



Hawai'i Commission for National and Community Service

State Service Plan

April 2024 – March 2027

AmericorpsHawaii.org

Our Mission

The mission of the Hawaii Commission for National and Community Service is to:

- Improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering
- Make a positive impact for those in need across Hawai'i's communities
- Enrich the lives of those who serve

This mission is guided by two things – the AmeriCorps Key Focus Areas and a set of Hawaiian values.

AmeriCorps National Key Focus Areas

- Disaster Services
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Economic Opportunity
- Healthy Futures
- Veterans & Military Families

Hawaiian Values

- Aloha – love, affection, compassion
- Kuleana – responsibility, privilege
- Manawale'a – to give freely
- Kāko'o – to uphold, support, assist
- Kuahui – to cooperate, work together
- Mālama – to care for, preserve, protect, stewardship

About HCNCS/AmeriCorps Hawai'i

The State of Hawai'i's cultural values of aloha (love, compassion) and kuleana (responsibility) naturally foster volunteerism and add a positive element to community service. Community service and a resilient volunteer base are vital for our state, considering the high risk of natural disasters (tsunamis, lava flows, or hurricanes) as well as the socio-economic challenges our residents face in both urban and rural areas.

Hawai'i, as a state comprised of eight main islands and several thousand miles from the continental US, experiences unique geographical challenges that require collaboration among various partners and stakeholders to effectively serve our communities. Innovation and comprehensive planning are also extremely important, as well as wise resource management.

The Hawai'i Commission's role is to identify, create, and foster opportunities to promote volunteerism throughout the State of Hawai'i via our AmeriCorps State and National programs. This program is separate from the AmeriCorps programs that are directly funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), e.g., AmeriCorps VISTA. The Hawai'i Commission maintains a significant representation of ethnic diversity in our volunteers, and will continue to do so over the next three years.

The Hawai'i Commission works closely with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and is the liaison between CNCS and the State of Hawai'i. The Hawai'i Commission is the only way for Hawai'i to receive federal funds from the CNCS. The Hawai'i Commission is administratively attached to the University of Hawai'i via the President's Office. The commissioners are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Hawai'i State Senate. Commissioners must represent key cross-sections of our state population as identified by CNCS.

This State Service Plan is a three (3) year blueprint to foster Hawai'i's ethic of community service and is guided by our Hawaiian values. It shall be evaluated every three years and reassessed annually

Hawai'i at a Glance

In 2022, more than 2,700 Americans of all ages and backgrounds united to meet local needs, strengthen communities, and expand opportunity through national service in Hawai'i. AmeriCorps invested more than \$8.1 million in federal funding to support cost-effective community solutions, working hand in hand with local partners to empower individuals to help communities tackle their toughest challenges.

AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers served at more than 300 locations across Hawai'i, including schools, food banks, homeless shelters, health clinics, youth centers, veterans facilities, and other nonprofit and faith-based organizations. Through a unique public-private partnership, AmeriCorps and its partners generated more than \$4.5 million in outside resources from businesses, foundations, public agencies, and other sources in Hawai'i last year. This local support strengthened community impact and increased the return on taxpayer dollars.

In 2022, HCNCS had a total of 335 members serving in areas across the state and received a total of \$3,157,645 in AmeriCorps funding

Our Goal

Over the next three years, it is our goal to increase and strengthen our support of underserved communities in Hawai'i and build a strong commission infrastructure to meet the needs of all our communities.

Our Priority Focus Areas

Support for Maui

More than 2,100 buildings and 800 business establishments were destroyed in Lahaina and other areas of Maui during the devastating wildfires in August 2023. In addition to the losses that personally affected thousands of residents across the island, the fires created a negative economic impact to the entire state. HCNCS endeavors to support the recovery of Maui and its residents.

- Bolster immediate response efforts and short-term recovery needs
 - Support disaster service efforts
 - Support short-term efforts to assist with food insecurity and homelessness
- Support medium- and long-term paths to thriving communities
 - Partner with Maui-based or other organizations that provide services in key AmeriCorps priority areas
 - Research long-term possibilities for commission-based disaster services program

Continued Support Across Hawai'i

HCNCS will support efforts across Hawai'i to expand national service opportunities and positively impact individuals and communities in need.

- Conduct an annual grantmaking process that increases access and utilization of HCNCS-funded resources in underserved communities.
 - Develop grantmaking process to include more outreach, technical assistance, and improved review and decision-making
 - Identify and partner with mid- and large-sized nonprofits and community-based organizations to recruit and deploy HCNCS-funded members
 - Offer informational opportunities for potential HCNCS applicants to learn about AmeriCorps
 - Provide training and support to maximize organizations' applications to HCNCS
- Provide meaningful support to HCNCS portfolio programs

- Conduct annual training and technical assistance for program directors to increase compliance with AmeriCorps and University of Hawai'i policies and monitoring
- Support member training that enhances the member experience and prepares them for post AmeriCorps service
- Expand educational and economic opportunity in underserved communities.
 - Utilize data from volunteer and non-profit surveys to better understand community service landscape in Hawai'i
 - Build institutional capacities of new and small community-based organizations to recruit and deploy AmeriCorps-funded members
 - Offer educational and training opportunities in topics such as financial accounting, recordkeeping, human resources, and payroll
 - Introduce community-based organizations to the AmeriCorps portfolio of programs

Addressing Strategic Administrative Needs for Greater Impact

In order to develop and communicate a statewide ethic of service and volunteerism, HCNCS must build and grow a strong administrative foundation to meet the needs of its programs and the wider community.

- Build commission infrastructure to maximize AmeriCorps funding and opportunities
 - Meet all compliance requirements of federal funding partner, AmeriCorps, and state funding partner, University of Hawai'i
 - Maintain strong relationships with AmeriCorps regional office and Hawai'i portfolio manager
 - Develop strong fiscal and programmatic policies and procedures
 - Grow staff capacity to meet commission administrative requirements and to support high-quality service programs
 - Update and develop plans for communications, marketing, and branding
- Develop cross-stream collaborations with other AmeriCorps programs in Hawai'i to grow a statewide network of AmeriCorps partners and to support the engagement of volunteers aged 55 or older
 - AmeriCorps Seniors (Foster Grandparents, RSVP, Senior Companions)
 - AmeriCorps VISTA
 - AmeriCorps NCCC
- Identify and develop relationships with other volunteer and service oriented programs to grow statewide network of service partners
 - State and County programs
 - Community non-profits

Addressing Strategic Governance for Greater Impact

HCNCS has experienced major changes in administrative controls and staffing over the past several years. In order to support a commission office that can positively impact national service in Hawaii, the commission must contemplate its own governance structure.

- Assess current status and future of commission administration
 - Work with Governor's Office and Legislature to explore appropriate alternative fiscal agent for the commission
 - Develop transition plans, as needed
- Assess and update commission bylaws
- Work with Governor's Boards and Commissions office to ensure required commissioner appointments each year