



Pine Tree Legal Assistance – Portland Office Maine VISTA Project Position Description

The Maine VISTA Project offers members a variety of opportunities to serve that include developing or expanding programs related to Veterans & Military Families, Education, and volunteer program development. This 26-member project is sponsored by the Maine Commission for Community Service (MCCS). MCCS builds capacity and sustainability in Maine's volunteer and service communities. Funding for the Maine VISTA Project is provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

Pine Tree Legal Assistance is a nonprofit corporation with 501(c)(3) status established in 1966 by private attorneys in Maine to promote access to justice by providing high quality free legal assistance responsive to the immediate needs of individual low-income clients and to address the long-range barriers to justice affecting low-income people in Maine. The program has always included low-income veterans and service members in its client population and, starting in 2009, has taken a national leadership role in the development of www.statesidelegal.org as a clearinghouse website for military and veteran households with legal needs.

This VISTA member will become familiar with the legal services provided by Pine Tree and other legal aid providers in Maine, as well as the information and self-help tools provided on www.statesidelegal.org and www.ptla.org. He or she will learn how to conduct basic intake of requests for legal help from military and veteran households in order to develop a written statement of legal needs within this client population. The VISTA member will work with staff of the Maine Volunteer Lawyers Project [VLP] and other private bar leaders to identify types of legal services that would be appropriate as new projects for the VLP and participate in the development of training and other recruitment tools to launch one new pro bono project serving low-income military or veteran households. He/she will conduct research on funding opportunities specific to legal services/legal needs of military or veteran households and work with staff to develop at least one new funding proposal to support this work at Pine Tree. The VISTA will be responsible for participating in the statewide "Stand-down" resource fair for homeless veterans in order to present information on legal services, and will participate in other networking and outreach events in southern and western Maine with members of the military or veteran community.

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions. Accommodation arrangements must be requested in advance by contacting Meredith Eaton at 207.624.6231 or VISTAdirector@volunteermaine.org.

Qualifications:

- Self motivated with a high degree of flexibility.
- Clear, concise oral and written communication.
- Excellent organizational skills.
- Strong computer skills.

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent is required.
- Previous experience in the military or an understanding of the military/veteran experience is preferred.
- Previous legal training/experience is preferred.
- Energetic commitment to justice for low-income individuals.
- Valid driver's license and access to reliable transportation.

Essential Functions:

Ability to:

- Relate to diverse people and to work effectively with colleagues.
- Define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions.
- Speak clearly and effectively to groups (large & small).
- Facilitate meetings of diverse participants.
- Provide training and technical assistance on service related issues.
- Develop and implement community/client needs assessments and/or program evaluations.
- Conduct grant/fundraising research and develop proposals.
- Use computer software such as Microsoft Office and navigate the internet.

Benefits and Terms:

All AmeriCorps*VISTA members receive a living allowance (\$936/mo), health benefit, and (upon successful completion of service term) a \$5,550 educational award or \$1,500 cash stipend. Additional benefits available to eligible members: relocation allowance, child care credits, student loans may qualify for deferment, and term life-insurance. The hosting organization will reimburse mileage expenses associated with project travel. (Please note: VISTA members commit to full-time service for one year and other terms. For more information about VISTA service, visit the AmeriCorps website at www.americorps.gov.)

For more information about VISTA positions throughout the state, contact VISTAdirector@volunteermaine.org or 207-624-6231.