



# / Law Student Application Guide

Veterans Legal Corps  
June - August 2019

## / Overview

### VETERANS LEGAL CORPS PROGRAM

Veterans often face complex and intertwined legal problems, many of which stem from physical and mental injuries sustained during military service.

Through the Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Veterans Legal Corps (VLC), Fellows and law students provide legal services that enable low-income and homeless veterans and their families to stabilize, recover, and rebuild their lives.

### TIMELINE

#### Application & Service Deadlines

The Veterans Legal Corps program operates on a rolling basis, with start and end dates largely dictated by the participant: though the final deadline for law students to apply is **May 15, 2019**, students should submit their application at least three (3) weeks prior to their proposed start date. Veterans Legal Corps Law Student Members must begin their service **no later than June 10, 2019**, and must complete their required hours (300) **by August 31, 2019**.

**Note:** Applicants must provide a start and end date for their term of service in their application materials, and must inform Equal Justice Works immediately if these dates change.

#### Notification Process

Equal Justice Works will notify applicants of the status of their application at least **two weeks** from the time of submission. Please refrain from inquiring about the status of your application until the two weeks have passed, unless your start date is less than two weeks away. Applicants should direct all inquiries to [yetslegalcorps@equaljusticeworks.org](mailto:yetslegalcorps@equaljusticeworks.org).

#### / Dates to Remember

- **May 15:** The final deadline to apply for the VLC Law Student Program
- **June 10:** The final deadline to begin service for the summer of 2019
- **August 31:** The final deadline to complete 300 hours of service

# / Eligibility

## APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

### General

- Must be a current law student
- Must not receive compensation for more than \$4,422 in external funding for the same service (see page 3)
- Must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or lawful permanent resident (e.g. green card)
- Must be able to pass a National Service Criminal History Check if chosen (see below)

### Required Background Checks

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:

Criminal History Check	Method	Responsible Party
State of Residency and State of Service (if different)	Truescreen	Member initiates
FBI Fingerprint Check	Fieldprint	Member initiates
National Sex Offender Public Registry	Truescreen	Equal Justice Works conducts

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

### Compensation

As part of AmeriCorps, law students who participate in the program will not receive compensation for their service. However, students who successfully complete the program requirements—300 hours of service—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.

### Outside Compensation

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 (see below). Please note that there is no restriction on work outside of the Member's VLC term of service (e.g. part-time job) or outside funds received for activities outside of service hours (e.g. 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](mailto:vetslegalcorps@equaljusticeworks.org).

### Prior Service

Under AmeriCorps regulations, individuals can serve a maximum of four terms of AmeriCorps 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.

## HOST ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS

### Service Locations

Members may not serve at multiple organizations—they must complete their service in the Veterans Legal Corps at one organization during their term.

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 otherwise host individually designed projects by [Equal Justice Works Fellows](#). Members may also serve at organizations that are funded by the [Legal Services Corporation](#), or at [Veterans Treatment Courts](#).

## Supervision

The host organization must be able to provide the VLC Student Member with a dedicated supervisor. Student Members may be supervised by non-attorney staff members; however, Members must abide by their relevant state rules of professional conduct regarding supervision by a licensed attorney when doing specific legal work.

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.

## / Responsibilities

### STUDENT MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

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.

### HOST SITE 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.

## / Program Completion

### SERVICE HOURS

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.

## EXIT PROCEDURES

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](#).

## 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.