

**North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, University of North Carolina, and East Carolina University Settle False Claims Allegations Regarding Inflated Member Service Hours and Falsely Certified Education Awards**

Closed 09/30/21

AmeriCorps OIG investigated allegations that the North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service and two of its subgrantees, the University of North Carolina and East Carolina University, failed to adhere to AmeriCorps timekeeping requirements. The investigation found that the North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism failed to follow AmeriCorps timekeeping requirements and, as a result, paid salaries using AmeriCorps funds based on missing or otherwise inadequate documentation.

The investigation also found that the University of North Carolina and East Carolina University violated their policies and AmeriCorps requirements by allowing members to (1) claim service hours on holidays and other days when service sites were closed, (2) claim excessive hours recorded on a single day, and (3) claim excessive hours recorded in the final week or month of a member's service term. Program officials failed to adequately review the member timesheets before approving them. The falsely certified hours ultimately allowed members to reach the required threshold to earn education awards that they were otherwise not entitled to.

AmeriCorps OIG pursued this matter jointly with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina. The University of North Carolina entered into a civil settlement agreement with the United States and paid \$375,000 to resolve allegations under the False Claims Act that it presented false and fraudulent claims to AmeriCorps. East Carolina University and the North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism similarly entered into a civil settlement agreement with the United States and paid \$140,000 and \$327,500, respectively. The North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, the University of North Carolina and East Carolina University denied the allegations and cooperated in resolving the matter.

Case ID 2019-044