



Be Peace. Choose Peace. Create Peace.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF AND ANSWERS FOR COMMUNITY PEACE PROJECT SPONSORS

Frequently Asked Questions

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What is Peace Through Action USA?

Peace Through Action USA is a national-scope, charitable, tax-exempt, social capital-building organization missioned to achieve peace between people and within communities in the United States of America by promoting caring action.

How long has Peace Through Action USA been around?

Peace Through Action USA is quite new. Between 2016 and mid-2017 our founder and board of directors built the organization. We opened for service in July 2017.

What does Peace Through Action USA do?

Peace Through Action USA energizes volunteers and servant leaders to activate Americans to reject aggression and violence and equip them with practical solutions to establish peace between people and groups where we live, learn, work, play, and pray.

What is the Peace Agents program?

Peace Through Action USA's Peace Agents program supplies compensated servant leaders—peace agents—to U.S. communities experiencing aggression and violence. We serve as an intermediary, recruiting, screening, and matching people who wish to dedicate a service term focused on peacebuilding to organizations that seek to increase peace between people and groups in their communities. Our peace agents lead community peace projects with their project sponsors.

What is a servant leader?

A servant leader is an individual whose primary motivation for leadership is the desire to serve others. When Peace Through Action USA uses the term “servant leader,” we are referring to individuals who, through our organization, render service through a community peace project over a medium- or long-term period and with a wage. We call our servant leaders “peace agents.”

What is a community peace project?

A community peace project is the general term that Peace Through Action USA uses to describe a set of peacebuilding activities organized and delivered in a community setting.

What is a project sponsor?

A project sponsor is the general term that Peace Through Action USA uses to describe a community-based, faith-based, or public organization or group of organizations that wishes to undertake/is undertaking already a community peace project of some type, and further is receiving assistance on that project from Peace Through Action USA in the form of servant leaders.

What is peacebuilding?

Peacebuilding is a general term for a wide range of efforts to address the root causes and immediate impacts of aggression or violence before, during, and after aggression or violence occurs.

What types of assistance can peace agents provide my community or organization?

Peace Through Action USA's peace agents and volunteers can help a community organization or coalition design and implement a community peace project. The peace agent and community members collaborate to put in place programs and services that aid community members in reducing aggression and violence and establishing peace between people and groups.

The specific services each peace agent provides depends on the needs of the community that they serve as well as the qualifications, skills, and experiences of the peace agent. Broadly speaking, peace agents deliver capacity-building services and/or direct services to communities.

Capacity-building services include conducting peaceful practices needs assessments and services gaps analyses; leading planning processes; developing and maintaining coalitions of organizations with common peacebuilding purposes; selecting and introducing culturally-appropriate, evidence-based and promising peaceful practices into the community; identifying trainers for

teaching the practices; recruiting community members to learn the practices; and building the funding, promotion, and performance management infrastructures to sustain the practices.

Direct services include training community members in social and emotional skills; convening restorative circles and mediation sessions in which community members resolve differences; organizing neighborhood volunteering opportunities; and serving as neighborhood watch leaders, home visitors, youth courts leaders, community arts leaders, or sport for development leaders.

What is expected to result from a peace agent having served our community?

One expected result is that the communities which peace agents serve generally and the organizations sponsoring their community peace project specifically will increase their capacities to offer and maintain peaceful practices, meaning that more community members will have access to resources and services that help them behave more peacefully with each other. Another expected result from peace agents' service is that individual community members will have more and better skills to resist aggression and violence and to practice peace.

Peace agents monitor whether these results occur through reporting progress of their service and by collecting information from project sponsors, community leaders, and community members.

Who may serve as a peace agent?

Peace Through Action USA welcomes as applicants for peace agent positions U.S. citizens, nationals, and legal permanent residents with at least a high school diploma or equivalent, aged 18 and older, and a desire to serve for peace. Peace agents may be from the very communities they serve or they may be from other parts of the country.

We aspire to achieve and maintain an organization culture and practice of equal opportunity, in which all are welcomed to participate fully in our programs and services. We do not discriminate against any person on the basis of an actual or perceived protected trait of such person.

We are an employer of national service. We encourage alums of AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, and other national service programs to apply for our peace agent or other positions.

We screen applicants for their motivations, qualifications, and skills. Also, we conduct a criminal history check on candidates who advance past the interview stage. We do consider the criminal history of individuals in our decision-making. However, having a criminal history is by no means an automatic bar to service as a peace agent.

Project sponsors assist in peace agent selection by getting word about the position out in the community. They refer candidates to Peace Through Action USA for screening and interviewing. They hold or coordinate their own community-level interview with a finalist(s). And they maintain the right to decline our suggested servant leader for their community peace project.

Who supervises the peace agent?

Peace Through Action USA staff members supervise and support peace agents, as they are our employees. Our supervisors ensure peace agents receive an orientation to program requirements, receive introductory training on peacebuilding; encourage positive conditions and committed people to be in place in the communities the peace agents serve; manage the relationship between Peace Through Action USA and projects sponsors; provide technical assistance to peace agents on executing their community peace projects; and monitor and evaluate peace agents' performance.

What are my organization's/the community's responsibilities?

Project sponsors help with supervising and supporting the peace agent by identifying a key staff member or volunteer of the sponsor or another community organization to serve as the peace agent's primary point of contact; collaborating with Peace Through Action USA to develop a

specific work plan and position description for the peace agent; connecting the peace agent to stakeholders key to the community peace project; integrating the peace agent into sponsor and community development and social activities when appropriate; and monitoring the peace agent's time and attendance.

Also, we request project sponsors to provide directly or identify another organization's location and space from which the peace agent may serve. (If no such space is available in the community, Peace Through Action USA will continue to consider placing a peace agent in the community if they have capacity and willingness to serve from their home.)

For how long does the peace agent serve?

Our peace agents serve full-year terms. For Peace Through Action USA, "full-year" means 12 months. We will consider modest variances from the full-year requirement such as for a "gap year" peace agent who may need to end their term a bit before 12 months to meet a start date of a school term.

How many hours per week does the peace agent serve?

Peace agents may serve either full-time or part-time, dependent on their own wishes and the needs of the community they serve. For Peace Through Action USA, "full-time" is 35 hours per week. "Part-time" is at least 14 hours per week but not more than 20 hours per week.

What days and hours does the peace agent serve?

Peace agents' service schedules vary and are determined by a combination of their communities' needs and the peace agents' preferences. Generally, peace agents can expect to serve during business hours on weekdays. Sometimes peace agents will serve during evening or weekend hours instead of daytime hours such as to lead an evening community meeting or a weekend community member training.

Do peace agents receive pay? How much?

Peace Through Action USA provides peace agents an hourly wage so that they may meet their basic living needs while serving. We compensate peace agents at the minimum hourly rate required by the state or locality in which the person is serving. At the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, a full-time peace agent would earn \$13,195 per year in gross income.

What other benefits do peace agents receive during their service term?

Peace Through Action USA pays unemployment insurance taxes and worker's compensation contributions required by law.

We provide full-time peace agents a \$3,600 allowance (distributed in amounts of \$300 per month for each month that the peace agent completes) that the peace agent may apply toward expenses of their choosing, such as health insurance premiums, healthcare expenses, student loan repayments, child care, or savings.

We provide full-time peace agents 120 hours of paid personal leave. Peace agents may use personal leave for medical, vacation, or other circumstances. We observe and pay peace agents on all federal holidays.

We provide relocation assistance to full-time peace agents moving over 50 miles from their current residence to their service location.

Can we remove the peace agent from our community if the arrangement is not working out?

Yes. The project sponsor may request that Peace Through Action USA remove the peace agent from their assignment to their community and project sponsor. Removal requests should be

based on cause factors and be documented with evidence of deficient performance or violations of standards of conduct.

How are peace agent positions funded? Is our community expected to help fund the peace agent's position?

Peace Through Action USA does not have single “angel donor” or public grant or contract source for financing our Peace Agents program. So, we are bringing this program to life by collecting small- and medium-sized donations from family, friends and social networks of peace agents and from organizations, foundations, businesses and individuals in the very communities where our peace agents serve. Our peace agents play a critical role in financing their service position by inviting their friends, family members, and community members to contribute to their community peace project. Peace Through Action USA has a peer-to-peer fundraising campaign platform from which peace agents will invite others to contribute.

While we do not assess a fixed fee on project sponsors to obtain a peace agent(s), we welcome voluntary cash contributions from them at amounts of their choice. Additionally, we request project sponsors’ help in fundraising by connecting Peace Through Action USA to potential local institutional and individual donors; leading, co-submitting, and/or endorsing funding applications we generate; and providing or arranging opportunities for peace agents to solicit donations from community organizations and individuals.

May we request more than one peace agent?

Yes. Communities and project sponsors that have plans or activities for community peacebuilding at a large scale are invited to communicate how a team of peace agents would help their community reach their goals. Peace Through Action USA would be pleased to collaborate with you to pursue a financing strategy to meet your human capital needs at the scale you envision.

When do peace agent service terms start?

We support community peace projects on a rolling basis as sufficient resources are accumulated to finance each peace agent position. Specific service term start and end dates are negotiated between the peace agent, project sponsor, and Peace Through Action USA.

Are project sponsor and peace agent opportunities available now?

Peace Through Action USA is a new organization. We are identifying our first project sponsors and raising funds for our first peace agent positions. We encourage organizations with interest in obtaining a peace agent to apply now. Doing so will help us identify where and why peace agent assistance would be helpful and focus our fundraising efforts.

I'm sold! What should I do next?

We welcome conversation with prospective community peace project sponsors. Please reach us at inbox@PeaceThroughAction.org, 202-827-5967, or @PeaceActUSA.

Or, complete a brief Community Peace Project Sponsor application here:

www.PeaceThroughAction.org/sponsor. A member of our team will review your application and then contact you.

Please join our e-list so that we can keep you in our circle. Sign up at www.PeaceThroughAction.org/engage.

If your community could benefit from a peace agent but you do not feel your organization is the best suited for leading a community peace project, please bring this opportunity to the attention of others in your community.