



onestar
foundation



**2014 AmeriCorps*Texas
All-Grantee Meeting**
March 27-28, 2014

- Living Allowance Basics
- OneStar's Living Allowance guidance
- Required Practices
- Common Pitfalls



- What is Living Allowance?
- Why is it unique?
- Special Living Allowance Rules
- Why do we talk about Living Allowance?



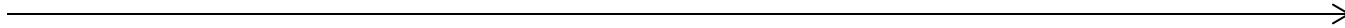
Living Allowance Distribution is outlined in the Living Allowance Pay Schedule

BUT.....

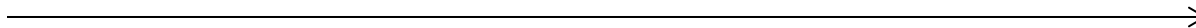
What happens when members start late or end early? Or get suspended? Or convert to another member type?



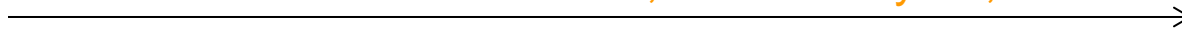
PLANNED SERVICE: Sept 3, 2013 – July 31, 2014



ENDING EARLY: Sept 3, 2013 – June 27, 2014



STARTING LATE: October 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014



OneStar's Living Allowance guidance:

-Member Service Agreements should include:

- a required term of service (start and end date)
- A total living allowance amount for a successful completion of a service term
- A list of what constitutes a successful completion of a service term
- A payroll schedule (more about this on the next slide)



OneStar's Living Allowance guidance:

- A payroll schedule should include:
 - A list of all paychecks that will be issued with a period of time covered
 - Date of each paycheck
 - Amount of each paycheck
 - Beginning date of first pay period should match the member's enrollment date (on the paper enrollment form and in My AmeriCorps) and the beginning date listed in the member service agreement
 - Ending date of the last pay period should match the member's exit date (on the paper exit form and in My AmeriCorps) and the ending date listed in the member service agreement.



| Pay Period Start Date (or first day of term of service if after pay period beginning date) | Pay Period End Date (or last day of term of service if before the pay period end date) | Date Payment will be made | Living Allowance Amount | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|-------|
| | | | FT - Gross | HT - Gross | QT - Gross | RHT-C |
| 9/3/2013 | 9/30/2013 | 9/30/2013 | \$750.00 | | | |
| 10/1/2013 | 10/31/2013 | 10/31/2013 | \$1,100.00 | | | |
| 11/1/2013 | 11/30/2013 | 11/29/2013 | \$1,100.00 | | | |
| 12/1/2013 | 12/31/2013 | 12/31/2013 | \$1,100.00 | | | |
| 1/1/2014 | 1/31/2014 | 1/31/2014 | \$1,100.00 | | | |
| 2/1/2014 | 2/28/2014 | 2/28/2014 | \$1,100.00 | | | |
| 3/1/2014 | 3/31/2014 | 3/31/2014 | \$1,100.00 | | | |

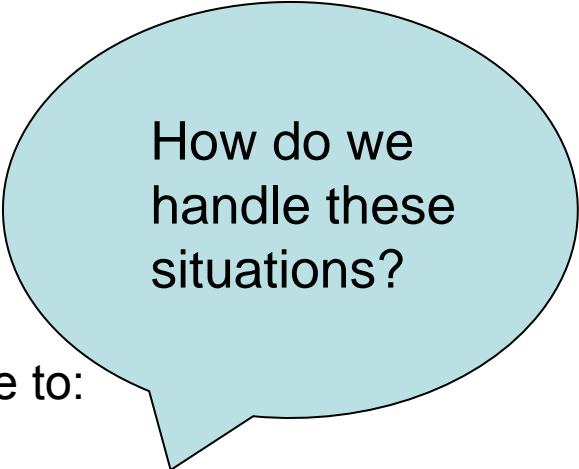
Beginning date of first pay period

Date of paycheck

Amount of paycheck

There are two kinds of members:

- Those who serve their term as planned
- Those who don't serve their term as planned due to:
 - Late starts
 - Early exit for personal compelling circumstances
 - Early exit for cause
 - Suspensions for any reason
 - Converting member type

A light blue speech bubble with a black outline, containing the text "How do we handle these situations?".

How do we handle these situations?



How to handle unplanned terms:

Step 1: Determine Effective
Enrollment/Exit/Suspension Date

Step 2: Ensure that all documents agree

Step 3: Have someone not involved in the
paperwork review for consistency.



Determining appropriate effective dates:

- **Enrollment:** A member enrollment date should be the first date of the member's service (includes orientation/training).
- **Exit:** The effective date for an *unplanned* exit from a program:
 - **When a member resigns:** the date the member notified the program that he/she has resigned. If member resigns by email/voicemail/text, the effective date is the date of the communication.
 - **When a member is terminated:** The date the program notified the member that he/she was terminated.
 - **When a member is released for personal compelling:** Circumstances may vary so come to OneStar to discuss, if not clear.
- **Suspension:** The day the program determines that the member should be in suspended status and communicates this to the member. Should not be retroactive.



Required Practices:

- Set up system for prorating living allowance when a member is active FOR LESS than the entire period.
- In order to receive the full annual living allowance amount, a member must be in active status for the entire period of service indicated in the member service agreement. Also, to receive the full annual living allowance amount, the amount of time required to be in active status may not differ from any other members of the same type. In other words, if a member is enrolled one week later than the others, they must serve one week longer than the other members to earn the full annual living allowance amount.



Required Practices Cont'd:

- Exception – In accordance with CNCS' FAQ C10, you may develop a reasonable written policy for instances when members start late or leave early. For example, if a member starts within the first week of a pay period, you might set policy that gives them the entire living allowance. If they start service later than that, you could prorate the amount based on the number of days in the pay period they will serve. The same would hold true for the end of service. You can establish different cut-off points as long as they are **reasonable, documented in written policy, and followed consistently**.
- If you determine a member has engaged in conduct that, according to your written policies, calls for a suspension, then the member should be paid until that suspension is executed.



Required Practices Cont'd:

- If you convert slots to a new member type or are having your first group of members of a particular member type serve a term that is not reflected on the original living allowance pay schedule, then you must submit a revised living allowance pay schedule to OneStar.

WHY?

- We do an analysis at the end of the year to reconcile projected living allowance with actual living allowance paid and if we don't have the current living allowance pay schedule for all member types, this analysis will be "off" due to the variance in pay for the new member types. Therefore, your final PER payment will be delayed until the variance is decreased.



Common Pitfalls:

- Incorrect, unclear or misaligned enrollment, suspension, and exit dates in My AmeriCorps, the member file, and pay records.
- Members within the same program who were in active status for an entire pay period should be paid the **SAME** amount for all pay periods subsequent to the one in which the later starting member was enrolled. i.e. A member may not receive more living allowance per pay period due to serving a shorter term.
- Not tying paychecks to a specified set of dates (follow the living allowance pay schedule which is approved by OneStar before your program year begins).



Common Pitfalls Cont'd:

- Forgetting that other benefits should end when living allowance does (i.e. Health Insurance, AD&D, etc.)
- A member may not accrue service hours prior to the enrollment date or after the exit date. NOTE: Dates should be consistent throughout all records).
- Suspensions/Terminations enacted retroactively.
- Reinstatement occurring *after* exit.



OVERALL:

Ensure dates and payment amounts align exactly between all program and fiscal documents including the member service agreement, member living allowance schedule, other AmeriCorps-specific documents/My AmeriCorps, the AmeriCorps budget, actual dates/amounts paid, etc.



QUESTIONS?

