

Bay Area JusticeCorps 20-21 Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated: 5/20/20

Thanks for visiting our FAQ page. We will try to keep this up to date so please check here before emailing program staff. If the answer to your question is not here or you're not sure how an answer would apply in your personal circumstance, please email JusticeCorps staff, and we will be happy to answer your question.

1. Q: How will the COVID-19 pandemic affect the Bay Area JusticeCorps?

A: Currently the Bay Area Courts are mostly closed to the public due to the Counties' shelter in place orders. The 19-20 program ended early due to these closures; however, all members in good standing were able to receive their full education award. The fellows were able to receive their full living allowance.

JusticeCorps is currently considering several options for program operations in Fall 2020. More information on our current thinking for these options is below. We will be in touch with a full update (and will update this page) on evolving plans as soon as we have concrete information to share.

2. Q: Will there be remote service options?

A: At least one of our placement sites, Bay Area Legal Aid, has started testing a remote service model and will likely have it in place for their JusticeCorps members.

Our partner court's (Alameda, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara) Self Help Centers are currently closed to the public due to the counties' shelter in place orders. During this time, they are considering several options for restoring services to the public. As each partner court establishes their new service model, JusticeCorps will work with them to develop a plan for JusticeCorps service. This plan may include remote service and/or in-person service options for Fall 2020. We will be in touch with accepted and confirmed members with updates for each site as soon as we have concrete information to share. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate these uncertain and unprecedented times.

3. Q: What safety precautions will be taken for in-person service?

A: In person, service may include service where JusticeCorps members and their supervisors are at the court while litigants are at remote locations. It may also include service where both JusticeCorps members, supervisors and litigants are all present at the court. In either scenario, each court will have social distancing guidelines in place for staff that align with their counties

public health directives. JusticeCorps members will be required to follow these guidelines and will be provided with the same type of protective equipment as staff.

4. Q: Will there be any flexibility with schedules if my schedule changes before or after the program starts?

A: JusticeCorps won't ask for your availability until August, so hopefully you will have a pretty good idea of your schedule by then. For our quarter schools which start after orientation students often need to switch their schedules around in the first few weeks, so minor changes for these members are expected.

5. Q: Is there any chance that weekends get added to the schedule to allow for social distancing?

A: No. Other than the scheduled weekend trainings there will not be program activities on the weekends. Court staff must be present to supervise members, and there is currently no plan for them to work on the weekends that we are aware of.

6. Q: Will JusticeCorps have the same number of student members as last year? If not, how will you decide who gets to participate?

A: Because of the uncertainty regarding court operations in September 2020 that was present during JusticeCorps' recruitment and selection season (Spring 2020), the program accepted and confirmed our usual number of student-members.

It is very likely that some courts (when they finalize their plans for fall 2020 [see question 2]) may decide that they cannot host as many student members as usual due to social distancing requirements or the challenges of supervising student members remotely. In this scenario, JusticeCorps will contact affected student members to determine who is best able to contribute to and benefit from placement at that site. Students who are eligible for service in the 21-22 academic year will be given the option to defer.

If the program must decide which of the student members (who had been assigned to a site that has reduced capacity to host members) can participate at that site in the 20-21 program year, the following variables are likely to be considered. The student member's:

- Date of graduation
- Language skills
- Physical location
- Interview score

7. Q: I will not be in the Bay Area for the duration of Summer or until August/September; how will I be able to complete the required background checks?

A. The background checks are comprised of 2 steps: the AmeriCorps background checks (Truescreen/Fieldprint) and the local court background check (LiveScan). Members can complete the AmeriCorps background checks (Truescreen/Fieldprint) out of state, which should enable you to earn hours for Orientation in September. [Fieldprint](#) has multiple locations in all 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands which should allow you to complete both of the AmeriCorps background checks remotely. However, you will have to wait for your local LiveScan clearance to begin serving with court and accruing service hours. We'll reach out to you once we begin initiating background checks.

8. Q: I was placed on the JusticeCorps waiting list. What are the chances of getting off the waiting list and when will I be notified?

A: It's likely that our sites will need fewer students than normal in the fall (See FAQ #6). If that's the case some of the students who were offered positions may not be able to participate. This makes it less likely than in a normal year that we would draw from the waitlist. Therefore, if you do have another opportunity we would encourage you to take it and let us know you are withdrawing from the waitlist. We probably won't know more about the waitlist till late August and will plan to contact waitlisted students then with updates.