

INTERPRETIVE MEMO

3SqVT Rule Interpretation

Procedural Instruction

This memo remains effective statewide until it is specifically superseded – either by a subsequent memo or by a contradictory rule with a later date.

Please file in your manual facing the page indicated below.

Facing page 273.9c10 iii Date of this memo 08/28/14 Pages 1 of 2

This memo: is new Replaces one dated 03/15/06

UPDATE: AmeriCorps Payments

AmeriCorps consists of three main programs (1) *AmeriCorps State and National*; (2) *AmeriCorps VISTA*; and (3) *AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps)*.

AmeriCorps State and National and *AmeriCorps NCCC* programs fall under Title I of the National Community Service Act (NCSA) of 1990 as amended in 1999. The NCSA states that allowances, earnings, and payments to participants in these programs must not be considered income when determining eligibility for any federal or federally assisted needs-based program, other than as provided under the Social Security Act.

Therefore, payments and allowances from *AmeriCorps State and National* and *AmeriCorps NCCC* are not counted as income in determining 3SquaresVT benefits, without exception.

AmeriCorps VISTA programs, however, fall under Title II of the Domestic Volunteer Services Act of 1973. Payments to volunteers for programs under Title I of that Act (including *VISTA*) are excluded for anyone who is receiving SNAP benefits or public assistance at the time they join *AmeriCorps VISTA*.

Therefore, payments and allowances from *AmeriCorps VISTA* are not counted as income for an individual already receiving 3SquaresVT benefits when they joined *AmeriCorps VISTA*, but do count as income if they begin receiving 3SquaresVT benefits after joining *AmeriCorps VISTA*.

QUESTION: When is a person considered having “joined” *AmeriCorps VISTA*?

ANSWER: The date someone joins *AmeriCorps VISTA* is the date they complete their required Pre-Service Orientation.

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QUESTION: What if someone applies for 3SquaresVT benefits before completing the *AmeriCorps VISTA* Pre-Service Orientation, but begins to receive 3SquaresVT benefits after completing the orientation?

ANSWER: If an *AmeriCorps VISTA* volunteer applies for, or is receiving, 3SquaresVT benefits before completing the Pre-Service Orientation, the *AmeriCorps VISTA* payment is not counted as income. Under this policy, individuals are considered recipients of benefits from the date of application. Therefore, in this case, the *AmeriCorps VISTA* payment would not be counted as income since the application occurred before the individual completed the orientation.

If an *AmeriCorps VISTA* volunteer applies for 3SquaresVT benefits after completing the Pre-Service Orientation, the *AmeriCorps VISTA* payment must be counted as income.

Therefore, interviewers must ask *AmeriCorps VISTA* volunteers, who are applying for 3SquaresVT benefits, whether they have completed their Pre-Service Orientation. Ask them to provide their *AmeriCorps VISTA* letter as a verification of the date of completion.

RA
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