

March 10, 2021

Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
Susan Minson
OMB Desk Officer for the Corporation for National and Community Service
725 17th Street, N.W. Room 10102
Washington, D.C. 20503

RE: Request for OMB Approval for Emergency Processing

Dear Ms. Minson:

Thank you for taking the time to review our application and request on such short notice. The Corporation for National and Community Service, dba AmeriCorps, has been working closely with OMB through the month to prepare to collect information from AmeriCorps Seniors grantees regarding their service activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate your time and attention to expediting the clearance of this collection.

As you know, AmeriCorps Seniors provides grants to organization to engage Americans 55 years and older in volunteer service. AmeriCorps Seniors knows that due to the continued impact of COVID-19, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers may continue to be unable to serve. AmeriCorps Seniors FGP and SCP grantees have been authorized to continue to pay AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers who are unable to serve a temporary allowance through March 31, 2021. The temporary allowance may be discontinued following this date, following an OMB review of the situation. Information from the survey – detailing how many volunteers are still unable to serve and potential vaccine affect on volunteers' ability to serve – will be useful in making a determination to extend the temporary allowance.

During COVID-19 grantees were to put in place a plan and structure – i.e. infrastructure, training, electronic equipment – that supports AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in FGP and SCP service in an alternative manner and complies with each programs' statutory and regulatory requirements. OMB has requested information about service activities during COVID-19. Existing reporting mechanisms – grant applications, progress reports, financial reports - were not sufficient to get at this information.

Public harm is reasonably likely to occur if normal clearance procedures are followed and if the temporary pay allowance is not extended past March 31, 2021. The temporary pay allowance is crucial to helping preserve the volunteer workforce who are trained and experienced service providers and to minimize potential service disruptions. It is also vital to ensuring the continuity of service for these programs. AmeriCorps Seniors runs the risk that volunteers will leave, not return, and that grantees will cease from seeking to engage in national service. There is also the very real economic costs associated by senior volunteers – all of which are below 200% of the poverty line. For these seniors, their stipend is vital to getting their prescriptions, getting to doctor appointments, ensuring

payment of their utilities, etc. This is needed more than ever due to the exceptional circumstances of COVID-19.

This submission includes one set of Survey Instructions. It also includes this letter, Supporting Justification, and 30 days submission for OMB review.

Since the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic, many Americans have expressed a renewed desire to serve their country by volunteering in their community. Now, we have an obligation to ensure that Americans have quality opportunities to serve. Moreover, as AmeriCorps and OMB have previously communicated, AmeriCorps is working hard to ensure it is fully compliant with the Paperwork Reduction Act and with OMB's information collection policies and procedures.

If you have any questions, Robin Corindo is the appropriate contact, and she is available to assist you in completing this expedited process. She can be reached at 202-489-5578 or rcorindo@cns.gov. We sincerely thank you for your consideration of this request and your willingness to work with to fully comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act.

Respectfully Submitted,

Atalaya Jones Sergi, Director, AmeriCorps Seniors
Corporation for National and Community Service