

About Serve Kentucky

Serve Kentucky, formerly the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service, is a State Service Commission. In addition to overseeing the annual grant competition that awards funding to AmeriCorps State and other community service programs, State Service Commissions determine social needs in their states, set policy and program priorities, provide training and assistance, support national days of service, and promote service and volunteering.

Serve Kentucky was established by Executive Order 94-6, as required by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. Serve Kentucky was created to serve as a conduit for federal funds that support AmeriCorps programs in the Commonwealth, encourage and recognize volunteerism, and assist in service program development. The commission is a statewide, bipartisan group of up to 25 members, appointed and re-appointed by the governor, with diverse service and volunteerism backgrounds.

Serve Kentucky funding is provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Kentucky General Assembly. The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is the parent agency for the commission, providing administrative support and oversight.

Serve Kentucky's mission is to engage Kentuckians in volunteerism and service to positively impact our communities.

Please refer to the [Serve Kentucky website](#) for the list of current commissioners, our by-laws, and other information.

Duties of Commissioners

Commissioners are the volunteers responsible for governing the state agency, Serve Kentucky; they must be able and willing to contribute their skills and resources in support of the Commission.

Commissioners are expected to exhibit ethical behavior, attend quarterly meetings, contribute their expertise, and play an active role in the development of resources through advice, personal contributions, suggestions of contacts, and solicitation of others, including policy makers and funders.

Empowered by both federal and state statute, Commissioners set national service and volunteerism priorities for the state and determine what programs best meet the needs of Kentucky.

Commissioners support the mission and vision of the Commission and are required to comply with responsibilities mandated by state and federal laws and rules. In their role as visionaries for service in their state, Commissioners:

- Advocate for service in and outside of the state
- Develop resources on behalf of service
- Build networks across states that include key opinion leaders
- Exert fiduciary responsibility for agency and program budgets
- Lead efforts that enhance and advance service as a strategy
- Serve as proactive and pre-emptive agents for service
- Partner with staff

Tips for Being an Effective, Engaged Commissioner

- Make attending commission meetings a priority; RSVP your attendance plans to staff
- Read materials so you are well informed
- Respond to emails and/or phone calls
- Come prepared to actively participate at meetings
- Share oneself as a resource in the group
- Provide your skills and expertise for Serve Kentucky projects
- Be open to listen to ideas of others
- Take responsibility for helping the group make decisions and solve problems
- Attend Commission trainings/conferences/events to network and celebrate successes
- Follow, share, and interact with commission's social media platforms
- Volunteer to sit on Grant Review or other committees
- Offer to serve in leadership positions
- Attend legislative events at the Capitol
- Talk to your legislators both locally and nationally
- Speak to your personal civic and professional groups
- Foster the Commission's relationships with businesses and partner organizations
- Invest the time and energy to get to know your fellow Commissioners
- Promote and educate others about service, volunteerism and the work of the Commission
- Build relationships, knowledge and awareness of Serve Kentucky programs and identify potential new partnerships

Commission Chair

- Is a voting member of the Commission
- Serves as the Chief Volunteer of the organization
- Partners with the Executive Director in achieving the organization's mission
- Provides leadership to the Commission, who sets policy and to whom the Executive Director is accountable
- Chairs meetings of the Commission after developing the agenda with the Executive Director
- Encourages Commission's role in strategic planning
- Appoints the chairpersons of committees, in consultation with other Commissioners and staff
- Serves as ex-officio member of committees and attends their meetings as appropriate
- Helps guide and mediate Commission actions with respect to organizational priorities and governance concerns
- Performs other responsibilities assigned by the Commission

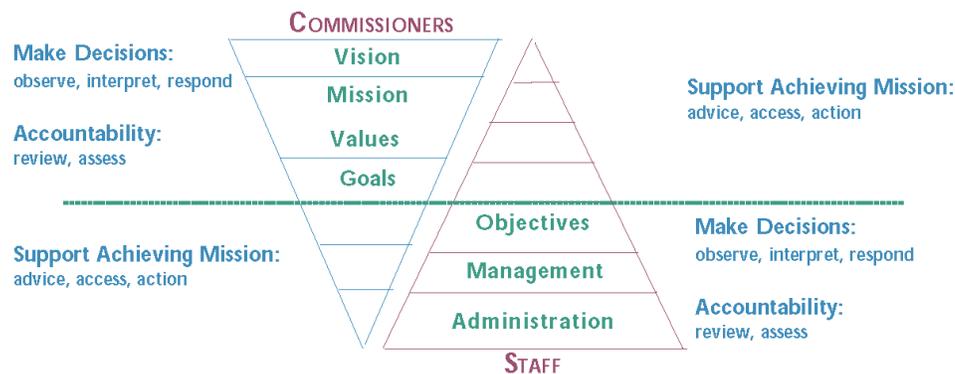
Commission Vice-Chair

- Is typically successor to the Chair position
- Is a voting member of the Commission
- Performs Chair responsibilities when the Chair cannot be available
- Reports to the Commission Chair
- Works closely with the Commission Chair, Executive Director, and staff

- Participates closely with the Chair to develop and implement officer transition plans
- Works with staff to coordinate advisor assignments for new commissioners
- Serves as ex-officio member of committees and attends their meetings as appropriate
- Performs other responsibilities as assigned by the Commission or Commission Chair

Commission Staff

The [staff](#) as a whole is responsible for designing and carrying out the activities and tasks necessary to implement actions approved by the Commission in fulfilling its duties. The Executive Director reports to the Executive Committee; all other staff members report to the Executive Director.



Commissioner and Staff Roles

■ Core Work, ■ Roles, and ■ Activities

Advocacy, Lobbying and Political Activity

This is an extremely important function for Commissioners. Commission staff are restricted in what they can do as much of their time is funded by federal sources. This makes it even more important for Commissioners to assume the role of communicating positions of the Commission to elected officials on matters relevant to public policy.

Tips on Advocacy

- Communicate first with the paid staff and leadership of the Commission. **Never** go it alone.
- Practice the art of purposeful education of elected and appointed officials.
- Getting your message through is only possible through effective communication.

Commissioners and Commission staff should follow all guidance or regulations from CNCS regarding political activity and lobbying while representing the Commission and/or any of its CNCS funded programs. Commission staff, as employees of the state of Kentucky, shall also follow all state policies regarding lobbying and political activity.

Political Activity

Volunteerism is a nonpartisan issue and commissioners and commission staff are expected to represent the Commission in a nonpartisan manner. While representing the Commission, conducting Commission

business, or serving in an official capacity, the Executive Director, staff and commissioners shall avoid any overtly public partisan activity that may jeopardize the public perception of the Commission. They shall avoid all such activity while representing the Commission or conducting Commission business.

Commission events will not promote any political party or candidate for elected office. Staff or commissioners planning Commission events that feature elected officials should take precautions to avoid the appearance of campaigning and should ensure events are official in nature. When possible, invitations to Commission events should be given to elected officials representing both parties and event planners should undertake steps to avoid the perception of partisanship.

Lobbying

Commission staff and commissioners will not lobby lawmakers (as defined by CNCS) when charging time or incidental travel expenses to grant funds or as match to grant funds directly related to lobbying. Under no circumstances should any costs or time directly related to lobbying be charged to Serve Kentucky federal funds. Commissioners, the Executive Director, and staff should charge any time spent on these activities or related travel expenses to an allowable non-matching account to ensure adequate documentation that expenses related to lobbying activities are not charged to federal grants. Lobbying does not include providing education about programs or services or responding to specific inquiries from elected officials; it does include activities designed to influence specific legislation.