



# Kentucky College Coaches

## Policies and Procedures Handbook 2020-2021



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# About This Handbook

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## **Service-at-Will Notice**

This handbook does not create a contract, establish rights, privileges, or benefits of your commitment to service, or guarantee of a continued position. The information in this handbook is for your guidance only.

Please review your AmeriCorps Member Service Agreement (contract) for specific information relating to termination. Be aware that being discharged for cause or leaving the program early may affect your eligibility for pay, health insurance, education award, and other benefits.

## **Handbook Notice**

This handbook is intended to provide you with a general overview and understanding of AmeriCorps and Kentucky College Coaches (KCC) policies and procedures. Although it will answer many of your questions, it does not address every situation or question you may encounter. You are encouraged to read and be guided by the contents of this handbook. If you have questions or need more complete information, you may speak with your KCC program staff.

This handbook covers all members of the Kentucky College Coaches. KCC reserves the right, with or without notice, unilaterally to interpret, supplement, vary, change, suspend, eliminate or replace at any time the policies and procedures outlined in this or any other handbook.

**In addition, AmeriCorps members of Kentucky College Coaches should make sure they understand and follow all additional policies their assigned host site may enforce above and beyond those stated in the handbook.**

# About AmeriCorps

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**According to the National Service Website (<http://www.nationalservice.gov>):**

AmeriCorps is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), an independent federal agency whose mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps is made up of three main programs: AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps).

Since the program's founding in 1994, more than 800,000 AmeriCorps members have contributed more than 1 billion hours in service across America while tackling pressing problems and mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve.

AmeriCorps serves as a network of local, state, and national service programs that connects over 80,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet community needs in education, the environment, public safety, health, and homeland security. AmeriCorps members serve with more than 2,000 non-profits, public agencies, and community organizations.

**Mission:** AmeriCorps programs do more than move communities forward; they serve their members by creating jobs and providing pathways to opportunity for young people entering the workforce.

AmeriCorps places thousands of young adults in intensive service positions where they learn valuable work skills, earn money for education, and develop an appreciation for citizenship.

### **What Program Does the Kentucky College Coaches Program Fall Under?**

The Kentucky College Coaches Program (KCC) is one of the many AmeriCorps Programs that has been established in the United States. KCC falls under the program of AmeriCorps State and National.

Beginning in 2010, Kentucky College Coaches was created in response to a recommendation from the Kentucky Higher Education Work Group formed by Governor Steve Beshear for a near-peer mentoring program that places recent college graduates in Kentucky high schools to help students navigate the steps from high school to college.

### **AmeriCorps Guidelines**

Because AmeriCorps is a federal program, there are certain regulations that legally must be followed. There are also written expectations from the federal funder, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). Everyone involved in a program – the administrative office, the host sites, the site supervisors, and the members – are expected to follow these directives.

### **AmeriCorps Language**

CNCS has a goal of building a clear understanding of AmeriCorps among its partners and among the general public. In media reports, CNCS wants to see the following language used.

- Members NOT employees or volunteers
- Serve and service NOT work or employment
- Stipend NOT salary
- Coaches = members of national service

## **About the Kentucky College Coaches**

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The Kentucky College Coaches AmeriCorps Program (KCC), implemented for the first time in the 2010-11 school year, is administered by Kentucky Campus Compact (KyCC) in partnership with Northern Kentucky University Research Foundation (NKURF), fiscal agent for the grant. Partners and intermediaries with KCC are Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) and independently sponsored school districts.

Kentucky College Coaches maintains that all students deserve equal access to educational opportunities. The goal of KCC is to ensure that students, especially underserved students (e.g. first generation college-going, low-income, and minority) get the information, knowledge, and coaching they need and deserve to make educated decisions and plans for their future.

Kentucky College Coaches operates as a statewide initiative. Using primarily a near-peer model of mentoring, KCC endeavors to establish an active pipeline of current and relevant information and knowledge of the college-going process. Drawing on expertise from professionals in the fields of education, higher education, financial institutions, state and government agencies, KCC AmeriCorps

members will present highly relevant information that will enable students to leave high school with solid plans and goals to secure their own success and success for the state of Kentucky.

As a statewide initiative, KCC enlists the support of both state and local organizations and businesses, garnering relationships that can help motivate students and propel them into a productive future, thereby strengthening Kentucky’s workforce, and developing its economy. These partnerships also work to serve coaches as they gain training and connections acquired through KCC. This allows them to establish a strong network of beneficial and influential support. In turn, they become strong and impactful individuals who remain dedicated to the state of Kentucky.

As Kentucky College Coaches, members join the larger network of AmeriCorps members, whose passion and dedication to service and people join them in a common cause of volunteerism. AmeriCorps members—in return for their dedicated service—receive a living stipend and an education award (after successful completion of service).

## **Standards of Conduct**

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AmeriCorps and Kentucky College Coaches expect and require honesty and integrity in all forms of its service. The Standards of Conduct establishes certain standards for the decisions and personal conduct of all KCC members. You have a personal responsibility to read, understand and comply with these standards. If you are ever uncertain about how the Standards of Conduct apply under particular circumstances, be sure to contact KCC program staff for guidance. Violations of the Standards of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including immediate termination. Standards have been established in the areas of conduct outlined below:

### ***Confidential Information and Copyrights***

Your position gives you access to proprietary or confidential information; it is your responsibility to handle that information in a manner consistent with not only AmeriCorps’ and the College Coaches’ policy, but the confidential policy of the educational site in which you serve, both during and subsequent to your service commitment. It is vitally important that all members recognize their duty to maintain the confidentiality of students with whom they interact and school district sites concerning any sensitive district information.

Any disclosure or use of any proprietary or confidential information, other than in connection with program concerns, or as specifically authorized in writing by KCC partners, could be highly detrimental to the initiative and could result in damages to KCC. Proprietary and confidential information must be returned to KCC partners upon the completion of your service or at any other time upon request.

### ***Maintaining Professional Relationships***

As a near-peer mentoring model, Kentucky College Coaches generally have much in common with the students they serve. They are also obligated to a) maintain professional relationships at all times—both with students and staff; and b) “[protect] the ‘health, safety, and emotional well-being’ of students” ([Coldiron, 2019](#)). As such, Kentucky College Coaches are prohibited from engaging in the following behaviors when interacting with students or staff:

- Sexually-related behavior with a student or staff member, regardless of consent, which ranges from sexual remarks to physical contact;
- Sexual jokes and teasing;
- Pressure for dates or sexual favors;
- Sexual assault;
- Unwanted touching;
- Sexual advances;
- Spreading sexual rumors; and
- Quid pro quo

As a Kentucky state law, adults in positions of authority (i.e. Kentucky College Coaches) are prohibited from engaging in sexual relationships with anyone under 18 years; and this violation constitutes felonious behavior in the Commonwealth.

Kentucky College Coaches staff take allegations of this nature very seriously. If you believe that another member is engaging in sexual activities with a student or staff member, please report this behavior to your program director immediately. Your report will remain anonymous and you will not be intimidated, disciplined, nor recriminated against for having reported the allegations or violations. Members who knowingly file false claims or violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of service.

## ***Workplace Expectations***

KCC is proud of our members' high standards of conduct. Our members are expected to conduct themselves during their service commitment so as to maintain these standards:

- Being self-driven and self-motivated;
- Exhibiting an enthusiasm for learning;
- Acting with integrity and compassion;
- Valuing all people—regardless of ethnic background, religion, gender, or sexual preference;
- Working as a team; and
- Serving others

## ***Resolution of Any Issues***

While it is expected that members will conduct themselves in a way that meets workplace expectations, if issues arise where expectations are not being met, program staff will become involved. KCC program staff take into account all facts surrounding a member's conduct in determining the appropriate resolution. For the member's first offense, an appropriate program official will issue a verbal warning to the member and will document the warning in the member's permanent file. For the member's second offense, an appropriate program official will issue a written warning and reprimand the member, noting the offense in the member's permanent file. For the member's third offense, the member may be suspended for a period of time without compensation and will not receive credit for any service hours missed. For the fourth offense, the program may release the member for cause.

KCC program staff reserve the right to bypass any progressive steps of discipline depending upon the circumstances involved. Depending upon the facts and severity of the offense, KCC program staff may

give a member a written or final warning as the first warning. KCC program staff can also terminate a member without prior warning. When misconduct is of a very serious nature, a member may expect immediate discharge.

**Please review your Kentucky College Coaches Member Service Agreement for more details.**

Each member is responsible for knowing the rules of expected conduct, as well as the procedures outlined in this handbook and the member contract. Should you have any questions about the application of any rule or discipline you have received, please discuss it with a KCC staff member.

## ***Exiting Procedure***

As stated in the member contract, participants must be released, or can be released under two grounds: “release for cause” or “release for compelling circumstances.”

KCC processes release of members according to standardized procedures to ensure consistent and equitable treatment. The departing member will be treated with respect and given ample time to discuss concerns, complete paperwork and ask questions. KCC partners will maintain confidentiality during all conversations.

The exiting member must turn in the following items (if applicable) to your site supervisor:

- Parking Pass
- Keys/Security Card
- Laptop
- Software/Hardware
- Other Equipment
- Or any other company information or property

For more information contact KCC program staff.

## ***Additional Terms of Service***

Eligibility for an additional term of service does not guarantee selection or placement. The member understands that being eligible to serve a second term of service is contingent upon outside funding and the member must receive satisfactory performance reviews for any previous term of service. The member’s eligibility for a second term of service with this program will be based on factors such as whether the member has:

- Completed the required number of hours,
- Satisfactorily completed assignments, tasks, or projects,
- Met any other criteria that were clearly communicated both orally and in writing at the beginning of the term of service, and
- Received a satisfactory program evaluation from the Kentucky College Coaches program.



## ***Drugs, Alcohol, and Weapons***

We promote the safety and well-being of our members and strive to maintain a healthy environment. Accordingly, your assigned host site's work environment must be free from substance abuse and weapons. You are expected to arrive at work fit to perform your job safely and efficiently. If you have a substance abuse problem, it is your responsibility to seek help so that it does not affect your service performance.

We promote a drug-free work environment where members who have a substance abuse problem can seek confidential counseling and treatment. KCC does not permit illegal manufacture, distribution, possession, sale or use of controlled substances or drug paraphernalia within the workplace or while conducting business. This policy covers controlled substances and illegal drugs such as all forms of narcotics, hallucinogens, depressants, stimulants, and other drugs restricted or prohibited by law.

Members should report to work in condition to perform their duties—free from the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol. Our policy also applies to controlled substances, illegal drugs and alcoholic beverages used outside of the workplace or outside of working hours if the use affects the performance of your job or creates a risk to you or others. KCC may take corrective action, up to and including dismissal of any member who violates this policy.

The possession of weapons such as knives and handguns, is strictly prohibited on school site properties and related events. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

## ***Tobacco-Free Environment***

KCC's smoking policy is designed to create a pleasant working environment for all members and to comply with school site regulations. Accordingly, smoking or use of any tobacco products is permitted only in designated areas located outside of your assigned facility.

## ***Workplace Violence***

We want each of our members to feel safe at their school site and every student to feel safe with you as a mentor. Workplace violence, which includes but is not limited to: threats or threatening behavior, intimidation, damaging property intentionally, engaging in behavior that creates reasonable fear for another, or assault will not be tolerated.

Your site supervisor will immediately begin an investigation should anyone report a case of violence or threat on school premises, outside of premises when related to other members or students, or at any KCC event. Program partners will contact the necessary authorities if there is an immediate or serious threat of harm to any member.

Any member who violates this policy is subject to corrective action or progressive discipline, up to and including termination of the service commitment. The school may seek the prosecution of those who engage in violence on its premises or against its students while they are engaged in any advising activities.

## ***Safety and Accidents***

In the event of an accident or injury (regardless of severity) on your assigned school's property or while conducting KCC activities, you are required to notify your site supervisor and program staff as soon as practical. Through KCC, you are provided Workers' Compensation Insurance for any work-related injury. Eligibility for benefits is governed by applicable rules and regulations of the Workers' Compensation Act.

## ***Dress Code***

As an AmeriCorps member, coaches should always be identified as such by wearing at a minimum, the AmeriCorps pin provided by the program. Members will receive additional shirts to wear at school during special events and days of service. For the most part, dress should be business casual in the schools (unless otherwise directed by your assigned site) and AmeriCorps gear will be worn when performing service in the community or conducting events at the school. For purposes of this program, business casual is clothing that allows you to be comfortable, yet always look neat and professional. Members should wear attire that is similar to what the teachers/faculty and counselors in the school are wearing. Coaches are often close in age to the older high school students and dress is often one way to distinguish AmeriCorps members from the students. The KCC placement is a professional position and members' dress should reflect that status. In general, khakis, trousers, polos, dresses, skirts, and the like, are all considered appropriate. Jeans with tears, tee shirts, house shoes, flip-flops, and the like, are not appropriate and should not be worn during service. Some schools have a casual Friday dress code and members are free to participate while still dressing in the manner most teachers/faculty and counselors follow. In addition, members are also expected to conduct themselves in a neat and professional manner, which includes appropriate grooming for a neat, clean, and tasteful look and smell.

Members should refer to their host site's office policies handbook for more information on dress code specifics and policies.

## **General Service Policies**

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### ***Displacement of Jobs***

An AmeriCorps position cannot take the place of a currently funded job at the host site. This includes but is not limited to:

- Proctoring of exams (ACT, EOC, MAP Assessments, etc.),
- Substitute teaching,
- Or any other jobs that have been performed by or were assigned to any—(a) presently employed worker; (b) employee who recently resigned or was discharged; (c) employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures; (d) Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or (e) Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

For more information, please refer to the supplemental document, *Kentucky College Coaches' Member Service Agreement*.

## ***Transportation of Students***

Under no circumstances should an AmeriCorps Kentucky College Coach transport students using a personal or school vehicle. This includes circumstances where the Kentucky College Coach a) is co-chaperoning a school-sponsored trip; and/or b) is a volunteer or paid coach of a sports or academic team through the host school. Since the primary objective of the member is to serve as a Kentucky College Coach with AmeriCorps, KCCs are obligated to decline any invitations to transport students.

## ***Outside Employment***

As a Kentucky College Coaches AmeriCorps State & National member, you are permitted to work part-time and either inside or outside of your host site, provided you are serving in a full-time capacity of 37.5 hours per week. Members are discouraged from working full-time and as this may interrupt regular service hours with AmeriCorps. Additionally, Kentucky College Coaches are prohibited from accepting positions at the host site where they could consistently (i.e. as the central part of the position) transport students (e.g. school bus driver).

In the event that you take employment with your host site (e.g. coaching a team), you must ensure that you are a) not accepting a position to drive a school bus (as it conflicts with policies about transporting students; b) never wearing the AmeriCorps logo while working in this capacity; c) never counting service hours while working in this capacity; and d) never transporting students via school bus or individual car.

## ***Equal Employment Opportunity***

Kentucky College Coaches is committed to providing equal opportunity in all areas of the service commitment: recruitment, site assignment, transfer, stipend, benefits, and training. It is our policy that all decisions regarding recruitment are made for sound reasons and without regard to an applicant's or member's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation or other legally protected status.

## ***Anti-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy***

KCC is committed to providing a safe and inviting environment for students in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. KCC does not tolerate any form of harassment or discrimination by or against any of its members.

### **Definitions of Harassment**

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state, and local laws. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical acts of a sexual or sex-biased nature. These acts are in violation of the law and our policy when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- An employment decision is based on an individual's acceptance or rejection of such conduct;
- Such conduct interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender.

Some examples of unacceptable behavior are:

- Making lewd jokes or sexual comments, whether verbally or in writing through text messages, e-mail, or other electronic means,
- Using sexually offensive language,
- Making graphic, sexually oriented comments about someone's body,
- Displaying, circulating or discussing sexually explicit or suggestive materials,
- Engaging in inappropriate physical contact or overly familiar touching,
- Making sexual innuendoes, and
- Requesting a sexual relationship or repeatedly requesting a dating relationship.

### **Other Forms of Harassment**

***Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy harassment is verbal or physical conduct that defames or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of her/his race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, citizenship, or any other characteristic protected by law or that of her/his relatives, friends or associates, and that:***

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment,
- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or
- Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping,
- Threatening, intimidating or hostile acts,
- Inappropriate jokes, and
- Written or graphic material that defames or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group and that is placed on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace.

### **Complaint Procedure**

KCC encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe they have been the victims of conduct prohibited by this policy statement or believe they have witnessed such conduct should discuss their concerns with their site supervisor. If the complaint involves the site supervisor, member should discuss concerns with

program staff. KCC encourages the prompt reporting of complaints so that rapid and constructive action can be taken.

Any reported allegations of harassment or discrimination will be promptly investigated. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge. To the extent feasible, confidentiality will be maintained to ensure the privacy of all individuals involved. No person who makes a claim of harassment or who takes part in an investigation will be retaliated against. Perceived acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly addressed.

Misconduct constituting harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be dealt with appropriately. Any member found by KCC to have violated our harassment policy or who fails to properly address harassment issues will be subject to corrective action, up to and including immediate dismissal.

Any member who has any questions or concerns about this policy should talk with their site supervisor and program staff.

## ***Disability and Reasonable Accommodation***

KCC does not discriminate on the basis of protected physical or mental disability, any history of disability, or any perceived disability.

KCC provides reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental disability of a qualified applicant or member where an accommodation is required for the performance of the job unless the accommodation would cause undue hardship.

Reasonable accommodation is any change in the service environment or in the way things are done that enables qualified people to perform the essential functions of their service commitment or enjoy equal opportunity, and which does not cause undue hardship to coaches. The feasibility of an accommodation is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

You have an important role in working out a reasonable accommodation. As a member you are responsible for requesting a reasonable accommodation if you need it to perform your job. To request an accommodation contact program staff, who will work with you and your physician to ensure that a reasonable accommodation is provided if it does not impose an undue hardship. If you are asked to provide documentation, it should be provided to program staff who will provide it to the KyCC office in order to provide the accommodation. Documentation is maintained confidentially and kept separately from your personnel records.

## ***Grievance Procedure***

If you become dissatisfied with a commitment-related matter, if you feel you have been treated unfairly, or believe you have been discriminated against, we encourage you to discuss it with the person who has responsibility for the issue (site supervisor for school issues, program staff for KCC issues). KCC is committed to responding to member concerns in a prompt and effective manner. In the event that the dissatisfaction lies with KCC program staff (e.g. program manager or program advisor), you are encouraged to discuss the matter with executive staff (e.g. Kentucky Campus Compact or KHEAA). In the

event that informal efforts to resolve disputes in the KCC AmeriCorps program are unsuccessful, AmeriCorps members, labor organizations, and other interested individuals may seek resolution through the following grievance procedures. These procedures may apply to, but are not limited to, service-related issues, such as assignments, evaluations, suspensions, or release for cause; as well as issues related to non-selection of members, and displacement of employees, or duplication of activities by AmeriCorps.

### **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)**

ADR is available, but must be selected within 45 days of the underlying dispute. If an aggrieved party chooses ADR as a first option, a neutral party designated by the program will attempt to facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution. The neutral party must not have participated in any previous decisions concerning the issue in dispute. ADR is confidential, non-binding, and informal. No communications or proceedings of ADR may be referred to at the grievance hearing or arbitration stages. The neutral party may not participate in subsequent proceedings.

If ADR is chosen by the aggrieved party, the deadlines for convening a hearing and of a hearing decision are 30 and 60 days respectively. They are held in abeyance until the conclusion of ADR. At the initial session of ADR, the neutral party must provide written notice to the aggrieved party of his or her right to request a hearing. If ADR does not resolve the matter within 30 calendar days, the neutral party must again notify the aggrieved party of his or her right to request a hearing. At any time, the aggrieved party may decline ADR and proceed directly to the hearing process.

### **Grievance Hearing**

An aggrieved party may request a grievance hearing without participating in ADR or, if ADR is selected, it fails to result in a mutually agreeable resolution. The aggrieved party should make a written request for a hearing to: Executive Director, Kentucky Campus Compact, 90 Campbell Drive, Suite 270, Highland Heights, KY 41099. Except for a grievance that alleges fraud or criminal activity, a request for a hearing must be made within one year after the date of the alleged occurrence. At the time a request for a hearing is made, the KyCC AmeriCorps program will make available to the aggrieved party information that is relied upon in its disciplinary decision.

The KCC program manager or executive director will arrange for one or more pre-hearing conferences at a time mutually convenient to all parties. Pre-hearing conferences are not a substitute for a hearing. They are intended to facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution of the matter to make a hearing unnecessary or to narrow the issues to be decided at the hearing. The format of the pre-hearing conference may be flexible, involving meetings with one party at a time and/or with both parties together. Pre-hearing conferences are conducted by the member's site supervisor. The hearing will be conducted by the KyCC executive director or a neutral third party agreed upon by disputing parties. The person conducting the hearing may not have participated in any previous decisions concerning the issue in dispute. \*Note: to ensure impartiality in the hearing, programs may choose to designate someone other than the KyCC executive director to approve disciplinary actions regarding members, leaving the KyCC AmeriCorps executive director available to conduct grievance hearings. A hearing will be held no later than 30 calendar

days after the filing of the grievance; and a written decision will be made no later than 60 calendar days after filing.

### **Binding Arbitration**

An aggrieved party may request binding arbitration if a grievance hearing decision is adverse or if no decision is made within 60 days after the filing of the grievance. The arbitrator will be independent and selected by agreement of the parties. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will appoint one within 15 calendar days after receiving a request from one of the parties. An arbitration proceeding will be held no later than 45 calendar days after the request for arbitration, or no later than 30 calendar days after the appointment of an arbitrator by the Corporation's CEO. An arbitration decision will be made no later than 30 calendar days after the commencement of the arbitration proceeding. The cost of arbitration will be divided evenly between the parties, unless the aggrieved party prevails; in which case, the program will pay the total cost of the proceeding and the prevailing party's attorney's fees.

### ***Member Files***

Kentucky College Coaches, housed at Northern Kentucky University, maintains a member file for every AmeriCorps member serving as a Kentucky College Coach at their host school. The file contains: member application, member service agreement (which includes the signed position description and signed application), both federal and state background checks, documentation of child-care enrollment, publicity release, performance reviews, disciplinary actions and other documents related to performance, timekeeping logs, and payroll and health benefits enrollment information.

In order to ensure your information is up-to-date, we ask that you inform program staff immediately of changes in the following: name, address, phone number, marital status, number of dependents, beneficiaries, and emergency contact information.

KCC strives to balance its need to obtain, use, and retain member information with each individual's right to privacy. To this end, we attempt to restrict information maintained to that which is necessary to comply with AmeriCorps policies, or that which is required by federal, state, or local law.

### ***Travel Policy***

KCC travel policy establishes procedures and provides guidelines for members incurring travel expenses to authorized training or event sites during authorized hours. All members of KCC should obtain permission through your site supervisor and KCC program staff prior to travel. The traveler is responsible for reviewing, understanding, and complying with the travel policy. The approver is responsible for accurately reviewing expense reports for compliance. Your assigned host site and KCC is not obligated to reimburse members for expenses that are not in compliance with this policy. Members are expected to be fiscally conservative in their spending. These policies and guidelines are necessary to meet federal, state, and organization requirements.

### ***Personal Auto Reimbursement***

Members are only authorized to use her/his automobile if they have both a valid driver's license and current comprehensive auto insurance (including liability and collision loss).

When a member uses her/his personal automobile to travel to mandatory Kentucky College Coaches trainings or events, Kentucky Campus Compact will reimburse mileage at the current Northern Kentucky University rate. Car-pooling with members at other sites to KCC trainings is encouraged.

Mileage from a member's home to a regularly assigned school locations is not a reimbursable expense. However, according to NKU reimbursement policies, if a member goes directly from home to a site for an official training (or event not regularly assigned to the school location) and the distance to the training is greater than the distance to the regular work location, then the member may be able to expense the difference.

In order to receive reimbursement for mileage, the member must complete an expense report specifying: purpose of trip, date of trip, and mileage traveled both to and from the location. When traveling for KCC trainings, KCC will reimburse all auto tolls and parking fees when a receipt is submitted. The member assumes all responsibility for any parking and traffic fines.

All travel must be approved by the site supervisor and KCC program staff prior to traveling. KCCs should check with their assigned host site regarding additional travel policies that will not be covered by the KCC program.

## **Service Commitment Requirements**

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### **Time Commitment**

As a half-time AmeriCorps member, you are expected to be in your school during regular school hours from 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. each weekday (i.e. 37.5 hours per week) or other hours determined by host school schedule) during the 10 months of the program, August through May. You will need to complete a minimum of 900 hours to receive your education award. Accurate timekeeping is essential and necessary both in order to fulfill your service commitment and comply with the AmeriCorps program. The time that counts toward your service can occur on any day of the week and includes: direct service (e.g. time in schools or during special events), training, and professional development. However, training, orientation, and professional development cannot exceed 20% of your total service hours. Fundraising activities cannot exceed 10% of your total service hours.

### ***Attendance and Timekeeping***

All members are responsible for accurately reporting their time through the online system, OnCorps, which cover three types of hours - service activities, trainings, and fundraising. Time sheets must be submitted on a bi-weekly basis with site supervisor and program staff approval. Accurate records are essential to determine eligibility of the education award upon completion of your committed service. Only members who have adequately served their commitment, as testified by performance reviews and approval by the member's site supervisor and program advisor, will be eligible to earn the education award.



Program staff and site supervisors are responsible for reviewing and approving time and attendance in accordance with various AmeriCorps and KCC policies.

## Reporting

Members will be required to collect data regarding core student and volunteer demographics, progress toward program goals, stories of success, and other information that may be requested. Members will be required to submit monthly service reports. Failure to adhere to this requirement will initiate progressive discipline action.

## Evaluation

Member performance evaluations are an AmeriCorps requirement and an important professional development tool. Members will undergo two evaluation periods per program year; at the midpoint of service and at the end of service. Performance evaluations will consist of a member-submitted self-evaluation and an evaluation submitted by member’s site supervisor or KCC program staff member. Members will be evaluated in following categories:

Attendance	Member consistently serves during regular school hours, on average 35-40 hours per week. Unplanned absences and tardiness are infrequent and accompanied by timely notification to site supervisor. Planned absences occur with appropriate advance notice and care is taken to ensure absences do not interfere with member's service commitments.
Professionalism	Member consistently maintain high standards of professionalism. Member wears attire appropriate to service site, typically business casual dress. Member interacts with others (staff, volunteers, students, and partners) in an appropriate and respectful manner. Member has a demonstrated understanding of general workplace etiquette.
Attitude	Member maintains a positive and collaborative attitude. Member carries out service with integrity and compassion. Member works well as a member of a team by demonstrating a value for all people and a commitment to diversity and inclusion. Member responds openly to feedback and suggestions. When faced with challenges or changing priorities, member responds with optimism and flexibility.
Compliance	Member accepts and adheres to the established policies and procedures of the site location and Kentucky College Coaches program which includes observation of AmeriCorps prohibited activities and submitting timely program reports.
Communication	Member responds to emails, phone calls and requests for information in an appropriate and timely fashion (generally, within 2 working days).

Commitment	Member displays an overall commitment to increasing the educational and career opportunities for underserved students in Kentucky. Member allows this commitment to guide innovation and decision-making processes. Member also commits to the goals and mission of the school.
Accountability	Member accepts personal responsibility for learning and contributing to the program. Takes initiative in identifying opportunities for training and professional development. Member seeks timely clarification of any ambiguity of position or task. Member respectfully communicates any areas of discontentment.
Achievement	Member is on-track with meeting the established objectives of the service position. Member uses sound decision-making and organizational skills to carry out projects and tasks that are consistent, relevant and impactful. Member consistently meets deadlines and follows through on responsibilities.

### ***In-Service Days***

As a component of the AmeriCorps experience, KCC members are required to serve on national service days, designated as in-service days:

**In-Service Days:**

- September 11<sup>th</sup> National Day of Service and Remembrance
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- AmeriCorps Week
- National Service Recognition Day

### ***Remote Service and Alternate Service Locations***

To ensure continued compliance with Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) standards, the KCC program does not allow remote service opportunities from home.

However, in the event of inclement weather (e.g. school closed for snow days, flooding, or tornadoes), members are permitted to serve at alternate service locations (ASLs) such as: any school within the host site’s school district, public libraries within the host site’s county, or at neighboring colleges or universities. When a member chooses to serve at an ASL, they must communicate this request in writing prior to starting service to both the site supervisor and KCC program staff member. For more information about what constitutes as an approved ASL, please contact the KCC program staff.

### ***Time Off***

For the most part, Kentucky College Coaches members follow their respective host site’s academic calendar. So long as service hour targets are being met and monitored, host sites may provide days off when school is not in session for holidays, snow days, etc.

**Typical Holidays off may include:**

Labor Day  
Columbus Day  
Election Day  
Thanksgiving Break  
Winter Break  
New Year's Day  
President's Day  
Spring Break  
Memorial Day

## ***Notification Responsibilities of Member***

### **Early Leave During the Service Day**

As a Kentucky College Coach, you are expected to serve a minimum of 7 hours per day. When you determine that you need to leave early because of illness or family emergency, you should do the following:

- Notify both the site supervisor and appropriate KCC program staff member as soon as you know that you will need to leave early,
- Work with the site supervisor to ensure that the leave will not interfere with your service commitment of 35-40 hours per week, and
- Notate the reason for leaving early in your bi-weekly time sheet.

### **Extended Service Days**

Occasionally, Kentucky College Coaches will serve over 9 hours in a day because of special school-sponsored events or activities that occur in the evening after school hours (e.g. freshmen orientation, FAFSA night, etc.). When you determine that you will need to serve over 9 hours in a day, you should do the following:

- Work with the site supervisor to ensure that you are not serving more than 12 hours in one day, and
- Notate the reason in your bi-weekly time sheet.

### **School-Sponsored Recreational Service Days**

On rare occasions, Kentucky College Coaches may chaperone at school-sponsored recreational activities or events that support students. These activities or events could include, but are not limited to: senior field trips, math and science day trips to Kings Island, prom, graduation, or project graduation. If you choose to participate in these activities as a chaperone, you should do the following:

- Notify both the site supervisor and appropriate KCC program staff member as soon as you know that you will be chaperoning,
- Ensure that the activity or event directly aligns with program goals of student mentoring, college access, and/or college success,

- Ensure that you are not counting more than 7 hours of direct student mentoring in one day from participating in this event or activity, and
- Notate the activity and how you directly supported students in your bi-weekly time sheet.

### **Planned Absences**

When you know that you will be taking an absence in advance (e.g. vacation), you should do the following:

- Notify both the site supervisor and appropriate KCC program staff member as soon as you determine that you will need to miss,
- Work with the site supervisor to ensure that the leave will not interfere with your service commitment of 35-40 hours per week, and
- Notate the duration of the planned absence and the reason in your bi-weekly time sheet.

### **Extended Leave of Absence**

When you know that you will be taking an extended leave of absence in advance (e.g. planned medical leave), you should do the following:

- Notify both the site supervisor and appropriate KCC program staff member as soon as you determine that the extended leave is necessary,
- Work with the site supervisor to ensure that the leave will not interfere with your service commitment of 35-40 hours per week or 900 hours per 10-month contract, and
- Notate the duration of the extended leave of absence and the reason in your bi-weekly time sheet.

### **Unplanned Absences**

When it is necessary for you to take an unplanned absence (i.e. illness, family emergency, etc.), you should do the following:

- Notify both the site supervisor and appropriate KCC program staff member before 8:30 a.m. (local time), and
- If it is a training day, notify KCC program staff by email or phone.

Any absence for illness or injury that continues for more than three (3) consecutive days may require medical certification.

### **Bereavement**

In the unfortunate event of a death in your family (e.g. parent, parent in-law, child, spouse, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, and/or other relative with whom you have lived), email both your site supervisor and KCC program staff to make arrangements for any missed time.

## ***Prohibited and Allowable Activities***

During the hours that you are serving as a coach, you are required to comply with the AmeriCorps stipulations on activities. Under AmeriCorps provisions, there are things you can and cannot do while serving. You may, of course, exercise your rights as a private citizen and may participate in the activities prohibited below on your initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time. While doing so, you should not wear the AmeriCorps logo.

Prohibited activities can be generalized as political or religious activities on AmeriCorps time. While serving in the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

- (1) Attempting to influence legislation;
- (2) Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- (3) Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- (4) Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- (5) Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- (6) Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
- (7) Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
- (8) Providing a direct benefit to—
  - (i) A business organized for profit;
  - (ii) A labor union;
  - (iii) A partisan political organization;
  - (iv) A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advKCCy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
  - (v) An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities; and

As AmeriCorps members, on AmeriCorps time, you *may* participate in capacity-building activities which should enhance the mission, strategy, skills, and culture, as well as systems, infrastructure, and human resources of an organization that is meeting unmet community needs. This allows the Kentucky College Coaches program and its partner organizations to gain greater independence and sustainability.

Examples of capacity-building activities you may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) Strengthening volunteer management and recruitment, including:
  - (i) Enlisting, training, or coordinating volunteers;
  - (ii) Helping an organization develop an effective volunteer management system;
  - (iii) Organizing service days and other events in the community to increase citizen engagement;
  - (iv) Promoting retention of volunteers by planning recognition events or providing ongoing support and follow-up to ensure that volunteers have a high-quality experience; and
  - (v) Assisting an organization in reaching out to individuals and communities of different backgrounds when encouraging volunteering to ensure that a breadth of experiences and expertise is represented in service activities.

(2) Conducting outreach and securing resources in support of service activities that meet specific needs in the community;

(3) Helping build the infrastructure of your assigned host site including:

(i) Conducting research, mapping community assets, or gathering other information that will strengthen the sponsoring organization's ability to meet community needs;

(ii) Developing new programs or services in a host site that is seeking to expand;

(iii) Developing organizational systems to improve efficiency and effectiveness;

(iv) Automating organizational operations to improve efficiency and effectiveness;

(v) Initiating or expanding revenue-generating operations directly in support of service activities; and

(vi) Supporting staff and board education.

(4) Developing collaborative relationships with other organizations working to achieve similar goals in the community, such as:

(a) Community organizations, including faith-based organizations;

(b) Foundations;

(c) Local government agencies;

(d) Institutions of higher education; and

(e) Local education agencies or organizations.

So long as these activities do not exceed 10% of your committed service time, you are also permitted to help raise resources directly in support of KCC's service activities. You may not, however, raise funds for living allowances or an organization's general operating expenses or endowment, or write a grant application to the Corporation or to any other Federal agency.

Examples of fundraising activities AmeriCorps members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read;

(2) Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers;

(3) Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals;

(4) Securing financial resources from the community to assist in launching or expanding a program that provides social services to the members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the members of a community-based organization;

(5) Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current members.

**All Kentucky College Coaches must talk with program staff and receive permission before completing fundraising activities.**

## Member Benefits

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### ***Stipend and Stipend Disbursement***

Kentucky College Coaches members receive a living allowance of \$1,210 per month prior to taxes. The living allowance is disbursed monthly, according to NKU's payroll system, independently of hours served, as it is an allowance and not a paycheck. All allowances will be required to be electronically deposited into your bank account(s). Automatic paycheck deposit is generally available through all financial institutions. KCC will assist you in setting up an account if you do not already have one.

Deductions from paychecks required by law, such as local, state and federal withholding and social security taxes are withheld from monthly earnings. These withheld amounts may change due to legislation or the member's personal situation.

### **Stipulations on the Stipend**

Although members receive a living allowance, there are exceptions where a member would not receive a full living allowance based on early-term resignation. If a member resigns prior to completing 7.5 hours of service within the first month of the contract, then member will not be eligible to receive a full living stipend for service during that month.

### ***Education Award***

The education award of \$3,047.50 is provided to members who successfully complete the required term of service with the Kentucky College Coaches. This education award may be used to repay qualified student loans, or toward future (within seven years of service completion) educational expenses at a post-secondary institution. Assuming satisfactory performance reviews and completion of the full term of service, members are eligible to complete a second full-time service commitment and receive a second education award. The award is considered taxable income in the year it is used by the member. Members can choose to draw upon the award in increments, so as to lessen the tax burden on the award.

In order to be eligible for the award, site supervisors and program advisors must assure that members have:

- 1.) Completed the required number of hours described above,
- 2.) Satisfactorily completed assignments, tasks or projects, and
- 3.) Met any other performance criteria which had been clearly communicated both orally and in writing at the beginning of the term of service.

As an AmeriCorps member, you are responsible to register with the My AmeriCorps portal to streamline the process of filing for your education award and to request that the Corporation pay a percentage of accrued interest on any qualified student loans the member may hold.

### **Stipulations on the Education Award**

Members are eligible for up to the equivalent of two full-time Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards and may serve up to four terms of service. It is important to note that the education award amount you are eligible to receive is affected by the total of any awards you have received previously.

A member who is released from service for compelling personal circumstances prior to completing an originally-approved term of service and who completes at least 15 percent of the originally-approved term of service is eligible for a pro-rated award.

A member who is released prior to completing an originally-approved term of service for cause is not eligible for any portion of an education award (2526.20).

A recipient of a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award who is convicted under pertinent federal or state law of the possession or sale of a controlled substance is not eligible to use his or her Ed Award from the date of conviction until the specified time period (1, 2 or more years), which is determined based on the type of conviction (2526.30).

### ***Loan Forbearance and Payment of Accrued Interest***

Individuals serving as AmeriCorps members are eligible for forbearance/deferment on qualified student loans throughout the duration of their service. An individual seeking forbearance must submit a request to the holder of the loan, which can be done online through the My AmeriCorps portal.

The government entity which funds AmeriCorps will pay a portion of accrued interest on qualified student loans upon successful completion of the member’s service commitment. Specifically, the corporation will pay the lesser of: the number of service hours completed divided by the number of days for which the loan received forbearance multiplied by 100; or 365 divided by 17, multiplied by 100. Qualified student loans are those lent by the government.

The Corporation will make payments directly to the lender from the National Service Trust for interest that has accrued on a qualified student loan during a term of forbearance. Before this can happen, KCC will verify that you have successfully completed the term of service, and the lender must verify the amount of interest that has accrued on the loan during the time of service. This can be done online through the My AmeriCorps portal.

### ***Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance***

If you are not covered by an existing insurance plan that covers the minimum health coverage requirements as defined by the AmeriCorps program, you will be covered through your service with AmeriCorps. If, as a result of your participation, or if, during your term of service, you demonstrate loss of coverage through no deliberate act of your own, such as parental or spousal job loss or disqualification from Medicaid, you are eligible for health care benefits through CIGNA.

CIGNA is a well-known carrier which provides medical plans to many of the largest groups in the United States. They bring the advantage of a recognizable name in the insurance industry, a broad preferred provider network and the ability to provide a plan at a low rate that will not result in any penalty for members under the ACA.



September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020  
 Medical by Cigna, AD&D by Gerber  
 Medical Group Number: 3338030



Benefit / Provision	Cigna	
	Open Access Plus Provider	Out-of-Network
<b>Deductible</b> <i>(Applies to all services except In-network Preventive)</i>	\$175 per Plan Year (September 1 – August 31)	
<b>Out-of-Pocket Maximum</b> <i>(Includes Deductible)</i>	\$2,750	
<b>Lifetime Maximum</b>	Unlimited	
<b>Preventive (Routine) Care</b>	100% (no deductible)	60%
<b>Prescription Drugs</b>	80%	60%

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Emergency Room	\$100 co-pay, then covered at 80%	
Hospital (Inpatient pre-authorization required)	80%	60%
Mental Health (Inpatient and Outpatient)	80%	60%
Chemical Dependency (Inpatient and Outpatient)	80%	60%
Outpatient Rehabilitation (20 visits per Plan Year) (Physical, Speech, Occupational, Cardiac therapies and Chiropractic)	80%	60%
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	24/7 telephonic support, 3 free face-to-face visits for life events Call 877-231-1492	
AD&D	\$10,000	
Rate (Per Corpmember, Per Month)	\$321.62*	

**Notes:**

***Cigna requires pre-authorization for all inpatient hospital, some outpatient procedures and certain drugs.  
\*100% of premium is paid by your program.  
This is a summary of your coverage. Further detail can be found by contacting Cigna.  
Out-of-network coverage is based on Cigna's maximum allowable charge and may result in additional out-of-pocket expenses.***

\*Coinsurance due at pharmacy.

## ***Childcare Enrollment***

You are eligible for to apply for childcare assistance if you have a child 13 or younger and need child care in order to serve full-time.

In order to qualify: (a) members must be the parent or legal guardian of, or is acting in loco parentis for, a child under 13 who resides with the participant; (b) Have a family income that does not exceed 75 percent of the State's median income for a family of the same size; (c) At the time of acceptance into the program, not be currently receiving child care assistance from another source, including a parent or guardian, which would continue to be provided while the participant serves in the program; and (d) Certifies that he or she needs child care in order to participate in the program.

GAP Solutions, Inc. (GAPSI) administers the AmeriCorps Child Care Benefits Program for the Corporation for National and Community Service and therefore members must apply directly to GAPSI for the child care benefit. Interested and eligible members should visit the GAP Solutions, Inc. website at: [www.americorpschildcare.com](http://www.americorpschildcare.com) or call toll-free at 855-886-0687 for more information.

## ***Member Assistance Program***

Kentucky College Coaches receive a free benefit of 24/7 access to personal and professional counseling services via telephone or mobile app. The Member Assistance Program, offered by AllOne Health, allows coaches to receive in-the-moment counseling that addresses social, emotional, familial, and financial concerns. Members can also receive referrals for mental health service providers in their area. To take advantage of the program, members should visit the AllOne Health website at: [www.allonehealth.com](http://www.allonehealth.com), download the “AllOne Health Employee Assistance Program” mobile app, or call toll-free at 800-451-1834 for more information.

# **Technology**

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## ***Acceptable Use Policy***

### **Introduction**

KCC and its partners provide members with access to a variety of technological/office equipment and communication systems as required for the performance and fulfillment of job responsibilities. This includes, but is not limited to, Internet access, telephone usage, e-mail system, voicemail system, fax machines, copiers, computers, and printers.

Users must understand that this access is for the purpose of increasing productivity and not for non-business activities. Users must also understand that any connection to the Internet offers an opportunity for non-authorized users to view or access corporate information. Therefore, it is important that all connections be secure, controlled, and monitored.

To this end, members should have no expectation of privacy while using school or program leased equipment and communication systems. Information passing through or stored on company equipment can and will be monitored. Users should also understand that KCC and the Kentucky College Coaches’ partners maintain the right to monitor and review the usage of these communication systems and equipment.

### **Permitted Use**

The technological/office equipment and communication systems of KCC are primarily for business use. Occasional and reasonable personal use is permitted, provided that this does not interfere with the performance of duties and responsibilities.

Users may use their host site’s Internet services for personal improvement, outside of scheduled hours of work, provided that such use is consistent with professional conduct, is not for personal financial gain, and in keeping with the host schools policies and procedures.

Users may send and receive e-mail attachments, provided that all attachments are scanned by your assigned host site’s chosen antivirus software.

### **Prohibited Use**

Users shall not use their assigned host site's company-owned or company-leased equipment and communication systems to view, download, save, receive, or send material related to or including, BUT not limited to:

- Offensive content of any kind, including pornographic material.
- Promoting discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.
- Threatening or violent behavior.
- Illegal activities.
- Messages of a political nature that conflict with the views and/or values of the organization.
- Gambling.
- Personal financial gain.
- Forwarding e-mail chain letters.
- Spamming e-mail accounts from your assigned host site's e-mail services or company machines.
- Material protected under copyright laws.
- Dispersing corporate information without authorization.
- Tampering with your company username in order to misrepresent yourself and the company to others.
- Using Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, e-mailing, texting, or having any other such contact with students from your assigned school. If a student should contact you by such means, and seems to be in a crisis situation, you are not to respond, but are to immediately report this to your site supervisor.

## **Responsibilities**

Members are responsible for:

- Honoring acceptable use policies of networks accessed through KCC's and the partners' internet and e-mail services.
- Abiding by existing federal, state, and local telecommunications and networking laws and regulations.
- Following copyright laws regarding protected commercial software or intellectual property.
- Minimizing unnecessary network traffic that may interfere with the ability of others to make effective use of KCC's and the partners' network resources(i.e. downloading large files, like movies, during work hours)
- Not overloading networks with excessive data or wasting KCC's and the partners' other technical resources.

## **Violations**

Violations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If it is determined that a user has violated one or more of the above use regulations, that user will receive a reprimand from his or her site supervisor and his or her future use will be closely monitored. If a gross violation has occurred, management will take immediate action. Such action may result in losing equipment and/or communication systems privileges, severe reprimand, or termination of service with the Kentucky College Coaches AmeriCorps Program.

This concludes the Kentucky College Coaches Policies and Procedures Handbook. Please follow-up with the KCC staff and address any questions. Thank you for your AmeriCorps service!