



## Commonwealth Corps Service Internship Position Description

Regional Environmental Council Inc.  
Commonwealth Corps School Garden Volunteer Engagement Specialist



The mission of the Commonwealth Corps service internship program is to engage Massachusetts residents of all ages, backgrounds, and identities in direct service to strengthen communities, address critical needs, and increase volunteerism. Through hands-on experience, Commonwealth Corps members gain professional skills and valuable knowledge while positively impacting diverse communities in our state.

The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) is a private, nonprofit agency that oversees the program and supports host site partners and members to find success throughout the program year. The 3 Commonwealth Corps members with The Regional Environmental Council will serve 10.5 months in a half time capacity. They will join a diverse corps of members across Massachusetts who share a common desire to discover their passion and build their network in the service to their communities and the Commonwealth.

The Regional Environmental Council, Inc. (REC), a grassroots, nonprofit, environmental and food justice organization with a 45-year history working for environmental sustainability and social justice in Central Massachusetts. The REC is seeking one half-time Commonwealth Corps members to support volunteer engagement, workshop development and education to support our 25 school gardens. Through their service, the School Garden Volunteer Engagement Specialist will increase the sustainability of school gardens in Worcester. In addition, they will collaborate with other members to leverage volunteers to be engaged in hands on garden support and maintenance of urban food production and education.

### What You'll Do:

#### *Essential Responsibilities:*

- Complete a minimum of 1500 hours of service, serving through June 25, 2022.
- Attend all required Commonwealth Corps trainings and service events held by MSA (minimum of 6 total, post orientation) and Regional Environmental Council including a new member orientation on August 16 & 17, 2021. Participate in a minimum of or 30 minutes of MSA-related activities each week (in person or virtually).
- Provide direct support at new and existing school gardens, including but not limited to: Building garden beds, general maintenance, planting and harvesting
- Assist School Gardens manager with K-12 curriculum development and implementation related to gardening for partner schools
- Assist School Gardens manager in identifying professional development and networking opportunities for volunteer garden coordinators
- Develop systems for volunteer engagement and management: i.e. recruitment, outreach, partner development and relationship building
- Develop training and orientation for summer garden volunteers

#### *Marginal Responsibilities:*

- Collaborate with other Commonwealth Corps members to support greenhouse operations to grow \$5,000+ seedlings for the community and school gardens network
- Support event planning and volunteer recruitment for organization wide Earth Day Clean Ups and Spring Garden Festival and Plant Sale
- Support produce delivery and sale in low-income communities via the REC Mobile Market Program

### Who You Are:

#### *You must be:*

- A Massachusetts resident ([see guidelines here](#)) with legal authorization to work in the United States
- 18 years of age at minimum, however we typically have members ranging from 18 – 70+ years old
- Excited to give back to your community and help others
- Interested in developing your skills and gaining new professional experience and knowledge
- Able to balance service internship commitments with personal commitments in a sustainable way
- Able to access your own vehicle, and a valid driver's license.
  - School Garden Volunteer Engagement Specialists will be expected to be able to meet at

*gardens across the city for service days. Members will also be expected to drive the REC pickup truck in order to transport tools and soil for volunteer garden events. Drivers will complete a vehicle orientation with our Director of Administration and be added to the organizational auto liability insurance.*

- A strong communicator, both in written and verbal formats

*It would also be great if you:*

- Speak a language other than English – multi-lingual candidates encouraged to apply
- Have comfort with online collaboration tools, e.g. shared calendars, email, shared folders/files such as Dropbox, Google Drive, Google Apps
- Have experience growing food
- Have experience with children/youth in the K-12 age range.
- Have familiarity/experience with the Worcester community, particularly the Bell Hill and Main South neighborhoods
- Had previous experience in collaborative environments or volunteering with people of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds

#### **What You'll Get:**

- **Stipend** of or \$450 semi-monthly while in service, up to or \$9,450, minus taxes and withholdings;
- **Member assistance program**, including unlimited, confidential, 24/7, phone counseling services and up to three free, in-person counseling sessions, plus a lot more;
- **Completion award** of up to or \$1,500 upon successful completion of service, minus taxes and withholdings;
- **Reimbursement for outside training** or professional development opportunities relevant to member's service and/or goals (Up to \$100; Dependent on approval from MSA)
- **Additional training and other professional development** opportunities;
- **Limited reimbursement for travel to Corps-wide MSA-sponsored activities;**
- **Limited travel reimbursement** from the Regional Environmental Council for certain service-related travel away from their usual service location, according to REC's policies;
- **A subsidized local food stipend** through REC Mobile Market paired with SNAP application support and training on the Healthy Incentives Program;
- The opportunity for at least 5 days of planned absences (may include holidays);
- and Opportunity to join with others with a common sense of purpose as part of the Commonwealth Corps.

*Please note that receipt of these stipends/benefits may impact an individual's eligibility for certain public benefits.*

#### **Term of Service:**

- **Position Start Date:** August 17, 2021
- **Position End Date:** June 26, 2022
- Service commitment will average 18-20 hours per week with a minimum of two full service days (9-5) and approximately two evenings per month and up to two weekends per month during the months of September, October, April, and May, with advance notice. Service schedule/days will be agreed upon at the start of the service term and any changes or additions, including night or weekend hours, will be made with advanced notice.

#### **How to Apply:**

- To apply, submit a cover letter and to Eliza Lawrence at [schoolgardens@recworchester.org](mailto:schoolgardens@recworchester.org). Early applications are encouraged as applications will be accepted on rolling basis, with preference given to candidates who apply by June 30, 2021.

Accepted members will be required to undergo a criminal history check.

*The Regional Environmental Council will recruit and select persons in all positions to ensure a diverse and inclusive climate without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, color, political affiliation, creed, national origin, marital status, or any other status as protected by federal, state, and local laws. The Regional Environmental Council welcomes applications from individuals with disabilities and will make reasonable accommodations for interviews and for service upon request.*