

# SERVING AND LEARNING TOGETHER (SALT)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Serving and Learning Together (SALT) program provides an 11-month service opportunity to citizens of the United States and Canada, ages 18 to 30, and single with no dependents, to live and serve in another country.

SALT service workers meet MCC faith/church/peace and personal conduct qualifications, are deemed eligible for service by MCC Human Resources, and sign a Record of Agreement.

## 2. POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

SALT applicants will fill out a regular MCC application and furnish references. Placement is done by the SALT Coordinator in conjunction with MCC Reps and local partners. All invitations to a SALT assignment are subject to a successful completion of a criminal background check, along with signing an offer letter, record of agreement, and code of conduct.

SALT service workers' terms begin with orientation and end with a re-entry retreat approximately 11 months later. Participation in both orientation and the re-entry retreat are mandatory. In the event of a termination or resignation, the individual is not eligible to attend the re-entry retreat.

2.1 Participation and preparation costs: SALT service workers will contribute a minimum financial contribution toward the cost of the SALT program. The contribution minimum is reviewed annually and is posted on the SALT Web page ([mcc.org/salt](http://mcc.org/salt)) around September. If a SALT service worker is unable to fundraise the full contribution amount, the individual must contact the SALT Coordinator before orientation who will work directly with them to determine a way forward to ensure they are able to participate.

SALT service workers will also pay for all preparation costs, including applying for a passport; required pre-service medical examination and vaccinations; optional dental and vision exams; clothing and personal items. MCC will reimburse out-of-pocket visa costs in excess of \$200 U.S. for SALT service workers.

2.2 Travel to and from assignment: MCC will arrange for travel and cover travel costs to

the SALT orientation, to the SALT assignment, to the re-entry retreat, and back to a permanent residence in Canada or the U.S. (airport, bus, or train station nearest their home) from the re-entry retreat. Travel arrangements will not include layovers for the purpose of vacation. SALT service workers' travel to their assignment is scheduled immediately following orientation. After travel arrangements have been made, SALT service workers are financially responsible for any changes that they request.

2.3 Waiting for Visas: MCC encourages individuals not to stop their employment, or education, or give up their housing arrangements until necessary visas are obtained. SALT service workers must attend orientation, even if the required visas for an assignment are not yet obtained. The MCC monthly allowance and any eligible loan assistance will be given during the time between orientation and the time the visa is obtained or denied.

If the necessary documents are not secured and if the individual is not reassigned within two months after orientation, the individual will be withdrawn from the program for that year and receive 30 days of support. An application may be submitted for the following year.

2.4 Visitors on Assignment: Having visitors on assignment is subject to approval by the appropriate MCC representative. SALT service workers must submit requests in advance of making any plans to receive visitors on assignments.

2.5 Food, housing, etc.: MCC will provide SALT service workers with the essentials for healthy living during their terms, in accordance with the subheading "Food, housing, furnishings, transportation" in Policy #7512. Arrangements vary by location.

2.6 Monthly allowance: MCC will provide a monthly allowance (Current amount listed in policy #7170) to SALT service workers to cover personal expenses. The monthly allowance is increased annually based on the U.S. cost of living adjustment (COLA) for salaried workers.

2.7 Language study: MCC will provide up to six weeks, depending on necessity of program, of language learning to SALT service workers; the actual time of formal language training varies from country to country. The cost of further language classes, if desired, is the responsibility of the service worker.

2.8 Shipment of personal items: All SALT service workers are entitled to the free baggage allowance as indicated by their airline. If there is no free baggage allowance, MCC will pay for one 50 lb. (22.73 kilos) bag for international and domestic flights to/from their assignment. Additional pieces of luggage are the responsibility of the service worker at their personal expense.

2.9 Leaves of Absence:

**Vacation:** SALT service workers will receive 10 days of vacation for rest and to learn more about the context they are serving in. Vacation costs are the responsibility of the SALT service worker. Vacation travel is limited to the country of assignment and/or an adjoining (or nearest, if not adjoining) country where MCC has programming. Some MCC country programs may have additional guidance and/or restrictions that SALT service workers must abide by. Permission for scheduling vacation is granted by the institution with which the SALT service worker is working and both their MCC supervisor and the MCC Representative of the proposed country of travel. SALT service workers must submit a vacation travel itinerary and contact information to their MCC supervisor, who will share it with the MCC Representative(s) of the proposed country of travel for final approval. SALT service workers must abide by the security guidelines and other policies in place by the MCC country program that they travel to.

Using the allotted vacation time to attend the wedding of a parent or sibling of the SALT service worker may be considered in consultation with the MCC Rep and SALT Coordinator. Travel costs are the responsibility of the SALT service worker. Consult the Program Coordinator and/or Human Resources for other familial relationships that may be considered.

**Personal:** Travel home for personal or family reasons such as anniversary celebration, birthdays, etc., during the term is not permitted in the SALT program.

2.10 Country retreats: SALT service workers will attend MCC country and/or area retreats in order to gain a deeper understanding of the service location.

2.11 Medical coverage: MCC will provide medical, dental and vision coverage to SALT service workers similar to that provided to International Program Service Workers under Policy #7512. MCC will cover the cost of post-service medical examinations performed to the same extent as the SALT service worker's pre-service medical examinations. See also the summary plan description (SPD) for the medical plan and Dental/Vision Plan policy #7569. At the end of assignment, temporary medical coverage (TMC) is available for purchase for up to 3 months.

2.12 Romantic Relationships: MCC does not recommend starting romantic relationships or dating someone during your MCC assignment. Marrying while in service is grounds for termination. A willful breach of any aspect of the Code of Conduct could be grounds for termination.

Incident reporting of sexual violence is handled in a sensitive and confidential manner in accordance to policy #7133.

2.13 Student loans: MCC will provide educational loan assistance to SALT service workers in accordance with Policy #7514. MCC assistance will continue for three months beyond the end of term of service when the full term has been completed. This will be paid in a lump sum payment. SALT service workers that continue into a service

worker assignment will continue receiving MCC educational loan assistance while in service but will not be eligible for an additional 3 months at the end of assignment.

2.14 Continuing in MCC service: The SALT program does not offer term extensions within the SALT program. However, a SALT service worker invited by an MCC Representative to continue in service with MCC is encouraged to do so, preferably for a full, three-year term. Such invitations should generally be given around the time of the SALT Mid-Year Reflection Report (February). Human Resources, SALT and IPD program staff should be notified about this consideration as soon as possible. A SALT service worker who accepts an invitation to continue MCC service, will sign a new Record of Agreement.

When a SALT service worker continues his/her term in the same assignment, it is expected that country program will create another assignment for a new SALT or YAMEN service worker the following year.

For a new MCC assignment of longer than one year, the SALT service worker will return to North America to take part in the SALT re-entry retreat to bring closure to the SALT experience, and will then return to their home community to make necessary preparations for a longer absence. The former SALT service worker will participate in a regular orientation if their new assignment is in a different country than the SALT assignment. If the former SALT service worker is returning to the same location as where they served as a SALT service worker, then MCC may offer orientation resource materials instead of attendance at a regular orientation. The time period between the SALT and the new assignment will generally not exceed one month, during which time the former SALT service worker will remain under MCC medical coverage and will receive the service worker monthly allowance under Policy #7512 and student loans payments under Policy #7514, if any. If the break between assignments exceeds one month, all MCC support will stop the last day of the SALT assignment, and resume the first day of the new assignment. The former SALT service worker will be eligible to purchase Temporary Medical Coverage for up to three months during the break in service.

If the new term of the former SALT service worker is for one year, then the former SALT service worker will stay on location and return home at the end of the new assignment. The person will follow the end-of-term guidelines for returning service workers and will be invited to attend a re-entry retreat for longer-term service workers.

The following policies applicable to International Program Service Workers are applicable to SALT service workers:

Workplace Harassment and Violence – policy #7133  
Workplace Accommodations – policy #7135

Personal Conduct – policy #7150  
Security Policy - #7162  
Conflict of Interest – policy #7402  
Conflict Prevention and Resolution – policy #7409  
Grievance – policy #7411  
Termination – Service Workers – policy #7422  
Support plan for International Service Workers – policy #7512 (sections concerning food, housing, etc., monthly allowance, medical care, and workers' compensation)  
Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) and Counseling – policy #7701  
Death or Serious Illness of a Family Member – policy #7805  
Technology Acceptable Use – policy #7906.