



**Office of Human Resources
Standard Operating Procedure
HR SOP #104**

Subject: Internships

Effective Date: August 16, 2018

Policy Statement:

The Department seeks to integrate a student's academic experience with practical application to foster learning in a workplace environment. Students will gain applied experience and make professional connections. The Department will gain experience with and knowledge of a pool of potential hires and foster community outreach. To this end, the Divisions may develop and/or operate Internship Programs.

Definitions:

Accredited College/University/Technical College: An institution that has met set standards of quality determined by the accrediting organization granting the accreditation.

NOTE: DNR verifies accreditation through the Council for Higher Education Accreditation website at <http://www.chea.org/search/default.asp>.

Intern: A student from an accredited college/university/technical college, undergoing supervised practical training, and who serves as an apprentice or trainee in an occupation or profession to gain practical experience while receiving school credit.

NOTE: Internships may be paid or unpaid. Very important specific distinctions between paid and unpaid internships are listed in the applicable sections below.

Procedure:

Internships:

DNR's internships are available only to college/university/technical college who meet the following criteria:

- Recommended by their school to participate in an officially recognized Internship Program;
- Presently enrolled during the time in which the student plans to serve as an intern;
- Successful completion of at least one semester of college;
- In good academic standing with their school, meeting any requirements of the school for participation in an internship program;
- At least 18 years of age;

- United States Citizen (only if serving as an intern in which duties would require POST certification if chosen as a profession);
- Ability to pass a criminal background check.

Supervisor Responsibilities:

The intern's supervisor:

- Should be selected due to their ability to teach/train/mentor employees;
- May interview and select interns through a competitive process;
- Must communicate with the student and school to provide a letter stating a start and end date of the internship and work location information; and
- Must provide a workplace orientation to the intern; (New employee orientation located on the agency intranet may be used as a guide for intern orientation http://dnrintranet.org/hr/orientation_for_new_employees.);
- Must provide a description of job duties and responsibilities to the intern;
- Must provide training, guidance and instruction to the intern;
- Must monitor the intern's progress, provide feedback and may provide a formal evaluation of the performance of the intern;
- Must complete any paperwork required by the school; and
- May conduct an exit interview with the intern.

Program Participation Acknowledgement:

Interns shall sign an *Internship Program Participation Acknowledgement* (Attachment 1) prior to beginning their internship with DNR. This form should be retained in the local management file.

NOTE: If problems occur during the internship or if circumstances arise which would not allow for continued use of a Student Intern at a specific location, the internship may be discontinued at any point, after suitable communication with the school and the intern.

Unpaid Internships:

Applying for an Unpaid Internship:

Students who are interested in an unpaid internship as an unpaid intern with DNR should directly contact the office of the Division that holds their interest.

If an unpaid internship is available, and the student meets the requirements, the student should follow procedures as set forth by each Division in regards to applying for the internship.

See internship contact information on the DNR website at www.gadnr.org/careers.

FLSA/IRS Considerations:

In addition to the requirements listed above, if the internship is to be unpaid, managers must use the primary beneficiary test factors below to ensure that the intern is the primary beneficiary of the relationship with the employer:

1. The extent to which the intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation, express or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee — and vice versa.
2. The extent to which the internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions.
3. The extent to which the internship is tied to the intern's formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.
4. The extent to which the internship accommodates the intern's academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.
5. The extent to which the internship's duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.
6. The extent to which the intern's work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern.
7. The extent to which the intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship.

If analysis of these circumstances reveals that an intern or student is actually an employee, then he or she is entitled to both minimum wage and overtime pay under the FLSA. On the other hand, if the analysis confirms that the intern or student is not an employee, then he or she is not entitled to either minimum wage or overtime pay under the FLSA.

NOTE: Unpaid interns are not covered under Workers' Compensation if injured at a work location.

Criminal Background Checks:

Unpaid intern candidates must complete the *Consent for Background Check (Intern)* (Attachment 2). Unpaid intern candidates who do not consent to a background check or who provide false information are to be given no further consideration.

An unpaid intern beginning the internship is contingent upon review and approval of the background check results by the HR Director.

Once the results of the criminal background check are received and a paid or unpaid intern is selected, all *Consent for Background Check (Intern)* forms must be shredded in accordance with applicable retention schedules. *Consent for Background Check (Intern)* forms are processed through the Office of Human Resources, or for EPD, they forms are processed by the Director's designee.

Paid Internships:

Units of the Department may also offer paid internships. Individuals in a paid internship will be considered employees of the Department and will complete all requirements for part-time employment.

Applying for a Paid Internship:

Paid internships are employment relationships. The intern must be hired in accordance with agency procedures applicable to part-time employees and the intern must adhere to the same work rules applicable to part-time employees.

Paid interns must be selected in accordance with the Department's part-time hiring HR SOP #101, *Filling a Vacant Part-Time Position*.

Criminal Background Checks:

Paid intern candidates must complete the *Consent for Background Check (Intern)* (Attachment 2). Paid intern candidates who do not consent to a background check or who provide false information are to be given no further consideration.

A paid intern being allowed to start work is contingent upon review and approval of the background check results by the HR Director.

Operation of Vehicles by Paid or Unpaid Interns:

Prior to operating a vehicle on State business during their internship while performing assigned duties, interns must read and comply with Admin SOP #030, *Operation of Vehicles on Department Business* including the completion of Attachment 1 of Admin SOP #030, the *Driver Acknowledgement Form*. Interns will submit the *Driver Acknowledgement Form* to their supervisor. The SOP is located at:

<http://dnrintranet.org/ad/standard-operating-procedures>

However, there is no medical payment coverage for an unpaid intern if they become injured while performing these duties. Unpaid interns that are injured while operating a vehicle on state business are required to use their personal health insurance coverage for treatment.

If an intern that is driving a vehicle on state business is involved in a vehicle accident that injures another person and the accident is determined to be the fault of the intern, whether paid or unpaid, the Department of Administrative Services (DOAS) would cover the accident on behalf of DNR, subject to provisions contained in the Georgia Tort Claims Act.

Retention Schedule:

Retain the *Internship Program Participation Acknowledgement* (Attachment 1) in the local management file for 5 years. Retain documents granting credit to the intern for performing the internship in the local management file for 5 years.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – *Internship Program Participation Acknowledgement*

Attachment 2 – *Consent for Background Check (Intern)*