

New Jersey Youth Corps of Phillipsburg Corpsmember Handbook



In this handbook:

- Your role and responsibilities as a Corpsmember
- Descriptions of what you will accomplish
- Rules and Regulations for the NJ Youth Corps of Phillipsburg

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Youth Corps Mission Statement

To restore and preserve the dignity of young adults who have been underserved and enhance their value to society by providing a comprehensive program of academic instruction and community service work experience that form a solid foundation upon which to build a brighter future.

Introduction

Welcome to the New Jersey Youth Corps of Phillipsburg! To make you comfortable in your new surroundings, we have put together a handbook to guide you on your path to success. Think of it as a map of your future.

Any questions you may have that pertain to policies in this handbook should be addressed to the staff. Your success is of utmost importance to us. We want you not only to meet our expectations of you, but also to exceed them. We will show you that there is nothing you cannot do. We are here to help you, so do not be afraid to ask.

We are:

Mr. Michael J. Muckle	- Director
Mr. David Smith	-Program Coordinator
Ms. Thea M. Muckle	-Instructor
Mr. Christopher Mugavero	-Transitions Coordinator
Mr. Adam Andrews	- Crew Supervisor
Ms. Dawn Gares	- Grants Manager



A Brief History

The journey you are about to embark on is a well-worn path. The modern Corps movement is based on the original Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the 1930's, which developed and maintained the nation's parks. The CCC was funded by way of the Works Progress Administration (*the largest agency created in F.D.R.'s 'New Deal'*) and the Walters Park Pavilion here in the park was built with WPA funds!

The New Jersey Youth Corps was established in 1984 to help provide individuals who have

not completed high school with the opportunity to learn life and job skills, to teach accountability and responsibility, perform community service and to obtain a H.S.E. Since its inception, NJYC has provided the state of NJ with over four million hours of service! The Phillipsburg New Jersey Youth Corps is one of 12 sites in the state. Annually, New Jersey Youth Corps provides about 1,000 young adults with the skills they need to become successful. You are now going to be among a group of very distinguished individuals!

Orientation-

You have made it through the selection process and now you are ready to get down to business, right? Great! Let us tell you a little about how it will be for the first couple of weeks. Transition can be confusing, so, we have scheduled an orientation to help you familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures of this Corps. During the orientation period, we will be assessing our situation and ourselves. That means we will be finding out about each other. Once you get a better understanding of what you will need to accomplish, we will use that understanding to develop your decision-making skills to help you make some pretty important life choices. We will also teach you where to look for a job, how to become a better candidate for employment, and the work habits you will need to keep that job.

Orientation will also include getting you familiar with your community. You may meet with town officials or visit local government agencies. On special occasions, we will have a guest speaker come in to give even more specialized instruction.

But first, we will conduct tests that determine where you are academically & vocationally. We do this to individualize the instruction you receive. These tests and evaluations only serve as a way to determine your progress, and to let you know what aspects you need to work on. Orientation culminates with an overall test of all the things you learned in the first two weeks. Passing this test is required for your entrance to Youth Corps!

Orientation is a familiarization process. We want you to get to know us, and us to know about you. Issues discussed hold the utmost importance throughout the program, not just the first few weeks. So, once you learn the rules, be determined to follow them throughout your stay with us, as the skills you learn will be used throughout your life. Remember, during a year there are only a few young people who will have the opportunity to have a Corps experience, but there are many requests to join. **Take advantage of this opportunity!**

Objectives-

The New Jersey Youth Corps staff will help you:

1. feel better about yourself and give you the confidence you need to get what you want out of life.
2. become more disciplined, by teaching you accountability and responsibility.
3. foster a deeper understanding of environmental issues through practicing conservation and stewardship
3. get a “hands-on” perspective on the goings-on in the Town of Phillipsburg and Warren County through meetings with community leaders and visits to community agencies.
4. develop work maturity skills through “Service Learning.”
5. develop strong leadership skills and abilities.
6. explore career options and develop a plan for your future.
7. increase understanding of cultural diversity
8. obtain an H.S.E.; increase proficiency in Basic Skills.
9. register for Selective Service (if applicable)

Holding up your end of the bargain-

To achieve these lofty goals, you must assume certain responsibilities. For our help, we expect you to:

1. attend school **every** day, ALL DAY, and to be here on time.
2. approach your learning process with a mature outlook. (not every day will be easy.)
3. be organized with all educational materials (pencils, pens, notebooks....),

come to class/work prepared for the events of the day, and to **actively participate** in your learning process.

4. complete all homework and special assignments. (*HSE Packets, CW Publications Life Skills Curriculum, Employability Skills Curriculum, etc.*)
5. participate in “Service Learning Projects.”
6. embrace responsibility, show respect, exhibit dependability, and involve yourself in your community.
7. successfully complete the H.S.E test.

Program Guidelines-

Learning is a fragile process. In order to provide you with an environment that will enable you to get the most out of our program, we have put together a list of Program Guidelines. The guidelines will provide you with an atmosphere that enables you to be productive and safe.



1. **Attendance is mandatory.** In order to get all you can from the program, you need to be here every day, and arrive on time. Unexpected absences lead to unproductive days & poor morale, so, please make every effort to attend! If you will be late or are calling out, you must call (or text) 908.859.2969 by 8:30 am to let us know. It is your responsibility to call and inform us of your absence or lateness. If you are calling to inform us you will be late, you must still be able to arrive to Youth Corps by 8:45 am, or otherwise you will be told to come in at 12:30 pm and/or have your stipend deducted by ½ day. Tardiness or absences will negatively affect your stipend (see below). Failure to call out or late on any day (No Call/No Show) will lead to a deduction in stipend for the day of the offense and the day you return. Additionally, calling late and not showing up (Call/No Show) will be treated as a No Call/No Show. If at any time a Corpsmembers does not call and simply arrives to Youth Corps at an inappropriate time, they will not be allowed to enter the classroom or go on to a worksite and will be sent home and told when to return. CM’s should make every effort to schedule appointments outside of YC hours, but if unavoidable, all absences require documentation to be considered ‘excused’. If too many unexcused absences accrue, you may be terminated from the program.

2. **Patterned Absenteeism** (*the frequency of calling out on the same days two*

times or more over a period of time) will be documented and may negatively affect your stipend.

3. **Stipends**– A tiered system of stipends will be dispersed to CM’s over their time in the program. Stipends start at \$50/week, then increase to \$75/week and then to \$100/week for the final eight (8) weeks of the program. Please refer to the Stipend policy in greater detail.

Stipend Policy

In an effort to model real-world working conditions, and to offset any costs incurred by our Corpsmembers for participating in the program, we offer an incentivized stipend policy that proportionately rewards for progression and participation in the NJYC program. Corpsmembers will earn stipends in a tiered system that proportionately rewards for attendance & punctuality, time served and overall performance. The policy laid out below offers the potential for each Corpsmember to earn a total of \$1,400 over the 16-week program. Amounts listed are potential per individual, based on 100% attendance.

Stipend Breakdown	
5 full days	100%
4 full days	80%
3 full days	60%
< 3 full days	0%

Accommodations can be made for Corpsmembers that secure employment during their term of service. Providing documentation for said employment will excuse Corpsmember from YC activities for up to one hour per day.

Timeframe and Stipend Potential-

The chart below displays the timeframes and potential stipend amounts available to each Corpsmember while enrolled in NJYC. Amounts are subject to reduction based on attendance and corresponding disciplinary actions.

- Orientation, Weeks 1-2 \$ - 0 -
- Week 3-4 (2 weeks @\$50/week) \$ 100.00
- Week 5-8 (4 weeks @ \$75/week) \$ 300.00
- Week 9-16 (8 weeks @ \$100/week) \$ 800.00

Potential Stipends Available \$ 1,200.00

Stage 1 Completion Bonus-

Corpsmembers who successfully complete the Youth Corps program (as per the NJYC Program Requirements) will be eligible for an incentive bonus of up to \$200. To be eligible, Corpsmembers must successfully; 1.) complete Stage One, 2.) complete a minimum of 140 hours of Service-Learning Projects and 3.) successfully complete the Employability Skills Curriculum. Bonus will be awarded accordingly:

168 Academic Hours:	\$100
168 Service Hours:	\$100
Employability Skills Benchmark:	\$100
TOTAL:	\$300

Referral Incentives: Corpsmembers/Alumni who refer candidates that apply, enroll and successfully complete the orientation portion of the YC program, will receive a \$25.00 referral bonus!

***Corpsmembers must complete a total of 50 hours of academic preparation before they will be scheduled for the first HiSet exam. CM's will be expected to continue to maintain the same level of academic attendance for the remainder of the class cycle.**

Summary: In total, Corpsmembers can receive a total of \$1,500 in stipends and incentives through Stage 1 of New Jersey Youth Corps. (This total amount does not include referral bonuses.)

4. Language or Behavior perceived to be inappropriate will be addressed by the staff. Corpsmembers are expected, at all times (*within and outside of the program*) to treat one another and staff with respect regardless of gender, race, color, creed, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. Corpsmembers also do not engage in public displays of affection. This general code of conduct will be expected of all Corpsmembers at all times. Respect each other and play fair! We're a team!

5. Uniform Policy & Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) -It is the policy of New

Jersey Youth Corps that all Corpsmembers must be properly attired in the New Jersey Youth Corps uniform at all times while attending the Youth Corps program. Attendance includes being transported in Youth Corps vans. This uniform shall consist of the standard yellow tee shirt and khaki pants/khaki shorts. Stipulations regarding the Uniform Policy shall include the following conditions (Classroom setting/Worksite Setting):

- The uniform shirt, pants or shorts and sweat shirts must be properly fitted. Improper fitting clothing will not be tolerated.
- CM's will be issued PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)
- Uniform must be worn properly and be visible upon entering the Youth Corps property and worn until dismissal.
- During cold or inclement weather, navy blue Youth Corps sweatshirts and/or navy blue Youth Corps field jackets may be worn over the shirt. Coats, hoodies or jackets which are not Youth Corps approved may be worn during cold or inclement weather only if a Youth Corps uniform piece is the outermost layer.
- Standard footwear on academic days may include athletic shoes and open toed footwear. Work boots **must** be worn while participating in outdoor service projects . All footwear must be worn in a way that promotes safety (*i.e. must be laced and tied*).
- If Corpsmembers require headgear during outdoor service projects, Youth Corps baseball caps or winter hats will be provided. Other types of headgear are unacceptable at all times, unless they serve a purpose not already provided by NJYC.
- Uniforms will be provided to the Corpsmembers by the program. Each Corpsmember will be provided two sweatshirts, two tee shirts, and two pairs of khaki pants/shorts upon induction.
- A Corpsmember who loses a component of the uniform must sign for a replacement item. Repeated offenses of this policy will be documented disciplinarily.
- At no time should a Corpsmember be permitted to participate in any New Jersey Youth Corps programming if improperly attired.



- Excessive jewelry is not permitted. This includes earrings, bracelets and necklaces. These items pose a safety hazard on the worksite as well as a distraction from other activities.
- Uniform compliance also includes maintaining good hygiene and keeping hair neatly combed and managed.
- For special events, Corpsmembers may petition, in writing, the director for an adjustment in the uniform policy.

6. Eating, drinking, chewing gum or tobacco, and smoking are not permitted within the classroom. (This includes e-cigarettes and vaping) Please use the kitchen for all food/beverage related activities. Additionally, please clean up after yourself! Smoking is permitted behind the Youth Corps building by the picnic tables.

7. The New Jersey Youth Corps of Phillipsburg is a drug-free environment! Definitions as used in this policy:

- *"Substance" means alcohol or drugs.*
- *"Alcohol" means ethyl alcohol or ethanol.*
- *"Drugs" means any substance taken into the body, other than alcohol, which may impair one's mental faculties and/or physical performance.*
- *"Corpsmember" means all persons who attend full time NJYC Programming.*

One of the greatest barriers to success of our youth today is the abuse of drugs and alcohol. The nationwide impact of substance abuse in the workplace is now estimated to billions of dollars annually.

The NJYC of Phillipsburg is vitally concerned about the well-being of its Corpsmembers, our most valuable asset. We are equally concerned that our organization's hard-earned reputation and positive image not be compromised in any way. Alcohol and drug abuse have an adverse effect on job performance, create dangerous situations, and serve to undermine our customers' and the community's confidence in our organization.

New Jersey Youth Corps of Phillipsburg cannot and will not condone drug or alcohol abuse on the part of its Corpsmembers, nor will it condone any Corpsmember behavior on or off the premises that may serve to damage the Youth Corps' reputation.

Our policy concerning drug and alcohol use and abuse is as follows:

- *NJYC of Phillipsburg will not enroll anyone who is known to currently abuse substances.*

- NJYC of Phillipsburg will educate and inform its Corpsmembers about the health consequences of drug and alcohol abuse.
- Corpsmembers must report to Youth Corps in a fit condition to perform their duties. Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol is not acceptable.
- Any Corpsmember on Youth Corps business, on or off Youth Corps premises, is prohibited from purchasing, transferring, using or possessing illicit drugs or using alcohol or prescription drugs in any way that is illegal.
- Corpsmembers will not be terminated for voluntarily seeking assistance for a substance abuse problem; however, continued performance, attendance or behavioral problems may result in loss of a position.
- Corpsmembers on physician-prescribed medication must notify a designated Youth Corps official if there's likelihood that such medication could affect performance and safety.
- NJYC of Phillipsburg reserves the right, when deemed necessary and/or appropriate, to request enrolled Corpsmembers to submit to urinalysis (or other method) to assess use.

Use of drugs or other controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, or possessing drug paraphernalia may lead to immediate dismissal from the program. **NOTE:** Upon entering the program or at any time while enrolled in the New Jersey Youth Corps, you may be asked to submit to a urinalysis to test for controlled substances. By signing your 'Handbook Agreement' you are giving us your consent to provide us with such documentation if requested. It is important to understand that positive results may necessitate your enrolling in a counseling program (to determine eligibility for re-entry to the Youth Corps). Use of drugs/alcohol can/will lead to termination from the program.

8. Cell phones, and other electronic devices (Apple Watches, etc.) are not allowed. In order to provide you a distraction-free environment and for you to be present in your learning process, we require your phone must be silenced and turned over to the Coordinator. Phones will be stored in a secure location during program hours. Corpsmembers will be permitted to use their phones during lunch. **If you are found to have been in possession of a phone during program hours, you will forfeit your stipend for the day.**

9. Office Phones are not for student use. In event of a real emergency, calls should be made to the Youth Corps office, 908.859.2969, and a message will be relayed to you. Staff representatives must authorize all outgoing calls made by students.

10. Breaks are to be taken in designated areas. No loitering is allowed in

unauthorized areas (Staff offices, Copy room). Designated areas for breaks are in the kitchen, outside on Youth Corps property, or in the classroom. Personal vehicles may only be accessed during lunch. Also, please do not invite visitors to wait around for you, with the exception of events in which guests are allowed.

11. Weapons Policy - Dangerous instruments which can be used to threaten the safety and well-being of Corpsmembers and staff are not permitted on school grounds, on the worksite or at any special function. Possession of said items may result in immediate termination.



12. Sexual Harassment - defined as unwelcome sexual advances,

requests for sexual favors, possession of objectionable material, or any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with a fellow Corpsmember or member of the staff will not be tolerated.

13. Threatening/Insubordinate Behavior— The safety of New Jersey Youth Corps' employees, clients, and visitors is an important concern to the organization. Threats, threatening behavior or acts of violence against employees, clients, visitors or others while on NJYC property, conducting business or receiving services from NJYC won't be tolerated. Violators of this policy will be asked to leave the premises immediately and if not compliant, law enforcement will be notified.

14 Backpack/purse Search – NJYC of Phillipsburg reserves the right to search a Corpsmember's backpack/purse to determine the possession of drugs/controlled substances/weapons.

15. Timesheets/Payroll/Holidays - Each Corpsmember will have his/her own timesheet to fill out on a daily basis. This is how we keep a record of your performance while at Youth Corps. *(These timesheets are what your stipend amount is based upon.)* The timesheets are checked periodically for accuracy. Please be sure to sign your timesheet *(and only your timesheet)* every day accurately and IN INK. Falsifying timesheets is considered a serious offense. We view a violation of this policy with the utmost seriousness. Should you have any questions about this policy, consult your supervisor.

Corpsmembers will be given credit toward stipends for Holidays (observed on

Monday-Friday) if they meet the following criteria:

A. Must be in attendance (or have a documented, excused absence) on the day prior to the holiday observed, and;

B. Must be in attendance (or have a documented, excused absence) immediately after the holiday is observed.

NOTE: (Corpsmembers will not be credited hours toward academics or service for holidays.)

16. Vehicles - the New Jersey Youth Corps has numerous vehicles to transport Corpsmembers and staff to and from worksites, field trips, etc. Your conduct in these vehicles while on the road is also of the utmost importance. Yelling, moving around in the vehicle, and causing distractions for the driver are considered serious infractions of Youth Corps rules and will lead to disciplinary actions. Furthermore, any vandalism or defacing of these vehicles will be dealt with in a similar disciplinary action. Youth Corps reserves the right to seek financial compensation for such damage.

17. Computer Use - Use of NJYC computers and Internet resources to access, view, transmit, archive, or distribute objectionable or illegal material is strictly prohibited. Furthermore, students are not allowed to access social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, etc.).

18. Smoking Policy—Smoking (*tobacco/nicotine based substances*) is only permitted in certain designated places. One place is outside behind the building at the NE corner of the house. This is the ONLY location smoking is allowed on the premises. Smoking may be allowed at worksites while on break, with the location being out of public view and at the discretion of the present staff. Smoking is prohibited at all times while on field trips.

Additionally, Disposable, non-refillable vaping/e-cigarettes are permitted in the smoking locations, but are subject to inspection by staff and must be surrendered upon request. Should it be determined that said device is not in compliance with our policy, it will be confiscated and you will face a proportionate consequence for violating this policy. Furthermore, refusal to surrender said device will be considered insubordinate behavior and dealt with accordingly.

In wanting to have realistic policies in place, NJYC of Phillipsburg recognizes that smoking is an addiction so some individuals are unlikely to be able to quit smoking, but that a positive step from the program would be to offer encouragement to those wanting to quit. Allowing employees to use e-cigarettes along the same basis as traditional cigarettes could be a positive step towards assisting those who are trying to quit smoking. (Materials and resources for

cessation are available.)

19. Evaluations-

While performing these tasks, you will be evaluated monthly on the following topics:

- *Punctuality*
- *Attitude and Behavior*
- *Relationships*
- *Dependability*
- *Quality of Academic, Employability Skills, and Service Work*
- *Appearance*

Once evaluated, you will meet with a staff member to discuss your performance. At that time you will have the chance to include your comments on the evaluation form.

Disciplinary Action / Counseling:

As we all know, we must face certain consequences for our actions. Our rules are in place with your interests at heart, so let us discuss what happens in the event that certain lines are crossed. Discipline/Counseling will be an option of enforcing certain policies. Offenses will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, with harsher penalties for the more serious offenses. Violations of certain policies can/will lead to immediate dismissal from the program.

Progressive Discipline – or the way we keep track of violations – will follow these steps:

- *Verbal Warning/Counseling*
- *Written Warning 1—with logical consequence administered*
- *Written Warning 2—with logical consequence administered*
- *One-day Suspension – chosen at the discretion of the staff*
- *Suspension with pending Termination – at this time your overall performance will be reviewed by the staff and a decision will be made as to your status in the Youth Corps.*
- *Termination from the cycle*

Documentation for each of these steps will remain active and applicable for your term of service with us. Remember that you will be evaluated monthly and that disciplinary notices will be reflected upon in your evaluation. (Numerous offenses may affect our ability to give you positive references.)

New Jersey Youth Corps Procedures

Attendance- Our hours of operation are Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and Friday 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. In order for you to get everything out of the program, we expect you to be here every day, and on time. Excessive

lateness or absences during your stay in the program result in a loss of the total experience for you. If you have an attendance/lateness problem, you will be notified. You will then have a chance to resolve the matter with the staff. If you are going to be late (at the staff's discretion) you may be asked to defer your start time until after lunch. **If you are going to be late or absent, please call/text us to let us know- 908-859-2969, (Please refer to 'Program Guidelines, Number 1)**

Breaks- We recognize that you will need the occasional break, so we have a minimum scheduled a 15-minute break in the morning and in the afternoon. We will take a half-hour break for lunch. If you are habitually late in returning from your break, it will be addressed by staff.

The Typical Week– the staff have created a recurring schedule for you to follow. Classes Monday/Wednesday, work Tuesday/Thursday. Fridays are flexible, but we usually have special activities scheduled (field trips, special speakers, etc.) This schedule may change due to weather.

Holidays/School Closings- - The New Jersey Youth Corps of Phillipsburg will observe all holidays observed by the municipality of Phillipsburg. School closings will be in accordance with the Phillipsburg School District. *(If Phillipsburg Public Schools are closed then so are we. The same applies for late openings as well.)* You will receive a text from NJYC if we are closed. If you still have any questions, call/text to 908-859-2969.



Disclaimer – Participants in the New Jersey Youth Corps of Phillipsburg are not to be considered employees, nor are they covered under a medical insurance plan. They are however, considered to participate in the Youth Corps as a volunteer, and such participation is completely of their own volition.

NOTES/Questions:

New Jersey Youth Corps Locations-

There are 11 other Youth Corps programs throughout the state of New Jersey. They are:

Pleasantville, Atlantic/Cape May Cty.
Phone: 609-485-0052 Ext. 4810

Newark, IYO
Phone: 973-641-2094

NJYC of Atlantic County - JEVS
267.238.3166

Newark - Leaders4Life
973-855-4950

Camden, Camden County
Phone: 856-486-7390

Paterson, Passaic County
Phone: 973-321-0763

Jersey City, Hudson County
Phone: 201-200-3101

Newton, Sussex County
Phone: 973-940-3500

New Brunswick, Middlesex County
Phone: 732-745-5325 Ext. 4401

Plainfield, Union County
Phone: 201-201-5489

Vineland, Cumberland County
Phone: 856-794-6943