

Key Considerations in Conducting Peace Corps Post Closures

March 2026



About Our Review

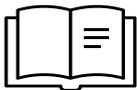
Periodically, the Peace Corps has to make the difficult decision to close a post. Reasons for post closures include, but are not limited to, potential risks to Volunteer safety and security or medical care, as well as changes in host country needs and America’s strategic interests. Post closure, while a normal part of the Peace Corps operational cycle, requires specific planning and execution. Although the agency has experience conducting post closures, staff knowledge on the subject has previously been dispersed across various offices and geographic locations. We developed this report as a tool to centralize staff knowledge and help guide the agency in current and future post closures. With ongoing closure activities in South Africa, we hope this report serves to increase agency efficiencies and effectiveness associated with post closures, while also helping to mitigate potential risks.¹

The insights, lessons learned, and best practices captured in this report came directly from interviews with 29 Peace Corps staff who have extensive experience with post closures. From their advice, we identified three main areas of focus where the agency should ensure it identifies and mitigates potential post closure risks. This report is organized by those three main areas, which include:

**Sustaining Mission
Success**

**Protecting
Institutional
Reputation**

**Ensuring Operational
Integrity and
Efficiency**



How to Use this Report

In speaking with Peace Corps staff, our interviews yielded considerations for leaders that we organized into two categories:

Peace Corps/Washington and Post Considerations: Some of the advice we garnered from interviews is applicable to both Peace Corps/Washington and post leadership. These insights are captured on pages with **dark blue tables**.

Post-Specific Considerations: Other advice that we gathered from interviews is specific to the needs of overseas posts and their leadership. These insights are captured on pages with **light blue tables**.

Each of the 3 main report areas highlighted above conclude with a page dedicated to best practices and specific examples from prior post closures that may offer useful methods for staff to employ in navigating post closures.

Finally, this report closes with a section that captures the agency’s applicable policies, procedures, and guidance associated with post closures. We shared this compilation with Peace Corps/Washington leaders, who have centralized these resources on the Peace Corps’ intranet to provide staff with easier and quicker access to this information when needed.

¹ In fiscal year 2026, the agency announced its plans to close its post in South Africa by 2027.

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Overview: Post Closure Activities and Timeframes

Given the complexity of the Peace Corps' operations overseas, closing a post involves extensive actions and critical responsibilities, such as ensuring the safety, security, and well-being of its Volunteers; providing support to staff who are offboarding; and maintaining an accurate catalog of property and assets. Additionally, the post closure process must follow congressional notification and consultation procedures.²

The agency staff we interviewed said that post closures should be considered in two phases when possible: Phase 1—departure of Volunteers from post, and Phase 2—close-out administrative activities following Volunteer departures from the post.

Phase 1

A post may not have Volunteers in service if its operations have been suspended ahead of closure. However, staff we spoke with emphasized that a closure becomes more complex during Phase 1 when a post has Volunteers in service. In such cases, many Volunteer-related priorities need to be addressed, including how the agency will handle continuation or completion of Volunteer service and how it will ensure Volunteer safety, security, and well-being through the duration of a post closure. Other factors that may impact the post closure timeline include the parameters of local contracts and leases, as well as whether the post is closing for emergency reasons, such as regional security issues. Staff said that the post Country Director (CD) will have the most amount of involvement in Phase 1 of a post closure, and that CDs are often transferred to other posts to maximize agency resources once Volunteers have departed. Staff also emphasized that from the time Volunteers depart the post, a reasonable timeframe for completing a post closure is about 6 to 12 months.

Phase 2

Close-out activities can be extensive and include, but are not limited to, financial obligations and disposition of property (furniture, equipment, etc.), records retention and disposition, transfer and disposal of medical supplies, termination/end of contracts, including personal services contracts, leases, and supplies/services contracts, and the termination of staff. According to the staff we interviewed, Phase 2 responsibilities are largely handled by the Director of Management and Operations (DMO) and General Services Manager (GSM), while other staff assist as necessary.

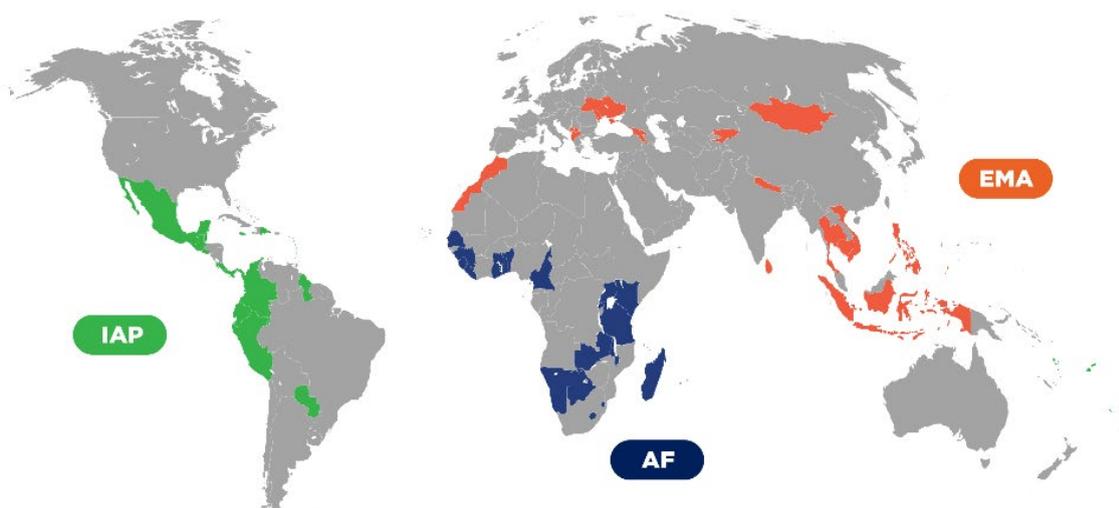
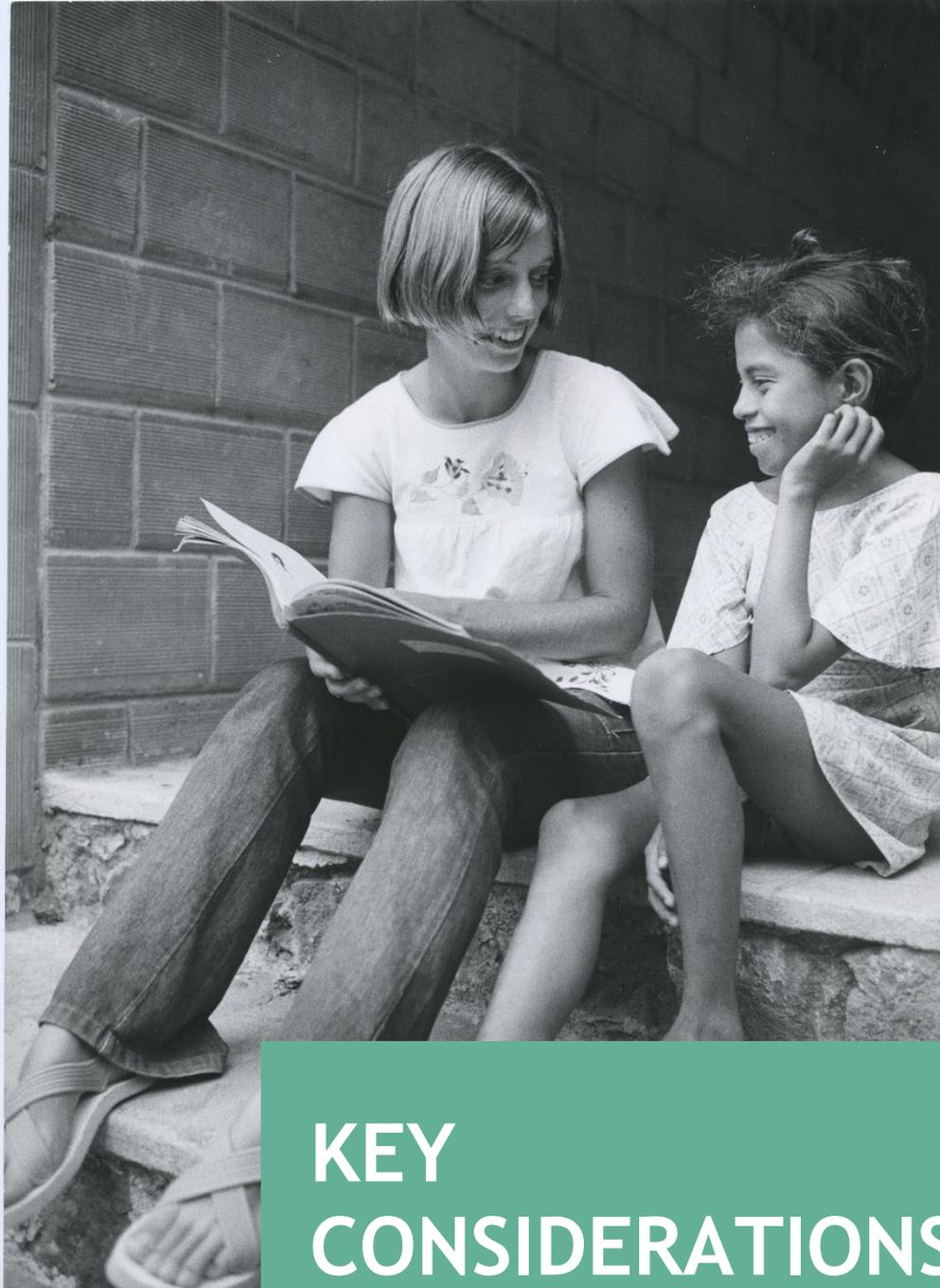


Figure 1. Agency Map of Countries with Peace Corps Posts as of February 2026

Source: Peace Corps map of its operations in the Inter-America and Pacific (IAP) region, Africa (AF) region, and Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia (EMA) region.

² Congress has consistently included an appropriations rider requiring the Peace Corps to notify and consult with the appropriations committees prior to any decision to open, close, suspend or reopen a post “unless there is a substantial risk to volunteers or other Peace Corps personnel”. See Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026 (pp. 355 and 376) (Public Law No. 119-75).



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Actionable Insights: Post Closure Key Considerations

Sustaining Mission Success

Proper Planning and Communication and Resource Allocation

The Peace Corps has three main goals: (1) to help interested countries in meeting their need for trained people; (2) to help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served; and (3) to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans. Although one post may be in the process of closing, many others continue to operate, and the Peace Corps' ongoing mission must remain supported.

To avoid any negative impacts to the Peace Corps' mission and its ability to meet its goals, agency and post leadership must consider a variety of factors, including: how to transfer and continue Volunteer service for those interested; how to retain and keep staff motivated to carry out key functions for closing posts; and how to ensure key stakeholders are fully and currently informed by using proper messaging and communication among all parties involved.

Protecting Institutional Reputation

Prioritizing Personnel Management

The Peace Corps' ability to sustain its mission depends largely on its institutional reputation. There have been instances in which the Peace Corps has closed a post and—years later—decided to return and reopen a post in the same host country. The way in which posts are closed can impact host countries' willingness to re-engage with the Peace Corps in the future. Post closures can also impact future country partners' perceptions of the agency's commitment to its relationships and agreements. Post closures can be perceived differently by currently serving and aspiring Volunteers, and transparent, compassionate communication can help mitigate negative perceptions. Throughout a post closure, the agency must recognize important partnerships among the posts, host countries, and local communities, while also honoring the legacy of service the post's Volunteers and staff have provided. As one staff member told us when comparing post openings to post closures, "how you end is just as important as how you begin."

Ensuring Operational Integrity and Efficiency

Facilitating Coordination and Post Specific Planning

Given the competing demands that agency and post leadership must manage during a post closure, it is important to closely monitor post operations. Significant agency funds and resources are associated with the post's property and inventory. To mitigate the potential for fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement, it is essential that the post properly monitors its assets throughout a post closure. In addition, one of the agency's most important resources is its dedicated staff. The way in which staff are offboarded and the support they receive honors the service and talent they provided to the Peace Corps throughout their employment with the agency.

Planning and Communication

Sustaining Mission Success

While the Peace Corps has evolved as an agency through the years, its mission and important role with global partners have remained consistent. As noted in the agency's FY 2026 Congressional Budget Justification "the Peace Corps helps create better trading partners, strengthens relationships with allies, inhibits extremism, and counteracts the growing influence of America's adversaries [...] Volunteers strengthen U.S. national security through improved relations with host governments and by showcasing America as an international leader." Therefore, it is in the United States' best interest that potential risks to the agency's mission and institutional reputation are considered before a post closure is formally announced.

Sometimes, there are internal or external pressures to close a post within a short timeframe. This limits the post's time to develop a good communication plan before the formal closure announcement is made. Staff we spoke with noted that when there is a lack of understanding about what information needs to be shared and when, it can create confusion among Volunteers, staff, and other stakeholders. In turn, this can impact staff morale and risk the agency's relationships with key stakeholders, including host country governments, Ambassadors, host country partners, and community members. Further, if not communicated properly, post closures can discourage prospective Volunteers from applying to the Peace Corps and impact the agency's ability to open new posts in the future.

*The next 3 pages contain insights from staff we interviewed on how potential risks to sustaining the agency's mission success can be mitigated through thoughtful **planning and communication**.*



"How you end is just as important as how you begin."

- Peace Corps Staff



Planning and Communication

Sustaining Mission Success: Peace Corps/Washington and Post Considerations

Consider:

1. Create a detailed communications timeline for events before and after the congressional notification of a post closure. Ensure stakeholders, including the CD, DMO and key Peace Corps/Washington offices, are involved.
2. Collaborate with the Office of External Affairs and regions to develop talking points for all stakeholder groups, to include having senior staff communicate with the post and host country government officials, such as the U.S. Ambassador.
3. Have Peace Corps/Washington senior leaders travel to the post and conduct in-person meetings with Volunteers, staff, and other stakeholders, when possible.
4. Review existing post closure communications resources on the Peace Corps' virtual workspace.
5. Be resolute when communicating decisions to stakeholders and have transparent and honest conversations with stakeholders. Tell them what you do know and tell them what you don't know.
6. Conduct outreach to current Volunteers and applicants to let them know the Peace Corps will continue its mission in other posts.
7. Understand the post's cultural norms and location-specific issues, such as local religious holidays.

Why This Matters:

A detailed timeline will ensure information is promptly communicated with important stakeholders, including the host country's diplomats. *"They don't want to hear about the post closure in the news."*

Unified, consistent messaging helps eliminate confusion when addressing questions from key stakeholders and ensures the agency is speaking with one voice on important matters.

Having senior leadership from Peace Corps/Washington visit the post to respond to questions and hear concerns emphasizes that the agency cares about the closure's impact on all stakeholders.

Many resources exist from prior closures and can eliminate the need to "reinvent the wheel."

In a time of uncertainty, stakeholders will appreciate decisiveness and a course of action that remains consistent. People fill a communication void with their own stories and perceptions. Even when there are no updates, communicate that to the stakeholders.

Volunteers and applicants can misinterpret a post closure and may assume it means all of Peace Corps will be impacted.

Post may be closed for holidays, which may limit the availability of staff and impact important close-out activities.



Planning and Communication

Sustaining Mission Success: Post-Specific Considerations

Consider

Why This Matters

1. Collaborate with Peace Corps/Washington and the region to develop talking points for all stakeholder groups. Specific talking points should be developed for the CD to use in speaking about post closure with staff, serving Volunteers, and prospective Volunteers, and for Volunteers to use in speaking about post closure with local community partners.

Post staff and Volunteers will be pressured by stakeholders to provide more information about the post's closure. Consistent talking points ensure that everyone receives the same message and can help mitigate the dissemination of misinformation.

2. Communicate in both English and the local language.

For post local staff, English may not be their first language. Staff may better understand critical information when shared in the local language.

3. Know the local environment, specifically if other U.S. agencies are also closing or downsizing operations in the country or region where a Peace Corps post is closing. Ensure that local staff understand the Peace Corps' closing procedures and that compensation packages for Peace Corps staff may be different than those provided by other U.S. agencies.

Local staff may have friends and family working for other U.S. agencies and will compare what they received in their compensation packages with each other.

4. Demonstrate empathy and compassion for what stakeholders are experiencing.

Staff morale will be low following a post closure announcement. It is important to ensure local staff feel valued and appreciated for their years of service.

Planning and Communication

Sustaining Mission Success: Best Practices and Examples

A Country Director with experience in communicating with Volunteers during an announced post closure suggested the following **best practices**:

- ❖ Be transparent and continually share updates, even if there is no new news.
- ❖ Continue to communicate with Volunteers that the post is on top of things to the best of their abilities and resources.
- ❖ Remind Volunteers to “tune out” background noise as much as possible and avoid speculation.

“Post closure is a big decision; it shouldn’t just be communicated in a memo that’s sent to post.”

- Peace Corps Staff



Examples of How Post Leadership Managed Communication with Stakeholders

- Following the closure announcement, post leadership held staff meetings more frequently to keep communication lines open. As the process continued, they transitioned to biweekly all-staff meetings to ensure everyone felt informed and confident that they were receiving all the available information updates. The focus was on good communication and setting expectations regarding roles and responsibilities.
- Post leadership kept local stakeholders, such as the ministry leaders, community partners and others, informed on next steps for the closure process to ensure the host community was aware of the coming changes and received accurate information from an official source.

Resource Allocation

Sustaining Mission Success

To sustain the Peace Corps' mission and ability to meet its goals, agency and post leadership should consider factors that can impact both Volunteer recruitment and continuity of service, as well as retaining the local staff needed to carry out essential functions at the closing posts.

Staff we spoke with noted that when post closures are announced, prospective Volunteers may get discouraged from applying to the Peace Corps. Additionally, following a post closure, current Volunteers may decide to end their service rather than transfer to another post, which may require them to learn a new language and culture. Some Volunteers may be discouraged if they are required to discontinue their service or are not offered a timely transfer opportunity to another post.

Additionally, locally employed staff (LES) may react to the news of a post closure and decide to leave their employment, increasing the risk of losing the skilled staff needed to complete closure activities. Most LES positions require specialized skills, and some staff are difficult to replace, such as Peace Corps Medical Officers.

Post closure activities follow a phased timeline, where staffing requirements are based on close-out priorities and positions are terminated as each operational area shuts down. Staff we spoke with expressed concerns that losing LES prematurely, combined with reduced staffing levels at Peace Corps/Washington, can negatively impact the agency's ability to handle critical functions during the post closure process. While it is essential to retain key staff to carry out the necessary functions for closing posts, it is equally important not to extend their service beyond the completion of that work in order to remain good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

*The next 3 pages contain insights from staff we interviewed on how potential risks to sustaining the agency's mission success can be mitigated through thoughtful **resource allocation**.*

“When people hear about closure, they're going to have some expectations. They're going to have questions...the process has to be managed with clarity, because lack of clarity leads to insecurity.”

- Peace Corps Staff





Resource Allocation

Sustaining Mission Success: Peace Corps/Washington and Post Considerations

Consider

1. Get an early start with determining the personnel support needed, including experts and temporary duty (TDY) staff from Peace Corps/Washington, to handle critical functions such as records management; inventory management; and IT requirements.
2. Delegate duties to Peace Corps United States Direct Hires (USDH) and experts from Peace Corps/Washington who have post closure experience. Certain areas may be difficult for USDH staff to navigate without prior closing experience or close working relationships with post staff.
3. Consider retaining LES for closure activities and providing transfer opportunities for strong local staff at nearby posts.

Why this Matters

Experts and TDY staff may travel to the post to support closing activities that require specialized expertise or access. Proper lead time can help ensure that necessary subject matter experts are available to the post when they are needed.

Experts can be more efficient in navigating complex post closure activities and personnel issues. They have good knowledge of agency systems and processes as well as prior experience handling personnel issues.

It may be more effective and efficient to retain LES who are trained and have experience to serve in nearby posts when appropriate rather than recruiting new staff. Local staff are highly skilled in their specialized areas, and they can be difficult to recruit in some Peace Corps countries. Unique skill sets and talents should be retained when possible.



Resource Allocation

Sustaining Mission Success: Post-Specific Considerations

Consider

1. Collaborate with Peace Corps/Washington to determine opportunities for Volunteers who want to continue their service and determine which Volunteers are eligible to close-out service early.
2. Coordinate with the region to develop a staffing plan that identifies essential staff based on closing priorities. Certain staff will not be needed at a post once Volunteers depart in Phase 1 of a post closure, such as the medical and programming staff who handle Volunteer health and safety.
3. Consider whether essential staff whose services may be required for longer periods of time should remain onboard for at least 3 to 6 months following official post closure.

Why this Matters

Volunteers will want time to make decisions about the future of their service. Historically, many have preferred to close-out their service at the post. Encouraging Volunteers to remain in service or return in the future is important in helping the agency achieve its Volunteer goals.

A post-specific staffing plan will ensure timely identification and proper allocation of resources based on close-out priorities, including the expert personnel needed to manage critical functions. It will also help reduce staff burnout.

Often, there will continue to be issues related to post operations, Volunteers, or staff after the post officially closes. Such issues may include complications with leases and other financial obligations, open court cases concerning crime victims, and other matters that require coordination with the U.S. Embassy.

Resource Allocation

Sustaining Mission Success: Best Practices and Examples

The following **best practices** have helped post staff mitigate resource allocation issues during post closures:

- ❖ Experts were sent to help with some post closures because they made the process more efficient and orderly.
- ❖ When agency expert resources were unavailable, the posts faced a greater need to retain LES who could effectively complete the job. Retention bonuses were offered to LES who were needed for closure activities. Bonuses motivated key staff to stay longer as opposed to immediately moving on to another job.



“You can get people to close a post [...] but no one’s going to go enthusiastically.”

- Peace Corps Staff

Scenarios Encountered at Previously Closed Posts

- Post leadership took the lead in assessing staffing requirements, worked with the region to develop a phased timeline, and requested additional resources from the agency, as needed, to reduce staff burnout and ensure staffing was based on priorities.
- The DMO, GSM, Deputy Director of Management and Operations (DDMO), financial specialist, cashier, IT support, and driver were identified as essential staff who should remain at the post throughout the closure of the post.

Personnel Management

Protecting Institutional Reputation

While post closures require a drawdown of agency personnel and resources, appropriate staffing levels must be maintained until the closure is finalized. Leaders are faced with the challenge of balancing post closure legal and administrative requirements while keeping staff and Volunteers motivated and maintaining the agency's reputation. As an organization that stands to promote world peace and friendship, it is essential that the Peace Corps' reputation is protected to ensure its Volunteers and staff are supported and remain in the best possible position to move forward, whether they stay with the Peace Corps or choose to seek other opportunities following a post closure.

According to the staff we spoke with, news of a post closure can create a climate of uncertainty for Volunteers and staff, who are worried about their future. For some Volunteers, a post closure may mean the end of their Peace Corps service. For staff, a post closure means they will lose their jobs.

While staff must be offboarded during a closure, prematurely losing experienced staff with unique skill sets can complicate the post's ability to handle critical post closure activities. Post leaders must ensure that the order of staff off-boarding does not compromise post operations and the safety and security of Volunteers.

If not planned well in advance of the formal post closure announcement, staff compensation packages can cause delays. Coordination between post and Peace Corps/Washington leadership is essential to appropriately navigate local labor laws. Transparent communication from agency leaders will help both Volunteers and staff understand next steps, including potential benefits they may receive.

*The next 3 pages contain insights from staff we interviewed on how potential risks to the agency's institutional reputation can be mitigated through thoughtful **personnel management**.*

“Know how to set them up for success and preserve the Peace Corps' reputation.”

- Peace Corps Staff





Personnel Management

Protecting Institutional Reputation: Peace Corps/Washington and Post Considerations

Consider

1. Research local labor laws, including applicable requirements, and consult with local attorneys on staff compensation plans before the formal post closure announcement is made.
2. Keep lines of communication open to address Volunteer and staff expectations.
3. Offer curated staff and Volunteer development training to facilitate a smooth transition from Peace Corps service or employment and future opportunities.
4. Develop guidance and materials that can assist with Volunteer and staff reactions, such as training materials or presentations. Consider addressing the mental and emotional impact on Volunteers and staff, potential FAQs, and transition advice.
5. Plan for meaningful ways to celebrate host country partners and the Peace Corps' legacy.

Why this Matters

Obtaining accurate legal interpretations and ensuring that the correct information is shared with staff regarding the calculation of local compensation packages will help to provide clarity and prevent legal issues.

A lack of awareness and transparency can lead to mistrust and frustration among staff and Volunteers, potentially jeopardizing their safety and security.

A curated list of training opportunities, such as resume writing, interview preparation, and other career readiness skills, can support future job placement and professional growth for both staff and Volunteers.

News of a post closure can be difficult for those affected, especially when it comes from sources other than Peace Corps leaders. Establishing a standard communication protocol can help minimize errors.

Acknowledging the successes of the Peace Corps post and host country partners is important in preserving relationships for future country collaboration.



Personnel Management

Protecting Institutional Reputation: Post-Specific Considerations

Consider

1. Be prepared to answer standard questions from Volunteers and staff.
2. Maintain relationships with staff along with local, ministry, and community partners.
3. To preserve the Peace Corps' legacy, develop an operational plan for archiving key documents. For example, compile a list of projects, documents, local partner contacts, and other specialized information unique to the post.

Why this Matters

Post leaders will receive many commonly asked questions following the formal announcement of a post closure. Formulating clear, consistent answers that can be immediately provided will help minimize Volunteer and staff frustrations and instill a greater trust throughout the remainder of the post closure process.

Relationships with local staff and partners are cultivated over long periods of time and built on trust. To maintain that trust, it is important to be supportive during times of uncertainty by responding to questions, listening to concerns, and assisting qualified staff in their transitions to new employment opportunities, such as through referrals or other forms of support.

Over the years, the Peace Corps has suspended, closed, and later reopened various overseas posts. Maintaining a comprehensive list of projects, documents, contact information, and other post-specific details creates a valuable foundation for reestablishing operations when returning to a post.

Personnel Management

Protecting Institutional Reputation: Best Practices and Examples

The following **best practices** have helped the Peace Corps care for the people involved in and impacted by post closure:

- ❖ Open expressions of appreciation for Volunteer and staff work and recognition of contributions.
- ❖ Proactive information sharing, including weekly staff meetings, by offering as much transparency as possible about post closure decisions and timeframes, and information on Peace Corps policy and procedures to help make informed decisions.
- ❖ Early educational sessions for post staff following a closure announcement to help them better understand the closeout process and associated activities.

“Keep a human face to everything you do.”

-Peace Corps Staff



How to Celebrate the Peace Corps' Legacy at a Closing Post

- Organize ceremonies with post staff and local stakeholders, including embassy staff. Allow participants to make speeches and share photos honoring the post's accomplishments and legacy of service. Volunteers and host families can be included in these events.
- Design a memory book with messages from the U.S. Ambassador, the CD, the Peace Corps Director, and the President of the United States thanking the country and the post for its service.
- Create a map with the names of all Volunteers and staff who served at post to place at the U.S. Embassy.

Coordination and Post-Specific Planning

Ensuring Operational Integrity and Efficiency

Post closures involve intricate administrative activities which, if not managed properly, can jeopardize the agency's operational integrity and efficiency. Records accountability, severance pay, and property management are just a few key areas that require keen management attention.

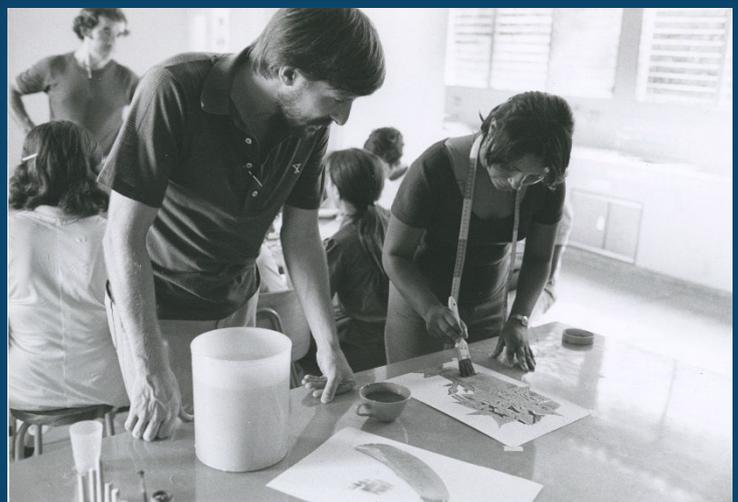
Staff we spoke with noted the importance of close, ongoing coordination among key Peace Corps/Washington offices and leaders, as well as post leaders, to address the unique challenges for each post closure. Planning and milestone dates are typically established by Peace Corps/Washington following a closure announcement, along with a checklist of required closeout actions. However, most operational efforts during a post closure are carried out by key offices and post leadership. Close coordination among these stakeholders can help ensure that established timelines are realistic for the closing post to achieve while balancing local intricacies, such as the legal requirements that govern staff compensation package formulation as well as the negotiation and closing of long-standing contracts, among other processes.

Significant agency resources and funding are dedicated to post operations, both before and during a post closure. Adequate oversight of records, assets, medical inventory, IT equipment, and vehicles is essential throughout a post closure to help prevent noncompliance, theft, waste, and loss.

*The next 3 pages contain insights from staff we interviewed on how potential risks to operational integrity and efficiency can be mitigated through thoughtful **coordination and post-specific planning**.*

“We need to be in the discussions [...] we're in the back; we're shoveling the coal. You know, we're keeping the train running.”

- Peace Corps Staff



Coordination and Post-Specific Planning

Ensuring Operational Integrity and Efficiency: Peace Corps/Washington and Post Considerations

Consider

Why this Matters

1. Involve the key offices (OGC, OCFO, OHR, OGO, OSS, OHS, OCIO, OCR, Communications, Management) and post leadership (CDs, DMOs, and HQ personnel) tasked with managing and overseeing critical post closure functions in the planning discussions with Peace Corps/Washington leadership.

The bulk of operations efforts will be completed by the post and key offices, requiring extensive coordination among the entities. Initiating early and direct discussions with those involved helps set expectations for staff roles and responsibilities, coordinating planning activities, and identifying potential risks.

2. Notify staff responsible for post closure activities of professional liability insurance options, as appropriate.

Staff responsible for closure activities can be exposed to risk of litigation by both internal and external stakeholders.

3. Identify a signature authority at Peace Corps/Washington to serve as a central point of contact who can sign local staff compensation plans and contracting actions.

A central signature authority at Peace Corps/Washington can improve the agency's oversight of the actions subject to local legal requirements and help reduce the risk of lawsuits being filed against staff members at post.

4. Anticipate the unexpected and consider the unique needs of the post, such as available cash flow for staff payouts, restrictive lease structuring; import/export costs for shipping goods to other posts, local lawyers' interpretations, and the physical destruction of IT equipment and medical inventory.

The country's legal environment and the unique needs of each post will dictate the requirements and timeline for closure activities. A clear understanding of post-specific needs is essential for providing a timely and appropriate response and avoiding negative implications.

5. Identify where limited staff may have expertise: records management specialists; inventory management specialists; and local compensation specialists.

Establishing backup roles to support critical functions is essential to avoid a single point of failure.

6. Collaborate with post leadership and relevant key offices to identify any underpaid or overpaid Volunteer allowances and grant funds.

Review Volunteer disbursements and grant documentation to make corrective payments or collect or issue bills of collections to Volunteers at end of service to comply with Federal regulations and Peace Corps policy.

7. Have Peace Corps/Washington support post leadership develop a termination plan for staff, leases, contracts, and other obligations.

Peace Corps/Washington involvement and support are critical in providing the expertise required to manage complex activities that may have legal or other implications for staff.

Coordination and Post-Specific Planning

Ensuring Operational Integrity and Efficiency: Post-Specific Considerations

Consider

Why this Matters

1. Develop an inventory plan for the proper disposition, transfer, or retention of property, medical inventory, and equipment.

Developing a plan for handling the post's inventory of assets based on age, condition, and closeout priorities can significantly reduce the amount of work needed once the closure process begins.

2. Complete a timely and proper review of post files to identify which records are for retention, disposition, and transfer to avert delays, a cumbersome volume of records to sort through, and the need for additional resources to clear all the post's files.

Reduced staffing numbers at Peace Corps/Washington can limit the availability of subject matter experts or staff with access to records, making it more difficult to complete the inventory of permanent records. Timely and effective records management can help prevent delays, reduce the volume of records, and minimize the need for additional resources. Proper records management ensures accountability and can help pave the way for a future Volunteer program in the country, should the Peace Corps choose to return.

3. Ensure that the agency's Property Management System is up to date to properly account for all post assets.

Timely completion of the required physical inventory and updates in agency's Property Management System (currently Maximo) will ensure that the post's assets are accurately accounted for and comply with regulations, while helping to avoid the need for additional resources during closure.

4. Coordinate with the region to determine the timeline for both Volunteer service closeout and Volunteer and staff transfers.

Obtaining accurate information about Volunteer and staff offboarding and transfers is important for proper logistics planning.

5. Examine the structure and underlying agreements in any property leases to properly identify the time it will take to vacate physical spaces and return them to the condition required by the landlord.

The timeline for closing a post can be affected by unforeseen circumstances such as restrictive lease structuring. For example, one post was required to fully restore its office building to its original condition, and construction scheduling extended the process by several months.

Coordination and Post-Specific Planning

Ensuring Operational Integrity and Efficiency: Best Practices and Examples

Staff with prior experience managing closures shared the following **best practices** that were found to be effective in navigating closing procedures:

- ❖ Ensure the property is timely and accurately accounted for in the Maximo system. Conduct physical inventory verifications, resolve discrepancies, and maintain an organized storage area so someone at the post, such as the inventory management specialist, can easily locate assets. Do not rely entirely on the information in Maximo.
- ❖ Ensure all staff involved in property management are fully trained in the Maximo asset management system and receive clear guidance on how the property should be recorded and managed.
- ❖ Obtain a legal opinion on local labor requirements—preferably before the formal post closure announcement is made—to get an early understanding of the laws applicable to financial and other obligations to help initiate the planning process for such obligations, including staff compensation packages.
- ❖ Create working or community groups with fellow staff in the field to share information and ideas.
- ❖ Conduct weekly or biweekly calls with the country desk officer.



“We did have a lot of excellent support from region, but everybody was scrambling, and it felt like we were reinventing the wheel.”

-Peace Corps Staff

Suggestions Based on Previous Post Closures

- Peace Corps vehicles are equipped with high-quality, mission-critical upgrades, making them costly and difficult to dispose of outside of diplomatic channels. To maximize regional asset use, posts can share inventory lists with neighboring offices to explore potential property transfers.
- To prevent theft, loss, or damage to property, post leadership implemented procedures requiring potential buyers to be escorted during IT equipment auctions, including items such as computers and phones.



REFERENCES

We compiled a list of applicable policies and procedures related to post closure activities from the Peace Corps Manual Sections (MS), Overseas Contracting Handbook (OCH), Overseas Financial Management Handbook (OFMH), and Medical Technical Guidelines (TG). The MS sets forth the authority of the Peace Corps; the OCH contains the official procedures implementing MS 732 Peace Corps Overseas Acquisition System; and the OFMH outlines the different functions and procedures required to support overseas posts, as required by MS 128 Office of the Chief Financial Officer: Organization, Mission, and Functions. Finally, the TG 395 outlines procedures for implementing requirements set forth in MS 261 for Peace Corps Medical Officers.

Agency Policies and Procedures

Applicable primary agency policies and procedures include guidance for financial, operational, and administrative activities completed during the post closure process, such as record management requirements and guidelines for closing the Health Unit.

Primary Agency Policies and Procedures	Effective/Revision Date
MS 341 Operational Status of Overseas Posts	Effective Date: August 19, 2024
MS 341 Operational Status of Overseas Posts – Procedures	Effective Date: September 5, 2024
MS 892 Records Management <i>Section 6.6.3: Closing a Post and Records Management</i>	Effective Date: July 10, 2024
OFMH Chapter 39 Post Closure-Emergency <i>Chapter 40, Post Closure Scheduled</i>	Revision Date: May 25, 2018
TG 395 Planned Country/Post Closure of Health Unit (Non-Emergency Post Closing)	Revision Date: September 2019

Additional Policies and Procedures

Additional policies and procedures include guidance for general procedures that need to be completed if a post were to close.

Additional Policies and Procedures	Effective/Revised Date
MS 128 Office of the Chief Financial Officer: Organization, Mission, and Functions	Effective Date: October 25, 2022
MS 261 Medical Offices and Peace Corps Medical Officers	Effective Date: September 2, 2025
MS 282 Peace Corps Service Re-enrollments, Reinstatement, and Transfers <i>Section 6.0 Transfers</i>	Effective Date: September 5, 2024

<p>MS 284 Early Termination of Service</p> <p><i>Section 7.0 Evacuations</i></p>	<p>Effective Date: June 28, 2024</p>
<p>MS 511 Personal Property Management Handbook Sections</p> <p><i>13.0 Loss, Theft, Damage, and Destruction of Property</i></p> <p><i>14.0 Transferring Property from One Peace Corps Location to Another</i></p> <p><i>15.0 Disposal of Personal Property</i></p>	<p>Updated: May 2018</p>
<p>MS 732 Peace Corps Overseas Acquisition System</p>	<p>Effective Date: September 7, 2022</p>
<p>MS 734 Medical Supplies and Equipment:</p> <p><i>Section 9.0 Disposal of Medical Supplies and Equipment</i></p>	<p>Effective Date: June 26, 2015</p>
<p>OFMH Chapter 26 Severance and other Separation Pay for Host Country Residents</p>	<p>Revision Date: April 21, 2021</p>
<p>OCH Leases Sections:</p> <p><i>21.0 Lease Terminations</i></p> <p><i>22.0 Lease Close-Outs</i></p>	<p>Effective Date: August 8, 2024</p>
<p>OCH Micro-Purchase</p>	<p>Effective Date: August 8, 2024</p>
<p>OCH Personal Services Contracts Sections:</p> <p><i>23.0 Ending a Personal Services Contract</i></p> <p><i>27.0 Personal Services Contract Close-Outs</i></p> <p><i>28.0 Transferring a Personal Services Contractor</i></p>	<p>Effective Date: February 27, 2025</p>
<p>OCH Supplies and/or Services Contracts Sections:</p> <p><i>18.0 Contract Terminations</i></p> <p><i>19.0 Contract Close-Outs</i></p>	<p>Effective Date: August 8, 2024</p>
<p>TG 240 Medical Supplies and Equipment</p> <p><i>Section 21.0: Disposal, Transfer or Return of Medications and Supplies</i></p>	<p>Effective Date: November 2024</p>

Resource Materials

The resource materials listed below are comprised of scenarios that regions and posts from past post closures have provided saved on the Agency All files section of the Peace Corps Intranet; to include our audit report on Volunteer payments and collections. These resources can be adapted to make post-specific documents for staff on post closure timelines, talking points, correspondence, and implementation of applicable agency guidance. Staff can review these documents and adapt them to their country specific needs.

Resource	Effective/Revised Date
Peace Corps History	Updated: 2024
Post Closure and Phasedown Notification Checklist	Updated: 2012
Marshall Islands Post Closure	Updated: 1999
Final Audit Report Volunteer Payments and Collections at the End of Service	Issued: March 31, 2023

APPENDIX A: SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Scope

We researched and reviewed current Peace Corps guidance and conducted interviews with Peace Corps leadership and staff from May 29, through July 2, 2025.

Methodology

We used an agile method to gather and produce information in real time for decision makers to assist the Peace Corps in navigating complex overseas post closures activities. Our review included an analysis of applicable Peace Corps policies, procedures, and prior oversight reports related to post closures. We also conducted interviews with leadership and key staff members, both at Peace Corps/Washington and in the field who have knowledge and experience in managing post closures. We provided interim briefings to senior and regional leadership at Peace Corps/Washington in July and August 2025.

Our objectives were to identify key considerations in current and future post closures, including suggestions for effectiveness and mitigation of risk, specifically:

- Key Considerations for Peace Corps/Washington Leadership,
- Key Considerations for Peace Corps Operational Staff and Post Leadership,
- Applicable Peace Corps Policy and Guidance for Post Closures

From May 29 through July 2, 2025, we conducted 14 interviews with a total of 29 Peace Corps staff members, including key officials at Peace Corps/Washington and abroad. Interview participants from Peace Corps/Washington included regional staff and representatives from the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of Management (OOM), Office of Health Services (OHS), Travel and Transportation, Office of General Counsel, and Office of Safety and Security. Field participants included former and current CDs, DMOs, and TDY experts.

We applied an iterative approach for conducting interviews, collecting feedback, and documenting information. Through this process, we gathered insights into lessons learned, key considerations, and best practices from previous post closures. We identified common themes and observations, highlighted suggested risk and mitigation strategies, and organized our interview data into an actionable list to support future post closure planning and execution. Additionally, we compiled relevant Peace Corps guidance, standard operating procedures, resources, and tools for post closure activities into a consolidated reference guide that aligns with the various tasks that posts and Peace Corps/Washington are required to complete during post closures. This information also guided us into developing more tailored interview questions based on each participant's role, functional area, and responsibilities.

The OIG Audit and Evaluation Units conducted this proactive informational review as a Cross Unit Project to assist agency and post leadership in navigating closure activities. This review did not follow Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). We conducted this review in accordance with OIG Directive 2020-03 – Revision to Reporting Procedures for Management Implication Reports and Management Advisory Reports, issued on January 6, 2020, to ensure appropriate quality standards.

APPENDIX B: KEY CONTRIBUTORS

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