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General WSP Applicant Questions

What attributes exemplify a candidate that would be a good fit for WSP?

- Genuine enthusiasm and curiosity for environmental science, community engagement, AND national service
- Professional demeanor
- Flexible with change

What, if any, physical activity will incoming Corpsmembers be expected to perform?

- This depends on the Placement Site for the most part, but all WSP Corpsmembers will need to pass a pre-enrollment medical examination before officially enrolling into WSP (see [Position Analysis](#) on WSP's webpage)

Do I need a college degree to join WSP?

- **No** – although our program is competitive and many of our applicants do have college degrees, it is not a requirement. Every year we receive a small number of well-qualified applicants without degrees.

Do I need a CA Driver's License to join WSP?

- **No** – having a CA driver's license is not a requirement of the program but not having a CA Driver's License will result in CMs 1) not being able to operate a Placement Site vehicle or 2) claim personal mileage reimbursement for program related travel, which could result in missed trainings and field opportunities.

I am a student. Can I be in the Watershed Stewards Program while I am studying?

- **No** - WSP requires a full-time commitment (40 hours/week during regular business hours) during the 10.5 - month term and is not appropriate for



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current students.

Do I need to turn in all my application materials at the same time?

- **No** – applicants will use WSP’s JotForm to complete their application and upload their cover letter and one-page resume. They must email their Letters of Recommendation to WSP.Recruiter@ccc.ca.gov by June 30th at the latest.

Will WSP reimburse me for the costs involved in moving to California and/or finding and securing housing near my Placement Site?

- **No** - WSP does not have the funds to reimburse applicants for these costs. However, WSP and your Placement Site will cover all costs for travel required for the program/Placement Site throughout your term of service. There are also many benefits when serving with WSP such as pro-deal discounts with major outdoor companies, qualification for CalFresh, and discounts on public transportation.

Do I qualify for EBT CalFresh (food stamps) as a WSP Corpsmember?

- While we cannot guarantee that you will qualify for CalFresh, as it is based on your household income, as a member of an AmeriCorps program, WSP Corpsmembers often qualify for this benefit since their stipend is not considered part of their income when determining CalFresh eligibility. The amount per month is dependent on applicant (average \$280/month).
 - [Use this EBT Locator to find](#) vendors who accept EBT

What other benefits can I apply for as an AmeriCorps member?

- PG&E CA Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) Program – [see if you qualify here](#).
- Cell Service Discounts with CA LifeLine – [see if you qualify here](#).



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If I choose to defer my college loans while serving with WSP, will they still accrue interest?

- **Yes** – your student loans will continue to accrue interest. However, if they are *eligible loans*, you can place your loans into forbearance using the My AmeriCorps portal and you will then be eligible to have the accrued interest paid in full upon the successful conclusion of your term. We will share more information about this during WSP's Orientation.

Am I required to have a car?

- **Yes & No** – Depending on the Placement Site location, it is strongly suggested you have a vehicle. Housing and services are often a distance from Placement Sites and public transport is not always available. Some Placement Sites require Corpsmembers to use their personal vehicle for field work (they will be reimbursed).

What type of criminal charges would prevent me from enrolling with WSP?

- a. We determine eligibility by reviewing the codes an applicant was convicted of once the criminal history check has been run. Convictions of the following make you ineligible:
 - (i) first degree murder equivalent to and/or as defined and described in 18 U.S.C. § 1111;
 - (ii) crimes that require you to register as a sex offender and/or result in you being listed on the National Sex Offender Public Website; and/or,
 - (iii) crimes involving arson or against vulnerable populations. Other criminal history results may require your conditional offer of enrollment to be further review; for example: (i) if you are on parole, probation, post release community supervision, or mandatory supervision; and, (ii) if you were convicted of a serious felony or violent crime as defined by California Penal Code section 667.5(c) or 1192.7(c)).
 - (iv) Convictions sealed under Welfare and Institutions Code Section 781 or Penal Code Section 1203.45 do not apply.
 - (v) Corpsmember applicants also cannot be on a parole, probation, post release community supervision, or mandatory supervision



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status that would prevent them from fully participating in the program (i.e., preventing you from traveling throughout the State on short notice and for extended periods, working with or around inmates, working with CCC tools, working in remote areas with limited and/or restricted access to electronic communication, etc.).

Team Leader Position

Do I need to have already served with WSP to apply for the Team Leader position?

- **No** – Team Leaders (TLs) are often 1st year Corpsmembers with WSP who have more of an interest in community outreach/ education and developing their program and project management skills.

Will WSP pay for travel and how often do Team Leaders need to travel?

- **Yes** – WSP provides TLs with state vehicles to conduct all TL activities and they are eligible for meal and limited lodging reimbursements while on travel status.
- TLs travel most weekends between March – June and balance their hours as needed.

Site-Specific Interviews

Does my application packet get sent to all the Placement Sites I ranked in my preference list?

- **No** - your list of preferences is very helpful when we match up applicants with sites, but we do not always send your application packet to every site that you ranked. WSP staff decides which applicant packets will be sent to sites based on both the applicants' interests and experience, and the sites' needs.
- WSP may also send your application to sites you did not indicate as a preference if we feel you are a strong candidate and you have identified being flexible on your WSP Application.

Can I contact Placement Sites directly to ask Site-specific questions?

- **No** - because our program receives such a high volume of applicants each year, we ask that you communicate with WSP staff instead of directly with



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the Placement Sites. If you are chosen for an interview with the Placement Site, you will have an opportunity to communicate directly with them at that time.

Can I re-rank my preferred sites after I have interviewed with Placement Sites?

- **Yes** - you can email your updated ranking preferences to WSP.Recruiter@ccc.ca.gov. After July 21st, please only rank sites with which you have interviewed.

If I am offered a position, will I get to choose which Placement Site I will serve at?

- **No** - candidates are offered a single position at one specific Placement Site.

If I am chosen for a position who will make the offer?

- WSP staff will call applicants to offer them positions. You will have several days to accept or decline.
- It is important that you notify WSP staff of any times that you may not be available by email or phone so that we can reach you regarding an offer.