

2022 -- S 2752

LC004894

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND CLIMATE  
CORPS

Introduced By: Senators Mendes, and Calkin

Date Introduced: March 24, 2022

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 42 of the General Laws entitled "STATE AFFAIRS AND  
2 GOVERNMENT" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 162

4 RHODE ISLAND CLIMATE CORPS

5 **42-162-1. Purpose.**

6 The purpose of this act is to create the Rhode Island climate corps to implement a work  
7 program that would provide employment doing climate resilience and adaptation work.

8 **42-162-2. Rhode Island climate corps created.**

9 (a) There is hereby created an organization, the name of which is the Rhode Island climate  
10 corps, which is to be developed and administered by ServeRI.

11 (b) The purposes of the Rhode Island climate corps are to:

12 (1) Increase the opportunities for Rhode Islanders to devote up to a year of service to Rhode  
13 Island communities; mobilize the service sector as an innovative solution to clear and pressing  
14 environmental problems that negatively impact Rhode Island communities; and

15 (2) Provide rural and underserved communities in Rhode Island with volunteer resources  
16 to help address critical health, human, public safety, educational, and environmental needs; and

17 (3) Strengthen civic engagement of participants and in communities through volunteer  
18 service.

1           **42-162-3. Definitions.**

2           Definitions. As used in this chapter:

3           (1) "Corps member" means an individual who is at least eighteen (18) years of age and  
4 who has committed to not more than twelve (12) months of full-time, part-time, or flex-time service  
5 in the Rhode Island climate corps.

6           (2) "Program host" means a state entity, municipality, or nonprofit organization located or  
7 with a physical presence in Rhode Island that has committed to hosting corps members through the  
8 Rhode Island climate corps.

9           (3) "ServeRI" means the Rhode Island commission for national and community service, as  
10 required under section 201 of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 and  
11 authorized by the Rhode Island general assembly, pursuant to section 1 of chapter 395 of the 2017  
12 public laws, entitled, "The Rhode Island Commission for National Community Service."

13           **42-162-4. Program host eligibility and duties.**

14           (a) The following conditions shall apply to the Rhode Island climate corps:

15           (1) ServeRI may provide funding to eligible program hosts that have experience  
16 administering national service grants and engaging Rhode Islanders in formal service programs in  
17 order to enable those hosts to support corps members and undertake eligible projects.

18           (2) Program hosts that receive funding from ServeRI through the Rhode Island climate  
19 corps shall use the funding received to meet costs incurred by hosting and supporting corps  
20 members in their service who are participating in eligible projects.

21           (3) Corps members shall be the responsibility of their program hosts and shall not be  
22 employees, or considered to be employees, of the State of Rhode Island for any purpose throughout  
23 the duration of their service.

24           (4) ServeRI and program hosts shall, to the extent practicable, ensure that corps members  
25 are placed in projects that match their interests, geographic constraints, skills, and abilities.

26           (5) Program hosts shall seek to enroll as corps members individuals who reflect the  
27 diversity of gender, racial, ethnic, sexual, social, and disability status of Rhode Islanders.

28           (6) Project eligibility shall be determined by ServeRI and may include weatherization,  
29 environmental restoration, and other climate-related projects. Innovative strategies and  
30 partnerships are encouraged.

31           (b) In administering the Rhode Island climate corps, ServeRI shall coordinate with  
32 appropriate organizations in the served communities, shall explore service-based solutions that  
33 build community capacity to combat climate change, and may engage with existing national service  
34 programs.

1           **42-162-5. Report.**

2           On or before April 1 annually, ServeRI shall report to the general assembly on the Rhode  
3 Island climate corps.

4           **42-162-6. Appropriation.**

5           The sum of five million dollars (\$5,000,000) is appropriated from the general fund to  
6 ServeRI in fiscal year 2023 for the purpose of administering the Rhode Island climate corps.

7           **42-162-7. Climate corps membership goals.**

8           Within one hundred eighty (180) days following the passage of this act, ServeRI shall seek  
9 to establish in 2024 the first class of corps members.

10           SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND CLIMATE  
CORPS

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1           This act would create the Rhode Island climate corps to implement a work program that  
2 would provide employment doing climate resilience and adaptation work. The climate corps would  
3 be developed and administered by ServeRI.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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