Frequently Asked Questions
Veterans Legal Corps Law Student Program
Applying to the Veterans Legal Corps

Please review the Veterans Legal Corps Law Student Application Guide and Veterans Legal Corps Law Student Manual prior to contacting Equal Justice Works.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When does the 2019 Veterans Legal Corps Law Student Program start and end?
Veterans Legal Corps Law Student Members should start their service no later than June 10, 2019 and must complete their required hours (300) by August 31, 2019. Applicants must provide a start and end date for their term of service in their application materials. The student must inform Equal Justice Works immediately if these dates change.

What is the application deadline?
Students should complete and submit their application in the Student Application Manager (SAM) at least three (3) weeks prior to their proposed start date. The final deadline to apply for the VLC Law Student Program is May 15, 2019.

When will equal justice works evaluate applications?
Equal Justice Works will evaluate applications on a rolling basis. The application for qualifying public interest law projects is now open. The final deadline to apply is May 15, 2019.

What if I applied several weeks ago and still have not heard from Equal Justice Works?
Equal Justice Works will notify applicants of the status of their application at least two weeks from the time of submission. Applicants are asked to refrain from inquiring about their application status until Please refrain from inquiring about the status of your application until the two weeks have passed unless you start date is less than 2 weeks away. Applicants should direct all inquiries to vetslegalcorps@equaljusticeworks.org.

What are the eligibility requirements to serve as VLC Law Student Member?
To participate in VLC Law Student Program, applicants:

- Must be a current law student
- Must not receive compensation for more than $4,422 in external funding for the same service
- Must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national or lawful permanent resident (e.g. green card)
- Must pass a National Service Criminal History Check
What is the deadline for the member’s signing authority to sign their contract?

The Member’s signing authority must be a staff member at the Member’s host organization. The designated signing authority will receive a link via email to execute the Member Service Agreement (MSA). Equal Justice Works recommends that the host organization sign the MSA as soon as it they receive it. The signing authority’s signature on the MSA is necessary for the Member to begin counting hours towards service.

What background checks are required for VLC Law Student Members?

Background checks are one of the most important steps to becoming a Veterans Legal Corps Law Student Member. Since this program is an AmeriCorps-funded program, Members are required to undergo three types of background checks to be eligible for service:

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<tr>
<th>Criminal History Check</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
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<tr>
<td>State of Residency and State of Service (if different)</td>
<td>Truescreen</td>
<td>Member initiates</td>
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<tr>
<td>FBI Fingerprint Check</td>
<td>Fieldprint</td>
<td>Member initiates</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Sex Offender Public Registry</td>
<td>Truescreen</td>
<td>Equal Justice Works conducts</td>
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Members must fully complete all of the aforementioned checks before counting hours towards the Veterans Legal Corps. Failure to complete all necessary checks before beginning service will result in a reduction of allowable hours. Applicants must sign a release form for the background checks during the application process, and will receive additional information regarding these checks via email.

AMERICORPS SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Do Veterans Legal Corps Law Student Members receive compensation for their service?

The Veterans Legal Corps Law Student Program is part of the AmeriCorps national service movement. As such, law students who participate in the program will not receive compensation for their service. However, students who successfully complete the program will receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award (approximately $1,230). The Education Award is an electronic disbursement from AmeriCorps to a member’s AmeriCorps account that the Member may apply towards qualifying student loans or current tuition within seven years of completion of service.
Can Members receive outside compensation as a VLC Law Student Member?

Yes. Members may receive funding in the form of a grant, stipend, or living allowance of up to $4,422 for their term of service, but it may not be earned as an hourly wage unless through Federal Work Study. Please note that there is no restriction on work outside of the Member’s VLC term of service (i.e. part-time job) or outside funds received for activities outside of service hours (i.e. general scholarship for law school).

*Federal Work Study Award

If Members are receiving funds through a Federal Work Study Award, they may receive an hourly wage. Members must disclose this amount to Equal Justice Works and, if applicable, ensure that the host organization reduces any additional payments so that the total amount received remains under this $4,422 cap. If Members are unsure whether their additional source of funding will affect their eligibility to participate in the VLC Law Student Program, they should contact Equal Justice Works at vetslegalcorps@equaljusticeworks.org.

Can Members split their required hours between two or more host organizations?

No. Members must complete their service in the Veterans Legal Corps at one organization during their term.

Where can Members serve?

Members may serve at qualifying host organizations (non-profits providing civil legal aid to low-income persons in the United States, U.S. territories, and tribal reservations), on a project that falls within the scope of the Veterans Legal Corps.

Qualifying organizations include those that host Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Veterans Legal Corps Fellows, specifically, or individually designed projects by Equal Justice Works Fellows, those that are funded by the Legal Services Corporation, and Veterans Treatment Courts.

Will a Member who previously served in an AmeriCorps-funded program, including an Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Law Student Program, be eligible to participate in the 2019 Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Veterans Legal Corps?

Under AmeriCorps regulations, individuals can serve a maximum of four terms of service, no matter the length of each term. However, an individual is limited to earning up to the aggregate sum in dollar value of two full-time (1,700-hour) education awards totaling about $11,630.

A previous term of service will not necessarily cause the Member to reach the limit on education awards or terms of service. To find out how many terms of service or education awards that have been received in the past, Members should contact AmeriCorps directly at 1-800-942-2677 or log into their My AmeriCorps Portal account.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF VLC LAW STUDENT MEMBERS AND THEIR HOSTS

If Members are already tracking hours at their host organization, do they need to be duplicated in the Student Application Manager (SAM)?

Yes, Members must track their daily hours in SAM and sign the time logs monthly. Members will receive notices from Equal Justice Works if it is discovered that they are not entering hours regularly. It is an AmeriCorps requirement that Members track hours regularly, and failure to do so, or respond to Equal Justice Works reminders, may result in Equal Justice Works’ determination that the Member has exited service early.

Can the Member’s supervisor be a current Equal Justice Works Veterans Legal Corps Fellow?

No. If a Student Member is located at an Equal Justice Works Veterans Legal Corps Fellowship Host Site, the Student Member can work with the VLC Fellow; however, the Fellow must not supervise the Student Member in any capacity.

Can the Member’s supervisor be a non-attorney staff member?

Yes. However, Members must abide by their relevant state rules of professional conduct regarding supervision by a licensed attorney when doing specific legal work.

What are the host site's main responsibilities?

By participating in the Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Veterans Legal Corps, the host organization agrees to host a Student Member and certifies that it is a qualifying organization for the program. Organizations should refer to the 2019 Veterans Legal Corps Law Student Manual for guidance on qualifying organization membership.

Host organizations are responsible for providing supervision and qualifying projects for VLC Student Members in partnership with Equal Justice Works. They are also responsible for ensuring that Student Members complete all program requirements, including the 300-hour minimum service requirement, per AmeriCorps guidelines.

SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING THE VLC LAW STUDENT PROGRAM

Can Members work beyond the end of their VLC Law Student Program service term if they have not met the 300-hour requirement?

Veterans Legal Corps Student Members are required to complete a minimum of 300 hours of service. Student Members must begin service by June 10, 2019, and are encouraged to complete service by August 30, 2019.

As an AmeriCorps Member, all Veterans Legal Corps Student Members are entitled to 365 days to complete their service; however, during the selection process, priority will be given to applicants who demonstrate a commitment to completing their 300 hours of service by close of business on August 30, 2019.
What are the exit procedures for the VLC Law Student Program?

When the VLC Law Student Member completes their exit form in the Student Application Manager, they will receive an email from Equal Justice Works with instructions regarding the exit procedures. Upon doing so, their supervisor will receive an email instructing them to certify the time log, a satisfactory evaluation, and the Member's non-participation in prohibited activities. The student must also complete an exit form in their My AmeriCorps portal.

How do I receive my education award?

Within 30 days after you and your supervisor have completed and signed all portions of the exit materials, including the final time log certification and final report, Equal Justice Works will notify AmeriCorps of your successful completion of service. AmeriCorps is responsible for disbursing the education award to your AmeriCorps Portal account, where you will be able to send the award directly to an accredited institution or qualifying loan provider. Equal Justice Works does not disburse your education award and you will not receive a check.