



Public Comment Submission from America's Service Commissions

Agency Information Collection Activities; Comment Request; Application Package for Current Population Survey Civic Engagement and Volunteering Supplement

July 13, 2026

AmeriCorps Agency Colleagues,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Civic Engagement and Volunteering Supplement Survey. This comment is provided by America's Service Commissions (ASC), the association of the 52 Governor designated state service commissions, which administer 75% of AmeriCorps State and National funding and support an ethic of service in their states and territories. State service commissions have championed the Volunteer Generation Fund grant since its creation and more than 90% of state service commissions facilitate, fund, and/or support volunteer engagement activities above and beyond AmeriCorps to some degree in their state or territory.

State service commissions and their partner organizations, including but not limited to volunteer centers, local United Ways, state agencies, local governments, and nonprofits use the data and insights from the volunteering and civic engagement supplement, VCLA report, and other associated resources to inform their volunteer engagement strategies, training, and resource allocations. The data and reports produced from the volunteering and civic engagement supplement help inform state service commission state service plans, which are approved by the state service commission's Governor and serve as a blueprint for identifying state priorities, themes, and areas of emphasis among all the streams of service. The supplement data and report inform commission-led volunteer engagement strategies and is used to educate elected officials and stakeholders about the state's volunteer landscape. It is also used to identify trends and focus areas for training and facilitates cross-sector partnerships to further volunteer engagement initiatives. In addition to the utility to commissions, the Volunteer in Civic Life in America report has proven to be a positive marketing and communications tool for both the AmeriCorps Agency and the broader volunteer engagement field about the importance of volunteering and how it intersects with American life.



ASC has submitted public comments in 2017, 2020, and 2023 about the supplement. We continue to have similar concerns as expressed in previous comments, as the survey was previously altered to center civic engagement and reduced the questions associated with volunteering. The input sought by the AmeriCorps Agency on the changes to the 2017 revised survey primarily reflected input from academics working in the space of civic engagement and we believe there was not adequate representation of practitioners working in the field of volunteering and community engagement to develop a survey that reflects the data that is needed.

Thus, the AmeriCorps Agency should reinstate volunteerism-related questions that were previously present in the survey. This will ensure the data has the historic baseline for comparison, which is essential to seeing how individuals and communities interact differently with neighbors, politics, and in their volunteering in today's world. Having the trendline analysis available from consistent data collection that covers all the nuances that were captured in the past will be critical to evaluate any change happening. Additionally, more questions related to volunteerism on the Civic Engagement and Volunteering Supplement Survey are essential to gaining insight on how Americans are volunteering and in turn glean information on how organizations can best support those volunteering.

We recognize there are a limited number of questions that may be asked as part of the supplement therefore we recommend revising the survey to combine questions that are similar to make space for more volunteer questions. We recommend combining questions 12 and 13 into one question about attending a public meeting and/or contacting or visiting with a public official. We also recommend removing question 14, as the question is not directly relevant to civic engagement and volunteering (we understand how it may be related, but not a primary question of interest compared to other indicators of civic engagement and volunteering activity).

Research in the field shows that volunteerism changed throughout the last decade. In the wake of a sharp decline in the 2023 data, the 2025 data showed that volunteerism is rebounding. The Current Population Survey Civic Engagement and Volunteering Supplement provides an opportunity to explore and delve deeper into the changing volunteering ecosystem. As such, we appreciate the inclusion of question 16f around the distinction of volunteering in-person and virtually online during the last 12 months. We suggest changing the wording to "remote and/or virtual volunteering" as this wording would be the most inclusive when attempting to capture volunteer opportunities Americans have participated in.



We recommend the following questions be reinstated or added:

1. Type of Activity -

- Coach, referee, supervise sports team
- Tutor or teach
- Mentor youth
- Be an usher, greeter, or minister
- Collect, prepare, distribute or serve food
- Collect, make, or distribute clothing
- Fundraise or sell items to raise money
- Provide counseling, medical care, other services
- Provide general office services
- Provide professional or management assistance
- Engage in music, performance, or other activities
- Engage in general labor or transportation
- Any other type of activity/specify

This question provides valuable information regarding the **type of service activities** people are participating in such as mentoring, skill-based activities, or others.

2. Ask about what types of groups they are volunteering with:

Type of Organization - What type of organization is that?

1. Religious org.
2. Children's educational, sports, or recreational group
3. Other educational group
4. Social and community service group.
5. Civic org.
6. Cultural or arts org.
7. Environmental or animal care org.
8. Health research or health education org.
9. Hospital, clinic, or healthcare org.
10. Immigrant/refugee assistance
11. International org.
12. Labor union, business or professional org.
13. Political party or advocacy group
14. Public safety org.
15. Sports or hobby group



16. Youth services org.
17. Some other type of org.

This question is essential for the field to understand **where and how** people are volunteering.

3. Add a question asking about whether people know how to get involved, “Do you know how to get involved in volunteering or community groups, in the community?”
4. Add back a question on how the respondent became connected to their primary volunteer activity, with options including: through their workplace, place of worship, friend/family member, found online, saw in newspaper, etc.
5. Add back question about how many organizations the respondent volunteers with, which is helpful to know the scope of volunteering happening in the state.
6. Add a question related to corporate and employer volunteer programs like have you engaged in volunteer activities led through your employer? This could capture more paid volunteer time or hours related to Corporate Social Responsibility programs like Days of Impact, Days of Caring, Service Days, team building around volunteer projects, and paid time off. Ideally, this would be a subsequent question to question SWP2.
7. Add a follow up question, if no to volunteering. “Why do you not volunteer? And provide options such as “Time limitations; transportation, not interested, I don’t know how, financial limitations, etc.”
8. Expand on question 18 to ask if they donate money to the organizations they volunteer with.
9. Ask about if they have volunteered or donated money or donated in-kind materials in response to a disaster (natural, public health, etc.).

We also encourage the AmeriCorps agency to continue to invest meaningful time and energy into the analysis and reporting of the supplement data. Conducting the survey is only the first step of making the data relevant and useful to the public and stakeholders. If the AmeriCorps



agency were to only provide the data set without providing analysis and reporting as it has in the past, the data will not be as accessible or useful to the public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. We welcome the opportunity for further dialogue and opportunities to collaborate on research and analysis of volunteer and community engagement. Please do not hesitate to contact me with further questions.

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