



# AMERICAN CONSERVATION EXPERIENCE



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### EPIC MEMBER HANDBOOK

#### **Emerging Professionals In Conservation**

ACE EPIC

2900 North Fort Valley Road

Flagstaff, AZ 86001

[www.usaconservation.org](http://www.usaconservation.org)



## **Welcome to ACE!**

Dear ACE Members,

Welcome to an exciting, challenging, and rewarding season with American Conservation Experience. Here at ACE, we believe that understanding and goodwill can be achieved through cooperative labor on meaningful conservation projects. The work you will engage in at ACE will be filled with numerous learning opportunities involving conservation projects, problem solving, and working with dedicated agency staff in some of the most beautiful and ecologically diverse parts of the United States.

We are thrilled that you have chosen ACE in this next phase of your life. ACE realizes that without the hard work and dedication of its Members, the organization could not exist. Due to your participation and desire to work on conservation projects and learn about ecological sustainability, we are able to continue to implement the objective of our mission. It is our hope that the skills, friendships, and new experiences you encounter during your service are carried with you and are valuable for professional development and career aspirations. If at any time you have questions about the information in this handbook please feel free to reach out to us to discuss this.

I welcome you with great enthusiasm to American Conservation Experience!

Laura Herrin  
President and CEO

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## SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Mission Statement

American Conservation Experience (ACE) is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing rewarding environmental service opportunities for youth, young adults, and emerging professionals of all backgrounds to explore and improve public lands while gaining practical professional experience.

ACE's mission is to provide rewarding environmental service opportunities that harness the idealism and energy of a volunteer labor force to help restore America's public lands. ACE is grounded in the philosophy that cooperative labor on meaningful conservation projects fosters cross-cultural understanding and operates on the belief that challenging volunteer service unites people of all backgrounds in common cause.

### 1.2 ACE Core Values

**Quality:** Approaches all aspects of work with a desire to provide high value services and outcomes.

**Inclusion:** Strives to create an environment where all staff and members are valued, respected, and supported in a just workplace.

**Professional Development:** Provides opportunities to learn and apply new knowledge and skills to advance and further one's career.

**Stewardship:** Partners with government, non-profit, and private organizations to foster hands-on stewardship of natural, cultural, and historical resources.

**Partner Immersed:** Pursues, develops, and maintains quality relationships with partners to meet project goals, support member experiences, and keep ACE financially sustainable.

### 1.3 Emerging Professionals in Conservation (EPIC)

American Conservation Experience was founded in 2004 with the mission to further environmental land restoration projects in America's national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and other public lands. EPIC Members have increasingly played an integral part in this important undertaking through tailored Individual Placement positions in support of conservation efforts throughout the US.

The ACE EPIC Individual Placement and Fellowship opportunities provide individuals with focused professional development to build on educational knowledge and gain practical experience alongside agency and organization mentors. These opportunities directly engage and teach the next generation of conservation leaders for best practices and vision of resource and land management.

The EPIC program operates in collaboration with Federal Agency partners such as the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, and other conservation focused groups. The positions available through ACE EPIC and its partners are spread across a wide range of specialized conservation oriented vocations, and all of these placements represent an invaluable step for those trying to link the academic and professional worlds of conservation careers.

In 2009, ACE became an authorized grantee of AmeriCorps Program through the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) Federal Agency. Since 1994, AmeriCorps has provided thousands of opportunities for Americans to serve their communities and build the capacity of organizations to meet local

environmental, educational, economic, disaster response, or other human needs. [AmeriCorps](#) is sometimes referred to as the “domestic Peace Corps,” due to its focus on providing service opportunities for individuals to give back to their country.

## 1.4 Intent of Member Handbook

This handbook is to provide EPIC Members with an understanding of ACE policies and procedures and establish ACE’s expectations for all members during their ACE service. In addition to this handbook, members may receive agency or partner organization specific resources that they will need to familiarize themselves with as well. Additional ACE member resources can be found on the ACE [website](#) under Member Resources (password ACEmember) or may be provided directly by ACE staff.

The Member Handbook is not a contract, expressed or implied, guaranteeing service with ACE for any length of time and is not intended to induce a Member to accept a term of service with ACE. ACE reserves the right to unilaterally revise, suspend, revoke, terminate or change any of its policies, in whole or in part, whether described within this handbook or elsewhere. If any discrepancy between this handbook and current company policy arises, conform to current company policy.

This handbook does not extend any particular state law into other states, and if there is any conflict or inconsistency between this Handbook and the laws of the state in which you work, those laws will typically take precedence over this Handbook. Every effort will be made to keep you informed of ACE’s policies, however we cannot guarantee that notice of revisions will be provided. This document will be updated appropriately as policies within ACE change or are added, and ACE will make an effort to inform members of any changes or updates as they are made. New policies and updated handbooks supersede and replace any and all personnel policies and manuals previously distributed. Feel free to ask your ACE Supervisor questions about any of the information within this handbook.

## 1.5 Term of Service

A Term of Service is defined by a member’s service agreement and position description with ACE. These define the estimated date range, required number of hours, a specific Living Allowance, and other position function requirements for the member. Partnering organizations, members and ACE agree to the Terms of Service on a volunteer basis. In order to successfully complete a Term of Service, a member must serve through the listed date range and accomplish any minimum hours or other listed requirements.

ACE and our Partners may end the term of service without notice, at any time and for any reason, with or without cause. This term of service is an at-will status and cannot be altered in any way by any oral or written statements, policies, or practices, and can only be altered or modified by a written term of service agreement signed by the ACE Supervisor for the Member. Members, likewise, may terminate the term of service at any time for any reason. The use or nonuse of progressive discipline is left solely to the discretion of ACE.

# SECTION 2 – GENERAL POLICIES & PRACTICES

## 2.1 Diversity and Inclusion

ACE strives to create and foster a supportive and understanding environment in which all individuals can realize their maximum potential within the organization, regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education or disability. We support diversity and are committed to

creating an inclusive environment for all members. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages and seek to ensure that all voices are valued and heard. All members have a responsibility to treat others with respect and dignity at all times and are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the service site, and at all other ACE-sponsored events.

Members who believe they have been subjected to any kind of discrimination that conflicts with ACE's diversity and inclusion policy and initiatives should seek assistance from a supervisor, a Department Chief, or Human Resources.

### 2.1.1 Equal Employment Opportunity

Employment or Service with ACE is based upon ability, qualifications, attitude, and job-related factors. Every qualified employee, member or applicant has the same opportunity for recruitment, hire, training, transfer, promotion, compensation, demotion, termination, benefits, employee activities, and general treatment without regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, gender, national origin, pregnancy, ancestry, citizenship status, genetic information (including of a family member), veteran or military status, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, medical condition, marital or parental status, political affiliation, ethnicity, hair texture or style, arrest record, caste, hereditary status, endogamy, or any other classification protected by applicable local, state, or federal law.

ACE will endeavor to accommodate the sincere religious beliefs of its employees and members to the extent such accommodation does not pose an undue hardship on the organization's operations. If employees/members wish to request such an accommodation, they should contact their ACE supervisor.

Discrimination on the basis of any protected category is forbidden and will not be tolerated. This policy reaffirms our commitment to fair treatment and Equal Employment Opportunity in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws.

### 2.1.2 Non-discrimination Statement

ACE is committed to fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment in which all employees and members can excel and achieve work/life balance irrespective of race, national origin, age, genetic or family medical history, gender, faith, gender identity and expression as well as sexual orientation.

### 2.1.3 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

In accordance with the ADA, ACE does not discriminate against any qualified applicant or member with a known physical or mental disability in any employment practice, including hiring, promotion, job assignment, compensation, discipline, training, termination, or other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

As required under the ADA, ACE will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with known temporary or long-term disabilities so that they can perform the duties and assignments which include the essential functions of a job, unless doing so would result in an undue hardship to ACE. Members in need of accommodations should make their [request through their supervisor and the included request form](#).

### 2.1.4 Pregnancy Accommodation Policy

Members who are pregnant and have a temporary disability that is contributed to or caused by pregnancy may request [reasonable accommodation](#) during their term of service. ACE will explore "all possible means of providing

the reasonable accommodation” and will engage in an interactive process after a member has made a request for accommodation under this policy to determine what accommodation, if any, may be appropriate.

A health care provider’s certification may be required that includes the date the accommodation became medically advisable, the probable duration of the accommodation and an explanatory statement as to the medical advisability of the accommodation.

## 2.2 Harassment

ACE is committed to providing a bias-free, professional work environment in which every employee and member is treated with dignity and respect. Being a part of ACE means co-creating a working environment free from intimidation, hostility, or other offensive conduct.

ACE does not condone discrimination or harassment on or off service duty by its employees, vendors, members, or partners toward any person. ACE strives to provide members with a working environment free from intimidation, hostility, or other offensive conduct, both on or off duty and on or off work premises, including but not limited to business travel and on social media.

ACE requires every employee, member, and partner to understand what comprises harassment and comply with the harassment policy. ACE will support anyone who submits a report of harassment and will actively seek a resolution to issues that are raised. ACE is committed to protection from any form of retaliation towards those reporting. ACE will maintain confidentiality to the fullest extent possible in order to conduct a full investigation, but cannot guarantee complete anonymity in regards to filing and investigating complaints.

Harassment, as defined, is conduct that interferes with an employee or member’s work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. This would include, but not be limited to: threats or offensive conduct directed toward a person’s sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, race, age, physical or mental disability, religion, national origin, veteran’s status, or any other classification protected by applicable law. This includes environmental and quid pro quo (this for that) sexual harassment. ACE’s full Harassment Policy can be found [here](#).

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or requests for sexual favors, and other offensive conduct that is either sexual in nature or directed at someone because of their gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment undermines a healthy workplace by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Harassment, whether sexual or based on characteristics listed above, may take many forms. By way of example, harassment may include but is not limited to:

**Verbal Conduct:** Includes suggestive comments, repeated flirtation or advances, derogatory jokes, name calling, innuendoes, demeaning slurs, gender or orientation-based comments and unwanted kidding or teasing, foul or obscene language, or discussions of a sexual nature.

**Visual Conduct:** Includes leering, derogatory or sexually-oriented visuals, items, photography, cartoons, drawings, graffiti, electronic mail, emojis, notes, or gestures.

**Physical Conduct:** Includes assault and unwelcome touching, tickling, picking up, patting, pinching, pushing,

blocking of normal movement, physical advances, or interfering with work.

**Threats or Demands:** Includes requiring sexual favors in exchange for access to resources, opportunities, or as a condition of continued employment. This also includes threatening other physical or verbal abuse.

**Bullying:** Includes repeated unreasonable behavior directed toward a worker, or group of workers, that creates a risk to health and safety. It includes behavior such as: verbal abuse, intimidation, and threats; withholding information that is essential for someone to do their job; excluding or isolating others; and interfering with someone's personal property or work equipment. Bullying in any form regardless of whether it is one time or repeated will not be tolerated.

**Microaggressions:** Microaggression is a term used for brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes towards specific individuals or groups. The individual who is acting in that way may come from an environment where that behavior was common and may not be malicious, yet it contributes to a feeling of inferiority and can delegitimize or downplay a person's achievements and value. This behavior can negatively impact others and should always be addressed appropriately.

ACE expects all members and staff to understand and evaluate the effects their behaviors may have on others. Both repeated and singular occurrences of harassment or discrimination present a risk to a healthy workplace and will result in appropriate action.

To this end, if you experience, directly witness, or are informed of any instances of harassment or discrimination, we strongly encourage you to report the issue to the most appropriate ACE point of contact. For more information on reporting and determining best point of contact, please see the following section or section [3.2 Incident Management and Reporting](#) if appropriate.

## 2.3 Fraternalization, Favoritism, and Nepotism

ACE expects and hopes that like-minded people coming together in support of meaningful conservation projects will form fast and lasting friendships that provide support and camaraderie through their ACE experiences and beyond. These relationships, however, can evolve to be romantic or otherwise exclusive. The following policies address these situations for the benefit of all ACE Staff, Members, and Partners. ACE's goal is to demonstrate an egalitarian workplace free of special treatment.

### **Fraternalization:**

It is not contrary to the ACE's policy for members to date, except in situations wherein one of the parties involved reports, either directly or indirectly, to the other party. No dating or exclusive relationships are permitted in such circumstances wherein there is a manager-subordinate reporting relationship. This includes but is not limited to Member Crew Lead/Member, Project Manager/Member Crew Lead, etc.

We strongly discourage exclusive relationships between external project partners and ACE Staff/Members. Personal or romantic involvement with an external project partner or vendor, which impairs an employee's or member's ability to exercise good judgment on behalf of ACE, can create an actual conflict of interest. An employee or member involved in any of the types of relationships or situations should fully disclose the relevant circumstances to their immediate manager, or any other appropriate ACE manager. Please note that if these relationships do form, ACE will take steps to ensure the continued success of the program and



partnership and to provide for a safe and comfortable work environment for all involved. It is likely that the ACE Staff / Member will be removed from the project and reassigned.

Fraternization can manifest in a number of different ways, and the terminology to describe these relationships is varied. This can include, but may not be limited to: public displays of affection (PDA), excessive flirting, dating, hooking-up, emotional non-platonic attachments, exclusionary relationships, etc.

ACE staff and members are required to disclose all non-platonic relationships in order to protect themselves, others, and ACE. When feasible, ACE may consider requests from employees/members to transfer them to other open positions within ACE, for which they are qualified, so the affected parties are not in the same reporting lines. To disclose non-platonic relationships or related concerns, please contact your ACE direct supervisor, division director, or head of department. Employees/members may be required to sign a Consensual Relationship Agreement.

**Favoritism:** Favoritism is when preferential treatment is displayed towards certain individuals that provides direct benefit to the “favored” individual. This can be demonstrated through things like unearned promotions, higher compensation, and having different standards or rules applied to their workplace performance and activities.

**Nepotism:** Nepotism is considered a form of favoritism that benefits the friends, family, and acquaintances of ACE Staff, Members, Partners, and Board. While it is not forbidden to hire or promote any of these individuals, it must be demonstrated that they have participated in the standard application process and are the best qualified for the position and that they are held to the same standards and level of accountabilities during the performance of duties to avoid any semblance of favoritism/nepotism.

Generally, an employee’s/member’s immediate relative, close friend, or household member may be hired provided the individual can perform the essential functions of the job and does not:

- Establish a direct supervisory, reporting relationship with the employee/member
- Create a conflict of interest
- Create a potentially adverse working situation
- Have access to sensitive information regarding a close family member or friend

Prior written approval from the ACE Department Head/Chief is required before hiring any relative of an ACE employee/member. You may recommend family members for employment but it is your responsibility to disclose the relationship. An applicant with relatives employed by ACE must provide the name of the relative/employee/member and the nature of the relationship, on the application.

## 2.4 Filing Grievance and Complaint Reports

ACE encourages open communication and strives to create a work environment where Members like to work. Members with concerns about discrimination, harassment, safety, their position, living allowance, or other term of service issues are encouraged to speak directly with their ACE Supervisor. Members may submit a complaint, which is more informal, and can be verbal or written, or they can submit a grievance, which is more formal, and usually regarding more serious infractions.

Please note that ACE strives to handle all complaints in a timely manner, involving witnesses and others on a need-to-know basis and maintaining as much confidentiality as possible. All complaints and grievances will receive a response. Every effort will be made to listen, investigate fully, and get the facts straight. ACE has a

strict no retaliation policy. There will be no retaliation against any member who in good faith reports a complaint/grievance or provides a witness statement.

### **Reporting Procedure:**

1. Members should contact their immediate ACE supervisor with details regarding the issue they wish to report, whether regarding ACE staff or members, or third party agencies.
  - a. When willing and feasible, complete an [ACE Complaint Report](#) and submit it to your ACE supervisor.
  - b. If the incident being reported is about the ACE supervisor or the member is uncomfortable discussing with their supervisor, the member may contact their supervisor's manager, or the department head/chief (staff contact information can be found on [ACE's website](#)). If needed, senior leadership will escalate and consult with ACE HR as appropriate.
2. When filing a report, it is important to be as detailed as possible to ensure proper action can be taken. When possible, please include all pertinent details, dates, names, witnesses, etc.
3. Respect the confidentiality of all involved, though not at the expense of personal or others' safety and well-being. Please note: ACE will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible with a thorough investigation. The outcome of the investigation will be shared as appropriate.

Members do not need to fill out the Official Complaint Form to register a complaint or an issue. Acceptable methods of initiating a report include, but are not limited to: text, phone, email, letter, or in-person meetings. Employees and Members can report an issue (as a victim, witness or bystander) and may be asked to follow up with a signed confirmation of report details.

### **ACE's Commitment to Members:**

- All reports will receive a response and will be properly documented.
- Every effort will be made to listen, investigate fully, and provide reasonable accommodation for the safety and well-being of those involved.
- If it appears that satisfaction, harmony, and efficiency are not being achieved, ACE will support members who ask to have the matter referred to higher management for consideration.
- There will be no retaliation against any member who files a report or who provides witness statements during an investigation.
- Acts of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation are considered actionable. Repeated occurrences of discrimination or harassment are subject to progressive disciplinary measures, including but not limited to: suspension, probation, or termination.
- ACE will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible while conducting a prompt and thorough investigation to determine whether inappropriate conduct has occurred. Outcome of an investigation will be shared as appropriate to all parties involved (complainant and complaine).

### **False Reporting:**

ACE endeavors to create a workplace free from harassment, discrimination, nepotism, favoritism, and wrongdoing. As an organization, we hope and expect that all staff will share in this responsibility and report wrongdoing in any form when they witness, experience, or hear about it. Every report submitted in good faith will be acknowledged and investigated. Appropriate action will be taken to address the issues, as per

the results of the investigation. While not anticipated, reports submitted in bad faith (those that skew, misrepresent, or fabricate facts / details / occurrences) will be considered a violation of ACE Policy.

### **Whistleblower Protection/Retaliation:**

If a member has knowledge or a concern of illegal action or action taken in violation of ACE Policy, the member should contact their immediate ACE supervisor, supervisor's manager, another senior manager, or the department head/chief without concern of retaliation.

Retaliation may be defined as any action that is taken against an employee(s) or member(s) that harms them professionally or personally as a result of a report they filed with regards to member, employee(s), or organizational wrongdoing. While not a comprehensive list, this can take the shape of demotions, passing over for promotions or raises, exclusion from work related opportunities, and suspension or termination of employment/service. This can also encompass other retaliatory measures that happen outside of the workplace. It is important to note that whistleblower protection does not confer automatic immunity on the individual(s) submitting the report if they have been involved in activities that violate ACE Policy.

\*AmeriCorps members have additional grievance opportunities provided by AmeriCorps. These procedures are outlined in the Member Service Agreement under Section X - "Grievance Procedure".

## **2.5 Discipline Policy**

Members may receive disciplinary action, up to immediate dismissal and release for cause from the ACE program, for behaviors including, but not limited to:

- Possessing or consuming alcohol or using illegal drugs on ACE projects or in other prohibited settings as determined by ACE and the Site Leads;
- Physically or mentally abusing another volunteer, an ACE staff member, Agency personnel, or a member of the general public;
- Vandalizing (including graffiti);
- Refusing safety instruction;
- Stealing;
- Breach or infraction of ACE organizational general policies and/or Member Service Agreement.

*For all conduct violations that may require disciplinary action, the ACE Supervisor, ACE Division Director and a Site Lead will consult each other to determine the next steps. Depending on the transgression, a disciplinary action or progression may follow these steps:*

1. Written warning describing violation and strategies for improvement.
2. Suspension. The Member will be suspended for one project cycle and will not receive a living allowance. When a Member is suspended, they will not be allowed to serve or accrue any hours towards their Education Award for the entire duration of that suspension.
3. Potential Release from ACE and/or AmeriCorps for cause.

### **Appealing Disciplinary Actions:**

1. The Member may appeal any decision by stating their case to their ACE Supervisor who will bring the case forward to the ACE Division Director, and appropriate senior staff member(s), to form the disciplinary committee to determine the outcome of the appeal.

2. In the case of dismissal:

- i. If two of the three members of the disciplinary committee agree with the decision of dismissal, the Member will be asked to leave ACE service immediately and will be responsible for providing their own accommodations and transportation home;
- ii. However, if two of the three disciplinary committee members disagree with the dismissal of the member, the Member will be given a two-week period during which time they must follow all rules of conduct and/or the expectations of any corrective action plan developed by the disciplinary committee.
- iii. If the Member performs to expectations during this period, continued voluntary service will be welcome.
- iv. If the Site Lead reports further problems, the Member will be released for cause and will be asked to leave ACE or Agency housing immediately and will be responsible for providing their own accommodations and transportation home.

AmeriCorps members can also use the Grievance procedure as outlined in the Member Services Agreement to appeal a disciplinary action.

## 2.6 Substance Abuse & Smoking

### **Alcohol and Drug Policy**

ACE receives funding from a variety of federal agencies; grants and agreements require ACE to comply with federal drug laws, including the Drug-Free Workplace Act and the Controlled Substances Act. Therefore, ACE has adopted an Alcohol and Drug Policy which prohibits the use, possession, paraphernalia, manufacture, sale or distribution of alcohol or drugs (including marijuana and excessive quantities of prescription or over-the-counter drugs) on ACE premises, property and work sites (including ACE vehicles and equipment, partner, hired or leased vehicles or equipment) or during ACE time.

Where the law permits, ACE reserves the right to conduct drug testing for pre-employment screening, specific incidents, probable cause, fitness for duty, random testing, suspicious sample, post-accident if there is an objectively reasonable basis, or as required or allowed by state or federal law. This list is not intended to limit the events which would require a drug test, and ACE reserves the right to test for alcohol and drug abuse for other lawful reasons. All positive or inconclusive tests will be reviewed by a licensed physician (Medical Review Officer). Upon violation of ACE's Drug and Alcohol Policy or receipt of a positive drug-use or alcohol-impairment test, ACE may take disciplinary or rehabilitative actions. Positive post-accident drug testing may result in forfeiture of workers' compensation funds for accident injury costs. The burden of treatment cost may fall upon the member if found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol

Please see full [ACE Alcohol and Drug Policy](#) for additional information.

### **Smoking Policy**

ACE is committed to providing a work environment that supports employee and member health and safety. For the protection of all employees/members and to ensure compliance with applicable local, state, and federal law, smoking is allowed in designated smoking areas only. Smoking is prohibited in any ACE or partner vehicle (owned or leased), facility, or building including any work areas, break rooms, hallways, and entrances.

ACE and partners may reserve the right to prohibit smoking during all ACE projects, including at the work site, on rest breaks while nearby other members or the public, or during transport to and from ACE project sites. Those who require a smoke break must arrange how, when, and where to take them with their immediate supervisor, and must recognize that certain work sites and conditions may not allow for smoking.

This policy covers the smoking of any tobacco product and the use of oral tobacco products, “spit” tobacco and e-cigarettes.

## 2.7 Dress Code & Personal Appearance

ACE is a professional organization that works with a variety of partners and the public. ACE’s reputation is built, in part, by the image Members present to others. All Members are expected to present themselves appropriately for the type of work they do and in keeping with personal safety and any standard set by supervisors. When in the field, Members are expected to adhere to all safety requirements relating to dress and personal protective equipment as covered within ACE’s Safety Policy Manual and the Agency’s safety standards.

ACE Members represent ACE during their term of service. Members are expected to wear their ACE gear (t-shirt, long sleeve shirt, hat, etc.) during work hours. However, we recognize that some agencies and partner organizations may have their own uniform needs, or that ACE’s uniform may not be appropriate for all weather conditions or job duties. We expect Members to make the safest decisions regarding uniforms, clothing, and gear based on the context of their service duties, climate, and overall situation, and ACE is willing to work with Members and Site Leads on specific needs. If your issued uniform is lost or damaged and needs to be replaced, please contact your ACE Supervisor.

AmeriCorps members are required to wear ACE provided uniforms with the AmeriCorps logo visible while logging service hours. For more information on the AmeriCorps uniform policy, please reference the Member Service Agreement.

*The following guidelines apply to all Members:*

- Shirts and shoes should be well maintained and must be worn at all times. Shoes should be safe for the type of work being performed. In general, boots and long pants are required for most outdoor work.
- Inappropriate attire is not permitted. Unacceptable items often include, but are not limited to: very short shorts or mini-skirts, beach attire, torn jeans, sleeveless shirts, tank/tube/halter/transparent/low-cut tops and t-shirts or any clothing with offensive imagery/wording or promoting alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products. Appropriateness of images/wording, length of shorts/skirts, and other clothing should be discussed with your immediate supervisor.
- Hair, jewelry and other items of clothing can be a safety or health hazard. Such adornments should be safe for the type of work being performed and having long hair requires members to cover and protect to prevent from getting caught in certain tools and machinery.
- Members should use their best judgment to present themselves with professionalism by maintaining good personal hygiene and not wearing anything that would make other employees or members of the public uncomfortable.

## 2.8 Social Media Policy

The policies within this document apply to all of ACE social media space(s). ACE recognizes blogs, networking sites, and other social media (collectively referred to as “social media,” defined below) as valuable tools to

support ACE's operational goals. Social media is defined as Online, electronic, or Internet media, tools, communities, and spaces for social interaction, sharing user generated content, or public or semi-public communication. Examples of ACE social media outlets include but are not limited to the following: LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, Wikipedia, Reddit, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, Flickr, Snapchat, and ACE identified blogs on the official ACE website. These Social Media Guidelines are designed to protect not only ACE as an organization, but also our employees, members, partners and affiliates. This policy is not intended to interfere in any way with any applicable federal, state or local laws.

#### *Social Media Guidelines*

- We encourage all ACE members to be active participants of social networks by “sharing, tweeting, re-tweeting, liking, hashtagging, pinning, following, and posting” suitable and appropriate content and photos that align with ACE's mission and cause. At the same time, we also uphold our fundamental values which dictate that ACE members should not express, through images, text, video, or any other medium, content that is sensitive, controversial, or deemed unsuitable or inappropriate and could harm ACE or its employees, members, or partners in any way.
- ACE is authorized to use, alter, reproduce, display, and/or publish member photographs and/or videos including member images, likeness and/or voice without compensation. This may include, but is not limited to television, newspaper, newsletter, blog, photo sites, magazine ads and articles, social media sites and ACE's website, and any other promotional activities and marketing materials regarding ACE.
- Material may be used in various publications, public affairs releases, promotional or recruitment materials, broadcasted public service advertising, or for other related ACE endeavors. Consequently, ACE may publish materials, use names, photographs, and/or make references to members in any manner that ACE deems appropriate without compensation. ACE partners, affiliate partners, and related programs are also authorized to use member images, likeness and/or voice without compensation. Members agree that ACE may use such photographs “with or without my name” and for any lawful purpose, including for example, such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, promotion, and website content. Members agree to waive any right to royalties or other payment for the use of their image or likeness and also waive the right to inspect or approve the released parties' use of their image or likeness as described above.
- All images and videos taken during work hours of any ACE related activities or work are property of ACE and members waive their right to photo or video crediting.
- Members who develop a personal website, write a blog or maintain a social media presence must obtain advance approval from senior management before mentioning potential ACE products or services, partners, customers, affiliates, and competitors. If approved, members are to identify that they are a Member of ACE and state that the views expressed on the blog, page or website are theirs alone and do not represent the views of ACE. Members are advised to use a disclaimer such as “opinions are my own” to avoid any misunderstandings.
- Being on social media on a company or personal cell phone or computer while on company time is considered the same as being on a personal call while at work. Please do your best to focus during your work hours and check these applications during personal time like breaks, meal periods, or at the end of the work day.

#### *Broadcast & Print Media Guidelines*

- Inquiries from the broadcast and print media seeking comments or information from ACE must be referred to ACE Staff. Members are not authorized to make comments to the media on ACE's behalf or represent themselves as ACE spokespersons without prior approval and consent from appropriate staff.

### *Respect & Privacy Rights*

- Members assume all responsibility for the use of copyrighted materials.
- Unfounded, defamatory, malicious, false, discriminatory, and mentally or physically abusive statements are prohibited.
- Consider the privacy rights of all parties by seeking their permission before writing about happenings that might be considered to be a breach of their privacy and confidentiality.
- Members are legally liable for anything they write or present online.
- Media contacts about ACE and ACE's current and potential services, employees, partners, members, customers, affiliates and competitors should be referred for coordination and guidance to ACE Staff. This does not specifically include opinions, writing, and interviews on topics aside from ACE and current and potential services, employees, partners, customers, other members, and competitors.

Application of this policy will be consistent with the National Labor Relations Act and will not be interpreted or enforced in a manner that would interfere with members' rights to discuss service related issues with one another.

Individuals are encouraged to use social media to be informed about ACE. Your personal social media accounts provide you with a right to free speech as a private citizen.

As stated in this handbook, if it is reasonable that you could be identified as an ACE member, then your comments must accurately reflect ACE programs and services. Posts to your personal accounts must not undermine ACE's objectives, ACE's reputation or relationships with its stakeholders. Comments should not discriminate, harass or demonstrate disrespect toward any person or entity.

Engagement with members of the public, in any forum, that encourages respectful dialogue on relevant issues is not a breach of the code of conduct provided it is factual, appropriate, and does not conflict with ACE's direction and ACE's other obligations, such as protecting privacy and maintaining confidentiality and a respectful workplace.

Inappropriate content posted on personal social media may impact your agreement with ACE whether or not it was posted from an ACE device or during work hours.

### *Social Media Impersonation*

Social media impersonation is a form of business identity theft. ACE prohibits the creation of ACE branded digital platforms including a website or social media channels. As ACE monitors social media activity, any fake accounts will be reported to the platform and removed. Any perpetrators will be reported to the appropriate regulatory agency in their state.

## 2.9 Evaluations

ACE Evaluations are meant to be used as a tool to gauge ACE Member experience before, during, and at the end of the term. We ask for candid feedback about goals, experiences, relationships, and projects that would be useful to improve each individual experience, as well as any subsequent opportunities we have for future members. While we do have some formal feedback opportunities, we invite you to reach out with feedback at any time.

- Beginning of Term – Within the first month of participation, ACE Supervisors will send Members a Beginning of Term evaluation to gather feedback on safety, work-environment, placement sites and more. Completing this form is a term-requirement.
- Mid-Term – ACE Members may be *required* to complete a mid-term evaluation with their ACE Supervisor to gather feedback and assess their experience and progress approximately halfway through their term (some shorter terms of service may skip the mid-term at the discretion of the ACE Supervisor). Throughout their term, all ACE Members should also expect frequent, often informal check-ins from their ACE Supervisor.
- End of Term – Towards the end of your service, your ACE Supervisor will send an Exit Questionnaire & Evaluation so Members can document their accomplishments and provide any further feedback about their experience. End of Term evaluations and accomplishments are required for all members.

## 2.10 Criminal History Checks

All ACE Members are required to undergo a Criminal History Check (CHC) prior to starting their term of service. Please note that your Service Site might require additional checks depending on your position. Below are the three service providers ACE uses for conducting CHCs:

- **Fieldprint** - Federal (FBI) Fingerprinting NSCHC vendor used for ACE AmeriCorps Members
- **Truescreen** - State and National Sex Offender NSCHC vendor used for ACE AmeriCorps Members. Also used to conduct State of Service and State of Residence CHCs.
- **Sterling Volunteers** - CHC program used for non-AmeriCorps Members

## SECTION 3 – SAFETY

### 3.1 ACE Safety Policy

ACE strives to provide a safe and healthy work environment for everyone. Members who notice hazards or other safety concerns, or who feel that they need additional training to perform their duties, must notify their Site Lead immediately, as well as their ACE Supervisor. ACE members may refuse to complete tasks they feel are unsafe at any time, and should bring these concerns to their ACE Supervisor and/or Site Lead in order to address the situation.

Site Leads and ACE should address these concerns and take corrective action when warranted. ACE members, staff, and partners have an obligation to be knowledgeable about the safety standards applicable to their area or job, and to abide by those standards. It is the duty of all Members to perform work with maximum regard for the safety of themselves, their co-workers, ACE Staff, and the public. Safe work practices are a condition of the term of service, and failure to follow safety standards may result in disciplinary action.

#### *General Workplace Safety Rules:*

- Ask for assistance from your Site Lead or other trained members when unsure about how to do a job safely and correctly; do not do anything you are not comfortable with/trained to do without asking for assistance;
- Report unsafe conditions to your Site Lead and ACE Supervisor immediately;
- Report all accidents/injuries/incidents to your Site Lead and ACE Supervisor as soon as possible; please document all incidents using the [ACE Incident Report Form](#); ACE forms MUST be completed regardless of completing partner specific paperwork;
- Use eye and face protection where there is danger from flying objects or particles (such as when



- grinding, chipping, burning, and welding, etc.);
- Dress properly. Wear appropriate work clothes given the work environment. When working outside, sturdy work pants, gloves, and boots are required for most tasks. Loose clothing and jewelry shall not be worn if it creates a possible safety hazard;
- All hand and power tools and similar equipment, whether furnished by the employer or the employee, shall be maintained in a safe condition;
- When power operated tools are designed to accommodate guards, they shall be equipped with such guards when in use;
- Avoid all distractions such as cell phones, earphones/ headphone, and other mobile devices while working around or operating machinery, while working in close proximity to other people while using tools, or in any situation where loss of situational awareness could increase risk;
- Maintain equipment in safe working condition. Do not use defective tools or equipment. Report any defective tools or equipment to the Site Lead for replacement or repair and flag them to not be used;
- Properly care for all personal protective equipment (PPE). Wear or use PPE when required;
- Lockout, tag-out, or depower any equipment or machines before any maintenance, un-jamming, or adjustments are made;
- Do not leave materials in aisles, walkways, stairways, work areas, roadways, or in areas that might block building/emergency exits;
- Practice good housekeeping at all times. Place wastepaper, empty cartons, and other trash in approved receptacles. Keep work and shared living areas clean and free from objects that can create a slip or trip hazard;
- Complete an adequate training prior to any equipment or tool use, including ACE or Partner vehicles or trailers;
- Avoid behavior that increases the likelihood of an injury or accident;
- Use proper lifting techniques when lifting is required. Members should keep their back straight, with the object close to their body and body weight directly over their feet, lifting gradually using the leg muscles. Do not twist or bend the back while lifting. Always ask for help with heavy objects. Stretching-out in advance can also help reduce injuries;
- Use proper stretching techniques daily, especially during repetitive or long-duration tasks;
- Contact the Site Lead regarding any questions relating to safety, and keep your ACE Supervisor informed regarding additional concerns.

### 3.2 Incident Management & Reporting

Members who are injured while working are to report their injury to their ACE Supervisor and their Site Lead as soon as possible after an accident occurs, and/or when an injury is known, regardless of how minor the accident or injury may be. Every incident that results in any type of injury, near-misses, or incidents which could require future medical attention requires filling out an [ACE Incident Report Form](#) (this may be in addition to any Site Lead paperwork required).

Unless only first aid is required, all work-related injuries should be treated at appropriate providers. Anyone needing emergency medical treatment should be taken to the nearest hospital or medical center. For any questions regarding incident reports and worker's compensation insurance, Members should contact their ACE Supervisor as soon as possible, but should not delay necessary medical care. For more information on incident response and reporting, members can review ACE's [EPIC Risk Management Guidelines and Plans](#).

### 3.3 Workers' Compensation Insurance & Incident Reports

All ACE Members are covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance while performing service duties. If a Member is injured during service hours, they can file a claim through ACE. This includes, but is not limited to, bodily injury as well as specific ailments. Injuries and illnesses sustained in the workplace are generally eligible for Workers Compensation coverage. Members are not covered by Workers' Compensation while on off time. The Incident Report form must be completed and submitted to ACE prior to submitting a Workers Compensation claim.

*Fill out the ACE Incident Report Form (IRF) when:*

- Any work time is lost due to an incident;
- There is a doctor or hospital visit stemming from work activities;
- There is any injury/illness, near miss, conflict, or unusual event relating to work;
- There is an accident where future medical care could be anticipated (i.e. minor ankle sprain that could get worse);
- *General rule: if there is any question of whether or not you should fill out an Incident Report, you should fill out an Incident Report.*

*Incident Reports must be submitted to your ACE Supervisor using the official [ACE Incident Report form](#). For instructions on how to fill out your incident report, reference our [Incident Report Form instructions](#), or call your ACE Supervisor. In addition to ACE forms, you may be required to fill out service site specific paperwork.*

### 3.4 Driving Policy

The following provides an overview of ACE policy regarding the use of Company Vehicles, which includes vehicles owned, rented or leased by ACE or the ACE Partner (hereinafter known as "Company Vehicle"). The comprehensive [ACE Driving Policy](#) should be thoroughly reviewed and referenced as well.

- Any member who operates a Company Vehicle must review, sign and comply with the [ACE Driving Agreement](#).
- Any member who operates a Company Vehicle must review and comply with the [ACE Driving Policy](#).
- ACE's unsafe Driving Policy and Procedure maintains a communication and accountability system for driver safety. This procedure is applicable to ACE drivers breaching their Driving Agreement, breaking the law or putting passengers, driver or vehicle in unsafe situations. All speeding tickets and moving violations received by the driver are included in this procedure. Unsafe Driving Protocol & Procedures can be followed [here](#).
- Incident and accident reporting is critical for the safety of vehicle drivers, passengers and ACE's fleet. Any incident that damages a vehicle or property or results in harm to an individual must be reported by following ACE's Incident/Accident Reporting Standard Operating Procedure. Follow the Incident/Accident Report Standard Operating Procedure [here](#).
- To be eligible for ACE Driver training and certification, members must have a valid and current Driver's License, pass a Motor Vehicle Record check and successfully complete their defensive driver training program and in-person driver training and evaluation as performed by a qualified Site Lead/Partner. To review more on the Driver training and certification, please see Section VIII-B of the [ACE Driving Policy](#). All incidents require members to complete the [ACE Incident Report Form](#).

## SECTION 4 – LIVING ALLOWANCES & SERVICE HOUR TRACKING

### 4.1 Timesheets

*Completing Timesheets: Timesheets are due every two weeks, and timely submission is required in order to get paid. The general timesheet process is outlined below, but upon arrival at your service site, discuss the timesheet review process with your Site Lead, as there may be subtle differences between various sites.*

- Members will track hours daily and submit timesheets every two weeks (more details on submissions below);
- Make sure to include the TOTAL number of hours worked during the pay period;
- Content: When completing timesheet reports, remember to be comprehensive yet concise in the summaries for proper ACE documentation;
- Check your hours: Pay periods run Sunday-Saturday, make sure that the hours mentioned in the timesheet matches the total weekly hours;
- Timesheets may only reflect hours actually worked in service of the project or term. This may be different from service site personnel who reflect holiday or vacation time in their timesheets.

*Submitting Your Timesheet\*:*

- Submit your timesheets every two weeks:
  - ACE AmeriCorps Members: submit timesheets using AmericaLearns. After your start date, you will gain access to your AmericaLearns account.
  - Non-AmeriCorps Members: submit PDF copies via email. Copy both your ACE Supervisor and Site Lead on any timesheet email submissions.
- For ACE AmeriCorps members, it is recommended that you let your Site Lead review your America Learns timesheets before submitting;
- Signature: All printed timesheets should be signed by you and your Site Lead for review;
- Submit your timesheet to ACE using the applicable method above by 5pm MST in compliance with dates listed on the ACE Pay Period Schedule. The submission dates fall on the Monday following the close of the pay period. Payday will fall on the Friday following the end of a pay period.
- *\*Please note that failure to submit your timesheet on time will mean that your paycheck will be delayed until the payday of the next pay period. If you know you will be unable to submit your timesheet on time, contact your ACE Supervisor.*

### 4.2 Service Schedules & Hours

Members are typically expected to serve 40 hours each week, unless otherwise indicated by their Member Service Agreement. The term of service may potentially include serving on holidays and weekends. The Site Lead will designate the day-to-day schedule structure. The service schedule and shifts will be subject to change to accommodate the requirements of various project, departmental, and organizational needs.

### 4.3 Breaks & Meal Periods

Members who contribute 8 hours or more are eligible for two paid rest periods of 15 minutes (members working 4 hours are eligible for one paid rest period of 15 minutes). Members should return to their service areas promptly after break periods.

Members contributing more than 4 hours in a day are required to take a meal period of at least 30 minutes, depending on the policies and requirements of the term of service. Members are relieved of all active responsibilities and duties during meal periods and are not compensated for that time.

#### 4.4 Time Off & Holidays

Best practice is to determine a holiday or vacation schedule with your Site Lead and then inform your ACE Supervisor via email with your Site Lead copied in the email. It is important to note that a zero-hour service week (Sunday to Saturday) will result in no pay for that week. Please be sure to discuss this with your ACE Supervisor if you have any questions. In compliance with payroll requirements, you will be required to submit a timesheet showing your zero hour service week(s).

All time off from ACE service days must be discussed and approved by your Site Lead and ACE Supervisor. This includes sick time, vacation time or extended personal leave of any kind.

#### 4.5 Paycor

ACE's payroll company is called [Paycor](#). Once you have received your first paycheck, you will be able to set up access to your online Paycor portal\*. You can utilize Paycor to:

- Easily access (and download) pay stubs online;
- Make changes to your personal information for payroll (address, email, phone, etc.);
- Sign up for "Paperless" to easily access and download year-end tax documents, such as your W2s.

If you need to update your direct deposit/bank account information, please send an email to your ACE Supervisor, who will then initiate a secure online transfer for you to provide your updated personal information.

*\*Please see the ["ACE Paycor New Member Registration Information"](#) document in the [ACE EPIC Enrollment Google Drive folder](#) for more information about setting up your account. Any questions about Paycor support should be directed to your ACE Supervisor.*

## SECTION 5 – MEMBER RESOURCES

*A complete catalog of ACE Member resources can be found on [ACE's website](#). Member password is ACEmember*

#### 5.1 ACE Contacts

If you have any questions about anything in this handbook or anything else related to your ACE experience, reach out to your ACE Supervisor. An ACE staff directory can be found on the ACE website: <https://www.usaconservation.org/staff/>

##### Core Business Hours:

ACE has business operations and employees located in all time-zones of the continental U.S. In order to ensure a collaborative work environment and ongoing cross-program teamwork, ACE divisions and departments may establish designated core business hours for non-field based employees. The central ACE core business hours are 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm Eastern time during the Monday - Friday work week.

ACE does not provide professional recommendations, but will provide employment verification should you need it moving forward. You are also free to ask for a reference from individual ACE staff if desired.

## 5.2 ACE Assistance Program

The ACE Assistance Program is a voluntary, work-based wellness program that offers free and confidential assessments, short-term counseling, referrals, and follow-up services to Members who have personal and/or service-related problems. ACE's Assistance Program addresses a broad and complex body of issues affecting mental and emotional well-being such as alcohol and other substance abuse, stress, grief, family problems, and psychological disorders.

*ACE partners with the Magellan Healthcare Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through the Principle Insurance program to provide **FREE, CONFIDENTIAL** services to help ACE members and/or any members of their household to manage a variety of different challenges and issues.*

Magellan Healthcare counselors also work in a consultative role with managers and supervisors to address Member and organizational challenges and needs. Many assistant programs are active in helping organizations prevent and cope with workplace violence, trauma, and other emergency response situations.

Some of the services provided include:

- 24/7 phone consultation with licensed mental health professionals and referrals to supportive resources found online at [www.MagellanAscend.com](http://www.MagellanAscend.com);
- Ongoing personal coaching sessions with scheduled telephonic appointments;
- LifeMart Discount Center, with savings on a variety of products and services;
- Self-assessments for identifying issues with stress, depression, or substance abuse;
- Health and wellness articles, guides, webinars, podcasts, and calculators;
- Online assistance with eldercare, childcare/parenting and other family life resources;
- Help with general crises and/or ongoing situations causing prolonged stress or harm.

### How can I use the ACE EAP service?

1. Go to their website: <https://magellanascend.com/>
2. Click "Find My Company | Log In" button in the top right corner of your screen.
3. The "Find My Company" tab will come up
4. Enter in "**Principal Core**" into the "Company Name" box
5. The "Select Your Group" will be "Principal Core"
  - a. Note: there should only be this one option
6. Click that you agree with the Terms of Use, Disclaimer and Privacy Policy
7. Click "Go"
  - a. Note: You do NOT need to create an account unless you want to. Creating an account just provides them with some information to help assist you.

### IMPORTANT!!!!

Make sure to use "**Principal Core**" and **NOT American Conservation Experience** for company name.

Please see the [ACE EAP Resource Guide](#) on the [Member resource Page](#) for more information and resources.

## 5.3 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the largest federal nutrition assistance program

(also known as EBT or food stamps). SNAP provides benefits via an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card, which can be used like a debit card to purchase eligible food in authorized retail food stores.

SNAP benefits are based on income level and many ACE Members qualify. Read more about eligibility [here](#). Members will need to apply with the SNAP State Agency for the state which you are serving. Find your state's SNAP office [here](#). For more information call the SNAP Toll-free Information Number: 1-800-221-5689

Each state process and application varies, but let your ACE Supervisor know if you need additional information or if you need proof of income when you apply. ACE is not responsible for your application and inquiries should be made directly to the State Benefit Program.

## 5.4 AmeriCorps Resources

For a complete overview of the ACE AmeriCorps program, please review the [AmeriCorps Orientation](#), and the materials provided on [ACE's Member Resource Site](#) (Password is ACEmember). Participating Members are enrolled in an ACE AmeriCorps term and must complete the minimum required number of hours associated with their term within the agreed upon date range in order to qualify for a full Education Award which is issued at the conclusion of the term.

### *MyAmeriCorps*

During enrollment, you will need to set up a MyAmeriCorps account in order to be enrolled in an AmeriCorps program. This online portal will also be where you can process your student loan forbearance, interest payment requests, and manage your AmeriCorps Education Award. For more information on setting up and accessing your MyAmeriCorps, view the guidance document [here](#). For all MyAmeriCorps account troubleshooting, please contact the AmeriCorps Hotline at 1-800-942-2677.

### *Federal Student Loan Forbearance*

ACE AmeriCorps Members may request to have their student loans put on forbearance during their term of service. Loan forbearance and interest payment requests are processed through your [MyAmeriCorps](#) account. Loan Forbearance Requests can be accessed as soon as members are enrolled in the program, and Interest Payment Requests after exiting the program—through the left hand menu. If members need support with loan forbearance/interest payment requests, they should reach out to AmeriCorps or their federal loan company for direct assistance.

### *Education Award*

ACE AmeriCorps Members who successfully complete their term of service are awarded a [Segal Education Award](#) after exiting the program. Education Awards may be used for any new or continuing education through Title IV accredited institutions, including trade schools, as well as eligible certification and training programs. For members with compelling personal circumstances, partial award eligibility may be granted for those who qualify based on compliance criteria set by AmeriCorps. Reach out to your ACE Contact for more information on eligibility. *Please note:* All payments made using the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award are subject to federal tax in the year each payment is made.

### *Prohibited Activities For AmeriCorps Members*

ACE AmeriCorps Members must review and comply with the [Prohibited Activities](#) outlined by AmeriCorps during service.

### *Community and Volunteer Service Projects*

As part of the greater National Service community, an opportunity to complete a Community and Volunteer Service project may be available. In most placements, these projects aren't mandatory, but can be a great way to work on something you are passionate about but otherwise don't have within your placement, or to connect with and give back to the local community, or to learn something new. Check in with your ACE Supervisor if you are interested in completing a Community and Volunteer Service Project.

- **300, 450, or 675 hour terms:** The ACE AmeriCorps Member has the option to complete a minimum of 4 hours of Community Volunteer Service (CVS). These volunteer hours need to be environmentally oriented and in conjunction with another non-profit organization.
- **900, 1200, or 1700 hour terms:** The ACE AmeriCorps Member has the option to organize a community event or service project and recruit volunteers outside of your regular service duties. Known as a Volunteer Service Project or (VSP). These volunteer hours need to be environmentally oriented and in conjunction with another non-profit organization.

### 5.5 ACE Learns

ACE Learns sessions are live and recorded informational events hosted by ACE. Presenters include ACE Staff, Alumni, Members, and Partners. ACE Learns sessions cover any and all topics related to the outdoors, from Emergency Preparedness, to Federal Hiring Practices, to Leave No Trace workshops, and many more. Registration emails are sent at least a week ahead of ACE Learns sessions, and are sent to ACE staff, Members, and alumni. To view recorded sessions, visit the [ACE Learns Folder!](#)

### 5.6 ProDeal Accounts

ACE has acquired a ProDeal partnership with Outdoor ProLink. Pro deals are deep discounts on outdoor gear exclusively for Members and staff. This account is for Members and staff only. You are expected to respect this access and use this discount exclusively for items you will use. Any abuse of the program could result in you losing access to Outdoor ProLink. To activate your free membership, follow the instructions [here](#) on the [ACE Member Resource page](#).

## Appendix A – Sample Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)

JOB HAZARD ANALYSIS	JOB TITLE:	Page__ of __ JHA #	DATE:	NEW
	TITLE OF PERSON WHO DOES JOB:	SUPERVISOR:	ANALYSIS BY:	REVISED
ACE DIVISION:	WORK CLASSIFICATION:	WORK LOCATION:	REVIEWED BY:	
REQUIRED AND/OR RECOMMENDED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT: ear protection, eye protection, gloves, closed-toe work shoes/boots with non-slip soles, dust/particulate mask			APPROVED BY:	
SEQUENCE OF BASIC JOB STEPS	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	RECOMMENDED ACTION OR PROCEDURE		



## Appendix B – Acronyms

### **Agency**

ACE – American Conservation Experience  
BLM – Bureau of Land Management  
BOR – Bureau of Reclamation  
NPS – National Park Service  
NRCS – Natural Resource Conservation Service  
USFS – US Forest Service  
USFWS – US Fish and Wildlife Service

### **Safety**

GAR – Green Amber Red  
SPE – Severity Probability & Exposure  
JHA – Job Hazard Analysis  
IRF – Incident Report Form  
ERP – Emergency Response Plan

### **ACE Specific**

AAP – ACE Assistance Program  
CHC – Criminal History Check

### **AmeriCorps Specific**

A\*C – AmeriCorps  
VSP – Volunteer Service Project  
CSV – Community Service Volunteerism

### **Special & Agency Specific Programs**

AIM – Assessment, Inventory, & Monitoring (BLM)  
CRDIP – Cultural Resource Diversity Internship Program (NPS)  
PLC – Public Land Corps  
DHA – Direct Hire Authority  
DFP - Directorate Resource Assistant Fellows Program (USFWS)  
I&M – Inventory & Monitoring (NPS)  
RAP – Resource Assistants Program (USFS)  
IPMT – Invasive Plant Management Team  
YCCP – Youth Community Conservation Program  
TTAP – Traditional Tradecraft Advancement Program (NPS)  
YCC – Youth Conservation Corps  
CROIE – Cultural Resource Office of Interpretation & Education (NPS)  
NPS/A - National Park Service Academy (NPS)

## Appendix C – Drugs, Alcohol, Testing, Disciplinary Actions, and Harassment Policies

ACE receives funding from a variety of federal agencies; grants and agreements require ACE to comply with federal drug laws, including the Drug-Free Workplace Act and the Controlled Substances Act. Therefore, ACE has adopted an Alcohol and Drug Policy which prohibits the use, possession, paraphernalia, manufacture, sale or distribution of alcohol or drugs (including marijuana and excessive quantities of prescription or over-the-counter drugs) on ACE premises or during ACE time. This includes but is not limited to:

- ACE housing (rented, owned, and including hotels, hostels and B&Bs)
- ACE offices
- Project work sites
- ACE vehicles and equipment
- Partner, hired or leased vehicles and equipment
- Any private vehicle parked on ACE premises, at ACE housing, or at an ACE work site (including Partner work sites)
- Any private vehicle while it's being used for ACE business.

ACE has the right to search the personal property of members and member work areas, including desks, lockers, tool boxes, etc. at any time.

It is a violation of ACE's policy for any employee/member to report to or be at work intoxicated or impaired due to the influence of illegal drugs, non-prescription drugs, alcohol, marijuana, controlled substances, or any metabolite thereof. The use of prescription drugs is allowed if they're in the original container and prescribed by a licensed physician as medication for use by the person possessing the medication. Any employee/member taking medication should consult a medical professional to determine whether the drug may affect their personal safety or ability to perform the essential functions of their job. Any employee/member taking a legal drug or medication (over-the-counter or by prescription) which may adversely affect judgment, coordination, safety of self or others, or the ability to perform assigned job duties must notify his/her/their supervisor before starting work. The supervisor, after review, will decide whether to allow the employee/member to remain at work or to make other suitable arrangements as allowed by law. Medical marijuana cases will be dealt with on a case by case basis in conjunction with Human Resources.

ACE has established a drug-free awareness program to inform employees/members about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, ACE's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, available drug counseling, rehabilitation, employee assistance support services, and the penalties that may be imposed for drug abuse violations. employee/member must report a conviction of any criminal drug charge within 5 days to ACE.

### **ACE Drug Testing Policy**

ACE is committed to providing a safe working environment, promoting the highest standards of employee/member health and productivity, and protecting ACE's reputation in the community. Therefore, ACE has implemented a drug-use and alcohol-impairment testing program. The goal of this policy is to

maximize safety and productivity in the workplace while preserving the privacy and dignity of employees and members.

Where the law permits, ACE reserves the right to conduct drug testing for pre-employment screening, specific incidents, probable cause, fitness for duty, random testing, suspicious sample, post-accident if there is an objectively reasonable basis, or as required or allowed by state or federal law. This list is not intended to limit the events which would require a drug test, and ACE reserves the right to test for alcohol and drug abuse for other lawful reasons. All positive or inconclusive tests will be reviewed by a licensed physician.

An employee/member may be required to submit to a drug-use test or alcohol-impairment test in the, but not limited to, following situations:

- Pre-employment. Applicants who have been extended a conditional offer of employment/service based upon successfully passing a drug test will be required to comply as a condition of employment/service. Refusal to consent to a pre-employment drug test will terminate any further action toward employment/service.
- Accident Testing. When ACE reasonably believes that the employee/member, while on the job site or during working hours:
  - Was involved in or contributed to an accident that did or could have resulted in an injury to the employee or another person.
  - Was involved in or contributed to an accident that did or could have caused equipment or material damage or loss.
- Suspicion of being under the influence or impaired. Testing will be conducted when ACE has reasonable suspicion that an employee/member may be affected by the use of drugs or alcohol and that the use may adversely affect the job performance or the work environment. Some examples of when reasonable suspicion may exist include, but are not limited to, the following: if an employee/member is unable to perform normal job duties or normal body functions, has unexplained or excessive absences or tardiness or otherwise appears to have used drugs or alcohol in a manner that may affect the employee's/member's work.
- Random Testing. From time to time, ACE may require an employee/member or groups of employees/members to undergo a drug-use test on a random basis.

Determinations for pre-employment testing, random testing, and regarding whether an employee/member's conduct falls within the above-described situations shall be made at the sole discretion of ACE, following applicable state and federal laws.

#### *Drug and Alcohol Testing Methods, Collection Procedures, and Results Management*

Drug-use testing will occur during, or immediately before or after, a regular work period. ACE will pay all actual costs for drug-use or alcohol-impairment testing required of current employees/members. The method of testing for drug use will be urinalysis. The method for testing for alcohol impairment may be by breath, saliva, blood or urinalysis. A blood test may be used if for any reason the employee/member cannot provide a sample; for example, if the employee/member is unconscious or is unable to provide a urinalysis.

All sample collection and testing for drug use must be performed according to the following conditions:

- The collection of samples must be performed under reasonable and sanitary conditions. ACE, in its discretion, will designate the company that will collect samples and arrange for testing. ACE may change this designation at its discretion at any time.
- Sample testing must comply with scientifically accepted analytical methods and procedures. Drug testing must be conducted at a laboratory approved or certified by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the College of American Pathologists, or the Department of Health Services.
- Sample collections must be documented, and these documentation procedures must include the following: Samples must be labeled in order to reasonably preclude the possibility of misidentification of the person tested in relation to the test result provided.
- The person to be tested must have the opportunity to provide the laboratory and/or ACE's designated person any information that may be considered relevant to the test including identification of currently or recently used prescription or nonprescription drugs or other relevant medical information.
- The person being tested must present reliable individual identification to the person collecting samples.
- Sample collection, storage, and transportation must be performed in a manner reasonably designed to preclude the possibility of sample contamination, adulteration or misidentification.
- Drug-use testing must include confirmation of any positive drug test results for employees/members. Confirmation of positive drug test results for employee/members must be by use of a different chemical process that was used in the initial drug-use test. The second or confirmatory drug-use test must be a chromatographic technique such as a gas chromatography-mass spectrometry or another comparably reliable analytical method.

Testing may be required for the following substances: amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cannabinoids (marijuana), cocaine, methadone, opiates, phencyclidine, and propoxyphene. Except as otherwise permitted by law, no sample taken for testing shall be tested for any substance or condition except drugs as defined herein. ACE reserves the right to add additional drugs to this list.

A drug-use test shall be considered positive when the screening levels established by the laboratory are exceeded. Information regarding the screening cutoff levels for various drugs will be made available upon request. An alcohol-impairment test shall be considered positive when an employee/member's test exceeds .00%.

If a drug-use test or alcohol-impairment test is considered unsuitable or inconclusive by the employer for any reason, the employee/member or applicant may be immediately retested. Examples of unsuitable or inconclusive test results include, but are not limited to, specimens that are considered diluted or specimens that have a low urine specific gravity. An employee/member or applicant may be instructed to refrain from drinking water or using diuretics (subject to medical concerns) for a specified time period prior to the retest.

The following violates ACE's Drug Testing policy:

- Failure to show up at an assigned collection site to provide a specimen at an agreed upon time.

- Employee/member refuses to cooperate, follow instruction, submit a specimen, or tampers with collection processes in such a way that prevents the successful completion of a test. Refusal to submit a specimen will be grounds for immediate termination of employment/service. In the case of an applicant, refusal to participate in drug testing or violating this policy, shall be grounds for refusal to hire that person.

ACE will provide results to only those individuals designated by ACE. These individuals will notify only the employee/member and supervisor of the test results. ACE will not release any information regarding the test results without the written consent of the employee/member tested, except as required or permitted by law. All communications received by ACE relevant to drug/alcohol use test results and received through this testing program are confidential communications and may not be used or received in evidence, obtained in discovery, or disclosed in any public or private proceeding (except in a proceeding related to an action taken by ACE or an employee/member in connection with this policy), and except disclosure to:

- The tested employee/member or any other person designated in writing by that employee/member.
- Individuals designated by ACE to receive and evaluate test results or hear the explanation of the employee.
- An arbitrator or mediator, or a court or governmental agency as authorized by state or federal law.

The tested employee/member has the right, upon request, to obtain their written test results. Employees/members have the right, upon request, to explain the test result to ACE in a confidential setting.

### **ACE Drug/Alcohol Disciplinary Actions**

Upon violation of ACE's Drug and Alcohol Policy or receipt of a positive drug-use or alcohol impairment test, ACE may take disciplinary or rehabilitative actions including:

- The employee/member may be subject to discipline (up to and including termination), at the discretion of ACE.
- The employee/member may be required to enroll in an approved rehabilitation, treatment or counseling program at the employee's/member's own expense (which may include additional drug testing and alcohol impairment testing) as a condition of continued employment/service.
- An employee/member who has enrolled in an approved rehabilitation, treatment, or counseling program and/or was subject to suspension or other adverse employment action based on having tested positive on a drug-use test or having exceeded .00% on an alcohol impairment test will be immediately terminated if such employee/member subsequently tests positive on a drug-use or alcohol-impairment test.

Furthermore, pursuant to applicable state law, individuals may be denied workers' compensation claims in circumstances where the individual tests positive for drugs and alcohol and drug or alcohol impairment was a substantial contributing cause of the accident. In this case the burden of treatment cost may fall upon the employee/member.

### **Definitions**

The following definitions apply for purposes of these policies:

- "Prescription drugs" are only those prescribed medications that are legal in the United States.

- “Drugs” refers to any substance considered unlawful under the controlled substances act, or the metabolite of the substance. “Drugs” specifically include, but are not limited to: amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cannabinoids (marijuana), cocaine, methadone, opiates, phencyclidine, and propoxyphene.
- “Alcohol” refers to ethanol, isopropanol or methanol, which are contained in products such as beer, wine, and distilled spirits or liquor.

### Harassment Policy

Harassment is defined as conduct that interferes with an employee/members’ work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. This would include, but not be limited to: threats or offensive conduct directed toward a person’s sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, race, age, physical or mental disability, religion, national origin, veteran’s status, or any other classification protected by applicable law. This includes environmental and quid pro quo (this for that) sexual harassment.

ACE’s harassment policy covers employee/member actions on duty and on, or off, ACE premises. The policy can apply to employee/member actions off-duty as well. This includes, but is not limited to, business and project-related travel and actions taken on social media and electronic communications. ACE requires every staff and member to understand what comprises harassment and comply with the harassment policy. ACE will support anyone who submits a report of harassment and will actively seek a resolution to issues that are Raised.

Any harassment or discrimination — based on any characteristics protected by law—is strictly prohibited. ACE expects all employees/members to be involved in the continuing co-creation of a workplace free of harassment. To this end, if you experience, directly witness, or are informed of any instances of harassment or discrimination, we strongly encourage you to report the issue.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or requests for sexual favors, and other offensive conduct that is either sexual in nature or directed at someone because of their gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment undermines a healthy workplace by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Harassment, whether sexual or based on characteristics listed above, may take many forms. By way of example, harassment may include but is not limited to:

- **Verbal Conduct:** Includes suggestive comments, repeated flirtation or advances, derogatory jokes, name calling, innuendoes, demeaning slurs, gender or orientation-based comments and unwanted kidding or teasing, foul or obscene language, or discussions of a sexual nature.
- **Visual Conduct:** Includes leering, derogatory or sexually-oriented visual items such as: photography, cartoons, drawings, graffiti, electronic mail, emojis, notes, or gestures.
- **Physical Conduct:** Includes assault and unwelcome touching, tickling, picking up, patting, pinching, pushing, blocking of normal movement, physical advances, or interfering with work.
- **Threats or Demands:** Includes requiring sexual favors in exchange for access to resources, opportunities, or as a condition of continued employment. This also includes threatening other physical or verbal abuse.
- **Bullying:** Includes repeated unreasonable behavior directed toward a worker, or group of workers, that creates a risk to health and safety. It includes behavior such as: verbal abuse, intimidation, and threats; withholding information that is essential for someone to do their job; excluding or isolating others; and interfering with someone’s personal property or work equipment. Bullying in any form regardless of whether it is one time or repeated will not be tolerated.

ACE expects all staff and members to understand and evaluate the effects their behaviors may have on others. Both repeated and singular occurrences of harassment or discrimination present a risk to a healthy workplace and will result in appropriate action.

Any person who becomes a target or observes conduct believed to constitute harassment should immediately take steps to eliminate this behavior by confronting the perpetrator and/or reporting it to their ACE supervisor or any manager or executive of ACE.

All reported violations of this policy will be fairly investigated with prompt remedial action taken as outlined in the Filing and Receiving Grievance and Complaint Reports policy [above](#).

It is contrary to ACE's policy for a supervisor or any employee/member to retaliate against anyone who files a charge of harassment. Any employee/member who believes that they are being subjected to retaliation should promptly report it to their ACE supervisor, or any manager or executive of ACE. False and malicious accusations of sexual or other harassment, as opposed to complaints which, even if erroneous, are made in good faith, may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

**ACE's Commitment to Members/Employees:**

1. All reports will receive a response and will be properly documented.
2. Every effort will be made to listen, investigate fully, and provide reasonable accommodation for the safety and well-being of those involved.
3. If it appears that satisfaction, harmony, and efficiency are not being achieved, ACE will support employees/members who ask to have the matter referred to higher management for consideration.
4. There will be no retaliation against any employee/members who files a report or who provides witness statements during an investigation.
5. Acts of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation are considered actionable. Repeated occurrences of discrimination or harassment are subject to progressive disciplinary measures, including but not limited to: suspension, probation, or termination.
6. ACE will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible while conducting a prompt and thorough investigation to determine whether inappropriate conduct has occurred. Outcome of an investigation will be shared as appropriate to all parties involved (complaint and complaine).

**False Reporting:**

ACE endeavors to create a workplace free from harassment, discrimination, nepotism, favoritism, and wrongdoing. As an organization, we hope and expect that all staff and members will share in this responsibility and report wrongdoing in any form when they witness, experience, or hear about it. Every report submitted in good faith will be acknowledged and investigated. Appropriate action will be taken to address the issues, as per the results of the investigation. While not anticipated, reports submitted in bad faith (those that skew, misrepresent, or fabricate facts / details / occurrences) will be considered a violation of ACE Policy.

**Whistleblower Protection/Retaliation:**

If an employee/member has knowledge or a concern of illegal action or action taken in violation of ACE Policy, the employee/member should contact their immediate ACE supervisor, another senior manager or the ACE Program Department Head without concern of retaliation.

Retaliation may be defined as any action that is taken against an employee(s)/member(s) that harms them professionally or personally as a result of a report they filed with regards to employee(s)/members(s) or organizational wrongdoing.

While not a comprehensive list, this can take the shape of demotions, passing over for promotions or raises, exclusion from work related opportunities, and suspension or termination of employment. This can also encompass other retaliatory measures that happen outside of the workplace. It is important to note that whistleblower protection does not confer automatic immunity on the individual(s) submitting the report if they have been involved in activities that violate ACE Policy.