

AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH VISTA PROGRAM

SEC. 602. (a) The Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (hereinafter in this title referred to as the "Secretary") is authorized to recruit, select, train and—

(1) upon request of State or local agencies or private nonprofit organizations, refer volunteers to perform duties in furtherance of programs combating poverty at a State or local level; and

(2) in cooperation with other Federal, State, or local agencies involved, assign volunteers to work (A) in meeting the health, education, welfare, or related needs of Indians living on reservations, of migratory workers and their families, or of residents of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, or the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands; (B) in the care and rehabilitation of the mentally ill or mentally retarded under treatment at nonprofit mental health or mental retardation facilities assisted in their construction or operation by Federal funds; and (C) in connection with programs or activities authorized, supported, or of a character eligible for assistance under this Act.

(b) The referral or assignment of volunteers under this section shall be on such terms and conditions (including restrictions on political activities that appropriately recognize the special status of volunteers living among the persons or groups served by programs to which they have been assigned) as the Secretary may determine; but volunteers shall not be so referred or assigned to duties or work in any State, or shall programs under section 605 be conducted in any State without the consent of the Governor.

SEC. 603. The Secretary is authorized to provide to all volunteers during training pursuant to section 602(a)(2) such stipend, not to exceed \$50 per month (or, in the case of volunteer leaders designated in accordance with standards prescribed by the Secretary not to exceed \$75 per month) such living, travel, and leave allowances, and such housing, transportation (includes travel to and from place of training), supplies, equipment, subsistence, clothing, and health and dental care as the Secretary may deem necessary or appropriate for their needs.

APPLICATION OF PROVISIONS OF FEDERAL LAW

SEC. 604. (a) Each volunteer under section 602 shall take and subscribe to an oath or affirmation in the form prescribed by section 121(d) of this Act, and the provisions of section 1001 of title 18, United States Code, shall be applicable with respect to such oath or affirmation; but except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, such volunteers shall not be deemed to be Federal employees and shall not be subject to the provisions of laws relating to Federal employment, including those relating to hours of work, rates of compensation, and Federal employee benefits.

(b) All volunteers during training pursuant to section 602(a) and such volunteers as are assigned pursuant to section 602(a)(2) shall be deemed Federal employees to the same extent as trainees in Residential Skill Centers under section 215 of this Act, except for purposes of the computation described in paragraph (2)(B) of section 215 the monthly pay of a volunteer shall be deemed to be that received under the entrance salary for GS-7 of the General Schedule of section 5332, title 5, United States Code.

(c) For the purposes of subchapter III, chapter 73 of title V of the United States Code, a volunteer under this title shall be deemed to be a person employed in the executive branch of the Federal Government.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

SEC. 605. (a) The Secretary is authorized to conduct, or to make grants, contracts, or other arrangements with appropriate public or private nonprofit organizations for the conduct of special programs in furtherance of the purposes of this title. Such programs shall be designed to encourage more effective or better coordinated use of volunteer services, including services of low-income persons, or to make opportunities for volunteer experience available, under proper supervision and for appropriate periods, to qualified persons who are unable to make long-term commitments or who are engaged in or preparing to enter work where such experience may be of special value and in the public interest. Individuals who serve or receive training in such programs shall not, by virtue of such service or training, be deemed to be Federal employees and shall not be