

VISTA Project \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Congratulations on being chosen to serve a year as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member in Utah. I am enclosing some information you may find helpful. This includes VISTA members in Utah, National Senior Service Corps and VISTA projects in Utah and information regarding the Corporation State Office.

In order to help make your VISTA experience a positive one and to insure that "surprises" are kept to a minimum, below you will find several important points for your review. After reviewing this information, please sign the form and return to me as soon as possible.

### **Policies**

- VISTA is a full-time, community service commitment. Full-time is defined by Congress as "24 hours a day, 7 days a week." This translates into being available to serve at any time, depending on the needs of your project. As such, you cannot hold a full- or part-time job in addition to your service.
- Full- or part-time enrollment in school is prohibited except: (1) Taking one course (no more than six semester hours) related to your VISTA assignment, or (2) to retain eligibility for a Pell Grant. Approval by your supervisor and the CNS State Director is needed prior to enrollment.
- By law, VISTAs are prohibited from any involvement in partisan or nonpartisan election activities, in voter registration activities, and in providing transportation to the polls in their capacity as a VISTA. VISTAs retain their rights as private citizens but as a VISTA, they may not engage in political activities that may be construed as attempting to represent the sponsor, the Corporation for National Service, or fellow VISTAs.

### **Benefits**

- The gross monthly subsistence allowance is \$762.00 (rural) and \$792.00 (urban) divided by 2.2 pay periods per month average. It is required that VISTAs elect to have their bi-weekly allowance deposited directly. An election form for direct deposit will be provided during PSO.
- VISTAs are eligible to enroll in group life insurance for which a bi-weekly premium of \$2.07 is deducted from the subsistence allowance. Child-care benefits are contingent on having a child under 13 in care, meeting an income threshold, needing child care assistance to complete the VISTA assignment and having a financial liability to pay necessary child care expenses. Health insurance is only for the VISTA member; it does not cover family members.

- VISTAs must choose either the post-service stipend of \$1,200.00 (accrued at the rate of \$100.00 per month) or a \$4,725.00 educational award.\* Any student loans are the responsibility of the individual VISTA member, although the Corporation will process requests for deferment or forbearance that may be possible as a result of service.

**Philosophy**

- VISTA's mission is to "increase the capacity of low-income people to improve the conditions of their own lives." VISTA members will serve others and support community residents and organizations to build their capacity to respond to problems in the community. To volunteer with VISTA is a commitment to national and community service. It is not considered paid employment.
- For the interview process for this VISTA position, you should have received a copy of the applicable VISTA Work Plan and Assignment Description. The work plan describes the organization's goals and objectives for your service. The assignment description defines your role and your responsibilities as they relate to the goals and objectives to be accomplished during this one year of service. Both the work plan and the assignment description are subject to some modification as circumstances may warrant.
- VISTAs are meant to help people learn to help themselves. To this end, you should not be fully engaged in "routine" work within your sponsoring agency. Be creative, a self-starter, and a caring person for your fellow men and women.

Please feel free to call, write or e-mail this office if you have any questions. We wish you the best of luck.

I have read and understand these policies.

VISTA Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name
Signature
Date

\*Please see page 5 of your "Terms, Conditions, Benefits" booklet.