

# YouthBuild Fall River Student Handbook

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## Congratulations!

You have reached the final step to becoming a student of YouthBuild Fall River. Successfully completing Mental Toughness Training means you are taking on the responsibility of making positive changes in your life and in your community.

YouthBuild Fall River's goal is to provide opportunity for personal transformation through education, career training, community-service, and leadership development. By joining YouthBuild Fall River, you are saying that you want to improve yourself, the lives of those around you and the community in which we live. And you are saying that you are willing to make changes in the way you will live your life. You have chosen to become a leader by participating in something unique in this city. We expect that you will be proud to represent the program long after your training with us has ended.

We will challenge you and support you to perform to the best of your ability while at YouthBuild. This is your chance to gain valuable skills, to develop a good reputation, to commit yourself to your education and to help rebuild Fall River. It is something you need to do for yourself! If you do well with YouthBuild Fall River, you will likely do well later. We want the best for you.

## Your Rights

- All students have a right to participate in the YouthBuild Fall River program on the basis of equal opportunity and merit.
- Students will not be discriminated against or harassed on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, age, disability or political affiliation.
- Students have a right to reasonable accommodation for disabilities.
- Students who believe their rights have been violated have the right to file a grievance.

## Your Responsibilities

- Satisfactory service includes attendance, adherence to the program rules, a positive attitude, quality performance and respect toward others in the program and in the community.
- Fall River students are asked to sign a contract agreeing to the terms of the program.

## Grievance Procedure

### Purpose

The purpose of the grievance procedure is to resolve disputes that may arise during the operation of the program. Disputes must be related to service activities or disciplinary action taken. All complaints must follow the following procedure.

1. All aggrieved parties should make every effort to settle the dispute on a personal basis.
2. If the matter cannot be settled, the aggrieved party must put the complaint in writing within ten days of the event. A hearing will be scheduled within seven days before a joint committee of staff and Policy Committee students.
3. If a successful resolution is not reached at the hearing, a written appeal shall be submitted to the Program Director within five days and a meeting with the director will be scheduled within five days of receipt of the appeal.
4. If a successful resolution is not reached at the meeting with the Program Director, a written appeal shall be submitted to the Senior Vice President for Social Services of Old Colony Y within five days and a meeting will be scheduled within ten days of receipt of the appeal.
5. **Binding Arbitration:** An aggrieved party may request binding arbitration if a grievance hearing decision is adverse or if no decision is made within 60 days of the filing of the grievance. The arbitrator must be independent and selected by agreement of the parties. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer will appoint one within 15 calendar days after receiving a request from one of the parties. An arbitration proceeding will be held no later than 45 calendar days after the request for arbitration, or no later than 30 calendar days after the appointment of an arbitrator by the Corporation's CEO. An arbitration decision will be made no later than 30 calendar days after the commencement of the arbitration proceeding. The cost of arbitration will be divided evenly between the parties, unless the aggrieved party prevails, in which case the program will pay the total cost of the proceeding as well as the prevailing party's attorneys' fees.

## General Expectations

**Doing well in YouthBuild Fall River means coming in every day and coming in on time.** It means using your mental and physical abilities to perform the service at hand. You will work to develop good relationships with everyone involved in the program. Most of all, a student is expected to take leadership responsibility—that is, doing things to make things go better for everybody, helping each other succeed, joining in on decision-making, and helping the whole program move forward.

We know that we will all have ups and downs. There will be times when personal problems will be overwhelming. Sometimes you may be bored and feel that what you are doing has no meaning. At times, you may be down on yourself or down on the program. It is important that we work together at overcoming these obstacles. They are part of life, they are part of growing and they are part of doing a hard task together. At all times, we expect everyone to give a full effort to be here on time and maintain respect for the people with whom we work.

**Remember, there is no such thing as failure. There is only adversity and when it strikes, you've got to pick yourself up, keep trying, and overcome it.**

## Morning Meeting

Each day at YouthBuild Fall River begins at 8:00 a.m. with a morning meeting that will last twenty minutes. The purpose of morning meeting is to prepare students and staff for the day ahead. It sets the tone for the day and provides information that is needed.

Morning Meeting consists of:

- Roll Call
- YouthBuild Pledge
- MassMoments – Historical moments in Massachusetts history
- Inspirational and thought-provoking readings
- Word of the Day – academic and vocational (An Interactive Experience)
- Quote of the Day
- Announcements (including important news for the program, report-backs from meetings and activities, community strengthening opportunities, updates on service projects and updates on academic accomplishments and current events).
- Morning Stretch

**After morning meeting, students will move directly on to service sites or the classroom.**

## Career Placement

At the completion of the program, we are committed to helping **YOU find employment. You will have the major role to play in this endeavor. Your attendance, reliability, cooperation, and punctuality (being on time) during your training period are very important in getting a job.** Also, the skills you have developed, the way you present yourself at the job interview, and your follow-through at the new job will help you to do well. The road to employment begins today and continues throughout the program.

Many employers require drug tests as a condition of employment. That is one of the reasons we are committed to maintaining YouthBuild Fall River as a **drug-free environment**. The bottom line is that drugs are illegal, end of discussion; there will be no compromise on this topic.

We cannot guarantee you employment after the program. However, we will do our best to put you on a path that will help you obtain a career that you want to pursue. Treating this program as you would a permanent job will help prepare you for the future.

**Your attendance, attitude, and performance will determine the recommendation we give to future employers.**

## Higher Education Placement

Students who are interested in pursuing a college education must have their GED.

Academic excellence involves a **desire to learn** more about yourself and the world around you. Preparing and performing well on academic evaluations is essential in building college placement recommendations. The YouthBuild Fall River staff **will assist** students in enrollment and financial aid matters. YouthBuild Fall River staff will make sure that all students are exposed to the material necessary for their future educational success. **As with any educational venture, no one can make you learn. You need to take an active role in your education.** Some people are willing to put in a lot of work in this area, while others are not. In order to prepare yourself for the future, you must decide that you are going to take an active role in your education and do the work that is required.

## Internship Opportunities

Internships are opportunities for students to gain experience in a profession, by being placed and trained by an agency or partner while still a student of the Fall River Program. We will be looking for internships in a wide variety of fields to match you with a position suited to your interests and goals.

For a student to qualify for this program she/he must be performing excellently on site and in the classroom. He/She must also initiate the request and drive for an internship. **No student will be eligible for any internship until the GED is attained. Attendance is a key in securing an internship. If you can't have good attendance at the program, we can't afford to place you in an internship and jeopardize our relationship with a potential employer.**

Internships expose you to an actual working experience and allow you to begin making contacts that will help you in the future. **Networking is generally the key to future employment.**

## Construction as a Career

During your time in YouthBuild Fall River, you will have the **opportunity** to see what happens on a construction project by working as part of a crew.

There are good job opportunities in the construction field. **These opportunities are expected to grow in the future.**

If you like working with your hands and don't mind getting dirty; if you enjoy being outside, especially in the winter or you're good at math; if you are mechanically inclined and might enjoy being part of a team responsible for creating a beautiful structure that will last for a long time, then a career in construction might be right for you.

**The building of a structure, whether it's a handicap access ramp, a house or a large office building involves many people.** On-site jobs in the building trades include carpentry, electrical, ironwork, labor, equipment operation, pipefitting, plumbing, and truck driving to name a few.

Off-site jobs in the building trades include architecture, drafting, document control, computer operating, engineering, purchasing, or estimating. Many of these occupations can be available to you with the proper training, interest and motivation on your part.

## **YouthBuild Definitions**

### **Student/Member**

A young person who is serious about learning and understands that it is the road to a future.

### **Mentor**

An adult who cares about the progress a student makes and takes an active role in their life.

### **Stipend**

The living allowance that can be earned by a YouthBuild student

### **Scamming & Skating**

The act of using the program by trying to take the easy way out and basically “getting over” or actually thinking that you are. From now on it will be referred to as S&S. Also known as “pimping the program”

### **Network**

The collection of people who can help you in the future

### **Fair**

In YouthBuild, fair does not mean that everyone gets the same thing, fair means that everyone gets what they need, deserve and have earned

### **Leadership**

Taking responsibility to make sure that things go right for yourself, your family, your program, and your community

### **YouthBuild USA**

The national organization that oversees YouthBuild programs across the country and helps the individual programs provide a solid program for their students

### **Massachusetts YouthBuild Coalition**

The individual programs in Massachusetts who have formed an organization to secure state funding and provide expanded services for YouthBuild students across the state

## YouthBuild Student Stipend

A stipend is a living allowance that will help you offset living expenses. You will be able to earn a stipend while at YouthBuild Fall River. It is unusual to be able to earn money while attending school. YouthBuild Fall River is an exception to that rule. You will receive the stipend based upon your attendance and performance in the program.

The YouthBuild Fall River stipend can only be earned if you are at the program. It is easy to earn the full stipend and it will prepare you for life after YouthBuild. This places the entire amount you can earn on your shoulders.

The stipend is earned based on the number of points that are earned each day. The stipend is awarded on a point system. Each student will be evaluated by the staff each day and awarded a point in each area of success. Points are awarded each day for the following 5 areas:

### Attendance

You must be at the program on time and remain for the full day. This includes returning from breaks and lunch. (1 point per day)

### Attitude

You must demonstrate an attitude that shows you know why you are here and that you want to work. This includes being in complete uniform all day. (1 point per day)

### Effort

Whether in class or on the site, you must do what is asked of you and complete the assignments you have been given to the best of your ability. Any attempt at S&S will be deemed as a lack of effort for that day. (1 point per day)

### Cooperation with Staff

The staff is here to educate you in class and on the site. You must work cooperatively with them throughout the day. (1 point per day)

### Interaction with Peers

Your peers are your partners in this venture. You must work cooperatively with them throughout the day. (1 point per day)

**Important note: Multiple violations of any rule during the course of a day will result in failure to earn points in different categories. For example: You are late in the morning; you fail to earn your attendance point. You are late from break; you fail to earn your point for cooperating with staff. You are late from lunch; obviously you are not giving it your all and you will fail to earn your effort point.**

You can earn 5 points per day or 25 points per week. Each point is worth \$5 dollars, so you can earn \$25 per day, or \$125 per week. For any week in which you earn 25 points, you will receive an additional \$25. **In other**

**words if you are here every day and complete all of your assignments cooperatively, you can earn \$150 per week.**

In addition, beginning in February, if you maintain at least a **98% attendance rate**, you will earn another **\$25 bonus each week** that you have perfect attendance.

In weeks that do not have five days because of days off, you will earn credit for that day providing you are here for the entire **day on both the day before and the day after** the day off.

All appointments (medical, court, etc.) should be scheduled after program hours. If this is not possible and you need to schedule an appointment during the day, you must begin the day at YouthBuild and then return right after your appointment. **If you do this and bring verification of the appointment, you will still be eligible to receive full credit for the day. If you do not bring in the appropriate paperwork or do not return, you will not receive full credit for the day and will not earn the full stipend.**

**No points are earned for days when you are out sick.**

## What to Expect on the Construction Site

The service day begins right after morning meeting and ends at 3 p.m. back at the Armory (unless otherwise stated by the Director/Staff).

Come prepared each day. Wear safety equipment as needed. You will be provided with a tool belt with hand tools. It is your responsibility to take care of this equipment. If you lose or damage this gear, you will be required to replace and/or repair it at your own expense.

At the beginning of each week you will be given a scope of service for the coming week. That is, you will be told what must be done that week for the project to remain on schedule. At the end of each week the crew will meet to evaluate the week's service.

All breaks are at the discretion of the construction staff. The whole crew will take lunch at the same time on site unless circumstances make it necessary to alter the schedule. **No one will leave the site at lunch time. Make preparations for your lunch ahead of time. Ordering lunch out is not an option.**

**The day begins and ends at the armory.**

### General Rules on the Service Site

- No horseplay or rough housing.
- No pointing or throwing tools at anyone, at anytime.
- Work boots must be worn at all times.
- Safety glasses must be worn when using power tools.
- No jewelry is to be worn on the construction site, especially earrings, necklaces, bracelets or rings. (This creates a safety hazard)
- Do not leave boards with nails on the site. If you see this it is your responsibility to make the work area safe, whether you place the object there or not. **The injury you prevent could be yours!**
- Clean up all spills to help avoid accidents.

- Always watch your step.
- Report all accidents to your trainer immediately.
- Do not leave the site without permission.
- No personal visits or incoming personal calls.
- **No earphones or electronics of any kind.** All emergency calls must come in to the site phone.
- The use of a radio on the site is totally at the discretion of the construction staff. If a radio is allowed, it will be played at a **low volume and only with lyrics that could not possibly be offensive to any visitors to the site. The radio is not a tool that will help us build the house and if there is any arguing over station selection or too much attention paid to it, it will be eliminated from the site!**
- You have been issued properly fitted clothing that is to be worn at all times. Altering it to make it loose fitting or having dangling sleeves, and jewelry can be hazardous. **This is a safety factor, not a fashion statement!**

**The Construction staff is in charge at all times.**

## Education

The educational program at YouthBuild Fall River is designed to:

- Help students attain the skills needed for passing the GED test.
- Build upon skills for those who have obtained a GED.
- Help students prepare educationally, emotionally and financially for higher education.
- Help students attain the skills that will allow them to successfully find employment and the resources to retain that position or move on to a better one.
- Provide students with the training and the knowledge they need to become leaders in the community.

We have designed a program that includes instruction in reading, mathematics, English, math, writing, social studies, science, civics, financial literacy, health, vocational training, computer literacy and career exploration. These classes will be held at the school and at appropriate places outside the classroom. Field trips may be planned to help students more deeply appreciate the connection between the classes and the world in which they operate on a daily basis.

## General Rules in Class

Students should find their educational experience at YouthBuild Fall River very different from previous school experiences. We have chosen material that is relevant to your future and the community that may have been missing in the school system. Our teaching methods are geared to enable you to be problem-solvers. We are not concerned with giving information for the purpose of memorization only. In other words, our focus is on teaching critical thinking, the skills that you will need to be successful in the future.

In Fall River, everyone is a teacher and everyone is a student. That means that sometimes students are expected to be teachers and the teacher becomes the student. We can all learn from each other. Students may be asked to teach their peers in subjects they have already mastered. This includes guests.

Since the academic program covers a wide variety of subjects and issues, we believe that anyone who is fully participating in the program will achieve his or her academic goals.

***Good luck, and keep your “eyes on the prize!”***

## **Instructional Staff’s Commitment to Students**

In order for effective learning to take place, the Instructional Staff of YouthBuild Fall River agrees to:

- Provide material that is relevant, practical and challenging.
- Set up written assignments, quizzes and tests.
- Check student’s work for accuracy and completeness.
- Provide constructive feedback.
- Come prepared for class each day.
- Come to class on time.
- Understand that mistakes are part of learning.
- Keep track of attendance.
- Keep track of improvements in learning skills.
- Evaluate student work and knowledge.
- Help students to set goals and provide the opportunity to achieve those goals.
- Meet one-on-one with each student.
- Use home assignments when an extension of the classroom learning is necessary
- Hold students accountable for signed agreements.
- Hold ourselves accountable for signed agreements.

## Learning Checklist And Responsibilities

Now that you have entered the classroom prepared to learn, follow this classroom checklist. It will help you to stay focused on why you are here, and help you to succeed.

- The day begins **right after Morning Meeting and ends at 3 p.m.**
- No sleeping in class. You are responsible for having adequate rest the night before. (Stay alert and be attentive)
- Come on time. Class begins right after the conclusion of morning meeting at which time the door will be closed.
- Learning tools (notebooks, pencils, pens, etc.) must be in class at all times.
- Respect the instructor's desk and ask permission before borrowing any item. Return items to their proper place or person.
- Follow the instructions of the teacher.
- Talk to one another when in the process of learning. Talk about subjects pertaining to the task. Offer ideas and suggestions to help each other. This applies at all times except when you are being tested.
- Stay in class until it is over. Take breaks when it is time. Come back on time. Try your best.
- Respect other students when they are working or testing.
- Always think about how your actions will impact others.
- No personal visits or personal phone calls during school time.
- Clean up your space when you leave.
- Complete your assignments and return folders to their proper place.
- Hold each other accountable for commitments.
- If you miss a day, **it is your responsibility to make up any work.**
- **No earphones or electronics.** All emergency calls should be made to the office phone and messages will be passed on to you. Arrange with staff to make any necessary calls.
- You are in class because you have committed yourself to improving your education. **COME TO SCHOOL PREPARED.** At the beginning of the year, you will be issued notebooks, pencils and pens. They are your responsibility. Always bring your supplies and any assigned work to class with you. If you lose or misplace your materials you will need to buy or rent new ones for the day from your teacher. Being unprepared can affect your ability to earn points that day
- You are expected to take care of school materials. Please treat them as you would anything you value. These materials are expensive and YouthBuild Fall River does not have the money to replace them.
- There will be a 45 minute lunch break from 12:00 pm to 12:45 pm.
- Everyone will dress in uniform each day.
- The following are not allowed in class: earphones/walkman, radios, cell phones, or sunglasses. We often have visitors here at Fall River and many of them are people who can help you in the future. Don't underestimate the value of the first impression.
- Tardiness will result in failure to earn **One Point** for that day

## Independent Assignments

In the Fall River YouthBuild program, we are trying to accomplish many things in a very short period of time. Even though the program is for ten months, only half of the time is spent in the classroom. That means we only have five months to complete all our educational goals including improving reading, writing and math skills, preparing for and passing the GED, applying for jobs, applying to and preparing for college, etc. **In order to make the most of the time we do have, the instructional staff may assign independent assignments during both school and site weeks.** All students are expected to complete the assignments and hand them in on time. Independent assignments are not only an opportunity to build and practice academic skills; it is an opportunity for students to learn to manage their time well and to discipline themselves to complete assignments on time.

## Leadership Development

- YouthBuild Fall River believes in the idea that **young people need to develop their potential as leaders.** We will provide an environment so that you can fully realize this potential and make it possible for you to demonstrate it in the community. Each day our young people are placed in positions where their leadership is tested.

**Everything we do at Fall River is centered on Leadership development.** However, the major categories in which the young people participate fall under one of these three categories, governance, management, and community service. Among the opportunities that will be available in these categories are the following:

### Management

- Peer Tutor
- Tool Chief
- Extra Curricular Activities
- Support Group Leader
- Mentor
- Facilitator
- Committee Chair

### Governance

- Youth Policy Committee
- Massachusetts YouthBuild Coalition
- Young Leaders Council
- Bristol Workforce Investment Board Youth Council
- Boards of Directors
- Fall River YouthBuild Advisory Committee

### Community Service/Development

- Building affordable housing for low income people
- Public speaking
- Working with the homeless
- Working with the elderly
- Community beautification projects
- Speaking at city meetings
- Violence prevention
- Working with local churches and agencies
- Building handicapped ramps
- Renovating community centers

## The Youth Policy Committee

At the beginning of November of the program year, a Youth Policy Committee will be elected. This committee represents all of the students at YouthBuild Fall River and will meet with the Director and staff advisor on a bi-weekly basis to make sure that the program is working well, to address problems, and to develop solutions. The Youth Policy Committee is required by YouthBuild USA to remain as an Affiliate in good standing.

## Reflection

Reflection is the time at the end of the program week or day when the students get together to share their experiences, reflect on the job that has been performed, and analyze how the week progressed. Reflection must be done for every community service project, whether led by a Fall River staff student or a trainee. Also, reflections can be a time when students think about themselves, their work ethic and their performance. Remember that you do not leave until the staff has officially dismissed you once reflections are complete. Reflection will be part of your Advisory group.

## Lateness and Absence Policy

If you are going to be late or absent, you are required to call the YouthBuild Fall River office (508-678-1975), before 8:00 A.M. and talk to a staff member or leave a voicemail if no one answers. Failure to do so will result in you not fulfilling the requirements of the program. If you need to be absent, you may be asked to submit written documentation covering your absence.

- **All leave request forms** for any scheduled appointment on program time must be filled out prior to leaving the program at any time during the day. These must be filled out at least two days in advance and should be passed in to Mrs. Lincoln

## Appointments During Program Time

**All routine appointments such as doctor, or dentist visits should be scheduled after program hours whenever possible.**

YouthBuild Fall River must be informed of all routine appointments scheduled during the week by filling out a leave request form at least two days before the appointment.

Any student who wishes to make an appointment with any member of the student service staff will request that appointment through Mrs. Lincoln.

If a student **chooses** to leave during the program day for any reason not considered an emergency or an acute illness or without giving **proper notice** it will be counted as inappropriate behavior and the student will not be eligible to earn points for that day.

## Completion Standards

To receive a YouthBuild Fall River Certificate of Achievement, each student must:

- Remain in the program for a minimum of six months (this would include students who have been deliberately placed in an appropriate job or school after six months, but before the program cycle has ended)
- Have an overall attendance record of 90% or an overall attendance of 85% or better with 95% attendance for the final three months
- Have made substantial educational progress
- Complete and present their portfolio
- Meet minimum requirements in areas of:
  - Academic Skills
  - Career Development Skills/Life Skills
  - Construction Skills
  - Leadership Skills
  - Community Service

Students who have achieved at this level will be able to wear caps and gowns at graduation.

## YouthBuild USA Honors Graduates

In 1998, the YouthBuild USA Policy Council adopted the category of YouthBuild Honors Graduates for students who meet high standards. Because the requirements of YouthBuild Fall River are set extremely high, students meeting the programs criteria for completion will also receive the Honors Graduate Certificates from YouthBuild USA if they have already attained the GED.

## The Rudy Award

The Rudy Award was created in 1991 to honor Rudy Griffith, a YouthBuild Boston graduate who had perfect attendance. To qualify for the award, a student must have perfect attendance and must have graduated from an affiliated YouthBuild program. Perfect attendance means that the student had only absences that were pre-planned with the staff.

## YouthBuild Fall River Contract

The fact that you were accepted into the YouthBuild Fall River program means that we trust that you want to learn and to grow. Therefore, we intend to help you in that process. We expect the best attitude and behavior from each student. So as not to be confused about what is expected of you, each student will sign and receive a contract that outlines the behavior expected of you during this program, and specifies the possible consequences for violating the contract.

### Learning Experiences

Most people grow up viewing discipline as something negative or as punishment. YouthBuild Fall River views discipline as a learning experience. That is, discipline should be used to teach which may in some cases take the form of punishment. The goal is to teach students the following:

- How to **identify** their inappropriate behaviors and attitudes
- How to **assess** their behaviors
- How to **avoid** old patterns of negative behavior and negative attitude
- How to **incorporate new and appropriate behaviors** that will strengthen the personal character as well as to strengthen the student's potential leadership in the community

**Learning Experiences** may be handled through a variety of activities:

- Discussion
- Counseling
- Visual demonstrations
- Written demonstrations
- Warnings
- Accepting responsibility for your actions
- Group discussion/brainstorming
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Contracts
- Dismissal

**Your actions have consequences in YouthBuild Fall River as they will in life.  
YouthBuild Fall River is a preparation for life.**

### Special Events Participation Eligibility

Prior to students participating in program field trips, extra program travel or other special events, eligibility to participate in those activities will be determined by drug-free status, attendance levels, infraction levels and student evaluations.

## AmeriCorps Agreement

### I. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this agreement to spell out the terms, conditions, and rules of membership regarding the participation of YouthBuild Fall River. Students at YouthBuild Fall River will also be referred to as “members.”

### II. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The member certifies that he/she is a United States citizen, a United States national, or a lawful permanent resident alien and at least 16 years of age upon entering the program. By signing this contract the member will also certify, under penalty of law, that she/he has a high school diploma or equivalency certificate or agrees to obtain one before using the education award.

### III. TERMS OF SERVICE

A. The member's term of service begins on or after September 29, 2008 and ends no later than one year after that date. The program and the member may agree, in writing, to extend this term of service for the following reasons:

1. The member's service has been suspended due to compelling personal circumstances.
2. The member's service has been terminated, but a grievance procedure has resulted in reinstatement.

B. The member will complete a minimum of 675 hours of service during this period. Of these hours, a maximum of 20% may be training, education, or other similar approved activities.

C. The member understands that to successfully complete the term of service (as defined by the program and consistent with regulations of the Corporation for National and Community Service) and to be eligible for the education award, he/she must complete at least **675 hours** of service, satisfactorily complete pre-service training and the appropriate education/training that relates to the member's ability to perform service, and complete all required service reports in a timely manner. The member must successfully complete OSHA training, CPR/first aid, and Home Builders Institute certification.

D. The member understands that to be eligible to serve a second term of service the member must receive satisfactory performance reviews for any previous term of service. The member's eligibility for a second term of service with this program will be based on at least a mid-term and end-of-term evaluation of the member's performance focusing on factors such as whether the member has:

1. Completed the required number of hours;
2. Satisfactorily completed assignments, tasks, or projects; and
3. Met any other criteria that were clearly communicated both orally and in writing at the beginning of the term of service.

E. The member understands, however, that the mere eligibility for an additional term of service does not guarantee selection or placement.

#### **IV. POSITION DESCRIPTION**

The member is expected to participate in all aspects of the program including:

- Construction
- Education
- Life skills training
- Leadership training
- Outside community service
- Maintaining the program sites
- Retreats
- YouthBuild events

All of these activities will be completed in a cooperative and respectful manner.

The name of the member's direct service supervisor is Mr. Denfeld.

#### **V. BENEFITS**

A. Upon successful completion of the member's term of service, the member will receive an education award from the National Service Trust. For successful completion of a half-time term, the member will receive an education award in the amount of \$1,800. If the member has not yet received a high school diploma or its equivalent (including an alternative diploma or certificate for individuals with learning disabilities), the member agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent before using the education award. This requirement can be waived if the member is enrolled in an institution of higher education on an ability to benefit basis or the program has waived this requirement due to the results of the member's education assessment.

1. The member understands that his or her failure to disclose to the program any history of having been released for cause from another AmeriCorps program will render him or her ineligible to receive the education award.
2. The member understands that his or her failure to disclose to the program any history of having been released for cause from another AmeriCorps program will render him or her ineligible to receive the education award.

B. Upon enrollment and acceptance into the program, the member is eligible for forbearance of any qualified student loans.

C. If the member has received forbearance on a qualified student loan during the term of service, the National Service Trust will repay a portion or all of the interest that accrued on the loan during the term of service.

## RULES OF CONDUCT

A. At no time may the member:

1. Engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state or federal law.
2. Engage in activities that pose a significant safety risk to others.
3. Engage in any AmeriCorps prohibited activities that include:
  - a. any activity involving attempting to influence legislation or an election or aid a partisan political organization;
  - b. helping or hindering union activity;
  - c. engaging in religious instruction;
  - d. conducting worship services;
  - e. engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
  - f. organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
  - g. impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
  - h. participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political candidates, political platforms, pro-proposed legislation, or elected officials;
  - i. providing a direct benefit to a for-profit entity, a labor union, a partisan political organization, a religious organization, or a non-profit that engages in lobbying.
  - j. Voter registration drives held by AmeriCorps members are unacceptable service activities. In addition, Corporation funds may not be used to conduct a voter registration drive.

B. The member is expected to, at all times while acting in an official capacity as an AmeriCorps member:

1. Demonstrate mutual respect towards others.
2. Follow directions.
3. Direct concerns, problems, and suggestions to **your immediate staff supervisor**

### ***Infractions***

Like any community, YouthBuild Fall River has to live by rules and guidelines to achieve harmony and order. **Students are expected to follow all of the rules at all times.**

Infractions **NOT INCLUDING INTOLERABLE OFFENSES** affect your stipend and standing in the program and fall under two general categories. They are **Discrediting the Program** and **Disruptive Behavior**.

### ***Intolerable Infractions***

The following infractions will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

- **Firearms or weapons possession**
- **Drug dealing**
- **Drug or alcohol use during program time**
- **Sexual violence**
- **Assault and/or battery on a staff member**
- **Stealing of any kind**

### ***Discrediting the Program***

**Discrediting the Program** is any public act that seriously damages the reputation of YouthBuild Fall River and is any seriously disrespectful public behavior committed during a YouthBuild event, at a community service activity, during program time, or in YouthBuild Fall River uniform during non-program time.

**Examples of Behavior that Discredit the Program include but are not limited to:**

- Public Intoxication
- Arrest
- Destruction of property off of program hours
- Fighting off program hours while in uniform

### **Consequences**

- First offense: Staff Intervention - student will be asked to sign an individualized contract, which could include a suspension and/or dismissal
- Second Offense: Staff Intervention Possible Suspension/ Dismissal
- Third Offense: Dismissal

### ***Disruptive Behavior***

**Disruptive behavior** is any action that stops normal program operation, keeps others from learning or prevents others from performing program operations or activities.

**Examples of Behavior that is Disruptive that will result in consequences and the inability to earn certain points for the day include but are not limited to:**

- careless behavior (any behavior that could lead to property damage, personal injury, or become disruptive to program activities)
- disrespecting staff, students guest speakers or visitors
- leaving before the end of the day without notice
- undermining your instructors
- not participating in program activities
- refusing to give up electronics

### **Consequences**

- First Offense – Written Warning
- Second offense: Staff Intervention - student will be asked to sign an individualized contract, which could include a suspension and/or dismissal
- Third Offense: Staff Intervention Possible Suspension/ Dismissal
- Fourth Offense: Dismissal

**Examples of Behavior that is Disruptive that will result in a suspension plus no points earned for the day and could include dismissal, include but are not limited to:**

- dangerous behavior (any intentional behavior or action that directly threatens personal safety of an individual or group of people)
- destroying property on program time (vandalism of any kind is destroying property)
- fighting
- instigating or bringing others into a fight
- making threats, verbal abuse, racial or sexual slurs
- sexual harassment (any unwanted or unsolicited verbal or physical advances of a sexual nature, or any derogatory or disrespectful comments of a sexual nature aimed at another person)

### ***Contributions***

Certain behaviors will result in a monetary contribution to help support the work of YouthBuild Fall River. These behaviors are all easily within your power to avoid. The contributions will be deducted directly from your stipend check. For all second year students, the amount is automatically **doubled**. These contributions are as follows:

|                                               |                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Cell phone possession                         | \$50                                          |
| Out of uniform                                | \$10                                          |
| Absence without calling                       | \$10 plus failure to earn points for the day  |
| Late with no call                             | \$10 plus failure to earn 1 point for the day |
| Late with a call more than 3 times in a month | \$25                                          |

### ***Director's Caveat***

The Program Director will make the final determination of major and minor offenses after consultation with staff. Decisions made by staff at individual service or classroom sites will stand and be binding until the Director has a chance to review them.

### ***Suspension***

When a student is suspended, s/he will not take part in any program activities, but will remain at the armory for the duration of the suspension. The student will be assigned tasks to be completed. Suspension will take the form of an in-school suspension and will be served for the designated period of time without the ability to earn points toward the stipend. In addition to assigned tasks, the student will formulate a response to the staff and students outlining his/her responsibility for the offense, the reason for that action, and a plan for rectifying the problem now and in the future. **Failure to fulfill the requirements of the suspension will be understood by YouthBuild Fall River as an indication that the student no longer wishes to continue as a student in the program.** Before being reinstated to the program for any suspension of 2 days or longer, the student will meet with staff members, representatives of the Youth Policy Committee and the student's mentor to determine continuation in the program.

### ***Uniforms***

All students and staff members of YouthBuild Fall River **will wear program uniforms every day**. Students will be issued five shirts and two pairs of pants. **Not having a clean uniform is not an acceptable excuse for showing up to the program out of uniform.** In addition, sweatshirts, hats and work boots will also be issued. Hats are only to be worn outside and on the worksite. You do not need to wear a hat but if you choose to wear one, it must be a program hat. They are to be worn with the brim facing directly forward or not at all. No hats are to be worn in the building. Work boots are always to be worn on the work site. **Failure to comply with the uniform policy will result in consequences.**

## YOUTHBUILD FALL RIVER DRUG POLICY

YouthBuild Fall River is a **drug-free program**. Substance abuse is a complex social problem that seriously and repeatedly interferes with health, job performance and safety, personal and family welfare and interpersonal relationships.

When a substance abuse problem is identified in a program applicant or student, YouthBuild /AmeriCorps Fall River will assist that person in meeting the responsibility to address the issue. Resource information and referral for anyone needing assistance will be made. The unlawful distribution of a controlled substance or alcohol during program hours is expressly prohibited and will result in immediate dismissal from the program. The unlawful possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited. Any alcohol or unlawful drug use or possession on program property or during program time, including outside events is expressly prohibited and will result in dismissal. No person shall report to program activities under the influence of illegal or unprescribed drugs or alcohol. If a person is reasonably suspected of coming to YouthBuild Fall River program activities under the influence, that person will be subject to immediate drug testing and then sent home. While awaiting drug test results, the student will not be allowed to participate in any program activity, and subject to suspension.

If the test is positive the student will be required to pay for the drug test. If the test is negative, the program will pay for the test, and the student will be fully reinstated including any lost stipend. If the drug test is refused, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Students will be tested prior to Mental Toughness Training, and again near the end of those three weeks. All applicants and staff will be required to take a drug test. Any student who refuses to take this test will not be eligible to participate in the program. A student who tests positive on both tests but the level has decreased on the second test will be allowed to begin the program, but will not be eligible to receive a stipend until a drug test is passed. A drug test must be passed within four weeks of the second test.

If, during the program year, we suspect illegal or unprescribed drug use during program time on the premises, including the designated smoking area, an immediate drug test will be required. If the test is positive, the student could be dismissed from the program. If the student refuses to take the drug test, that student will be dismissed from the program.

Random testing for students and staff will take place throughout the year. If a student is aware that they are having difficulty complying with the policy, they have the opportunity to let the staff know and a plan will be formulated that must be accepted by the student. Failure to accept the recommendation will result in dismissal.

Failure to pass a random drug test will place the individual on suspension until the problem is alleviated. For any test that is positive, the student will be required to pay for the test and for subsequent retests.

### Drug Free Workplace

**In accordance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act you are notified that:**

- The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited at YouthBuild Fall River.
- Conviction of any criminal drug statute must be reported within two days to the director.
- Each student's participation is conditioned upon compliance with the requirements of this notice.
- Certain actions will be taken against students for violations of such prohibitions

## Student Contract

This handbook has described what the YouthBuild Fall River program is about and the program's expectations for trainees' conduct and behavior, as well as the consequences for violations.

Everything that is in this handbook has been explained to you. It is your responsibility to live up to this agreement. This agreement is a part of the **Learning Experience** that you are undertaking as a student of YouthBuild Fall River. This **Learning Experience** will help you to prepare for your future.

### Term of Service

- The student's term of service begins on September 29, 2008 and ends at graduation on June 26, 2009. The student and the program, in writing may expand the term because the student's service has been suspended due to compelling personal circumstances.
- The student understands that in order to be eligible for serving a second term of service the student must satisfactorily complete the first term of service. This includes completing the requirements for completion.

### Benefits

- The student will receive a stipend determined by the number of points earned

As your final experience before entering the program you are now ready to sign that you will live up to this contract. The contract will be signed by you and by the program director. One copy will remain in this book for you to keep. The program director will place the other copy in your personal file. It is your responsibility to keep this handbook. Losing the handbook will not be accepted as an excuse for a violation of the contract. This handbook is your way of life while you are a student of YouthBuild Fall River. We welcome you to this experience and expect you to succeed. Since you have made it this far, you should have the same expectation for yourself. The future is ahead of you and it is time for you to seize it.

***I have read and understand the conditions that are described in this agreement between me and YouthBuild Fall River, and I agree to abide by these conditions. I also agree to abide by all of the AmeriCorps provisions.***

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_