



Position: [AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program \(AVAP\) Advocate](#)

Program Sponsor: [New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence](#)

Location: AVAP Advocates serve at host sites throughout the state of New Hampshire. Please reach out to Natalie Ryckman at Natalie@nhcadsv.org for the most up to date info on available placement locations

Work Schedule: Monday-Friday

Hours per Week: 37.5 (full time), 20 (half time)

Living Stipend : \$14,279 full time service, \$7,710 half time service

Educational Award: \$6,195 full time, \$3,097.50 half time

Service Term: 09/09/2020- 9/3/2021

Service Position Description: AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program (AVAP) members provide crisis intervention, direct support services, and advocacy to individuals and families who have been impacted by domestic, sexual, and stalking violence, addressing critical needs of communities throughout New Hampshire. Members receive training from experts in the field on crucial topics related to victim/survivor advocacy. As financial abuse presents a significant barrier to survivors in accessing safety, members integrate economic empowerment into their advocacy by providing financial literacy education and services.

AVAP is currently accepting applications for 2020-2021 service positions which will begin 9/9/2020 and end 9/3/2021. AVAP members are placed at crisis center and criminal justice-based host sites throughout the State of New Hampshire. Both full time (1700 hours) and half time (900 hours) positions are available.

By serving a year with AVAP, you have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of victim/survivors of domestic, sexual, and stalking violence. The experience and training you receive will not only help you make a difference in the field of victim/survivor services, but will also allow you to make valuable connections within the profession, community, and with other socially conscious individuals.

Full time service includes a living stipend totaling \$14,279. An educational award of \$6,195 is also offered upon successful completion of service that can be used to pay back qualified student loans or to pay for the cost of attending a qualified higher education institution. Health insurance is also offered to full time members. (Half time amounts: \$7,710 stipend, \$3,097.50 educational award)

AVAP members serve as Crisis Center or Criminal Justice advocates, providing a variety of direct services to meet the needs of survivors and their families which include:

Crisis Center Advocate:

- Provide financial literacy sessions (one-and-one & workshops) and referrals to services that will assist those seeking to address financial barriers and gain financial independence
- Assist survivors in obtaining restraining orders and offering support and assistance at legal hearings
- Provide confidential support to survivors of domestic, sexual, and stalking violence
- Answer crisis hot line calls
- Provide accompaniment to the hospital, police department, criminal proceedings and social service agencies
- Make contacts and/or referrals to social service agencies and other community resources
- Participate in public outreach and education to community organizations, hospitals, etc.
- Facilitate support groups and workshops for survivors



Criminal Justice System Advocate:

- Refer victims to local crisis centers and social service & community agencies
- Educate the victim/witness about the criminal justice system
- Provide information on victim's compensation and assist survivors in the application process
- Provide information on financial literacy and referrals to meet financial literacy needs
- Inform the victim/witness of case status, procedure and hearing/trial dates
- Support and assist victims in preparing victim impact statements
- Provide information and referrals for financial assistance
- Collaborating with community partners to offer financial literacy sessions and workshops in the community

Qualifications: At least 18 years of age.

Commitment to community service.

Interest in the issues of domestic, sexual, stalking, and human trafficking violence.

Interest in economic justice/empowerment.

Ability to work independently with limited supervision.

Ability to maintain a non-judgmental stance.

No prior experience in victim/survivor advocacy required.

How to Apply: Applications (found online [here](#)) and the required corresponding documents- resume, personal statement, copy of current driver's license, and three professional/academic references- may be submitted directly to Program Manager Natalie Ryckman via e-mail at natalie@nhcadsv.org or mailed to AVAP at P.O. Box 353, Concord, NH 03302-0353

Review of applications and interviews will begin March 2020. Although applications will be considered through July 2020, host site placements occur on a rolling basis so early submissions are strongly encouraged to secure host site location preference. Find our application available for download at <https://www.nhcadsv.org/avap.html>



AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program

Helping Survivors Through Community Service

Frequently Asked Questions:

- **What is AmeriCorps service?**
 - AmeriCorps is a voluntary service program that addresses critical needs in communities throughout the United States. It is often referred to as a domestic version of the Peace Corps. There are many AmeriCorps programs throughout the country at both the national and state level that focus on an array of issues including health, education, environment, economic opportunity, and veteran services.

- **What is the AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program (AVAP)?**
 - AVAP is one of eight AmeriCorps programs offered in the State of New Hampshire. It was established in 1994 as a way to address gaps in services to victims/survivors of domestic and sexual violence and stalking.
 - AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program (AVAP) members serve at host sites throughout the state of New Hampshire and provide crisis intervention, direct support services, and advocacy to individuals and families who have been impacted by domestic and sexual violence and stalking. Members integrate economic empowerment into their advocacy by providing financial literacy services to survivors with the goal of helping survivors gain financial independence and access safety.

- **What is the time commitment of AVAP service?**
 - AVAP service is a year commitment. The new program year begins the first Wednesday in September and runs through the last week of August. Both full time and half time service positions are available. Full time service is a commitment to a minimum of 1,700 service hours (37.5 hours per week) and half time service involves a commitment to a minimum of 900 service hours (approximately 20 hours a week).

- **What are the benefits of AmeriCorps service?**
 - AVAP members receive a weekly living stipend and health insurance is offered to full time members. Upon successful completion of service, members receive an educational award that can be used toward qualifying student loan debt or towards the cost of future attendance at a qualifying educational institution. Members may also be eligible to apply for loan forbearance during service so that no payments are due during the service term. AVAP members also receive training and professional development opportunities in the field of victim services.



- **What training do members receive?**

- The first two weeks of service involve an intensive training in Concord, NH that includes a variety of sessions to prepare members to enter the field of victim/survivor advocacy. Members receive additional training once they arrive at their host sites to assure that members feel comfortable providing direct service. Throughout the program year, members attend team meetings on the third Friday of every month that include training sessions on topics relevant to the field. Members have the opportunity to provide input on the training topics that they would like to see covered.

- **Why do people choose to do a year of service with AmeriCorps?**

- There are many reasons why people choose to serve with AmeriCorps. Some individuals are recently graduated from high school or college and are looking to develop professional skills, gain direct service experience, and add to their resume. Some individuals serve for a year in between undergrad and grad school as a way to give back to the community while earning the educational award to put towards the cost of grad school. Some individuals are looking for a career change and pursue service to explore different career paths. Some individuals are looking to feel more connected to a cause and/or community and find that service helps foster connections with other service minded individuals and helps provide a sense of purpose. Some individuals are looking to re-enter the workforce after some time away and find that a year of service is a good way to relearn skills and develop confidence. AmeriCorps has a vast alumni network of nearly a million individuals as well as name recognition; having service experience on a resume could give individuals an advantage in a competitive job market or college/graduate school admissions.

- **How can I learn more about AVAP?**

- Visit AVAP's website at <https://www.nhcadsv.org/avap.html>
- Contact Natalie Ryckman, Program Manager, at **603-715-8795** or Natalie@nhcadsv.org



AmeriCorps **Victim Assistance Program**

Helping Survivors Through Community Service

Who we serve:

Individuals and families impacted by domestic, sexual, and stalking violence

Where we serve:

Throughout NH in crisis centers, police agencies, and prosecutor offices

How we serve:

AVAP members provide a wide range of direct victim/survivor advocacy services to best meet the needs of those they serve including: financial literacy services that address barriers to safety and independence, confidential support in person and on the crisis line, support and accompaniment at legal proceedings, hospitals, police departments and social service agencies, support groups, connection to community resources, and outreach and awareness education in communities throughout the state.

Our Impact:

- 1,500+ victim/survivors served
- 1,953 Financial Literacy Services Provided
- 747 Housing Services provided
- 110 survivors with a demonstrated increase in financial knowledge from financial literacy workshops and individual sessions- with an average 50% increase in knowledge!
- 23 survivors transitioned to safe, stable, and affordable housing as a direct result of housing services provided by an AVAP member

Data from the 2017-18 AVAP



AVAP members provide a variety of direct services to meet the needs of survivors and their families:

Crisis Center Advocate:

- Provide economic empowerment services including financial literacy sessions (one-and-one & workshop) and referrals to services that help address financial barriers and gain financial independence
- Assist survivors in obtaining restraining orders and offering support and assistance at legal hearings
- Provide confidential support to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking
- Answer crisis hot line calls
- Provide accompaniment to the hospital, police department, criminal proceedings and social service agencies
- Make referrals to appropriate social service agencies and other community resources
- Participate in public outreach and education to community organizations, hospitals, etc.
- Facilitate support groups and workshops for survivors

Criminal Justice System Advocate:

- Refer victims to local crisis centers and social service & community agencies
- Educate the victim/witness about the criminal justice system
- Provide information on victim's compensation and assist survivors in the application process
- Provide information, resources, and referrals on financial literacy
- Inform the victim/witness of case status, procedure and hearing/trial dates
- Support and assist victims in preparing victim impact statements
- Provide information and referrals for financial assistance options
- Collaborate with community partners to offer financial literacy sessions and workshops in the community



AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program Member Benefits 2020-2021

Living Allowance

- Full time service: Total of \$14,279 (274.60/week for 52 weeks)
- Half time service: Total of \$7,710 (148.27/week for 52 weeks)

Educational Award

- Full time service: \$6,195
- Half time service: \$3,097.50
- Upon successful completion of service, members will receive an educational award to pay back qualified loans or to pay for the cost of attending a qualified institution of higher education;
- A qualified student loan is "a loan backed by the federal government under Title IV of the Higher education Act...or under Titles VII or VIII of the Public Health Service Act";
- A qualified institution of higher education is "an institution that has a Title IV Program Participation Agreement with the Department of Education whereby students at the school are eligible to receive federal financial assistance (backed by the Department of Education under Title IV of the Higher education Act) to attend the school; An institution may be fully accredited;
- Cost of attendance is a term used by the school's Financial Aid Office and each Title IV school determines its own;
- Educational awards *cannot be used* to repay any other loans, even if the loan has been obtained for educational purposes;
- The member has up to 7 years after completing the program to use the educational award;
- The educational award will be made out directly to the lending institution or to the institution of higher education - it will not be made out to the member;
- The educational award can be split to pay a combination of student loans and/or educational expenses (tuition, fees, books, etc.);
- The educational award is taxed in the year it is used; The member will be sent a 1099 form in the year of use
- The most common qualified student loans are Stafford and Perkins. If unsure of your loan type, contact your lending institution.

Student Loan Forbearance

- AmeriCorps members qualify to have certain student loans go into forbearance while they are serving in AmeriCorps;
- Members must request the forbearance from their loan holders making it clear that they are performing "national service" in "AmeriCorps";
- Most student loans that are in default are not eligible for forbearance;
- Anyone unsure if their loans qualify for forbearance should contact their lending institution directly.

Coverage of Student Loan Interest Accrual

- While the member's qualified loans are in forbearance interest will still accrue on the loan, however, upon successful completion of service, the Corporation for National Community Service will pay interest that accrued during the service period on qualified loans
- This benefit is in addition to the educational award and is also taxed

Health Insurance (Full-time members only)

- Health insurance is provided by Cigna free of charge for full-time members.
- This health insurance coverage is basic and is single coverage (for the member only)

Child Care Benefits (Full-time members only)

- Member must be the legal parent or legal guardian of a child under the age 13
- The child must reside with the member and the member must meet income eligibility requirements
- The member must certify that they need child care in order to participate in the AmeriCorps program