key programming principles at the start of their service. OSOT: On-Site Orientation and Training is provided by the sponsoring organization and introduces VISTAs to the organization, the community, and the goals of the project. Other training and professional development opportunities provided through the VISTA Campus.

Relocation Assistance:
Available to VISTAs who relocate 50 miles or greater to enter service. Relocation includes $0.40/mile plus a resettlement allowance of $750.

***Non-Competitive Eligibility:**
After completing service, non-competitive eligibility allows an AmeriCorps VISTA member who meets the minimum qualifications for a federal job to be hired by a federal agency without having to compete with the general public.