

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1203

To amend the Peace Corps Act by reauthorizing the Peace Corps, providing better support for current, returning, and former volunteers, and for other purposes.

---

## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 19, 2023

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CRAPO, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. YOUNG) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

---

# A BILL

To amend the Peace Corps Act by reauthorizing the Peace Corps, providing better support for current, returning, and former volunteers, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*

2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4       (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the

5       “Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2023”.

6       (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for

7       this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 3. Readjustment allowances for volunteers and volunteer leaders.

Sec. 4. Restoration of volunteer opportunities for major disruptions to volunteer service.

Sec. 5. Health care continuation for Peace Corps volunteers.

Sec. 6. Access to antimalarial drugs and hygiene products for Peace Corps volunteers.

Sec. 7. Codification of certain Executive orders relating to existing noncompetitive eligibility Federal hiring status for returning volunteers and extension of the period of such status.

Sec. 8. Extension of period of existing noncompetitive eligibility Federal hiring status for returning volunteers.

Sec. 9. Comprehensive illegal drug use policy with respect to Peace Corps volunteers.

Sec. 10. Protection of Peace Corps volunteers against reprisal or retaliation.

Sec. 11. Peace Corps National Advisory Council.

Sec. 12. Memorandum of Agreement with Bureau of Diplomatic Security of the Department of State.

Sec. 13. Clarification regarding eligibility of United States nationals.

Sec. 14. Sexual Assault Advisory Council.

Sec. 15. Suspension without pay.

Sec. 16. Oceania Peace Corps partnerships.

Sec. 17. Reports.

Sec. 18. Technical and conforming amendments.

**1 SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2       Section 3 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2502)

3 is amended—

4           (1) in subparagraph (b)—

5              (A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as  
6 follows:

7              “(1) There is authorized to be appropriated  
8 \$410,500,000 for each of the fiscal years 2024  
9 through 2028 to carry out this Act.”; and

10             (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “that fis-  
11 cal year and the subsequent fiscal year” and in-  
12 serting “obligation until the last day of the sub-  
13 sequent fiscal year”; and

14             (2) by redesignating subsection (h) as sub-  
15 section (e).

1   **SEC. 3. READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

2                   **AND VOLUNTEER LEADERS.**

3       Section 5 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504)

4   is amended—

5                   (1) in subsection (b), by striking “insure their  
6       health” and inserting “ensure their safety, their  
7       health,”;

8                   (2) in subsection (c)—

9                   (A) by striking “\$125” and inserting  
10       “\$375”;

11                  (B) by striking “his” each place such term  
12       appears and inserting “the volunteer’s”; and

13                  (C) by striking “he” and inserting “the  
14       volunteer”;

15                  (3) by redesignating subsection (e) as sub-  
16       section (d);

17                  (4) by inserting after subsection (d), as redesi-  
18       gnated, the following:

19                  “(e) The Director shall consult with health experts  
20       outside of the Peace Corps, including experts licensed in  
21       the field of mental health, and follow guidance by the Cen-  
22       ters for Disease Control and Prevention regarding the pre-  
23       scription of medications to volunteers.”;

24                  (5) in subsection (h), by striking “he” and in-  
25       serting “the President”;

26                  (6) in subsection (n)(2)—

1                             (A) by striking “subsection (e)” each place  
2                             such term appears and inserting “subsection  
3                             (d)”; and

4                             (B) by striking “he” and inserting “the  
5                             President”; and

6                             (7) in subsection (o), by striking “his” each  
7                             place such term appears and inserting “the volun-  
8                             teer’s”.

9 **SEC. 4. RESTORATION OF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**  
10                             **FOR MAJOR DISRUPTIONS TO VOLUNTEER**  
11                             **SERVICE.**

12                             (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5 of the Peace Corps Act  
13 (22 U.S.C. 2504), as amended by section 3 of this Act,  
14 is further amended by adding at the end the following:

15                             “(q) DISRUPTION OF SERVICE PROTOCOLS.—

16                             “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall establish  
17 processes for the safe return to service of returning  
18 Peace Corps volunteers whose service is interrupted  
19 due to mandatory evacuations of volunteers due to  
20 catastrophic events or global emergencies of unknow-  
21 able duration, which processes shall include—

22                             “(A) the establishment of monitoring and  
23 communications systems, protocols, safety  
24 measures, policies, and metrics for determining  
25 the appropriate approaches for restoring volun-

1           teer opportunities for evacuated returned volun-  
2           teers whose service is interrupted by a cata-  
3           strophic event or global emergency; and

4           “(B) streamlining, to the fullest extent  
5           practicable, application requirements for the re-  
6           turn to service of such volunteers.

7           “(2) RETURN TO SERVICE.—Beginning on the  
8           date on which any volunteer described in paragraph  
9           (1) returns to service, the Director shall strive to af-  
10          ford evacuated volunteers, to the fullest extent prac-  
11          ticable, the opportunity—

12           “(A) to return to their previous country of  
13           service, except for Peace Corps missions in  
14           China; and

15           “(B) to continue their service in the most  
16          needed sectors within the country in which they  
17          had been serving immediately before their eva-  
18          cuation due to a catastrophic event or global  
19          emergency, except for Peace Corps missions in  
20          China.”.

21           (b) MEDICAL PERSONNEL.—Section 5A(b) of the  
22          Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504a(b)) is amended, in the  
23          matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “, mental  
24          health professionals” after “medical officers”.

1       (c) VOLUNTEER LEADERS.—Section 6 of the Peace  
2 Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2505) is amended—

3                 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “\$125” and  
4 inserting “\$375”; and

5                 (2) in paragraph (3), by striking “he” and in-  
6 serting “the President”.

7 **SEC. 5. HEALTH CARE CONTINUATION FOR PEACE CORPS**

8 **VOLUNTEERS.**

9       Section 5(d) of the Peace Corps Act, as redesignated  
10 by section 3(3) of this Act, is amended to read as follows:

11       “(d)(1) Volunteers shall receive such health care dur-  
12 ing their service as the Director considers necessary or ap-  
13 propriate, including, if necessary, services described in sec-  
14 tion 8B.

15       “(2) Applicants for enrollment shall receive such  
16 health examinations preparatory to their service, and ap-  
17 plicants for enrollment who have accepted an invitation  
18 to begin a period of training under section 8(a) shall re-  
19 ceive, preparatory to their service, such immunization,  
20 dental care, and information regarding prescription op-  
21 tions and potential interactions, as may be necessary and  
22 appropriate and in accordance with subsection (f).

23       “(3) Returned volunteers shall receive the health ex-  
24 aminations described in paragraph (2) during the 6-month  
25 period immediately following the termination of their serv-

1 ice, including services provided in accordance with section  
2 8B (except that the 6-month limitation shall not apply in  
3 the case of such services), as the Director determines nec-  
4 essary or appropriate.

5 “(4) Subject to such conditions as the Director may  
6 prescribe, the health care described in paragraphs (1)  
7 through (3) for serving volunteers, applicants for enroll-  
8 ment, or returned volunteers may be provided in any facil-  
9 ity of any agency of the United States Government, and  
10 in such cases the amount expended for maintaining and  
11 operating such facility shall be reimbursed from appro-  
12 priations available under this Act. Health care may not  
13 be provided under this subsection in a manner that is in-  
14 consistent with the Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction  
15 Act of 1997 (Public Law 105–12).

16 “(5) Not later than 30 days before the date on which  
17 the period of service of a volunteer terminates, or 30 days  
18 after such termination date if such termination is the re-  
19 sult of an emergency, the Director, in consultation with  
20 the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall pro-  
21 vide detailed information to such volunteer regarding op-  
22 tions for health care after termination other than health  
23 care provided by the Peace Corps, including information  
24 regarding—

1               “(A) how to find additional, detailed informa-  
2               tion, including information regarding—

3                 “(i) the application process and eligibility  
4                 requirements for medical assistance through a  
5                 State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the So-  
6                 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.), or  
7                 under a waiver of such plan; and

8                   “(ii) health care option identification serv-  
9                   ices available through the public and private  
10                  sectors;

11               “(B) where detailed information on health plans  
12       may be obtained; and

13                 “(C) if such volunteer is younger than 26 years  
14                 of age, the eligibility of such volunteer to enroll as  
15                 a dependent child in a group health plan or health  
16                 insurance coverage in which the parent of such vol-  
17                 unteer is enrolled in such plan or coverage offers  
18                 such dependent coverage.

19       “(6) Paragraph (5) shall apply to volunteers whose  
20 periods of service are subject to early termination.”.

21 SEC. 6. ACCESS TO ANTIMALARIAL DRUGS AND HYGIENE  
22 PRODUCTS FOR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS.

23       Section 5A of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504a)  
24 is amended—

25 (1) by striking subsections (c) and (e);

1                             (2) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-  
2                             section (e);

3                             (3) by inserting after subsection (b) the fol-  
4                             lowing:

5                             “(c) ANTIMALARIAL DRUGS.—

6                             “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall consult  
7                             with experts at the Centers for Disease Control and  
8                             Prevention regarding recommendations for pre-  
9                             scribing malaria prophylaxis, in order to provide the  
10                             best standard of care within the context of the Peace  
11                             Corps environment.

12                             “(2) CERTAIN TRAINING.—The Director shall  
13                             ensure that each Peace Corps medical officer serving  
14                             in a malaria-endemic country receives training in the  
15                             recognition of the side effects of such medications.

16                             “(3) CONSULTATION.—The Director shall con-  
17                             sult with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for  
18                             Health Affairs regarding the policy of using  
19                             mefloquine in the field as an antimalarial prophy-  
20                             lactic.

21                             “(d) ACCESS TO HYGIENE PRODUCTS.—Not later  
22                             than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the  
23                             Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2023, the Director  
24                             shall establish a comprehensive policy to ensure Peace

1 Corps volunteers who require hygiene products are able  
2 to access such products.”.

3 **SEC. 7. CODIFICATION OF CERTAIN EXECUTIVE ORDERS**  
4                   **RELATING TO EXISTING NONCOMPETITIVE**  
5                   **ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING STATUS FOR**  
6                   **RETURNING VOLUNTEERS AND EXTENSION**  
7                   **OF THE PERIOD OF SUCH STATUS.**

8         The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.) is  
9 amended by inserting after section 5A the following:

10 **“SEC. 5B. CODIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE ORDERS RELAT-**  
11                   **ING TO NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FED-**  
12                   **ERAL HIRING STATUS FOR RETURNING VOL-**  
13                   **UNTEERS.**

14         “(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), Execu-  
15 tive Order 11103 (22 U.S.C. 2504 note; relating to Pro-  
16 viding for the Appointment of Former Peace Corps Volun-  
17 teers to the Civilian Career Services), as amended by Ex-  
18 ecutive Order 12107 (44 Fed. Reg. 1055; relating to the  
19 Civil Service Commission and Labor-Management in the  
20 Federal Service), as in effect on the day before the date  
21 of the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act  
22 of 2023, shall remain in effect and have the full force and  
23 effect of law.

24         “(b) PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY.—

25                   “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

1                 “(A) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—the term ‘Ex-  
2                 ecutive agency’—

3                         “(i) has the meaning given such term  
4                 in section 105 of title 5, United States  
5                 Code;

6                         “(ii) includes the United States Postal  
7                 Service and the Postal Regulatory Com-  
8                 mission; and

9                         “(iii) does not include the Government  
10                 Accountability Office.

11                 “(B) HIRING FREEZE.—The term ‘hiring  
12                 freeze’ means any memorandum, Executive  
13                 order, or other action by the President that  
14                 prohibits an Executive agency from filling va-  
15                 cant Federal civilian employee positions or cre-  
16                 ating new such positions.

17                 “(2) IN GENERAL.—The period of eligibility for  
18                 noncompetitive appointment to the civil service pro-  
19                 vided to an individual under subsection (a), includ-  
20                 ing any individual who is so eligible on the date of  
21                 the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization  
22                 Act of 2023, shall be extended by the total number  
23                 of days, during such period, that—

24                         “(A) a hiring freeze for civilian employees  
25                 of the executive branch is in effect by order of

1           the President with respect to any Executive  
2           agency at which the individual has applied for  
3           employment;

4           “(B) there is a lapse in appropriations  
5           with respect to any Executive agency at which  
6           the individual has applied for employment; or

7           “(C) the individual is receiving disability  
8           compensation under section 8142 of title 5,  
9           United States Code, based on the individual’s  
10          service as a Peace Corps volunteer, retroactive  
11          to the date the individual applied for such com-  
12          pensation.

13          “(3) APPLICABILITY.—The period of eligibility  
14          for noncompetitive appointment status to the civil  
15          service under subsection (a) shall apply to a Peace  
16          Corps volunteer—

17           “(A) whose service ended involuntarily as a  
18           result of a suspension of volunteer operations  
19           by the Director, but may not last longer than  
20           1 year after the date on which such service  
21           ended involuntarily; or

22           “(B) who re-enrolls as a volunteer in the  
23           Peace Corps after completion of a term of serv-  
24           ice.”.

1   **SEC. 8. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF EXISTING NONCOMPETI-**  
2                   **TIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING STATUS**  
3                   **FOR RETURNING VOLUNTEERS.**

4       The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.) is  
5   amended by inserting after section 5B, as added by section  
6   7 of this Act, the following:

7   **“SEC. 5C. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF EXISTING NON-**  
8                   **COMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIRING**  
9                   **STATUS FOR RETURNING VOLUNTEERS.**

10     “(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to section 5B, Executive  
11   Order 11103 (22 U.S.C. 2504 note; relating to Providing  
12   for the Appointment of Former Peace Corps Volunteers  
13   to the Civilian Career Services), as amended by Executive  
14   Order 12107 (44 Fed. Reg. 1055; relating to the Civil  
15   Service Commission and Labor-Management in the Fed-  
16   eral Service), as in effect on the day before the date of  
17   the enactment of the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of  
18   2023, shall remain in effect and have the full force and  
19   effect of law.

20     “(b) NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY FEDERAL HIR-  
21   ING STATUS.—Subject to subsection (d), any volunteer  
22   whose Peace Corps service was terminated after April 1,  
23   2020, and who has been certified by the Director as hav-  
24   ing satisfactorily completed a full term of service, may be  
25   appointed not later than 2 years after completion of quali-  
26   fying service to a position in any United States depart-

1 ment, agency, or establishment in the competitive service  
2 under title 5, United States Code, without competitive ex-  
3 amination, in accordance with such regulations and condi-  
4 tions as may be prescribed by the Director of the Office  
5 of Personnel Management.

6       “(c) EXTENSION.—The appointing authority may ex-  
7 tend the noncompetitive appointment eligibility under sub-  
8 section (b) to not more than 3 years after a volunteer’s  
9 separation from the Peace Corps if the volunteer, following  
10 such service, was engaged in—

11           “(1) military service;  
12           “(2) the pursuit of studies at a recognized insti-  
13           tution of higher learning; or  
14           “(3) other activities which, in the view of the  
15           appointing authority, warrant an extension of such  
16           eligibility.

17       “(d) EXCEPTION.—The appointing authority may not  
18 extend the noncompetitive appointment eligibility under  
19 subsection (b) to any volunteer who chooses to be subject  
20 to early termination.”.

21 **SEC. 9. COMPREHENSIVE ILLEGAL DRUG USE POLICY WITH  
22 RESPECT TO PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS.**

23       (a) IN GENERAL.—The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C.  
24 2501 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 8I (22  
25 U.S.C. 2507i) the following:

1   **“SEC. 8J. COMPREHENSIVE ILLEGAL DRUG USE POLICY**  
2                         **WITH RESPECT TO PEACE CORPS VOLUN-**  
3                         **TEERS.**

4         “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall develop and  
5         implement a comprehensive drug use policy with respect  
6         to Peace Corps volunteers. The policy shall—

7                 “(1) establish a zero tolerance policy regarding  
8         volunteer or trainee involvement with illegal drugs;  
9         and

10          “(2) require that every case of volunteer or  
11         trainee illegal drug involvement be brought imme-  
12         diately to the attention of relevant Peace Corps lead-  
13         ership, including the Director, and be reported expe-  
14         ditiously by the Peace Corps to the Office of the In-  
15         spector General.

16          “(b) CONSULTATION.—In developing the policy de-  
17         scribed in subsection (a), the Director may consult with  
18         and incorporate, as appropriate, the recommendations and  
19         views of experts in the field of substance abuse, and shall  
20         consult with the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the  
21         House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign  
22         Relations of the Senate.”.

23          (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date  
24         of the enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit  
25         a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the  
26         Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the

1 House of Representatives describing the illegal drug use  
2 policy developed and implemented under section 8J of the  
3 Peace Corps Act, as added by subsection (a).

4 **SEC. 10. PROTECTION OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS**

5 **AGAINST REPRISAL OR RETALIATION.**

6 Section 8G of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2507g)  
7 is amended by adding at the end the following:

8 “(d) PROHIBITION AGAINST REPRISAL OR RETALIA-  
9 TION.—

10 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

11 “(A) COVERED OFFICIAL OR OFFICE.—The  
12 term ‘covered official or office’ means—

13 “(i) any Peace Corps employee, in-  
14 cluding an employee of the Office of In-  
15 spector General;

16 “(ii) a Member of Congress or a des-  
17 ignated representative of a committee of  
18 Congress;

19 “(iii) an Inspector General (other  
20 than the Inspector General for the Peace  
21 Corps);

22 “(iv) the Government Accountability  
23 Office;

1                     “(v) any authorized official of the De-  
2                     partment of Justice or other Federal law  
3                     enforcement agency; and

4                     “(vi) a United States court, including  
5                     any Federal grand jury.

6                     “(B) RELIEF.—The term ‘relief’ includes  
7                     all affirmative relief necessary to make a volun-  
8                     teer whole, including monetary compensation,  
9                     equitable relief, compensatory damages, and at-  
10                     torney fees and costs.

11                     “(C) REPRISAL OR RETALIATION.—The  
12                     term ‘reprisal or retaliation’ means taking,  
13                     threatening to take, or initiating adverse ad-  
14                     ministrative action against a volunteer because  
15                     the volunteer made a report described in sub-  
16                     section (a) or otherwise disclosed to a covered  
17                     official or office any information pertaining to  
18                     waste, fraud, abuse of authority, misconduct,  
19                     mismanagement, violations of law, or a signifi-  
20                     cant threat to health and safety, if the activity  
21                     or occurrence complained of is based upon the  
22                     reasonable belief of the volunteer.

23                     “(2) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Peace  
24                     Corps shall take all reasonable measures, including  
25                     through the development and implementation of a

1       comprehensive policy, to prevent and address re-  
2       prisal or retaliation against a volunteer by any Peace  
3       Corps officer or employee, or any other person with  
4       supervisory authority over the volunteer during the  
5       volunteer's period of service.

6               “(3) REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION; RE-  
7       LIEF.—

8               “(A) IN GENERAL.—A volunteer may re-  
9       port a complaint or allegation of reprisal or re-  
10       taliation—

11               “(i) directly to the Inspector General  
12       of the Peace Corps, who may conduct such  
13       investigations and make such recommenda-  
14       tions with respect to the complaint or alle-  
15       gation as the Inspector General considers  
16       appropriate; and

17               “(ii) through other channels provided  
18       by the Peace Corps, including through the  
19       process for confidential reporting imple-  
20       mented pursuant to subsection (a).

21               “(B) RELIEF.—The Director of the Peace  
22       Corps—

23               “(i) may order any relief for an af-  
24       firmative finding of a proposed or final res-  
25       olution of a complaint or allegation of re-

1                   prisal or retaliation in accordance with  
2                   policies, rules, and procedures of the Peace  
3                   Corps; and

4                   “(ii) shall ensure that such relief is  
5                   promptly provided to the volunteer.

6                   “(4) APPEAL.—

7                   “(A) IN GENERAL.—A volunteer may sub-  
8                   mit an appeal to the Director of the Peace  
9                   Corps of any proposed or final resolution of a  
10                  complaint or allegation of reprisal or retaliation.

11                  “(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing  
12                  in this paragraph may be construed to affect  
13                  any other right of recourse a volunteer may  
14                  have under any other provision of law.

15                  “(5) NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS AND REM-  
16                  EDIES.—The Director of the Peace Corps shall en-  
17                  sure that volunteers are informed in writing of the  
18                  rights and remedies provided under this section.

19                  “(6) DISPUTE MEDIATION.—The Director of  
20                  the Peace Corps shall offer the opportunity for vol-  
21                  unteers to resolve disputes concerning a complaint  
22                  or allegation of reprisal or retaliation through medi-  
23                  ation in accordance with procedures developed by the  
24                  Peace Corps.

1                 “(7) VOLUNTEER COOPERATION.—The Director  
2         of the Peace Corps may take such disciplinary or  
3         other administrative action, including termination of  
4         service, with respect to a volunteer who unreason-  
5         ably refuses to cooperate with an investigation into  
6         a compliant or allegation of reprisal or retaliation  
7         conducted by the Inspector General of the Peace  
8         Corps.”.

9 **SEC. 11. PEACE CORPS NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

10         Section 12 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2511)  
11         is amended—

12                 (1) in subsection (b)(2)—  
13                         (A) in the matter preceding subparagraph  
14                     (A), by striking “(subject to subsection (d)(1))  
15                     conduct on-site inspections, and make examina-  
16                     tions, of the activities of the Peace Corps in the  
17                     United States and in other countries in order  
18                     to”;  
19                         (B) in subparagraph (C), by striking  
20                     “and” at the end;  
21                         (C) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as  
22                     subparagraph (G); and  
23                         (D) by inserting after subparagraph (C)  
24                     the following:

1                 “(D) make recommendations for utilizing  
2                 the expertise of returned Peace Corps volun-  
3                 teers in fulfilling the goals of the Peace Corps;

4                 “(E) make recommendations on strength-  
5                 ening diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessi-  
6                 bility principles in the workforce and daily work  
7                 of the Peace Corps, including by—

8                         “(i) increasing the recruitment of vol-  
9                 unteers from diverse backgrounds and bet-  
10                 ter supporting such volunteers during their  
11                 training and enrollment in the Peace  
12                 Corps;

13                         “(ii) increasing and sustaining a di-  
14                 verse and inclusive workforce through data  
15                 collection, anti-harassment and anti-dis-  
16                 crimination measures, recruitment, reten-  
17                 tion, professional development, and pro-  
18                 motion and leadership initiatives that also  
19                 consider the work and roles of contractors;

20                         “(iii) ensuring that advisory commit-  
21                 tees and boards represent the diversity of  
22                 the agency; and

23                         “(iv) increasing opportunities in oper-  
24                 ations, programming, and procurement  
25                 through work with partners and commu-

nities that are underrepresented or traditionally marginalized;

3                 “(F) make recommendations to reduce any  
4                 financial barriers to application, training, or en-  
5                 rollment in the Peace Corps, including medical  
6                 expenses and other out-of-pocket costs; and”;

7 (2) in subsection (c), by amending paragraph

8 (2) to read as follows:

9       “(2)(A) The Council shall be composed of 7 members  
10 who are United States citizens and are not being paid as  
11 officers or employees of the Peace Corps or of any other  
12 United States Government entity.

13        "(B) Of the 7 members of the Council—

14               “(i) 1 member shall be appointed by the Presi-  
15               dent;

16               “(ii) 3 members shall be appointed by the  
17               President pro tempore of the Senate, of which—

18                   “(I) 2 members shall be appointed upon  
19                   the recommendation of the leader in the Senate  
20                   of the political party that is not the political  
21                   party of the President:

22                         “(II) 1 member shall be appointed upon  
23                         the recommendation of the leader in the Senate  
24                         of the political party of the President; and

1               “(III) at least 2 members shall be former  
2               Peace Corps volunteers; and

3               “(iii) 3 members shall be appointed by the  
4               Speaker of the House of Representatives, of which—

5               “(I) 2 members shall be appointed upon  
6               the recommendation of the leader in the House  
7               of Representatives of the political party that is  
8               not the political party of the President;

9               “(II) 1 member shall be appointed upon  
10               the recommendation of the leader in the House  
11               of Representatives of the political party of the  
12               President; and

13               “(III) at least 2 members shall be former  
14               Peace Corps volunteers.

15               “(C) Council members shall be appointed to 2-year  
16               terms. No member of the Council may serve for more than  
17               2 consecutive 2-year terms.

18               “(D) Not later than 30 days after any vacancy occurs  
19               on the Council, the Director shall appoint an individual  
20               to fill such vacancy. Any Council member appointed to fill  
21               a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for  
22               which the member’s predecessor was appointed—

23               “(i) shall be appointed for the remainder of  
24               such term; and

1           “(ii) may only serve on the Council for 1 addi-  
2         tional 2-year term.

3           “(E)(i) Except as provided in clause (ii), Council  
4         members shall not be subject to laws relating to Federal  
5         employment, including laws relating to hours of work,  
6         rates of compensation, leave, unemployment compensa-  
7         tion, and Federal employee benefits.

8           “(ii) Notwithstanding clause (i), Council members  
9         shall be deemed to be Federal employees for purposes of—

10          “(I) chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code  
11         (relating to compensation for work-related injuries);

12          “(II) chapter 11 of title 18, United States Code  
13         (relating to conflicts of interest);

14          “(III) chapter 171 of title 28, United States  
15         Code (relating to tort claims); and

16          “(IV) section 3721 of title 31 (relating to  
17         claims for damage to, or loss of, personal property  
18         incident to service).

19          “(F) Council members shall serve at the pleasure of  
20         the Director. The Council may remove a member from the  
21         Council by a vote of 5 members if the Council determines  
22         that such member—

23          “(i) committed malfeasance in office;

1           “(ii) persistently neglected, or was unable to  
2 successfully discharge, his or her duties on the  
3 Council; or

4           “(iii) committed an offense involving moral tur-  
5 pitude.”;

6           (3) in subsection (g)—

7           (A) by striking “and at its first regular  
8 meeting in each calendar year thereafter” and  
9 inserting “at its first meeting each subsequent  
10 calendar year”; and

11           (B) by adding at the end the following:  
12           “The Chair and Vice Chair shall each serve in  
13 such capacity for a period not to exceed 2  
14 years. The Director may renew the term of  
15 members appointed as Chair and Vice Chair  
16 under this subsection.”;

17           (4) in subsection (h), by amending paragraph

18           (1) to read as follows:

19           “(1) The Council shall hold 1 regular meeting per  
20 quarter of each calendar year at a date and time to be  
21 determined by the Chair of the Council or at the call of  
22 the Director.”; and

23           (5) by adding at the end the following:

24           “(k) INDEPENDENCE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL.—

25           None of the activities or functions of the Council author-

1 ized under subsection (b)(2) may undermine the independ-  
2 ence or supersede the duties of the Inspector General of  
3 the Peace Corps.”.

4 **SEC. 12. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH BUREAU OF**  
5 **DIPLOMATIC SECURITY OF THE DEPART-**  
6 **MENT OF STATE.**

7 (a) QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW AND UPDATE.—Not  
8 later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of  
9 this Act, and at least once every 5 years thereafter, the  
10 Director of the Peace Corps and the Assistant Secretary  
11 of State for Diplomatic Security shall—

12 (1) review the Memorandum of Agreement be-  
13 tween the Bureau of Diplomatic Security of the De-  
14 partment of State and the Peace Corps regarding  
15 security support and protection of Peace Corps vol-  
16 unteers, and staff members abroad; and  
17 (2) update such Memorandum of Agreement, as  
18 appropriate.

19 (b) NOTIFICATION.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Peace  
21 Corps and the Assistant Secretary of State for Dip-  
22 lomatic Security shall jointly submit any update to  
23 the Memorandum of Agreement under subsection (a)  
24 to—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of  
the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of  
the House of Representatives.

9 SEC. 13. CLARIFICATION REGARDING ELIGIBILITY OF  
10 UNITED STATES NATIONALS.

11 The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.), as  
12 amended by this Act, is further amended—

(4) in section 12(g) (22 U.S.C. 2511(g)), by inserting “United States nationals of American Samoa or” after “who are”.

#### **4 SEC. 14. SEXUAL ASSAULT ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

5 (a) REPORT AND EXTENSION OF THE SEXUAL AS-  
6 SAULT ADVISORY COUNCIL.—Section 8D of the Peace  
7 Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2507d) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

10       “(d) REPORTS.—On an annual basis through the  
11 date specified in subsection (g), the Council shall submit  
12 a report to the Director of the Peace Corps, the Com-  
13 mittee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee  
14 on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on For-  
15 eign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and the  
16 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representa-  
17 tives that describes its findings based on the reviews con-  
18 ducted pursuant to subsection (c) and includes relevant  
19 recommendations. Each such report shall be made publicly  
20 available.”; and

(2) in subsection (g), by striking “October 1, 2023” and inserting “October 1, 2028”.

## **23 SEC. 15. SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY.**

24       Section 7 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2506)  
25 is amended by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

1       “(b) SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY.—(1) The Peace  
2 Corps may suspend (without pay) any employee appointed  
3 or assigned under this section if the Director has deter-  
4 mined that the employee engaged in serious misconduct  
5 that could impact the efficiency of the service and could  
6 lead to removal for cause.

7       “(2) Any employee for whom a suspension without  
8 pay is proposed under this subsection shall be entitled  
9 to—

10       “(A) written notice stating the specific reasons  
11 for such proposed suspension;

12       “(B)(i) up to 15 days to respond orally or in  
13 writing to such proposed suspension if the employee  
14 is assigned in the United States; or

15       “(ii) up to 30 days to respond orally or in writ-  
16 ing to such proposed suspension if the employee is  
17 assigned outside of the United States;

18       “(C) representation by an attorney or other  
19 representative, at the employee’s own expense;

20       “(D) a written decision, including the specific  
21 reasons for such decision, as soon as practicable;

22       “(E) a process through which the employee may  
23 submit an appeal to the Director of the Peace Corps  
24 not later than 10 business days after the issuance of  
25 a written decision; and

1           “(F) a final decision personally rendered by the  
2         Director of the Peace Corps not later than 30 days  
3         after the receipt of such appeal.

4           “(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a  
5         final decision under paragraph (2)(F) shall be final and  
6         not subject to further review.

7           “(4) If the Director fails to establish misconduct by  
8         an employee under paragraph (1) and no disciplinary ac-  
9         tion is taken against such employee based upon the alleged  
10        grounds for the suspension, the employee shall be entitled  
11        to reinstatement, back pay, full benefits, and reimburse-  
12        ment of attorney fees of up to \$20,000.”.

13 **SEC. 16. OCEANIA PEACE CORPS PARTNERSHIPS.**

14           (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the  
15        date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the  
16        Peace Corps shall submit a report to Congress containing  
17        strategies for reasonably and safely expanding the number  
18        of Peace Corps volunteers in the Indo-Pacific countries of  
19        Oceania, with the goals of—

20                   (1) expanding the presence of the Peace Corps  
21         to all currently feasible locations in the Indo-Pacific  
22         countries of Oceania; and

23                   (2) working with regional and international  
24         partners of the United States to expand the presence  
25         of Peace Corps volunteers in low-income commu-

1       nities in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania in  
2       support of climate resilience initiatives.

3           (b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under sub-  
4       section (a) shall—

5               (1) assess the factors contributing to the cur-  
6       rent absence of the Peace Corps and its volunteers  
7       in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania;

8               (2) examine potential remedies that include  
9       working with United States Government agencies  
10      and regional governments, including governments of  
11      United States allies—

12               (A) to increase the health infrastructure  
13       and medical evacuation capabilities of the Indo-  
14       Pacific countries of Oceania to better support  
15       the safety of Peace Corps volunteers while in  
16       those countries;

17               (B) to address physical safety concerns  
18       that have decreased the ability of the Peace  
19       Corps to operate in the Indo-Pacific countries  
20       of Oceania; and

21               (C) to increase transportation infrastruc-  
22       ture in the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania to  
23       better support the travel of Peace Corps volun-  
24       teers and their access to necessary facilities;

10 (A) changes to volunteer deployment dura-  
11 tions; and

(B) scheduled redeployment of volunteers to regional or United States-based healthcare facilities for routine physical and behavioral health evaluation.

16 (c) VOLUNTEERS IN LOW-INCOME OCEANIA COMMU-  
17 NITIES.—

1       that help the Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania ad-  
2       dress social, economic, and development needs of  
3       their communities, including by—

4                     (A) addressing, through appropriate resil-  
5                     ience-based interventions, the vulnerability that  
6                     communities in the Indo-Pacific countries of  
7                     Oceania face as result of extreme weather, se-  
8                     vere environmental change, and other climate  
9                     related trends; and

10                  (B) improving, through smart infrastruc-  
11                  ture principles, access to transportation and  
12                  connectivity infrastructure that will help ad-  
13                  dress the economic and social challenges that  
14                  communities in the Indo-Pacific countries of  
15                  Oceania confront as a result of poor or non-  
16                  existent infrastructure.

17                  (d) INDO-PACIFIC COUNTRIES OF OCEANIA DE-  
18       FINED.—The term “Indo-Pacific countries of Oceania”  
19       means Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Mi-  
20       cronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Sol-  
21       omon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

22       **SEC. 17. REPORTS.**

23                  (a) REPORT ON MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION  
24       STANDARDS.—

1                             (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after  
2                             the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director  
3                             of the Peace Corps shall submit a report to the  
4                             Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and  
5                             the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of  
6                             Representatives containing the guidelines and stand-  
7                             ards used to evaluate the mental health of Peace  
8                             Corps applicants prior to their Peace Corps service.

9                             (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under  
10                            paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

11                             (A) A detailed description of mental health  
12                             screening guidelines and evaluation standards  
13                             used by the Peace Corps to determine medical  
14                             eligibility of applicants for service, including a  
15                             description of the most common mental health  
16                             conditions of applicants.

17                             (B) Specific standards in the mental health  
18                             screening process that could lead to an appli-  
19                             cant's disqualification from service, and a de-  
20                             scription of how these determinations are made.

21                             (C) A description of any expedited mental  
22                             health clearance process for severe or recent  
23                             symptom presentation.

24                             (D) A description of periods of stability re-  
25                             lated to certain mental health conditions and

1           symptoms recommended prior to an applicant's  
2           clearance to serve.

3           (E) An assessment of the impact of up-  
4           dated mental health evaluation guidance, in-  
5           cluding a comparison of mental health related  
6           volunteer medevacs in years before and after  
7           updated guidelines were implemented.

8           (F) A review of these screening guidelines,  
9           conducted by a panel of certified and qualified  
10          medical professionals in the United States, that  
11          evaluates these standards based on scientific  
12          evidence and mental health research and pro-  
13          poses relevant updates or additions to current  
14          guidance.

15          (b) REPORT ON VOLUNTEER MEDICAL EVACU-  
16          ATIONS.—

17           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the first May  
18          1 occurring after the date of the enactment of this  
19          Act, and annually thereafter for 5 years, the Direc-  
20          tor of the Peace Corps shall submit a report to the  
21          Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and  
22          the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of  
23          Representatives regarding volunteer medical and  
24          mental health evacuations.

1                             (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under  
2                             paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

3                             (A) The number of Peace Corps volunteer  
4                             medical and mental health evacuations during  
5                             the previous year.

6                             (B) A breakdown of these evacuations into  
7                             medical and mental health evacuation cat-  
8                             egories.

9                             (C) The estimated cost of these eva-  
10                          cations for each year, including a breakdown of  
11                          costs between medical and mental health eva-  
12                          cation categories.

13 **SEC. 18. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**

14                          The Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.), as  
15                          amended by this Act, is further amended—

16                          (1) by amending section 1 to read as follows:

17 **“SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

18                          “(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the  
19                          ‘Peace Corps Act’.

20                          “(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents  
21                          for this Act is as follows:

“TITLE I—THE PEACE CORPS

“Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

“Sec. 2. Declaration of purpose.

“Sec. 2A. Peace Corps as an independent agency.

“Sec. 3. Authorization.

“Sec. 4. Director of the Peace Corps and delegation of functions.

“Sec. 5. Peace Corps volunteers.

“Sec. 5A. Health care for volunteers at Peace Corps posts.

“Sec. 5B. Codification of Executive orders relating to noncompetitive eligibility Federal hiring status for returning volunteers.

“Sec. 5C. Extension of period of existing noncompetitive eligibility Federal hiring status for returning volunteers.

“Sec. 6. Peace Corps volunteer leaders.

“Sec. 7. Peace Corps employees.

“Sec. 8. Volunteer training.

“Sec. 8A. Sexual assault risk-reduction and response training.

“Sec. 8B. Sexual assault policy.

“Sec. 8C. Office of Victim Advocacy.

“Sec. 8D. Establishment of Sexual Assault Advisory Council.

“Sec. 8E. Volunteer feedback and Peace Corps review.

“Sec. 8F. Establishment of a policy on stalking.

“Sec. 8G. Establishment of a confidentiality protection policy.

“Sec. 8H. Removal and assessment and evaluation.

“Sec. 8I. Reporting requirements.

“Sec. 8J. Comprehensive illegal drug use policy with respect to Peace Corps volunteers.

“Sec. 9. Participation of foreign nationals.

“Sec. 10. General powers and authorities.

“Sec. 11. Reports.

“Sec. 12. Peace Corps National Advisory Council.

“Sec. 13. Experts and consultants.

“Sec. 14. Detail of personnel to foreign governments and international organizations.

“Sec. 15. Utilization of funds.

“Sec. 16. Foreign Currency Fluctuations Account.

“Sec. 17. Use of foreign currencies.

“Sec. 18. Activities promoting Americans’ understanding of other peoples.

“Sec. 19. Exclusive right to seal and name.

“Sec. 22. Security investigations.

“Sec. 23. Universal Military Training and Service Act.

“Sec. 24. Foreign language proficiency.

“Sec. 25. Nonpartisan appointments.

“Sec. 26. Definitions.

“Sec. 27. Construction.

“Sec. 28. Effective date.

“TITLE II—AMENDMENT OF INTERNAL REVENUE CODE AND  
SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

“TITLE III—ENCOURAGEMENT OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE  
PROGRAMS

“Sec. 301. ”;

- 1                   (2) in section 2(a) (22 U.S.C. 2501(a))—
- 2                   (A) by striking “help the peoples” and in-
- 3                   serting “partner with the peoples”; and
- 4                   (B) by striking “manpower” and inserting
- 5                   “individuals”;

- 1                         (3) in section 3 (22 U.S.C. 2502)—  
2                             (A) by redesignating subsection (h) as sub-  
3                             section (e); and  
4                             (B) in subsection (e), as redesignated, by  
5                             striking “disabled people” each place such term  
6                             appears and inserting “people with disabilities”;  
7                         (4) in section 4(b) (22 U.S.C. 2503(b))—  
8                             (A) by striking “him” and inserting “the  
9                             President”;  
10                             (B) by striking “he” and inserting “the  
11                             Director”; and  
12                             (C) by striking “of his subordinates” and  
13                             all that follows through “functions.” and insert-  
14                             ing “subordinate of the Director the authority  
15                             to perform any such function.”;  
16                         (5) in section 5 (22 U.S.C. 2504)—  
17                             (A) in subsection (c), by striking “: *Pro-*  
18                             *vided, however,*” and all that follows through  
19                             “the amount” and inserting “. Under such cir-  
20                             cumstances as the President may determine,  
21                             the accrued readjustment allowance, or any  
22                             part thereof, may be paid to the volunteer,  
23                             members of the volunteer’s family, or others,  
24                             during the period of the volunteer’s service, or  
25                             prior to the volunteer’s return to the United

1 States. In the event of the volunteer's death  
2 during the period of his service, the amount";

3 (B) in subsection (h), by striking "he may  
4 determine" and inserting "the President may  
5 determine"; and

6 (C) in subsection (o) by striking "the date  
7 of his departure" and all that follows and in-  
8 serting "the date of the volunteer's departure  
9 from the volunteer's place of residence to enter  
10 training until not later than 3 months after the  
11 termination of the volunteer's service.";

12 (6) in section 6(3) (22 U.S.C. 2505(3)), by  
13 striking by striking "he may determine" and insert-  
14 ing "the President may determine";

15 (7) in section 7 (22 U.S.C. 2506)—

16 (A) in subsection (a), by moving para-  
17 graphs (7) and (8) 2 ems to the left; and

18 (B) in subsection (b), as redesignated, by  
19 striking "in his discretion" and inserting "in  
20 the President's discretion";

21 (8) in section 8A (22 U.S.C. 2507a)—

22 (A) in subsection (c), by striking "his or  
23 her" and inserting "the volunteer's";

24 (B) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting  
25 "the" before "information"; and

1 (C) in subsection (f)—

10 (10) in section 8E (22 U.S.C. 2507e)—

11 (A) in subsection (b), by striking “sub-  
12 section (c),” and inserting “subsection (c);”  
13 and

17 (11) in section 9 (22 U.S.C. 2508)—

(B) by striking “Act proceedings” and inserting “Act. Removal proceedings”;

3 (12) in section 10 (22 U.S.C. 2509)—

14 (C) in subsection (j), by striking “of this  
15 section.”;

19 (14) in section 14 (22 U.S.C. 2513)—

20 (A) in subsection (a), by striking “his  
21 agency” and inserting “such agency”; and

(B) in subsection (b)—

(ii) by striking “he”:

1 (15) in section 15 (22 U.S.C. 2514)—

(A) in subsection (c), by striking “that Act” and inserting “that subchapter”; and

(B) in subsection (d)(7), by striking “his designee” and inserting “the Director’s designee”;

(16) in section 19(a) (22 U.S.C. 2518(a)), by striking “he shall determine” and inserting “the President shall determine”;

10 (17) in section 23 (22 U.S.C. 2520)—

15 (B) by striking “Universal Military Train-  
16 ing and Service Act” and inserting “Military  
17 Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.”);

18 (18) in section 24—

19 (A) by striking “he” each place such term  
20 appears and inserting “the volunteer”; and

(B) by striking "his" and inserting "the  
volunteer's";

23 (19) in section 26—

1                             (A) by redesignating paragraphs (2)  
2                             through (9) as paragraphs (3) through (10), re-  
3                             spectively;

4                             (B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the  
5                             following:

6                             “(2) The term ‘Director’ means the Director of  
7                             the Peace Corps.”;

8                             (C) in paragraph (5), as redesignated, by  
9                             striking “he or she” and inserting “the medical  
10                             officer”;

11                             (D) in paragraph (7), as redesignated, by  
12                             striking “5(m)” and inserting “5(n)”; and

13                             (E) in paragraph (10), as redesignated—

14                                 (i) by redesignating clauses (i) and  
15                                 (ii) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respec-  
16                                 tively; and

17                                 (ii) in subparagraph (A), as redesi-  
18                                 gnated, by striking “section 5(f)” and in-  
19                                 serting “section 5(e)”; and

20                             (20) in section 301(a), by striking “manpower”  
21                             each place such term appears and inserting “individ-  
22                             uals”.

