

**From Insight to Impact**  
– worldwide

Longitudinal Study of  
AmeriCorps Members:  
Respondent Tracking

**OMB Supporting  
Statement for  
Paperwork Reduction  
Act Submissions –  
Section A**

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## A. Justification

### 1. Circumstances Requiring the Collection of Data

The *Longitudinal Study of AmeriCorps Members* is a quasi-experimental study designed to measure the outcomes and impacts of AmeriCorps participation on members' civic engagement, education, employment and life skills. The study compares changes in the outcomes of AmeriCorps members over time to those of similarly interested individuals not enrolled in AmeriCorps, controlling for interest in national and community service, member and family demographics, and prior civic engagement.

The AmeriCorps programs are funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation). The Corporation is a government corporation reauthorized in 2009 by the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. The Corporation's mission is to engage Americans of all ages and backgrounds in community-based national service that is intended to address the Nation's education, health, environmental and energy conservation, economic opportunity, and veterans-related needs in order to achieve direct and demonstrable results. The Corporation's programs and public-private partnerships involve national and community-based service organizations, corporations, foundations, colleges, universities, K-12 schools, and State and municipal governments.

One of the major goals of the Corporation is that the lives of those who serve will be improved through their service experience. The Corporation has an interest in the study of AmeriCorps because the results of this study will enable the Corporation to determine the extent to which service in AmeriCorps fosters a lifetime of citizenship and civic engagement among members who serve (Executive Order 13331 of February 27, 2004); and enhances skills development and educational level and opportunities for participants (National and Community Service Act of 1990, Section 199H 42 USC 12655). This study also complements the Corporation's strategic plan, specifically addressing the Corporation's guiding principle to measure and continually improve its programs' benefits to service recipients, participants, community organizations, and the national culture of service; and to support continued civic engagement, leadership, and public service careers for its programs' participants and community volunteers.

Since 1999, the Corporation has conducted four surveys of the AmeriCorps survey sample. The most recent occurred in 2007 (OMB Control Number 3045-0123), eight years after the baseline survey. In order to be able to reach survey sample members for subsequent surveys in the future, the Corporation needs to locate survey respondents. By locating respondents, the Corporation will reduce study attrition. The Corporation and its evaluation contractor, Abt Associates, will focus on three activities in this effort:

- Obtaining or locating AmeriCorps Longitudinal Study respondents' current contact information;
- Locating hard-to-find respondents; and
- Locating study participants who did not respond to the Phase III survey under OMB Control Number 3045-0123.

## **2. Purposes and Uses of the Data**

The verified and updated contact information collected will be maintained and used by the Corporation for future surveying of the Longitudinal Study of AmeriCorps Members study sample.

## **3. Uses of Information Technology to Reduce Burden**

Several methods will be used to locate respondents. To reduce the burden on respondents, efforts that do not require a response will be implemented first.

In the first approach, Abt Associates will utilize subscription-only databases, such as Choicepoint, and other databases to obtain updated contact information. If Abt Associates finds updated contact information through these databases, it will update the AmeriCorps contact information database. Abt Associates will also cull through additional websites, such as networking websites, for information and leads on hard-to-locate respondents.

After culling through subscription-only databases, such as Choicepoint and other databases for updated contact information, Abt Associates will call, mail, or e-mail respondents in the AmeriCorps Longitudinal Study (from baseline) to verify their contact information.

For those respondents where Abt Associates does not have the correct phone number or address, the respondents' friends and family (data collected during the baseline, post-program, post-program supplemental, and phase III surveys) will be contacted. Short of face-to-face tracking and locating efforts, Abt Associates will utilize any and all prior contact information to locate respondents. This often includes getting information from friends or family and following up on those leads. As Abt Associates obtains and verifies contact information, it will update the AmeriCorps contact information database.

## **4. Efforts to Identify Duplication**

Efforts to avoid duplication include a review of the Corporation's administrative agency reporting requirements and of existing studies of Corporation programs. Existing data can, and will, be used where possible.

## **5. Efforts to minimize burden on small businesses**

This information collection will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

## **6. Consequences of Not Collecting the Information**

Frequently updated information for study sample members is important to maintain contact with the study sample. The Corporation needs to maintain the study sample so members can be surveyed in the future to provide the Corporation with continued insight into the long-term impacts of service in AmeriCorps. If the Corporation loses track of study sample members, as a result of out-dated contact information, the survey sample size would decline and the information gained from future surveys could be compromised.

## **7. Special Circumstances Justifying Inconsistencies with Guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6**

There are no special circumstances required for the collection of the updated contact information from study participants.

## **8. Consultation Outside the Agency**

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub.L. No. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), the Corporation published a notice in the Federal Register announcing the agency's intention to request an OMB review of data collection activities. The notice was published on Friday, October 16, 2009, on page 53219 and provided a 60-day period for public comment. A copy of the Federal Register notice for this information collection is included in Attachment B. There were no public comments submitted to the Corporation in response to the Federal Register notice.

## **9. Payments or Gifts to Respondents**

Respondents will receive a small incentive, such as a magnet, designed to encourage them to update their contact information, thereby achieving a high response rate and reducing the likelihood of non-response bias. Due to the long period of the longitudinal study and the use of a panel of members over time, incentives help to ensure member remain in each wave of data collection. Based on prior experience and research, the use of a small incentive may also reduce the need for more expensive field tracking and locating services.

## **10. Assurance of Confidentiality**

Every effort will be made to maintain the privacy and/or confidentiality of respondents. The confidentiality procedures adopted for this study during all rounds of data collection, data processing, and analysis consist of the following:

- All study respondents will be assured that the information they provide is confidential and will be used only for the purpose of this research. To ensure data security, all individuals hired by our contractor, Abt Associates, are required to adhere to strict standards and sign an oath of confidentiality as a condition of employment.
- Hard-copy data collection forms are delivered to a locked area for receipt and processing. Abt Associates maintains restricted access to all data preparation areas (i.e., receipt, coding, and data entry). All data files on multi-user systems will be under the control of a database manager, with access limited to project staff on a "need-to-know" basis only.
- Survey data collected via the web will also be protected. The Corporation's contractor, Abt Associates, will maintain web-based survey data on a secure server with appropriate levels of password and other types of protection.

- Individual identifying information will be maintained separately from completed data collection forms and from computerized data files used for analysis. No respondent identifiers will be contained in public use files made available from the study, and no data will be released in a form that identifies individual grantee staff, service providers, program participants, or comparison group members.

## 11. Questions of a Sensitive Nature

The information collected is not of a sensitive nature.

## 12. Estimate of reporting and recordkeeping hour and cost burdens of the collection of information

Exhibit 1 lists the time and cost estimates of the reporting burden for updating contact information.

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### Exhibit 1

#### Estimates of Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

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	Number of Respondents	Minutes per Respondent	Response Burden in Hours	Cost/Hour	Cost to Respondents
Treatment Group					
State and National	1,401	6	140.1	\$10.91	\$1,528.49
NCCC	380	6	38.0	\$10.91	\$414.58
Comparison Group					
State and National	1,219	6	121.9	\$10.91	\$1,329.93
NCCC	320	6	32.0	\$10.91	\$349.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,320</b>		<b>332</b>		<b>\$3,622.12</b>

**Number of respondents:** The number of respondents, 3,320, was calculated by adding the 1,781 former AmeriCorps members in the treatment group and the 1,539 individuals in the comparison group.

**Minutes per respondent:** The estimated minutes per respondent, based on Abt Associates' experience collecting similar information for other studies, is three minutes. The tracking will occur once every six months, for an annualized estimated burden of six minutes per respondent.

**Cost per hour:** The Corporation estimates a corpsmembers' average hourly living allowance at \$10.91, reflecting the average 1999 earnings by the comparison group in the survey sample plus 4 percent annual increases. Other than their time to complete the survey, there are no direct monetary costs to respondents.

**13. Estimate of Total Capital and Startup Costs/Operation and Maintenance Costs to Respondents or Record-Keepers**

Not applicable.

**14. Estimates of Costs to the Federal Government**

The estimated cost to the Federal Government for the tracking data collection is \$75,000.

**15. Changes in Burden**

This submission to OMB is for a renewal of 3045-0123, with a change in burden.

**16. Plans for Publication, Analysis, and Schedule**

Exhibit 2 lists the schedule for the data collection.

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**Exhibit 2**

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**Schedule for Tracking and Locating Study Respondents**

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February 2010 - August 2010	Locate respondents and update data in the Longitudinal Study of AmeriCorps Members database
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**17. Approval to Not Display Expiration Date**

Not applicable.

**18. Exceptions to Item 19 of OMB Form 83-1**

No exemption required.