

**NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT**

**ORIENTATION HANDBOOK**

**FOR**

**NEW MEMBERS APPOINTED TO THE**

**NORTH DAKOTA STATE COMMISSION ON  
NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

**January 2016**

## **NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT OF 1993**

As a new member of the North Dakota 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 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 resources are used.

This orientation handbook provides 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. The following web links provide a historic perspective and insight to the regulatory and provisional guidelines of the various programs.

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

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/legislation>

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/who-we-are/our-history>

## 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.

## **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, and re-established by Governor Jack Dalrymple under Executive Order 2013-10 on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013, amending and superseding Executive Order 2002-02.

The North Dakota State Commission on National and Community Service is a 15 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. Administration of grant programs (AmeriCorps Formula / State Competitive);
4. Evaluation and monitoring of programs;
5. Technical Assistance to sub grantees, non-profits, and faith-based organizations;
6. Program Development Assistance Training for AmeriCorps programs;
7. Recruitment and placement; and
8. Benefits

The minimum number of voting members on the State Commission represents the following constituencies appointed by the Governor:

*One Senator;*

*One Representative;*

*Two representatives 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;*

*One representative 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, 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;*

*One individual with expertise in the educational, training, and developmental needs of youth, particularly disadvantaged youth;*  
*One Representative from Indian Tribes*

The State Commission By-Laws allow two additional voting members to be recommended and appointed by the Governor:

*One representative of the volunteer sector;*  
*One member at large*

Other composition requirements:

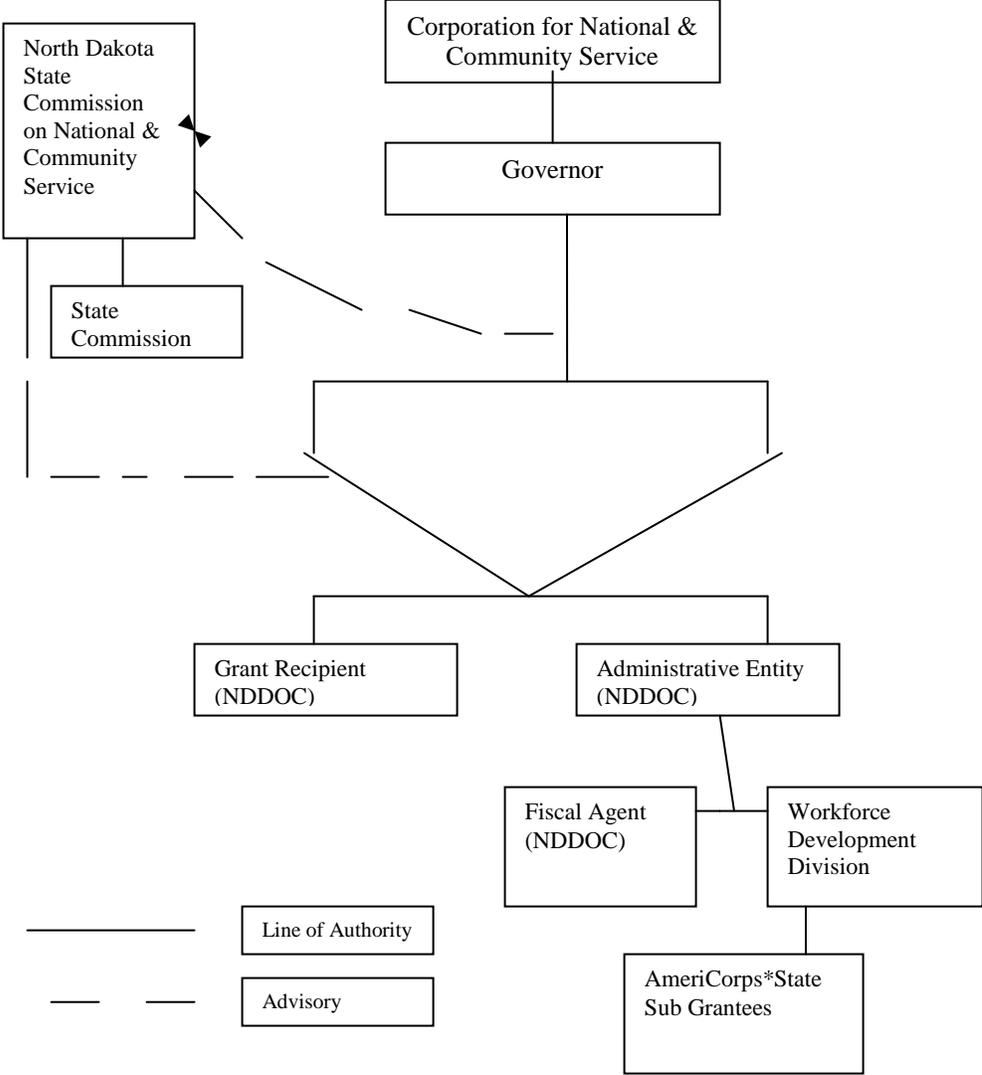
*To the extent possible, the Chief Executive Officer of a state shall ensure that the membership of the State Commission is balanced with respect to race, ethnicity, age, gender, and disability characteristics. Not more than 50% plus one of the members of a State Commission may be from the same political 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
- Business Representative
- The State Commission Director

### **Responsibilities:**

- a. Recommend policy positions for the State Commission's review and approval.
- b. 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.

## **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 V.           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

Social Innovation Fund

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

### **State Commission Administration:**

Federal funds provide salary and benefits for the State Commission administrative staff. **The federal funds require a non-federal match of a maximum of 50% for the 2015-17 Biennium.** The non-federal match is leveraged by using the State General Funds salary appropriation included in the budget for the Workforce Development Division.

### **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 by the State Commission, however, awarded sub-grantee organizations are required to provide non-federal match based upon a prescribed graduating rate).

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 \$600,000 annually to support AmeriCorps projects around the state.

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, National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), Higher Education and Community-Based Organization funding is made available through national competitive grants.

## **STATE COMMISSION 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.

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.

**North Dakota State Commission Member Responsibilities:**

Assist the State in carrying out national and community service activities

Promote the Commission and its leadership role with respect to national service & volunteerism within the State.

Be as actively involved and participative as possible, as measured by attendance at meetings.

Be thoroughly knowledgeable about the Commission, its mission, goals, and objectives.

Work closely with volunteer leadership in support of the Commission.

Serve as a resource for fellow commissioners, as needed.

Be an advocate for all national service programs and initiatives, especially those funded or supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Keep your constituency apprised of Commission activities, goals, and objectives.

Encourage the public's knowledge of and involvement in appropriate Commission- related work, including attending meetings and participation in state service planning.

Communicate with other commissioners and Commission staff, as appropriate, including providing them with information that they might not otherwise receive.