



Going the distance to make a **difference**

A Guide for Volunteers' Friends and Family



Contents

Get to Know Us	2
Our Service Sectors	4
Benefits for Volunteers	6
More to Know About Service in the Peace Corps	8

A photograph of two people standing on a rocky mountain peak at sunset. The person on the left is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and a blue skirt, and the person on the right is wearing a light-colored jacket and dark pants. A woven basket sits on the ground between them. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with a few wispy clouds. The background shows a vast landscape of rolling hills and mountains under a hazy sky.

You know someone exceptional

Someone you care about is considering or is embarking on their service journey, and as a family member or friend, your encouragement can make a world of difference. Learn more about the Peace Corps, what Volunteers do, and what you can expect when someone you love steps up to serve.

Get to Know Us

Founded in 1961 with a bold vision, the Peace Corps is a federal agency part of the U.S. government that brings together skilled, committed Volunteers with welcoming communities for service opportunities in more than 60 countries.

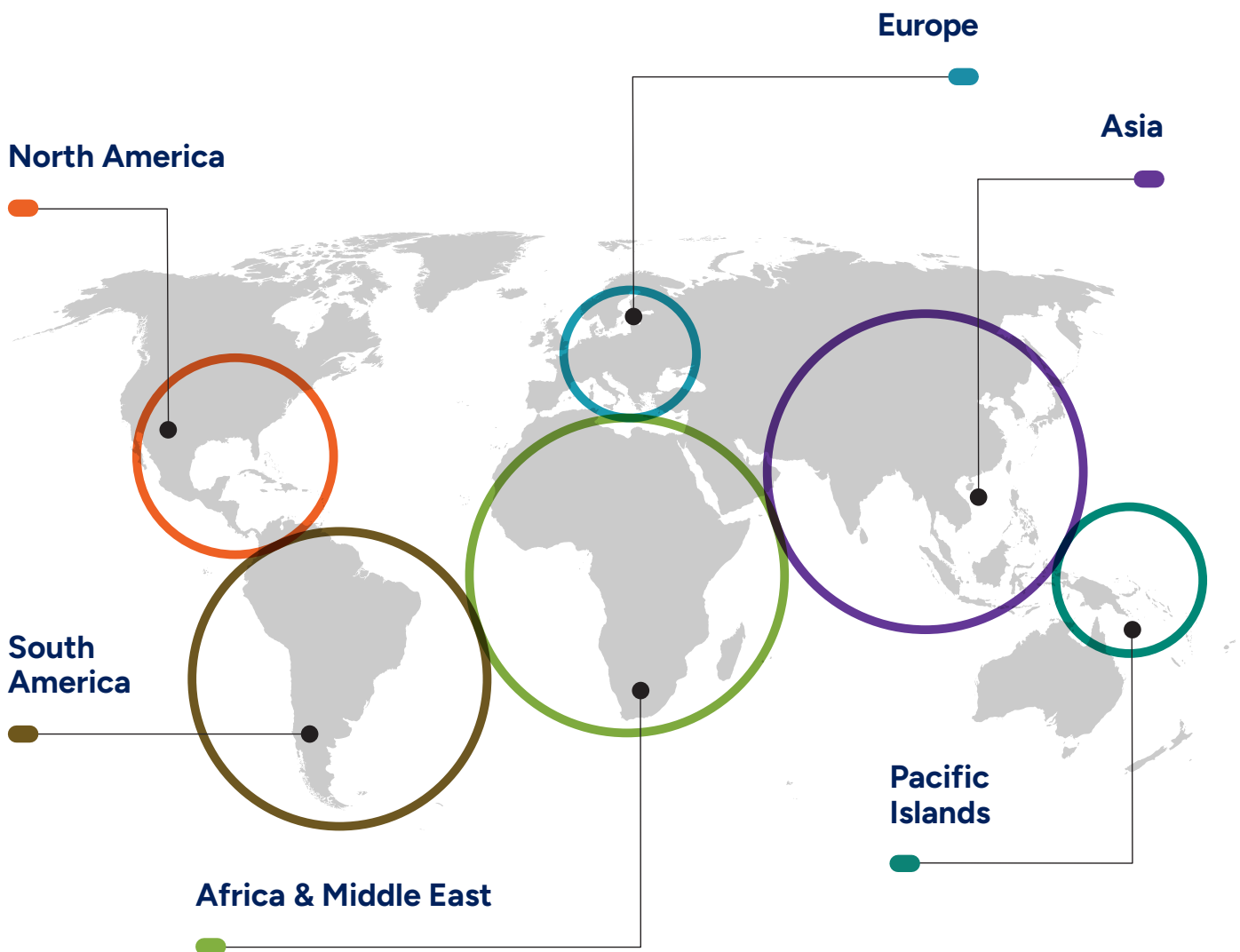
Volunteers are invited to live and work side-by-side with community members on locally prioritized projects. They build relationships, exchange knowledge, and help transform lives for generations to come.

Peace Corps Volunteers represent our country abroad for two years, and the selection process is competitive. Those invited to serve in the Peace Corps bring an open mind, an open heart, and a spirit of appreciation and gratitude wherever they go.



Our Regions of Service

Peace Corps Volunteers are invited to serve in more than 60 countries. See the most current list at peacecorps.gov/countries.



Our Service Sectors

Volunteers serve in six different sectors, but there are countless ways they can work with their host communities to make change together.



Teach for Tomorrow Education

Work with schools, communities, parents, and students to support learning in math, science, English, and literacy.



Advance Health Equity Health

Work with health care facilities and providers to develop strategies to promote nutrition, maternal and child health, hygiene, water and sanitation, malaria prevention, and HIV/AIDS education.



Strengthen Food Security

Agriculture

Support food system resiliency, climate change adaptation, sustainable living, and farming.



Cultivate Opportunity

Community Economic Development

Strengthen economic infrastructure through urban planning or supporting entrepreneurs and business owners.



Empower the Next Generation

Youth in Development

Engage youth in programs related to HIV/AIDS education, gender awareness, environmental stewardship, sports, and more.



Protect Our Planet

Environment

Promote efforts to protect natural resources at the local level and strengthen understanding of environmental and sustainability issues.

Benefits for Volunteers

The Peace Corps offers support and benefits to help Volunteers succeed—during their service and after they return.

Support While They Serve

Travel

We take care of Volunteers' travel to and from the United States to the host country at the start of and the completion of service.

Stipend

We pay Volunteers a monthly stipend to cover expenses such as food, local travel, and incidentals. We also cover their housing costs.

Time Off

Volunteers accrue two vacation days per month of service, along with their host country's holidays.

Medical & Dental Care

The Peace Corps provides, or completely covers, the costs for all necessary medical and dental care during training, service, and vacation, including preventive care, required medications, emergency care, and care relating to pre-existing conditions.

Student Loan Assistance

Volunteers qualify for the Department of Education Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. Several federal programs and private loans may also qualify for further deferment or forgiveness. Ask your lender or visit [peacecorps.gov/loans](https://www.peacecorps.gov/loans).

Success After They Serve

Transition Funds

Upon completing service, Peace Corps Volunteers will receive up to \$10,000 (pre-tax) to help them resettle and prepare for life after Peace Corps service. Peace Corps Response Volunteers will receive at least \$400 (pre-tax) for every month served.

Graduate School Benefits

Returned Volunteers qualify for reduced or even free tuition, assistantships, and stipends at 120+ campuses through the Paul D. Coverdell Fellows program. Explore more at peacecorps.gov/fellows.

Professional Skills

Peace Corps Volunteers demonstrate to employers and admissions offices

international experience, intercultural competence, extreme adaptability, and other transferable skills. We routinely hear from employers who intentionally seek out returned Peace Corps Volunteers.

Fuel for the Job Search

Returned Volunteers enjoy exclusive access to career fairs and to a large peer network. Learn more at peacecorps.gov/careers.

Extra Edge for Federal Jobs

After completing two years of service, Volunteers benefit from a year of non-competitive eligibility (NCE) for federal jobs, which offers a faster application process and enhanced desirability. Get details at peacecorps.gov/nce.

Additional Service Opportunities

Volunteers can serve again in any program, and many returned Volunteers choose to serve through the Peace Corps Response program. Learn more at peacecorps.gov/response.

More to Know About Service in the Peace Corps

Health and Safety Are Top Priority

You care about your loved one's well-being. We do too. That's why Volunteers' safety is a major priority.

Every country where the Peace Corps serves has medical and safety and security staff to provide health and safety services. They get support from the Peace Corps Offices of Safety and Security, and Health Services in Washington, D.C.

Though there are inherent risks to living and traveling in countries where the Peace Corps serves, we take these steps—and more—to protect our Volunteers.



Training for Safe and Productive Service

At the start of their service, Volunteers undergo thorough instruction in language, cross-cultural exchange, and health and safety. The training helps them build awareness of their new environment, increase their capacity to handle challenges, and understand how to adopt a safe and appropriate lifestyle.

Proactive Support for Volunteers' Health

During the second stage of the application process, a Peace Corps Pre-Service Nurse will conduct a comprehensive medical evaluation to enable the Peace Corps to place Volunteers in countries with the resources to meet their health care needs. The evaluation is customized for each potential Volunteer and based on a careful review of their individual medical history. In situations that warrant a higher-level review, a physician or psychologist will also be involved.

At each country's Post, Peace Corps staff includes at least two medical officers. All clinical staff are carefully evaluated, credentialed, and reviewed by the Office of Health Services' Quality Improvement Unit at Peace Corps headquarters. Medical officers take part in continuing medical education in order to be up to date on current practices.

Medical staff provide basic medical supplies, train Volunteers on how to stay healthy, and deliver primary care as needed. If a health problem cannot be treated locally, the Peace Corps will pay for the Volunteer to travel and get treatment at a regional facility or in the United States.

Volunteers are also eligible for benefits under the Federal Employee Compensation Act for most injuries or illnesses that occur during Peace Corps service.



Emergencies at Home

The Peace Corps has mechanisms that operate 24/7 to notify a Volunteer of a family emergency at home.

If there's a death in a Volunteer's immediate family—a parent, spouse, sibling, child, or grandchild by blood, marriage, or adoption—the Peace Corps allows a two-week leave period and pays for the Volunteer's round-trip travel home.

Emergencies Abroad

Each Peace Corps host country has a specific emergency action plan in case of natural disasters, civil unrest, and other events that may create safety risks.

The Peace Corps also has devoted in-country safety and security managers who are available 24/7 to offer Volunteers support in case of an emergency. During their training, Volunteers learn who they can contact, what to do, and where to go if they ever feel unsafe.

Learn more about safety and security at [peacecorps.gov/safety](https://www.peacecorps.gov/safety).



We are the Peace Corps.

In more than 60 countries, we are Volunteers, partners, communities—working together, living together. Learning and bridging language, customs, and culture, we combine our experience, passion, and joy to build a better world. Together.

See how you can help at
peacecorps.gov/family-and-friends.