



# AmeriCorps Segal Education Award

## **FAQ**

### **How do I become eligible to receive the award?**

You must successfully complete your term of service; that means you must complete all required service hours AND duties satisfactorily (per your member contract).

### **What can the award be used for?**

Repay qualified student loans and/or pay for current education expenses at eligible institutions

### **What is a qualified student loan?**

A qualified student loan is a loan backed by the federal government under Title IV of the Higher Education Act. It may also be a loan that was made to you by a state agency, including state institutions of higher education.

### **What is an eligible institution?**

The award can be used at colleges and universities listed as Title IV by the Department of Education.

Veterans of the Armed Forces can also use the award for education, apprenticeship, and on-the-job training at institutions that accept the G.I. Bill.

### **What are other educational programs I can use the award for?**

- *Outdoor Education*

An outdoor education program specializes in active learning expeditions that inspire character development, self-discovery and service both in and out of the classroom and accepts the education award through its partner schools.

- *Study Abroad*

International programs provide service-learning community development programs in an international setting with optional academic credit. The Segal award can be used toward program fees, airfare, and related expenses. The program is in partnership with a university.

- *Overseas Schools*

A number of schools overseas and in Mexico and Canada are listed as Title IV and accept the award. You can look up specific schools and regions through the Department of Education's Title IV list.

If an overseas school is NOT listed as Title IV but you would still like to attend using your education award, you might be able to enroll in a school stateside and participate in an exchange program. That way, you are paying your tuition to a school inside the U.S. while attending a school overseas. To make this option work, it will take a bit of research on your part.

Please see <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/ed-award/overseas-schools> for more information.

- *Trade School*

A number of trade schools are also on the Title IV and G.I. Bill lists. These include schools for flight training, massage, cooking, salon training, auto mechanics, court reporting, and many others.

Please see <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/ed-award/trade-schools> for more information.

- *Enrichment Classes*

You can use your award to take a class at a community college or public university — just as long as it's Title IV. You can take classes like guitar, swimming, photography, or anything else that's offered.

The award can also apply to writer's conferences and other activities offered through schools — as long as the tuition is paid to an eligible institution.

## **Can I use the award to buy educational supplies and/or equipment?**

You can use your award to pay for expenses within the school's predetermined Cost of Attendance. (Cost of attendance is a financial aid term for the general amount it would cost for a student to attend that school).

If you are a full-time student requesting to use the award on a computer, your chances are better than a student taking just one class. If you are a photography major, you have a better chance in asking to use the award to buy a camera than a student studying biology.

## **How soon do I have to use my education award?**

By law, you have seven years after completing service to use your education award funds. The period begins the date you complete your term of service in AmeriCorps.

Yes, this time limit may be extended if certain circumstances have prevented the award from being used during this time period. These circumstances include:

1. Performing another term of service in AmeriCorps or the Peace Corps during the seven year period.
2. Being unavoidably prevented from using the award during the seven-year period. Examples of unavoidable situations which may warrant extensions include serious illness or disability, military service, death of a family member, or important service records being destroyed or inaccessible by the program. Any period of incarceration as a result of a conviction of a criminal offense will not be considered an unavoidable situation.

You must request the extension in writing before the end of the seven-year period.

For further information on how to request this extension, contact the National Service Trust at 1-800-942-2677.

## **Do I have to pay taxes on my award?**

Yes. The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, unlike most other scholarships and fellowships, is subject to federal and state taxes in the year you have funds sent from your National Service Trust account to a school or lender.

In January, following the service year, if you use all or part of your award, you will receive a 1099-Misc form in the mail. You can also download this from your My AmeriCorps account. This is an income-reporting form that you use when filling out your taxes.

Unlike other types of employment income, you are NOT able to withhold a sum from your education award and use it to pay taxes.

## **What can I do if I never use my education award?**

AmeriCorps members who are 55 or older at the start of their service term can transfer their education award to a child, step child, grandchild, step grandchild or foster child. You CANNOT transfer it to other family members, mentored children, or scholarship funds.

The transferring and designated individual are required to provide a certification (under a penalty of law) that each meets the criteria to give or receive a transferred award. When an Education Award is transferred, it affects the transferring and designated individual's ability to receive future awards. For example, if a parent gives her child two full-time awards, neither parent nor child will be able to receive awards in the future.

You can transfer one award one time to one designated individual. If you serve multiple terms, you can designate different awards to different individuals. The individual you transfer the award to is responsible for paying the taxes on the award, once they expend it.

## **How can I access my education award?**

After you successfully complete your AmeriCorps service, and complete your exit form in the My AmeriCorps portal, the National Service Trust will deposit the amount of your Education Award into your online My AmeriCorps account. This might take a few weeks.

Then, from your online account, you can send funds to a school or lender (you cannot send Education Award funds to yourself).

Remember: You don't need to use all your Education Award funds at once, and you have seven years from when you finish service to spend it!

## **When will my award be disbursed?**

When you send Education Award funds to a school, the money will arrive in two payments (the second midway through the term or semester).

## **Additional Questions:**

**For more information or help in accessing your education award call National Service Trust at 1-888-507-5962.**