



State Service Plan 2016-2018

OVERVIEW

National service and volunteerism are highly effective, cost-efficient strategies for addressing critical community needs, and Louisiana is a state rich with opportunities. As the state service commission, Volunteer Louisiana is uniquely positioned to promote civic engagement and connect our citizens with service as a solution to our most pressing problems.

MISSION

The Volunteer Louisiana Commission's mission is to build and sustain high quality programs that meet the needs of Louisiana's citizens and promote an ethic of service. Volunteer Louisiana currently awards and administers AmeriCorps and Volunteer Generation Fund grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), and promotes volunteerism through training, recognition, and a statewide online volunteer management system. Volunteer Louisiana is also charged in the state's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) with coordinating spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteers statewide in times of disaster.

2016-18 STATE SERVICE PLAN

CFR 45 2550.80 requires that State Commissions, such as Volunteer Louisiana, develop and annually update a statewide plan for national service covering a three-year period consistent with the broad goals of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Our 2016-18 State Service Plan outlines four broad goals for the Volunteer Louisiana Commission.

Goal 1: Promote national service in Louisiana and provide resources to support AmeriCorps subgrantees

Volunteer Louisiana currently manages an AmeriCorps portfolio of \$3.5 million that is meeting critical needs in education, economic opportunity, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, and disaster services. 1000 AmeriCorps members are serving in 15 programs across 25 parishes and will earn up to \$2.5 million in education awards in 2016.

Over the next three years, Volunteer Louisiana will increase awareness of national service, maintain a diverse state portfolio, and help ensure the success of our programs from the application process through grant implementation.

Goal 2: Boost volunteerism in Louisiana

For 2016, Volunteer Louisiana has awarded \$65,000 in VGF grants to support 18 projects in 32 parishes that will engage 6,732 volunteers in service. Statewide, over 600,000 Louisianians will volunteer for over 58 million hours of service. However, a recent national survey ranked Louisiana last among the 50 states in volunteerism rates.

Over the next three years, Volunteer Louisiana will promote volunteerism statewide, recognize outstanding volunteers, and help build the volunteer capacity of organizations. We will also promote informal and faith-based volunteering that may not get captured in national studies.

Goal 3: Maximize the effectiveness of volunteers in disasters

Among the many lessons of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 was the need for a strong system of volunteer management in times of disaster. Systems were created and put to the test during the 2010 BP oil spill. Volunteer Louisiana managed 16,694 spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteers, kept them from self-deploying, and connected them with response and recovery agencies.

Over the next three years, Volunteer Louisiana will cultivate its relationships with disaster services stakeholders, provide training to organizations, and maintain the resources necessary to manage volunteers after a disaster.

Goal 4: Develop sustainability of the Commission

Volunteer Louisiana is supported primarily through federal grants from CNCS that are matched in part by the state of Louisiana. The uncertainty and flux in both state and federal budgets is an ongoing threat to the organizational sustainability of Volunteer Louisiana.

Over the next three years, Volunteer Louisiana will promote and support the Volunteer Louisiana Foundation, engage elected officials and other key stakeholders, and develop public outreach strategies.

ABOUT VOLUNTEER LOUISIANA

As established in Louisiana RS 49:1112, the purpose of the Volunteer Louisiana Commission shall be to:

- (1) Encourage community service as a means of community and state problem solving.
- (2) Promote and support citizen involvement in government and private programs throughout this state.
- (3) Develop a long term, comprehensive vision and plan for action for community service initiatives in this state.
- (4) Act as the state's policymaking body for the Corporation for National and Community Service.
- (5) Serve as the state's liaison to other national and state organizations which support its mission.

ABOUT THE STATE SERVICE PLAN

CFR 45 2550.80 requires that state service plans meet the following minimum requirements:

- (1)** The plan must be developed through an open and public process (such as through regional forums or hearings) that provides for the maximum participation and input from a broad cross-section of individuals and organizations.
- (2)** The plan must ensure outreach to diverse, broad-based community organizations that serve underrepresented populations by creating State networks and registries or by utilizing existing ones.
- (3)** The plan must set forth the State's goals, priorities, and strategies for promoting national and community service and strengthening its service infrastructure, including how Corporation-funded programs fit into the plan.
- (5)** The plan must ensure outreach to, and coordination with, municipalities and county governments regarding the national service laws.
- (6)** The plan must provide for effective coordination of funding applications submitted by the State and other organizations within the State under the national service laws.
- (7)** The plan must include measurable goals and outcomes for national service programs funded through the State consistent with the performance levels for national service programs.
- (8)** The plan is subject to approval by the chief executive officer of the State.
- (9)** The plan must be submitted, in its entirety, in summary, or in part, to the Corporation upon request.

The Volunteer Louisiana 2016-2018 State Service Plan was developed using data from the following sources:

- (1)** A series of 9 regional Listening Sessions conducted between October 13 and November 4 2015 in Lake Charles, Marksville, Winnsboro, Opelousas, Bastrop, Bossier City, Houma, Franklinton, and Mandeville that engaged over 250 participants. Invitees included national service programs within the State, community-based agencies, organizations with a demonstrated record of providing educational, public safety, human, or environmental services, residents of the State, including youth and other prospective participants, State Educational Agencies, traditional service organizations, labor unions, and other interested members of the public.
- (2)** Current Volunteer Louisiana subgrantees were invited to submit feedback through an online survey.
- (3)** Volunteer Louisiana commissioned a statewide volunteerism study through the LSU Public Policy Research Lab that surveyed over 2500 Louisiana residents.
- (4)** Volunteer Louisiana staff and commissioner input.