

AmeriCorps VISTA Members Tasked with Service Outside the Scope of the Grant and Duties Otherwise Performed by Employees

Closed 7/24/19

CNCS-OIG investigated allegations that SEEDS, Traverse City, MI, improperly required AmeriCorps VISTAs (VISTAs) to engage in direct service outside the scope of the grant and displaced staff. The investigation revealed SEEDS violated 45 C.F.R. § 2556.150 when its staff directed and assigned three VISTAs to perform services or duties that would otherwise be performed by employed workers or other volunteers. In addition, SEEDS did not have adequate policies or practices to prevent VISTAs from conducting direct service. The investigation found no evidence to support the allegation of staff displacement.

Agency/Administrative Actions

CNCS responded that the CNCS Michigan State Office provided training to SEEDS staff, and conducted a visit to SEEDS to reinforce the training. Additionally, CNCS program officers conducted a site supervisor training in April 2019, which covered multiple aspects of VISTA project and member management, including allowable indirect capacity building activities vs. non-allowable direct service activities.

Case ID 2018-026