



Be Peace. Choose Peace. Create Peace.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF AND ANSWERS FOR PEACE AGENTS

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 activates and equips Americans to implement practical peaceful solutions to aggression and violence in their communities and our country.

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 with our assistance, primarily in the form of our providing servant leaders and volunteers to lead and/or support the project.

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.

Does the Peace Agents program have any relation to AmeriCorps or Peace Corps?

Peace Through Action USA's Peace Agents program is not affiliated with AmeriCorps or Peace Corps. However, we did design our program following the AmeriCorps national service model. We are big fans of AmeriCorps and Peace Corps. Also, we are an employer of national service.

You say that peace agents do peacebuilding. 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. Peace Through Action USA's peace agents engage in peacebuilding by helping an organization or coalition in a community design and implement a community peace project. The peace agent and community members put in place programs and services to aid community members in reducing aggression and violence and establishing peace between people and groups.

What specifically will I do as a peace agent? “Peacebuilding” still seems vague.

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 who request a peace agent from Peace Through Action USA.

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 my service?

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 community leaders and 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.

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.

Do you accommodate servant leaders with disabilities?

Peace Through Action USA does not discriminate against any person on the basis of an actual or perceived protected trait of such person, including their disability status. If a person with a disability has need for a reasonable accommodation to serve, they may request such accommodation at any time prior to, during, or after the application process. We will engage with the applicant or servant leader to implement a reasonable accommodation.

Who will I serve?

Peace agents serve generally a defined community and its members. Specifically, they serve community-based, faith-based or public organizations or coalitions that wish to undertake

community peace projects and have sought a peace agent from Peace Through Action USA to lead or help them on those projects.

Who will be my supervisor? What are their duties?

Peace Through Action USA staff members supervise and support peace agents. Among their duties, supervisors ensure peace agents receive an orientation to program requirements, receive introductory training on peacebuilding; ensure positive conditions and committed people are 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.

Where will I serve?

Our peace agents serve within the United States of America. We do not offer positions overseas. Peace agents serve a specific geographic area (such as a neighborhood) or place (such as a school, community-based organization, or faith center). The particularities of where they serve depend on which communities request a peace agent, their location, and their populations of focus.

Also, peace agents can propose a community peace project of their own. And then Peace Through Action USA helps them make service happen.

Do I have to relocate from where I currently live in order to serve?

No. If the peace agent positions we have available are for geographies where an individual does not wish to settle, then they need not apply for the position. On the other hand, if the individual is willing to relocate to another geographic area they may apply. Additionally, the individual can propose a community peace project of their own design and geographic choice.

If an individual is selected for and accepts a peace agent position in a geographic area over 50 miles from where the individual currently lives, Peace Through Action USA provides up to \$1,200 for round-trip relocation assistance to be used for expenses such as for airfare, household items shipping, or vehicle rental.

Where will I report daily for service?

Peace agents' service locations vary and are determined by a combination of their communities' capacities and the peace agents' preferences. Generally, peace agents can expect to report to a facility of the project sponsor. However, there may be opportunity or necessity for the peace agent to serve remotely from their home, an open space community location, and/or cooperative productive space.

For how long will I be expected to 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 will I be expected to 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 will I be expected to 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.

Will I be serving alone, or with other peace agents?

Most often we assign a solo peace agent to a community peace project. That does not mean, however, that the peace agent serves in isolation. They have a community leader or group associated with their project sponsor supporting their service. They have a Peace Through Action USA staff member providing supervision, training, and technical assistance. And ideally, they have one or more Peace Through Action USA volunteers also assigned to the community peace project in advisory, promotion, spiritual support, and/or psychosocial support roles.

Will I receive pay for my service? 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. Note that Peace Through Action USA is required by law to withhold from this gross amount the percentages necessary for meeting Social Security, Medicare, and income tax obligations of employers.

What other benefits will I receive during my 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.

How is my position funded? Will I be expected to help fund my 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.

Can I earn other income while serving?

Yes. Peace Through Action USA does not restrict our peace agents from earning outside income. However, we request our peace agents to make their service term with us their priority in time management and mental concentration.

Can I attend school while serving?

Yes. Peace Through Action USA does not restrict our peace agents from pursuing education or other development opportunities while serving. However, we request our peace agents to make their service term with us their priority in time management and mental concentration.

Can I be removed from or leave my peace agent position during my service term?

Yes. Peace Through Action USA and the peace agent have an “at-will” employer-employee relationship. An at-will relationship is one in which an employer can dismiss an employee for any reason and without warning, and in which an employee can resign or quit for any reason and without warning. Peace Through Action USA is committed to ensuring superior conditions to motivate peace agents to complete their terms. We request our peace agents to make a parallel commitment.

When do peace agent service terms start?

We admit peace agents into the Peace Agents program 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 peace agent service opportunities available now?

Peace Through Action USA is a new organization. We are identifying our first project sponsors and raising funds for peace agent positions. We encourage people with interest in a peace agent position to apply now. First, so that they may be among the first we contact as peace agent positions come online. Second, so that we may find out where and why YOU wish to serve and then begin to network with potential project sponsors and donors in those communities to persuade them that there is a servant leader ready and waiting to serve for peace!

I'm sold! What should I do next?

Complete a Peace Agents application here: www.PeaceThroughAction.org/XXX. A member of our team will review your application and then contact you.

I'm not ready to commit yet (or ever) to a term of service as a peace agent. What else can I do to support peacebuilding in the U.S.?

We understand that service is not the right fit for everyone. We have organized a range of opportunities for people to promote, volunteer, uplift spirits, and give for peace through action. Please visit www.PeaceThroughAction.org/participate and find the opportunities that appeal to you.

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

We welcome your inquiries to inbox@PeaceThroughAction.org, 202-827-5967, or @PeaceActUSA.