

## Sponsoring an AmeriCorps A\*VISTA at Your Exchange or Time Bank

CHECK WITH THE NATIONAL OFFICE TO LEARN IF THERE ARE AMERICORPS\*VISTA WORKER SLOTS AVAILABLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY. IF SO, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO APPLY FOR A PLACEMENT IN YOUR EXCHANGE. THE RATES VARY BY STATE INCLUDING COST SHARING DEPENDENT UPON AVAILABILITY OF FEDERAL FUNDING.

### SAMPLE PRE-SERVICE PLANNING LETTER

Thank-you for partnering with XXXXXXXX to sponsor an A\*VISTA at your Time Bank site. A\*VISTAS must be involved in running a time bank and reaching low-income populations to create positive social change in our communities.

#### I. Getting Started: The Forms that You Need

1. **Memorandum of Agreement** –This is a formal agreement that outlines our and your responsibilities to each other, and our responsibilities to the AmeriCorps A\*VISTA program and a fee agreement. This must be completed before your site recruits a candidate for the PSO A\*VISTA training.
2. **Pay Fees** to Contractor– as determined prior to placement.
3. Letter of support for this project from your non-profit board.
4. Resume from Site Supervisor – the person supervising the A\*VISTA Volunteer
5. Work Plan –
  - a. **Project Plan** - (or Workplan - *they are same thing*). As a sponsor of an A\*VISTA volunteer, one of your first tasks is to develop a project plan/workplan for your A\*VISTA and project site. Use this sample template (and keep this format) to save time and get a sense of what should be included in your project plan.

Sample Project Plan/ Work Plan – we have samples for your review.

6. **Application Checklist** - This form lists the documents and materials you will need to gather with you're a\*VISTA candidate to complete the A\*VISTA hiring process. *Use this checklist to make sure you have all the proper documents!*

#### *Recruiting:*

*On-line and traditional recruitment locations:*

*We have Sample A\*VISTA Advertisements available. If you plan to advertise your position in the newspaper or on-line, you may find this sample Ad helpful. We encourage agencies to recruit from all over the US using the on-line recruitment tools. See [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org) for more information.*

#### II. Forms from your AVISTA:

1. **Completed AmeriCorps On-Line A\*VISTA Volunteer Application** - **Fill out on-line but also print** and included with your Application Checklist Materials! Individuals interested in becoming an A\*VISTA will need to fill out this comprehensive application. *(You might interview for the position first and after you have narrowed it down to 1 or 2 candidates, have only those candidates fill out this form. It is entirely up to you, but filling out the form is very time consuming so it is not necessary to have EVERY applicant complete it, but absolutely necessary for the candidate that you choose!)* Get started early as getting it complete with references often takes time! (Applications are due seven weeks prior to the PSO Training dates!)
  - a. **[www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)** – for more information.
  - b. **Certification Page** – *print and sign from the On-Line Registration pages and include with application.*
  - c. **Benefit Election form** – *print and sign from the On-Line Registration pages and include with application.*

- d. Print the all pages out and submit as well with all other documents. Approx. 11 pages.
2. Application Form – signed and dated by applicant. Available on-line.
3. Two Completed Reference Forms – This can be done on-line. If not available, we have other forms that can be filled out and copied. Once candidate enters the name, contact and email address of reference, they will be contacted. They need to fill this out on-line. ***Most applications are delayed due to this step. Please check back with your reference to make sure that all contact information is correct, they received notice and they will provide a good reference. Two are needed.***
4. Sponsor Evaluation Form - XXXXX is the sponsoring organization for the overall A\*VISTA project, however, as a partnering organization, you will need to fill this form out for each A\*VISTA that you decide to hire. It is your statement of faith in the candidate that you have chosen.
5. A\*VISTA Checklist for A\*VISTA Members Beginning Service -The A\*VISTA candidate that you have selected will need to review and sign this form. Take the time to review it with them, as there are specific A\*VISTA guidelines that your new A\*VISTA member will need to understand. They must understand and agree to abide by these items.
6. On-Site Orientation Plan - After your A\*VISTA has returned for the PSO training, they should then attend a 1 or 2 day orientation training at your agency. There is a sample Orientation outline available. This helps the VISTA get situated, acquainted and familiar with the places and team players of your agency and neighborhood.
7. Member Assignment Description - You will need to develop an assignment description for your A\*VISTA. Use (may use the available sample template) to save time and get a sense of what should be included in your 'assignment description.' It is a brief job description. Feel free to add to our template. This needs to be signed.
8. Benefit Election Form – signed and dated by applicant. This specifies Education or Stipend Award Benefits. (This is part of the on-line application.)
9. Use of Vehicle Form - If your A\*VISTA uses their own vehicle, a company vehicle or public transportation for travel related to their A\*VISTA duties, they need to fill out this form. It includes insurance information and assures us that they have transportation to and from work and during work. Public transportation is fine, but we need to know.
10. PSO Registration Form - After you have hired an A\*VISTA they will need to register for the PSO: Pre- Service Orientation. Their paperwork must be submitted to the A\*VISTA office at least 7 weeks prior to the PSO dates. If you don't know the upcoming PSO dates, contact us. They are typically in July, August, November, January and April.
11. Things to Know Form – signed and dated by applicant.

### III. Additional Forms:

1. *A\*VISTA Narrative* - All Contracted sites are required to do the VISTA narrative. However, you will also find several sample assignment descriptions in this document if you would like to review them.
2. As an A\*VISTA supervisor, you will be required to complete quarterly A\*VISTA progress reports, which will be emailed to you directly from XXXX.
  - a. Comprehensive reports are also due at six and 12-months into the project. This includes forms, press received locally, reports and other information about your time bank demographics, including; seniors, low income, baby boomers, transportation, and other populations served and services provided. **Track this from the very beginning using a Registration Sheet or the on-line software.**
  - b. **Site Supervisors sign off on all submitted reports.**

3. Your VISTA needs to fill out:
  - a. Bi-weekly reports on service with hours,
  - b. Citizenship papers for identification,
  - c. Also, there will be 6-month,
  - d. and 12-month reports due in June and December.
  - e. VISTAs will fill out EXIT forms.
  - f. We ask that they gather materials, such as created forms, press material and include in the 6 and 12-month reports that demonstrate the activities of the time bank.
  - g. They will need to attend Training in Starting Time Banks (when available) or other trainings in person or on-line or e-conference/ telephone, as available. We encourage full participation and try to provide useful on-going trainings. Cost is approximately \$100 for 1-day training. MTB does not pay travel fees. We can try to locate funds from other sources, but your agency should budget for this training fee and transportation/accommodation costs.
  - h. Your agency is also responsible for mileage costs during year long service.
  - i. There may be occasional reports or data needed which can be obtained from a time banking software tracking program, like Time and Talents, Time Keeper or Community Weaver.
  
4. If you contract to hire a cost-share A\*VISTA through XXXX, we will 'bill your agency' quarterly. Deposit is required one week prior to PSO Training of candidate.