

Minnesota GreenCorps Host Site application guide

Program year 2025-2026

The Minnesota GreenCorps (MN GreenCorps) is an AmeriCorps program coordinated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). For the 2025-2026 program year, MN GreenCorps anticipates selecting sites to host up to 58 members around the state. This document contains important information about applying to become a host site for the 2025-2026 MN GreenCorps program year. **Please review this document and all appendices carefully before submitting an application. Host site application information is outlined in Section V.**

Applications are due electronically by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, to:
mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us.

Note: Operation of the 2025-2026 program year is contingent on receiving funds from ServeMinnesota and AmeriCorps. Confirmation of funds may not be available prior to the application deadline.

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I. Program overview

AmeriCorps overview

AmeriCorps is a national service program that connects more than 250,000 individuals each year with organizations to strengthen communities across America. AmeriCorps members provide intensive service to meet our country's critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. AmeriCorps programs provide opportunities for Americans to strengthen communities and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Visit www.americorps.gov/ to learn more about AmeriCorps.

Minnesota GreenCorps program overview

The MN GreenCorps is an AmeriCorps program coordinated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) designed to preserve and protect Minnesota's environment while training a new generation of environmental professionals. The program places AmeriCorps members with host organizations around the state to help communities increase resilience to climate change by:

- Reducing solid waste and increasing recycling.
- Reducing greenhouse gases and other air pollutants.
- Reducing water runoff and improving water and land quality.
- Assisting community members in taking eco-friendly actions.
- Reducing disproportionate negative impacts from pollution.
- Training new environmental professionals.

Funding for MN GreenCorps is provided through a combination of resources from AmeriCorps, ServeMinnesota, and the MPCA, along with local in-kind support.

MN GreenCorps member position overview

This program year, MN GreenCorps anticipates placing and supporting up to 58 full-time AmeriCorps members. MN GreenCorps members serve for 11 months, from September 2025 through August 2026. Full-time members must serve 1,700 hours during their term, which equates to around 40 hours a week. As a professional development program, MN GreenCorps coordinates quarterly trainings, pairs each member with a professional mentor, and provides opportunities for member participation at conferences and workshops.

Program topic areas

The MN GreenCorps program has identified four overarching areas to meet program goals.

1. Community readiness and outreach.
2. Energy conservation and green transportation.
3. Stormwater and forestry.
4. Waste reduction and recycling.

These topic areas have been selected because of their overall relevance to statewide environmental priorities, alignment with host site needs and member interest, opportunity to draw involvement of community members, and ability to generate measurable outcomes.

II. Position descriptions

Position descriptions for the community readiness and outreach, energy conservation and green transportation, stormwater and forestry, and waste reduction and recycling topic areas are found on the following pages. While responsibilities and activities will vary depending on the host site and the project topic area, host sites must align with one or more of the essential functions listed in the position description selected.

Community readiness and outreach member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to impacts of climate change by advancing sustainable practices, improving infrastructure, and increasing knowledge of residents and community-based organizations through campaigns, presentations, events, trainings, workshops, social media, and other related activities. Provide outreach, education, and assistance to raise understanding and increase best practices on energy conservation and green transportation, stormwater and forestry, and waste reduction and recycling. Work with local government(s), tribal nations, school districts, nonprofit and community-based organizations, and other partners to adopt and implement sustainability best practices.

Essential functions

Outreach and assistance will focus on one or more of the topics listed below.

Community sustainability:

- Provide support to sustainability-related education activities. This could include the development and implementation of environmental events, fairs, or workshops to educate individuals.
- Support outreach activities, including dissemination of messages via website and social networking.
- Create, update, and distribute educational materials, helping ensure that education materials are relevant, informative, and accurate.
- Conduct surveys to collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on knowledge gained and/or behavior change to more sustainable environmental practices.
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.

Energy conservation and green transportation:

- Promote energy conservation best practices that reduce energy usage at home, work, and school.
- Encourage reduction of vehicle miles traveled and improved air quality through complete streets planning, education and practices, safe routes to school initiatives, and education on multi-modal transportation, mobility options, and active living.
- Promote opportunities for adopting and expanding electric vehicle usage and charging infrastructure within communities.
- Promote emission reductions to community members through educational campaigns targeting practices and behaviors that alleviate air pollution (i.e., air alert education, car-sharing, public transit, biking,), and those that contribute to air pollution (i.e., gas-powered lawn equipment, backyard fires, vehicle idling, single-occupancy vehicles, and low-efficiency wood-burning boilers/stoves/fireplaces).

Stormwater and forestry:

- Conduct outreach to increase awareness of stormwater and community forestry best practices that prevent or reduce water pollution and improve public lands.
- Conduct and engage community members in community stormwater and forestry initiatives such as rain garden installation, tree planting, and invasive species removal volunteer events.
- Provide outreach to communities on the harmful effects of chloride (i.e., road salt and water softener discharge), promote best management practices that reduce chloride application and discharge, and help host organizations in offering Smart Salting trainings in their communities.

Waste reduction and recycling:

- Promote resources to strengthen community resilience through waste prevention, recycling, composting/organics management, and food waste prevention.
- Provide community outreach and education on local food production, food waste prevention, increasing the capture and distribution of reusable materials, preventing waste, and recycling.
- Support recycling efforts by providing on-site assessments, gathering baseline data, and conducting initial waste sorts, supporting recycling system setup, delivering resident education, and conducting post implementation data collection to track project effectiveness.

Energy conservation and green transportation member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to the impacts of climate change through energy conservation and green transportation. Decrease building and vehicle energy use through benchmarking, assessment, engagement, and implementation of conservation and efficiency measures. Conduct behavior change campaigns and provide education on energy savings programs and environmentally conscious practices. Encourage the transition to clean energy sources for building operations and vehicles.

Essential functions

- Encourage reduction of vehicle miles traveled through safe routes to school, biking and walking initiatives, improved vehicle and fleet efficiency, complete streets planning and implementation, education about multi-modal transportation, and facilitation of safety and infrastructure improvements.
- Promote and encourage the use of hybrid and electric vehicles through education and outreach and assist with developing infrastructure for electric vehicles, including charging stations.
- Provide electric vehicle information, including operation and maintenance cost savings, to fleet managers to encourage electric vehicle use in public fleets.
- Educate community members on residential energy-saving opportunities and energy assistance programs. Encourage individuals to adopt environmentally conscious behaviors at work and home.
- Assist with the collection, benchmarking, and reporting of data on energy use for public buildings using existing databases and tools such as B3 Benchmarking, WegoWise, ICLEI, and/or Energy Star.
- Identify and facilitate state/local government opportunities to finance energy audits, retrofit projects, and retro commissioning through the Guaranteed Energy Savings Program (GESp), Local Energy Efficiency Program (LEEP), Energy Savings Partnership, state master contracts, or other opportunities.
- Retrofit public structures to improve energy efficiency by implementing energy conservation measures such as HVAC/lighting systems scheduling, upgrading to more efficient lighting, installing smart power strips/sensors, exploring plug load management strategies, etc.
- Promote community educational campaigns that target practices and behaviors that alleviate air pollution (i.e., air alert education, carpooling, public transit, biking, car sharing), and those that contribute to air pollution (i.e., gas-powered lawn equipment, backyard fires, vehicle idling, single occupancy vehicles, and recreational fires and/or wood heaters).
- Measure and track air quality data.
- Conduct surveys to collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on knowledge gained and behavior changed.
- Help institutionalize ongoing savings in energy and emissions through tracking and follow-up, revised building and vehicle operations and maintenance practices, program marketing, and continued employee engagement.
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.
- Assist with additional sustainability-related projects as outlined in the community readiness and outreach, stormwater and forestry, and waste reduction and recycling position descriptions (these 'marginal functions' cannot exceed 340 hours on the service plan).

Stormwater and forestry member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to impacts of climate change by implementing stormwater and forestry best practices to improve water quality and public lands through activities such as rain garden maintenance, erosion control, invasive species removal, and native plantings. Assist in collecting, managing, and analyzing data by inventorying and assessing stormwater best management practices (BMPs), chloride sources and concentrations, and trees and forest health. Provide outreach opportunities to increase awareness and engage community members.

Note: member activities cannot help organizations achieve or maintain compliance for stormwater permitting.

Essential functions

- Inventory or assess existing stormwater BMPs and/or assist with the development or improvement of stormwater BMP assessment(s) and performance plan(s). Manage associated data.
- Identify opportunities and implement green stormwater infrastructure practices, such as rain gardens, permeable pavement, green roofs, bioswales, etc.
- Provide community outreach, education, and guidance about the benefits of green stormwater infrastructure practices and pollution prevention.
- Conduct tree inventory and manage associated data.
- Develop or update community forest management plans, Emerald Ash Borer/pest management plans, invasive species management plans, tree care plans, etc.
- Identify and implement community forestry best practices, such as erosion control, invasive species management, etc.
- Help facilitate the equitable distribution of tree canopy by conducting research, planning, and coordinating community tree plantings.
- Improve public land through activities such as clearing natural debris, planting climate change resilient plants and trees, and removing invasive species.
- Identify local chloride sources and management strategies and provide outreach, education, and guidance on proper salt application.
- Incorporate best management practices for road and sidewalk salt prevention (i.e., improved snow removal), product storage, and application.
- Conduct surveys to collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on knowledge gained and/or behavior change to more sustainable environmental practices.
- Use resources/calculators (e.g., Minnesota Stormwater Manual, minimal impact design standards (MIDS) calculator, I-Tree) to quantify the benefits of green infrastructure practices (greenhouse gas reduction, pollutant load reductions, water quality, etc.).
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.
- Assist with additional sustainability-related projects as outlined in the community readiness and outreach, energy conservation and green transportation, and waste reduction and recycling position descriptions (these 'marginal functions' cannot exceed 340 hours on the service plan).

Waste reduction and recycling member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to impacts of climate change through waste reduction, recycling, prevention of wasted food, and composting/organics management. Support efforts to incorporate the framework of sustainable materials management into programs. Increase knowledge about ways to prevent food from being wasted and track the amount of food that is rescued and sent to a food recovery organization or composted. Educate community members, students, teachers, school administrators, and facility operations staff or members of the public on waste prevention and recycling best practices.

Essential functions

- Support initiatives to reduce or prevent waste generation, launch, or improve organization-wide recycling, and/or launch or improve organization-wide organics recycling programs.
- Increase the capture and distribution of reusable materials (i.e., implement campus-wide move in/move out donation, clothing or book swaps, fix-it clinics, 'green meeting' reusable dishware and utensils, etc.).
- Support programs that prevent food from going to waste and divert food waste and other organic material away from disposal.
- Capture food that would otherwise have been wasted and bring to food rescue organizations to be distributed.
- Work with local units of government and/or partners to establish programs to educate people on preventing food from being wasted.
- Implement and/or expand community outreach and education efforts related to the production and consumption of locally produced food. Include education on proper storage of produce, expiration dates and ways to minimize food from being wasted.
- Implement or assist with initiatives to reduce the amount of contamination within recycling and/or organics recycling programs.
- Research, conduct, and analyze waste characteristics at a school/organization/housing complex within the community to identify high priority opportunities and develop recommendations for improving waste reduction, recycling, or organics recycling.
- Support recycling efforts in multi-family complexes by providing on-site assessments, gathering baseline data, and conducting initial waste sorts, supporting recycling system setup, delivering resident education, and conducting post implementation data collection to track project effectiveness.
- Research and inform the host site, partners, and community members of state, county, or city resources that can improve waste prevention, recycling, or organics recycling programs.
- Establish, support, or improve volunteer programs that support waste prevention, recycling, and composting (i.e., Recycling/Composting Ambassador or Green Warrior program).
- Document best practices through case studies and/or "how to" guides.
- Conduct surveys to collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on knowledge gained and/or behavior change to more sustainable environmental practices.
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.
- Assist with additional sustainability-related projects as outlined in the community readiness and outreach, energy conservation and green transportation, and stormwater and forestry position descriptions (these 'marginal functions' cannot exceed 340 hours on the service plan).

III. Program and host site responsibilities

MPCA Minnesota GreenCorps responsibilities

The MPCA is responsible for providing oversight to the MN GreenCorps program on a statewide level, including member management, host site management, and compliance with AmeriCorps regulations. The MN GreenCorps program coordinators are employees of the MPCA.

A. Member selection and management

- Interview and selection: The MPCA will accept and screen all applications for member positions. The MPCA reviews applications, selects candidates for interviews, and makes offers. The MPCA has the responsibility and authority to make final selection decisions.
- Criminal history checks: Per AmeriCorps requirements, the MPCA will conduct a criminal history check on selected member applicants. This includes a national sex offender database search, and a state and

FBI fingerprint-based check. Member participation in the MN GreenCorps program is contingent upon passing these criminal history checks. Some positions also require passing a driving record check, administered by the MPCA. The host site is responsible for conducting any additional checks that the host site may require.

- Program requirements: The MN GreenCorps program staff will track and monitor each member's progress in completing program requirements. This includes monitoring members' service hours to ensure the member will complete the minimum hour requirement by the end of the program term.
- Oversight: While the host site will provide day-to-day supervision, the MN GreenCorps program staff will communicate regularly with the member to provide guidance and support and help ensure the tasks and activities of the project align with the position description and goals of the MN GreenCorps program. The MPCA will schedule and conduct a minimum of one site visit during the year.
- Benefits: The MPCA is responsible for administering and overseeing member benefits including living allowance, health insurance, and workers' compensation. Program staff will assist qualifying members in receiving federal student loan forbearance, childcare assistance, and the AmeriCorps education award.
- Training: The MPCA is responsible for coordinating the logistics and scheduling member required orientation and quarterly trainings. The MPCA will reimburse qualified travel expenses for members to attend MN GreenCorps required training.
- Mentorship: The MPCA will work with host sites to provide each MN GreenCorps member with a mentor that will provide technical assistance and support to the member throughout the program year.
- Performance management: The MPCA will work closely with the site supervisor regarding setting expectations and, if necessary, administering coaching and discipline for performance-related issues, including but not limited to lateness, difficulty meeting deadlines, failure to complete service position duties, etc.
- Grievance procedures: The MPCA will ensure that service concerns are resolved appropriately, following the grievance procedures outlined in the Member Service Agreement.
- Release from service: Only the MPCA's designated staff has the authority to suspend (and reinstate) and/or release a member for disciplinary or personal reasons or compelling personal circumstances. Site supervisors must actively work with the MPCA to address performance issues before release from service is considered.
- Reasonable accommodation: A reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment to a job, practice, or work environment that makes it possible for an individual with a physical or mental disability to perform the essential functions of a job. The MPCA must provide such accommodations, upon request by members with disabilities, unless doing so imposes undue financial or administrative burden.
- Site partnership termination: In the event that a host site environment becomes unsuitable for a member to continue their service work, the MPCA reserves the right to terminate the site partnership.
- Personnel file: The MPCA will maintain a personnel file for each member.

B. Site selection and management

- Interviewing and selection: The MPCA will accept and screen all applications for host site positions., selecting organizations to interview. The MPCA has the responsibility and authority to extend an offer to an organization and makes the final selection decisions.
- Oversight: Program staff will communicate regularly with the site supervisor to ensure the tasks and activities of the member project align with the position description and goals of the MN GreenCorps program and the MPCA. MN GreenCorps program staff will schedule and conduct at least one site visit with each host site. The site visit will review progress in relation to the expectations laid out in the Host Site Agreement, celebrate member success, and assist with problem solving.

Host site responsibilities

Host sites, acting through a designated site supervisor, are responsible for the following.

A. Member management

- **Supervisor training:** Supervisors are required to participate in orientation at the start of the program year to learn roles and responsibilities. Supervisors are expected to actively participate in webinars, topic area calls, site visits, and check-ins.
- **Supervision:** Provide day-to-day professional supervision of the MN GreenCorps member(s), equating to an average of three hours per week, per member. Set a daily schedule with the MN GreenCorps member to ensure a full-time member is serving approximately 40 hours/week, and then hold the member accountable to this set schedule. Supervisors must work from the office at least two days a week; those days should be days that the member is serving in person.
- **Communication:** Maintain open lines of communication with the MN GreenCorps member, MN GreenCorps program staff, and MPCA professional staff in relation to the member's role and performance.
- **Member terminology:** MN GreenCorps members are not "employees," "interns," or "volunteers" of the site.
- **Member training:** Provide site orientation including a building tour, introductions to internal and external partners, explanation of site policies, rules of conduct, site expectations, safety procedures, etc. Invite the MN GreenCorps member to participate in relevant on-site training and/or staff meetings. Help the member identify training opportunities relevant to their project and/or their career development. MN GreenCorps host sites must contribute \$600 for member professional development (trainings, conference registration, networking events, certifications, etc.). The professional development contribution is required as in-kind match; host sites must retain receipts as documentation.
- **Time tracking and reporting:** Verify the member's service hours by approving their timesheet online once every two weeks. Member timesheets must be approved by supervisors on time for the member to receive their living allowance. Review and approve the member's progress reports and a final report that includes lessons learned and project measures for success.
- **Performance management:** Complete a mid-year and end-of-year member performance evaluation. Ensure that members comply with the terms of the Member Service Agreement. Host sites must be involved with coaching and resolving problems and may be involved in the grievance procedures. The site supervisor must work closely with MN GreenCorps program staff on disciplinary action. A site may not decide to terminate a member; only designated MPCA staff have the authority to suspend or release a MN GreenCorps member from service for disciplinary reasons.
- **Grievance procedures:** Discuss challenges with members, engage in informal problem solving, and (if required) support the Grievance Procedures included in the Member Service Agreement.

B. Service site

- **Work environment:** Maintain a work environment that is welcoming, respectful, free of harassment and discrimination, and safe.
- **Workspace:** Provide a reasonable workspace at the host site for members to complete project tasks. This includes a desk, phone, computer, access to office supplies, access to a printer, copy machine, and internet, and materials needed for member projects. The host site is required to provide the members with a host site e-mail address.
- **Teleservice:** If teleservice is allowable within the perimeters of the Teleservice Policy, provide members with necessary equipment to operate from a remote location. The member and supervisor must complete a Teleservice Authorization form for approval. It is the supervisor's responsibility to monitor both the member's plans, progress, and outputs while they are serving off-site.
- **Safety:** Provide appropriate safety training including employee right-to-know and emergency procedures and provide personal protective equipment.

- Reasonable accommodation: Members with mental or physical disabilities have the right to request reasonable accommodations through their host site. The host site should work closely with MN GreenCorps program staff and the MPCA’s Human Resource Office to support and respond to such requests.
- Travel: If traveling is required for the member service activities, the host site must provide transportation for the member (access to fleet vehicles, mileage reimbursement, bus fare reimbursement, etc.).
- Insurance: If the member is using vehicles belonging to the host site organization to conduct business on behalf of the MN GreenCorps program, then the host sites’ vehicle insurance is primary. The host site organization directing the member activity is responsible for liability coverage, not the MPCA. MN GreenCorps does not provide indemnification.

In-kind contribution

The MPCA does not charge a fee for participation in the MN GreenCorps program. Per AmeriCorps regulations, host sites cannot provide financial contributions to the member; supplementing the member stipend or other costs of living (e.g., housing) is prohibited. However, host sites are expected to provide in-kind contributions in the form of operating costs and professional development costs. The expected contribution for hosting one member is \$1100, broken down into the following categories:

Category	Estimated minimum contribution per member
Operating costs (office space, internet connection, phone connection, computer purchase or rental, office equipment)	\$500.00
Professional development (trainings, conference registration, networking events, or other opportunities)	\$600.00

Host sites will be required to provide written documentation verifying all in-kind contributions, including how expenses were calculated and maintain any source documentation. In-kind contributions cannot be provided from a federal source of funds unless permission has been provided from the granting federal agency.

IV. Member information

Eligibility and qualifications

Minimum qualifications

- Must be a minimum of 18 years or older.
- Must be a U.S. Citizen, U.S. National, or a lawful permanent resident of the U.S.
- Must be eligible to serve an AmeriCorps service term and make the commitment to complete the 11-month (1700 hour) service term.
- Must have two years post-secondary education (a two-year associate degree or completion of sophomore year in a four-year degree program) or equivalent of 6 months professional experience (volunteer, internship, or work).
- Must have a demonstrated interest in the environment and service and community work.

Preferred qualifications

- Ability to build and maintain relationships.
- Ability to work well independently and on diverse teams.
- Ability to take initiative and effectively manage projects.
- Ability to research and organize information.
- Effective communication, presentation, and writing skills.
- Functional computer skills: word processing, spreadsheet, database management.

Physical requirements

- Most positions are primarily based in an office setting and require sitting, standing, and operating a computer and telephone.
- Most positions require light to moderate lifting, bending, stooping, kneeling, and carrying.
- Some (limited) positions require the use of hand tools and/or power tools (e.g., chainsaws). Personal protective equipment and safety training will be provided by the host site.
- Some (limited) positions require the ability to work outdoors in adverse weather conditions, such as wind, rain, and high or low temperatures on uneven terrain for up to 8 hours at a time.

Additional requirements

- Positions that perform driving require a valid driver's license and ability to pass a driving record check. Some positions require access to a personal vehicle for transportation.
- Per AmeriCorps regulations, all positions require the successful completion of a criminal history check, including an FBI fingerprint check.

While MN GreenCorps members will be selected for placement based on their qualifications and commitment to service, host sites must understand that members may not necessarily bring highly specialized skills to their position. The members are participating in the MN GreenCorps program to give back to their communities and gain valuable skills and experience in the environmental field. Host sites will need to invest time in on-the-job training for the members.

The MPCA and the MN GreenCorps program do not discriminate with regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, familial status, gender identity, gender expression, or membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law. Reasonable accommodations provided upon request. The MPCA supports equal opportunity and affirmative action.

Member compensation and benefits

Members earn a living allowance disbursed every two weeks, health insurance with premium paid, childcare assistance, free mental health services with counseling, student loan forbearance on eligible loans, and an education award for education expenses or qualified student loans. Members receive training from the MPCA, develop green job skills, gain professional experience, network with environmental professionals, and are paired with a mentor who provides ongoing guidance.

Member code of conduct

Policies and procedures

Members are expected to satisfactorily perform the functions of the position as described in the position description. Members are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined by MN GreenCorps and adhere to the policies, procedures, and code of conduct of their host site, including, but not limited to confidentiality policies, internet policies, dress code, and other behavior. Members may not displace an employee, volunteer, or position at their service site.

Attendance

Member are expected to:

- Arrive and depart from the host site on time following the set schedule. Members are responsible for their transportation to and from the host site each day; commute time does not count as service.
- If tele serving, start the service day on time following the set schedule. Host sites are encouraged to allow the member to serve remotely one day, but no more than two days, per 40-hour service week.

- Notify the site supervisor if they will be late or are sick, obtain prior approval for scheduled absences, and notify MN GreenCorps program staff for absences longer than one week. Approved time away is not counted as service hours.
- Arrive on time and fully participate in required MN GreenCorps training.
- Arrive on time and fully participate in required host site trainings and meetings.
- Abide by policy regarding breaks and lunch; lunch does not count as service hours.
- Serve approximately 40 hours per week as reported on the approved timesheet.

Reporting

Members are expected to:

- Report service hours on timesheets daily. Submit timesheets into the OnCorps online system for supervisor approval at the end of each time period (every two weeks).
- Submit progress reports with accomplishment data and narrative updates. Program staff will work with the member and host site to provide tools for tracking and reporting data.
- Provide additional information to program staff as requested, including the completion of surveys.

Training

Members are expected to arrive on time to MN GreenCorps training sessions, including a required orientation at the start of the program year, and required quarterly trainings throughout the program year. Members are asked to be respectful of trainers, turn their cell phones to silent, and be engaged and responsive as participants.

Communication

Members are expected to check their email daily and respond in a timely manner. Members must communicate with the MN GreenCorps program staff regarding extended absences, contact updates, or site issues or concerns. The MN GreenCorps Program Coordinator will raise serious concerns and policy violations to MPCA Human Resources.

Professionalism

Members are representatives of their host site organization, community, the MN GreenCorps, the MPCA, and AmeriCorps during their term of service and are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. This includes wearing appropriate attire, communicating professionally, responding to constructive feedback, limiting cell phone use to breaks, and using the internet professionally.

Prohibited service activities

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities, members may not engage in prohibited service activities, CFR § 2520.65.

- Attempting to influence legislation.
- Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes.
- Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing.
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
- Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office.
- 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.
- 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.

- H. Providing a direct benefit to: (1) a business organized for profit, (2) a labor union, (3) a partisan political organization, (4) a non-profit 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 these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative, and (5) an organization engaged in the religious activities, unless AmeriCorps assistance is not used to support those activities.
- I. Conducting a voter registration drive or using AmeriCorps funds to conduct a voter registration drive.
- J. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services.
- K. Census activities. AmeriCorps members and volunteers associated with AmeriCorps grants may not engage in census activities during service hours. Being a census taker during service hours is categorically prohibited. Census-related activities (e.g., promotion of the Census, education about the importance of the Census) do not align with AmeriCorps State and National objectives. What members and volunteers do on their own time is up to them, consistent with program policies about outside employment and activities.
- L. Election and polling activities. AmeriCorps members may not provide services for election or polling locations or in support of such activities.
- M. Such other activities as AmeriCorps may prohibit.

Fundraising restrictions

- A. AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of program service activities.
- B. 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.
- C. AmeriCorps members may not:
 - 1. Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment.
 - 2. Write a grant application to AmeriCorps or to any other Federal agency.

An AmeriCorps member may spend no more than 10% of their originally agreed-upon term of service performing fundraising activities, per CFR § 2520.40.

Nonduplication/nondisplacement

- A. Nonduplication: AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless the requirements of the nondisplacement clause (below) are met, AmeriCorps assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides, per CFR § 2540.100.

- B. Nondisplacement: A MN GreenCorps AmeriCorps member is not an employee or volunteer of the host site organization. A MN GreenCorps member may not displace an employee of the host site, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits. A MN GreenCorps member may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any: currently employed worker, employee who recently resigned or was discharged, employee who is subject to a reduction in workforce or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures, employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick), employee who is on strike or is being locked out.
1. An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps assistance.
 2. An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps assistance.
 3. A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
 4. A participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
 5. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that:
 - i. Will supplant the hiring of employed workers.
 - ii. Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall right pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
 6. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any:
 - i. Presently employed worker.
 - ii. Employee who recently resigned or was discharged.
 - iii. Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
 - iv. Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick).
 - v. Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

V. Host site application information

Eligibility

Eligible host sites include:

- Government entities (city, county, regional, state, tribal).
- School districts.
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. (*For-profit entities are not eligible*)
- Not for profit institutions of higher education.

Other requirements include:

- Host sites must have at least one full-time paid employee. The minimum supervision requirement is an average of at least three (3) hours per week for the duration of the program year. Since supervisory time is no longer counted as match, supervisors do not need to undergo a criminal history check.
- Host sites are required to provide reasonable workspace for the members to complete their projects tasks, including a dedicated desk, phone, computer, and email account.

- If traveling is required for member service activities, the host site must provide transportation for the member (access to fleet vehicles, mileage reimbursement, bus fare reimbursement, etc.). If the member is using vehicles belonging to the host site organization to conduct business on behalf of the MN GreenCorps program, then the host sites' vehicle insurance is primary.
- Host sites must contribute \$600 to member professional development (training, conference registration, networking events, certifications, etc.). This contribution is required as in-kind match.
- Members may not engage in AmeriCorps prohibited service activities. Member activities may not include assisting organizations with meeting requirements, coming into compliance, or avoiding fines from local, state, or federal laws or regulations. AmeriCorps members cannot displace or replace employees.

Please review the host site requirements checklist in Appendix B to make sure your organization can meet the requirements for hosting a MN GreenCorps member.

Instructions

If your organization is interested in hosting a MN GreenCorps member, **please complete the application available online at www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps and submit electronically by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 to mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us.**

Application components:

- Application questions completely answered, including a completed service plan.
- Letters of support from any identified partners. (optional)*

**Letters of support will be accepted at the time of application and throughout the selection process.*

Current or past host sites wishing to participate in the 2025-2026 program year must submit a new application proposing a member project that is unique from past member positions. Or, if the project is similar to past member initiatives, an explanation justifying continued organizational and/or community need. Past participation as a host site does not guarantee selection for subsequent years of the program. Previous site performance, including timeliness of in-kind and member reporting, site visit reviews, and communication with MN GreenCorps program staff will be taken into consideration.

Please submit one application for each member position request. In an effort to allocate MN GreenCorps member positions and resources to various communities, most organizations will only receive one member placement per year.

Host site selection process

1. After the application period closes, a committee of MPCA staff will review and score applications using the established criteria, below.
2. Host site semi-finalists will be selected for each topic area and may be contacted for a MS Teams interview in late March or early April. Host site staff identified as on-site supervisors are expected to participate in the interview.
3. Based on application and interview, finalist host sites will be recommended to MPCA leadership for selection.
4. It is anticipated that applicants will be notified of their status in early May, contingent on AmeriCorps funding. Selection of host site projects may be contingent upon the applicant providing additional information or making service plan revisions.
5. Before entering into a grant agreement with the MPCA, host sites must provide proof of 501(c)(3) status and a board resolution if applicable.

Program performance measures

Host site organizations will be selected in part for their commitment and ability to contribute to program performance measures. The service project may address any of the performance measures in any of the categories. **Projects must align with at least one performance measure outlined below.** In addition, MN GreenCorps prioritizes projects based in or that benefit environmental justice areas and/or mobilizes volunteers on community service projects planned and carried out by MN GreenCorps members.

Air

- Improve air quality: members will implement measures and education aimed at monitoring and reducing air pollutants by reducing vehicle miles traveled, supporting vehicle electrification, or promoting active transportation.
- Conserve energy: members will conduct outreach and/or apply energy conservation measures to public buildings and/or homes. Retrofitted structures will result in reduced energy consumption and/or reduced energy costs.

Land and water

- Reduce water pollution: members will implement nutrient reduction efforts targeting phosphorus, total suspended solids, chloride (i.e., road salt and water softeners), etc. to improve water quality.
- Improve habitat: members will implement best management practices to treat and improve public lands through activities such as removing invasive species, planting climate resilient trees, erosion control, seeding prairie, etc.

Waste reduction

- Prevent food from going to waste: members will support and enhance programs capturing food that would otherwise have been wasted for redistribution by food rescue organizations to help address food insecurity.
- Support organics recycling: members will implement residential or institutional waste prevention or organics recycling resulting in pounds of organics prevented or diverted from the waste stream.
- Divert waste: Members will integrate sustainable waste management practices into daily operations at host site and community facilities to prevent, reuse, recycle, or otherwise divert material from the waste stream.

Outreach and education

- Educate or train individuals: members will educate and/or train individuals on environmental stewardship to improve land, air, and water quality.
- Motivate individuals to change behavior: members will provide education and training that will result in individuals changing behavior or making a promise or pledge to change behavior to lessen adverse environmental impact.
- Mobilize and/or engage volunteers: members will recruit, train, and/or engage community members in local service projects.

Criteria

As a statewide program, MN GreenCorps seeks host site organizations from all areas of the state. The MPCA will consider the mix of organization type, geographic location, and other demographic factors in deciding the composition of host sites. The MPCA reserves the right to not award host sites in any of the topic areas.

Host site applications will be reviewed using the following established criteria.

<p>Project and performance measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project aligns with MN GreenCorps pre-scoped position description and program goals. • Member activities clearly defined. • Ability of the proposed activities to meet program performance measures. 	35 points
<p>Organizational capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational mission or goals align with MN GreenCorps. • Qualified supervisor with related expertise to provide project support. • Placement does not replace, displace or duplicate existing position. 	25 points
<p>Community involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project includes opportunities for broader community involvement. • Project engages, focuses on or serves environmental justice areas per the EJ Story map. • Service activities target new communities that have not recently received MN GreenCorps assistance. 	25 points
<p>Current or past host sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How proposed member position is unique from past positions or a justifiable continued need. • Previous site performance, including timeliness of in-kind and member reporting, site visit reviews, member support and communication. <p>*New host sites automatically receive 15 points.</p>	15 points
<p>Total</p>	100 points

Grant agreement

Each host site must formally enter into a grant agreement. The agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation of the project. The recipient is expected to read and comply with all conditions of the agreement. If selected, host sites are required to be a registered vendor in SWIFT and will sign the grant agreement using DocuSign. See a sample Host Site Agreement on the MN GreenCorps’ website at www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps.

Questions

Please thoroughly review this document, along with the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) in Appendix A. Questions may be directed to mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us. As questions arise, an updated FAQ will be available online at www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps. All questions received will be listed on the FAQ. Questions will not be answered individually.

Appendix A. Frequently asked questions

Are MN GreenCorps members considered employees of our organization?

No, MN GreenCorps members are not to be considered employees or volunteers of the host site, although they will be provided with office space, computer, and other support services. They should be referred to as “members” and the activities they carry out as “service.”

Do projects have to align with one of the four topic areas?

Host sites must select one topic area on the application and have a service plan that aligns with one of the four position descriptions - community readiness & outreach, energy conservation & green transportation, stormwater & forestry, or waste reduction & recycling. There may be other opportunities for different projects in future years.

Do projects have to align with all of the essential functions on the position description?

It is not required that the project fulfills most or all of the listed essential functions on the position description. However, the service plan must align with at least one bullet point from the position description and one performance measure; alignment with two or more activities and/or measures is encouraged.

What is the financial commitment to host?

The MPCA does not charge a fee for participation in the MN GreenCorps program. The financial commitment of the host site is to provide in-kind contributions in the form of office space, internet, telephone, vehicle, or travel reimbursement (when required for service activities) and professional development costs associated with hosting a member. Host sites are expected to provide supervision and any needed materials or funds for the MN GreenCorps members to implement their project activities.

Will money be provided to the MN GreenCorps members by the MPCA to implement their projects?

No, host sites are expected to provide any needed materials or funds for the MN GreenCorps members to implement their project activities. The MPCA pays the members’ living allowances but does not have funds available to support projects.

Will host sites be responsible for training their MN GreenCorps members?

Yes, the majority of the training and ongoing supervision for day-to-day service will be provided by host sites. Members will be given basic training in AmeriCorps and program policies, procedures, and project topic areas quarterly, arranged by the MPCA. Professional staff will also be available to provide guidance as “mentors” for MN GreenCorps members.

How much time will it take to supervise a MN GreenCorps member?

The minimum requirement is an average of three (3) hours per week of a professional staff’s time supervising or supporting a MN GreenCorps member. Supervision time may exceed this minimum requirement depending on project and member needs.

What sort of reporting requirements will host site supervisors have?

Site supervisors must review and approve member timesheets every two weeks and member progress reports each month. Supervisors must conduct a mid and end term member performance evaluation and submit a great story each year.

Our organization is too small to host a MN GreenCorps member. Can we submit a joint application with other local organizations and share the MN GreenCorps member with them?

It is possible for a small organization to involve other organization(s) in an application for a MN GreenCorps member, but one organization must bear full responsibility for supervision, reporting, time-tracking, and other aspects of the MN GreenCorps members’ service. Partnerships must be clearly defined.

If we hosted a MN GreenCorps member this current program year, can we apply again?

Yes. Current and/or past host sites can apply for MN GreenCorps members in future years. Past performance will be taken into consideration.

We would like to apply for two members. Would we be more likely to be considered if we only asked for one?

Applying for more than one member does not make you any more or less likely to be selected as a host site. You might, however, be selected as a host site but only awarded one member. To allocate MN GreenCorps member positions and resources to various communities, organizations have historically not received more than two member positions. Organizations must submit an application for each member position request.

Can MN GreenCorps members assist businesses?

An AmeriCorps member cannot provide a direct benefit to a for-profit entity. However, on a limited basis, members may assist businesses owners who are community members with environmental practices when the primary goal is to improve the environment/community. Members may not assist businesses with coming into compliance or avoiding fines from any local, state, or federal environmental laws.

Can MN GreenCorps members use power tools?

Yes, MN GreenCorps members can use power tools such as chainsaws. The host site organization is responsible for providing safety training and personal protective equipment.

Are members covered under liability insurance?

While MN GreenCorps members are covered by AmeriCorps health insurance for personal needs and under the State Workers Compensation Plan for service-related injury or illness, the host site organization directing the activity is responsible for liability coverage, not the MPCA. MN GreenCorps does not provide indemnification.

How does the member selection process work? Will we be able to review potential candidates?

The MPCA administers the recruitment, application, and selection process for MN GreenCorps members. Time constraints prevent active participation by host sites in the member selection process; sites do not participate in reviewing potential candidates or making selection decisions. Host sites are encouraged to promote member service opportunities in their community, invite candidates to apply, and provide candidate recommendations. This does not guarantee that that member will be selected and placed with that host site.

Do we need to submit our 501(c)(3) documentation with our application?

No, organizations do not need to provide proof of nonprofit status with their application. However, selected host sites will be required to provide proof of 501(c)(3) status prior to entering into a grant agreement.

Do we need a Board resolution in support of the MN GreenCorps position with our application?

No, organizations governed by a board do not need to provide a resolution with their application. However, selected host sites will be required to provide a board resolution prior to entering into a grant agreement with the MPCA, if their organization requires board approval.

Appendix B. Host site requirement checklist

Host site applicants: Please use the following checklist to verify your ability to participate in the MN GreenCorps program. Eligible host sites must be able to respond “yes” to all of the following:

Host site requirements	Meets requirements
Host site is an eligible entity (government entity, school district, not for profit institution of higher education, or 501(c)(3) non-profit).	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site has at least one full-time paid employee.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site has adequate space for the member including a phone with messaging, access to a computer that has internet and email, place to save work files electronically, access to printer and copier, is accessible to people with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site understands and ensures that the member is not replacing the work of staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site supervisor will set a schedule with the member.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site will provide on-site training to member, including a comprehensive orientation during the first week the member is on-site.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor is able to provide a minimum of three (3) hours per week supporting the member and/or program,	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor will ensure MN GreenCorps member is not involved in any general site fundraising or other activities prohibited by AmeriCorps (i.e., partisan activities, religious activities, labor organizing, lobbying, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor will furnish an in-kind documentation letter when requested; instructors will be provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor will approve/submit all reporting which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member timesheets bi-weekly. • Progress reports monthly. 	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor can attend host site orientation in September.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

Appendix C. Sample board resolution

WHEREAS _____ (name of organization) has applied to host an AmeriCorps member from the Minnesota GreenCorps, a program of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), for the 2025-2026 program year; and

WHEREAS, if the MPCA selects _____ (name of organization), the organization is committed to implementing the proposed project as described in the host site application, and in accordance with pre-scoped position description; and

WHEREAS the MPCA requires that _____ (name of organization) enter into a host site agreement with the MPCA that identifies the terms, conditions, roles, and responsibilities;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT _____ (name of organization) hereby agrees to enter into and sign a host site agreement with the MPCA to carry out the member activities specified therein and to comply with all of the terms, conditions, and matching provisions of the host site agreement and authorizes and directs _____ (name of a position) to sign the grant agreement on its behalf.

Print name of signing officer

Title

Signature of an officer with our governing body

Date your governing body agreed to this resolution