Q: Can I choose the country where I'll serve as a Volunteer?

A: The Peace Corps makes every effort to accommodate your interests and preferences for serving as a Volunteer, but we cannot guarantee placement in any specific country or region. Our main priority is to place you in a country where your skills are most needed, so we encourage you to be flexible when you are offered an assignment.

Q: How long is a Peace Corps assignment?

A: Peace Corps assignments are for 27 months (essentially three months of training and two years on assignment) in your country of service.

Q: I have student loans. Can they be deferred or canceled while I'm in the Peace Corps?

A: In general, while you are a Volunteer, you may defer repayment of your Stafford Loans (formerly known as Guaranteed Student Loans), Perkins Loans, Federal Consolidation Loans or Direct Loans. In addition, Volunteers with Perkins Loans receive a 15 percent cancellation of their outstanding balance for each year of their two years of service. The Peace Corps does not grant deferments, cancellations or grace periods for government or private loans. You must obtain those directly from your lending institution. The regulations that authorize loan deferment and cancellation are sometimes complicated, but your Peace Corps recruiter can help explain the different rules that apply to each type of loan.

Q: What kind of job placement assistance does the Peace Corps provide when I complete my Volunteer service?

A: The Peace Corps’ office of Returned Volunteer Services (RVS) provides career, educational, and other advice and assistance through its career center in Washington, D.C., and through the Peace Corps regional offices. In addition, returned Volunteers have non-competitive eligibility status for appointments to U.S. government executive branch agencies for a period of one year after completion of Peace Corps service.
Q: **What sort of educational background do I need to be a Volunteer?**

A: Most Volunteer assignments require a four-year college degree. Applicants without a college degree may qualify by having three to five years of work experience in an area such as managing a business or working in a skilled trade.

Q: **I hear it's very hard to get into the Peace Corps. Is that true? How competitive is it?**

A: To become a Peace Corps Volunteer, applicants must meet certain education and work experience requirements. When evaluating an applicant, the Peace Corps considers the "whole person" – including life experience, community involvement, volunteer work, motivations and even hobbies. Your Peace Corps recruiter can work with you to help you gain the skills and experiences needed to qualify for a Volunteer assignment.

Q: **Do I need to speak another language to get into the Peace Corps?**

A: The Peace Corps has great language training, and teaches more than 180 languages and dialects. During your pre-service training, you will receive intensive language instruction to prepare you for living and working in your overseas community. While some countries where Volunteers serve prefer people who have studied French or Spanish, it is not always a requirement.

Q: **Will I be the only Peace Corps Volunteer in my community? Will I be in an isolated spot? Can I have a roommate?**

A: Every Volunteer's experience is unique. Some Volunteers are placed in rural communities, hours or even days away from the nearest Peace Corps Volunteer. Others live in bustling towns or large cities, where the nearest Volunteer lives down the street or even in the same apartment building. Serving in the Peace Corps requires flexibility and independence. So be prepared to live alone, with another Volunteer, or with a host family.

Q: **How much will I get paid in the Peace Corps? What do I have to pay for as a Volunteer?**

A: As a Peace Corps Volunteer, you will receive a stipend to cover your basic necessities – food, housing expenses, and local transportation. While the amount of the stipend varies from country to country, you will receive an amount that allows you to live at the same level as the people you serve in your community. The Peace Corps pays for your transportation to and from your country of service (with the exception of vacation travel) and provides you with complete medical and dental care. At the conclusion of your service as a Volunteer, you will receive a "readjustment allowance" of $6,075.
Q: Do I get vacation time while I'm overseas? Can I come home for a visit? Can my family or friends visit me?

A: The Peace Corps provides two vacation days for every month of service. You may wish to travel home for a visit, or your family and friends can make the trip to see you in your overseas community. Visiting a Peace Corps Volunteer is one of the most exciting ways to see and learn about another country's people, cultures, and traditions. The cost of your vacation travel, home or elsewhere, is your responsibility.

Q: Will I have trouble overseas if I am a vegetarian?

A: Many vegetarians have served successfully as Peace Corps Volunteers. However, many of them have faced situations overseas where they have been served meat or dairy products, or where locally available foods did not allow them to maintain a healthy vegetarian diet. If you are a vegetarian, your recruiter will want to discuss similar experiences you may have had here at home, and ask how you would feel and react if confronted with these challenges as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

Q: Can I bring my pet(s)?

A: No, you may not bring your pet(s) when you go off to live overseas as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

Q: Can married couples join the Peace Corps? Can I serve with my boyfriend or girlfriend?

A: Peace Corps service can be a rewarding, enriching experience for married couples. Today, about 10 percent of Peace Corps Volunteers are married. In all cases, both spouses must serve as Volunteers and live and work in the same community. The Peace Corps is unable to place couples with dependent children and cannot guarantee placement in the same country of couples or friends who are not legally married. Applicants can begin the Peace Corps application process while engaged, but must be married before departing for their overseas assignment.

Q: Does the Peace Corps accept senior citizens?

A: You're never too old to serve in the Peace Corps. Volunteers must be at least 18, but there is no upper age limit. The oldest Peace Corps Volunteer ever was 86 when he completed his service. The Peace Corps and the countries where Volunteers serve often welcome and value the wealth of experience that older Americans bring to their overseas assignments.
Q: *I'm not a U.S. citizen. Can I join the Peace Corps?*

A: We appreciate the interest of our friends around the world, but the answer is no. Only U.S. citizens may join the Peace Corps.

Q: *What does the Peace Corps do to protect the health and safety of its Volunteers?*

A: The safety and health of every Volunteer is the Peace Corps' highest priority. The Peace Corps has developed an extensive training and support program to ensure the wellbeing of its Volunteers. First, Volunteers serve in countries that have formally requested Peace Corps assistance. The Peace Corps conducts an extensive assessment of the security circumstances in every country under consideration before an official program is established. Second, the Peace Corps does everything possible to ensure that Volunteers are assigned to areas where their safety needs can be reasonably met. Every Volunteer is trained regularly on safety and health issues relevant to the area in which he or she serves. And the Peace Corps expects Volunteers to enhance their personal health and safety by exercising mature, appropriate behavior and sound judgment in the countries where they serve.