What is an Up2Us Sports VISTA and what duties can an Up2Us Sports VISTA perform?

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) is a national service program under Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) that aims to fight poverty. Up2Us Sports receives a grant from CNCS, which allows us to provide VISTA members to sports-based youth development programs nationally.

VISTA members are capacity builders and help to strengthen and support organizations. VISTA members DO NOT perform direct service. They can do the following:

- Recruit and train community volunteers
- Apply for funding sources and write grants
- Design and implement databases and evaluate programs
- Market the organization and manage social media platforms
- Establish and build new partnerships
- Plan fundraisers and special events

What is my organization’s financial obligation?

For the 2020-2021 VISTA year only, we are discounting the cost to host a full-year Up2Us Sports VISTA. Your organization can receive an Up2Us Sports VISTA for just $7,500!

How does the living allowance work?

CNCS provides a living allowance to each Up2Us Sports VISTA. The living allowance is based on the poverty line of your organization’s county. You can use this document to determine the day rate for your county. To determine the full rate, multiple the day rate by 365. The living allowance is provided by bi-weekly via direct deposit and is taxed federally. Even if the Up2Us Sports VISTA does not pay rent, they will still receive the allowance.

Can organizations provide additional compensation to the Up2Us Sports VISTA?

Organizations cannot provide an Up2Us Sports VISTA with more pay. You can give your Up2Us Sports VISTA other incentives like: a rent stipend, food gift cards, transit pass, gas cards, internet/cell phone support. However, checks can’t be made directly to them, they must be made to the landlord, internet company, etc.
In addition to the living allowance, what benefits does an Up2Us Sports VISTA receive?

- **Leave**: 10 sick days and 10 personal days.
- **Relocation assistance**: VISTA members who are moving 50 miles or more from their home are eligible to receive a settling-in allowance of $750. Additionally, members receive a travel allowance to cover any travel expenses and is based on the mileage from the VISTA's home address to site address.
- **End-of-service benefit**: Choice between the Segal Education Award ($6,095) and cash stipend ($1,800) upon successful completion of the term.
- **Health benefits**: If VISTA members have insurance, they can enroll in the Allowance Plan, which will help to cover out-of-pocket expenses. If members do not have insurance, they can enroll in the Benefits Plan, a basic health plan, at no cost.
- **Non-competitive eligibility**: VISTA alumni applying to federal agencies have a faster application process.

How does the Up2Us Sports VISTA receive the end-of-service awards and are there any limitations when using them?

If the Up2Us Sports VISTA chooses to receive the education award, they can access it through the My AmeriCorps Portal. It is a voucher and must be used toward school expenses or repaying existing loans. The education award may be used up to seven years after completing service and is considered taxable income.

If the Up2Us Sports VISTA chooses the end-of-service summer stipend, the stipend is paid in the last two living allowance payments. There are no limitations on how the VISTA uses this stipend.

Can a previous employee work as an Up2Us Sports VISTA?

Up2Us Sports VISTA members are prohibited from replacing current or previous employees. Also, Up2Us Sports VISTAs cannot perform a role that would be carried out by another employee. An Up2Us Sports VISTA can support a full-time staff member who has taken on more responsibilities and can help support a department.

Can an organization share an Up2Us Sports VISTA?

An Up2Us Sports VISTA can work at various locations within an umbrella organization (YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, etc.) if the locations are in the same city. When applying, please indicate each site's location and your plan for implementation. If offices are located nationally, each city should apply to host an Up2Us Sports VISTA. For example, Up2Us Sports NYC and Up2Us Sports LA will each apply separately to host an Up2Us Sports VISTA.
What are the hour requirements?

Up2Us Sports VISTA(s) should work in a full-time capacity. They should average around 40 hours a week. The absolute minimum hours they can work is 30 hours per week. We do not formally track hours. This program is based on the honor system of adhering to the guidelines set by the program.

Can my Up2Us Sports VISTA work in-person?

Your Up2Us Sports VISTA is able to work “in-person” as different states begin to open up. You must ensure that your organization is following all of the guidelines that are outlined in your city and state. Please submit a plan to the Up2Us Sports VISTA team showing how you plan to keep members safe and healthy.

How does the Up2Us Sports VISTA apply?

Each organization will create an opportunity listing link, which will be posted on the My AmeriCorps Portal. All candidates will apply to the position through this listing. The application includes the following sections: motivational statement, skills and experience, education, community service, criminal history questionnaire, demographic information, and references. Two references will be required to respond to a list of questions. Teachers and professors, supervisors, coaches, and mentors are valid references, while co-workers, friends, and family members are not.

What documents does an Up2Us Sports VISTA need to provide in order to start their service term?

The Up2Us Sports VISTA must complete the required onboarding forms, which are found on the My AmeriCorps Portal. The Up2Us Sports VISTA will select their end-of-service award and fill out information needed to receive the living allowance.

Does an Up2Us Sports VISTA qualify to receive unemployment benefits?

If an Up2Us Sports VISTA was not previously enrolled in unemployment benefits, they can not collect unemployment now that their service has begun. Up2Us Sports VISTA members are not covered by unemployment compensation because they aren’t in an employment relationship with either the federal government or host site.

If an Up2Us Sports VISTA was previously enrolled in unemployment, it varies from state to state as to if they can continue to collect it. Individuals must contact their state’s unemployment office to inquire and find out details. Our team is also doing our best to get more information about each state’s policy and we’ll keep you updated.