

Episcopal Service Corps 2022 Program Standards

Service

- Corps members commit to serve 32-40 hours/week in organizations working toward community justice and equity, with accountability and supervisory capacity appropriate to ensuring the corps member has a positive experience. Typically these are 501c3's, government agencies, or church-related ministries. Some programs coordinate with AmeriCorps.
- Service sites are recruited and screened to ensure the environment and role is appropriate to a successful experience for the corps member. This includes the following:
 - the process of communicating Episcopal Service Corps values of service as relational solidarity, the affirmation of identities, and the formation of corps member's professional and vocational skills
 - a minimum of one hour of direct supervision each week
 - At least 1 full time equivalent, permanent staff member
 - Evaluation system that allows for a minimum of 2 reviews over the course of the service year
- Programs should enter into contracts with service sites on an annual basis.

Justice

- In decisions about recruitment, programming, community life, and host site placements, every ESC program will be guided by the ESC diversity statement:
ESC member programs value and celebrate diversity in all of God's creation, striving to build programs reflective of Beloved Community, and committing to creating affirming space for all, particularly BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ persons. We do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, or ability.

Formation

- Programs regularly facilitate the spiritual/personal formation of corps members drawing on the following common practices:
 1. Worship, prayer, and ritual that is creative, inclusive, and draws on Episcopal resources among others
 2. Meaning making in community that is focused caring for the physical mental, emotional, and spiritual health of each corps member
 3. Discernment designed to help corps establishing patterns and habits of meaningful reflection
 4. Practices that embrace ESC's commitment to diversity, creation care, and belonging
- Programs should develop an integrated philosophy and organized plan for meaningful formation opportunities, providing a minimum of 8 hours/month and at least two annual program retreats, one of which may be regionally based.
- Programs provide vocational discernment and leadership development opportunities.
- Programs will participate in pre-identified network-wide events and are encouraged to participate in other formation opportunities offered at the network level.

Community

- Program must be primarily residential and start the year with a minimum number of 4 corps members.
- A program must have at least 3 members throughout the year. If the program falls below that number, it will cease residential life and relocate remaining corps members.
- Corps members are typically 21-32 years old, though programs may welcome corps members as young as 18.
- Programs facilitate the establishment of a Rule of Life that includes shared household responsibilities, regular shared meals, regular house meetings, and mutually-established community expectations that incorporate the program's baseline requirements.

Leadership

- Program leadership are responsible for property management, site cultivation, member recruitment, ESC network participation, program formation development, budgeting, fundraising, faith community outreach, communications and supporting corps members by providing crisis management and pastoral care as needed.
- Programs are encouraged to have a minimum of one full time program director or the equivalent in order to undertake these responsibilities.
- Programs must meet governance requirements as established by their organizing documentation and legal status.
- DFMS maintains an ESC Program Manager to support and convene the network, act as a primary point of contact, and to facilitate connections between the ESC network and other networks in the Episcopal Church and in the young adult communities. (See ESC Program Manager job description for details)

Network

- Programs regularly engage with the wider ESC network and regional structures, including the ESC Advisory Council and Working Groups.
- Program Directors must sign and are subject to every provision of the Program Director Covenant.

Minimum Program Standards

- It's important for programs to have reliable and sustainable funding. A 3-year budget must accompany any application to the ESC network.
- Programs must offer health insurance or medicaid coverage for corps members and staff. Programs will also offer Employee Assistance Program coverage or equivalent mental health resources.
- ESC programs have a wide variety of housing and incorporation entities. In every case, the programs need to have contractual coverage reviewed by an attorney or the diocesan chancellor to ensure housing is stable and safe for members.
- Every program must carry insurance that meets state and local requirements. This includes property, liability, board, and worker's compensation insurance.
- Programs must meet Safeguarding standards as well as state and local safety regulations, including occupancy standards. An assessment of living standards is required before opening and reviewed via site visit from ESC Program Manager or Advisory Corps member every 3 years.
- The language we use to describe corps members and service situations is important. We do not use

words like work, job, employment, as they do not describe a corps.

- Programs and corps members must enter into an attorney-reviewed contractual agreement outlining, at a minimum, program expectations, benefits, service requirements, and dismissal/termination notification and procedures.
- Programs need to have an up-to-date Corps Member Handbook that is distributed and signed by each incoming corps member.
- All leadership and participants must be trained and certified in Safeguarding God's Children and background checked. If you are unclear about who needs to be trained, call your diocesan Safe Church coordinator.
- Every program must have a grievance policy with an identified whistleblower contact outside the organization structure.
- Every program must conduct exit interviews
- Every program must complete the annual metrics survey
- For a variety of reasons, an ESC program may need to take a time of Sabbath. See Sabbath Procedures document for details.
- Every ESC program will be visited by the ESC Program Manager and/or a member of the ESC Advisory Council once every three years. These visits are designed to facilitate an ongoing productive and collaborative relationship, promote program awareness, and ensure compliance with criteria and covenant responsibilities as outlined in the PD Covenant.

Accountability:

Membership in the ESC network is a privilege based on the covenant created and maintained between ESC Programs. Programs not meeting these criteria and the criteria outlined in the Addendums will be removed from the ESC network by the Advisory Council in consultation with ESC Program Manager until compliance is reached.

Related Documents Included by reference:

- 2022 Advisory Council Norms, Functions, Meetings
- 2022 Application Process
- 2022 ESC Coordinator at DFMS job description
- 2022 Process for Joining the ESC Network
- 2022 Program Director Transition Best Practices
- 2022 Sabbath Procedures
- 2022 Program Director Covenant