

COUNTY OF TULARE
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION NO. 20
(Resolution No. 2007-0574)

SUBJECT: County Internship Program

Effective Date: August 28, 2007 (Revised Program Adopted)

Background:

The County Board of Supervisors formally established an Internship Program in 1997 by adopting Administrative Regulation No. 20 (amended in September 1998). This regulation set forth in general terms the responsibilities of the Personnel/Human Resources Department, County Departments, Sponsoring schools, and Interns. It also established a rate of compensation for Interns at *minimum wage*. The program limited student participation to COS Work Study students and to those in post secondary institutions.

Expansion of the current program is needed to provide more flexibility or choices to departments, to address varying needs of County departments, to incorporate current practices of hiring students under job codes/categories other than "Intern", and to support Interns and Departments by providing resources or tools. Therefore, four Categories or levels of Intern have been created, providing for a range of academic and vocational skill levels. To assist Agencies/Departments in this program, a "Mentor" component has been added.

Categories of Interns

The following "intern" Categories and levels are proposed:

Trainee I

High school senior students enrolled in regular high school classes OR those enrolled in an alternative vocational high school OR students working toward high school equivalency in an approved program. These groups of students are closely supervised and work as assistants or aides. They are responsible for learning the Agency's or Department's policies, procedures, and methods of operation; collecting and tabulating data; performing basic research; and learning skills of how to interpret data. They are introduced to local government operations in a narrow capacity.

Trainee II

Freshman or sophomore year college students, Community college students, or Business and Vocational school students who have completed high school or equivalent. This category of interns are able to evaluate information gained in accordance with established policies and procedures, and assist professional staff in ongoing project work. They also may perform technical/vocational skills such as operating equipment. They are gaining a general knowledge and understanding of local government and are introduced to the concept of careers in public service.

Intern

Junior or Senior year college students. Assigned to work in a position related to the student's field of study. The Intern participates in project work in an increasingly responsible role. They participate in team analysis of problems and in the preparation of reports under the supervision of professionals.

Apprentice

Professional and graduate school (Master's candidates) students. This category of interns would only be eligible to work in a position directly related to the student's field of study. Under the oversight of professionals, assumes responsibility for preliminary studies, analysis and recommendations on systems, procedures, and programs of the Agency or Department. May assist in piloting a new policy, program, or procedure.

Compensation of Interns

To cultivate and attract students to this program, compensation for service provided needs to be competitive with other employment opportunities and to mitigate travel and other associated costs. Enhanced compensation, over the previous program, will allow Agency/Departments to attract students who may reside in the adjacent counties of Fresno, Kings, and Kern.

The following hourly Compensation (Step 1) is proposed:

		<u>Example using current Min Wage(7/07)</u>
Trainee I	Minimum Wage plus 10%	(\$7.50 plus \$. 75 = \$8.25)
Trainee II	Minimum Wage plus 15%	(\$7.50 plus \$1.13 = \$8.63)
Intern	Minimum Wage plus 30%	(\$7.50 plus \$2.25 = \$9.75)
Apprentice	Minimum Wage plus 40%	(\$7.50 plus \$ 3.00 = \$10.50)

All intern Categories are established on a three-step scale. Beginning placement is at Step 1, however, placement at the Advanced Step 2 may be granted by the Agency or Department Head for exceptional qualifications. A salary increase from Step 1 to Step 2 will occur after 1,040 hours have been worked. (If the intern was hired at the Advanced Step 2, they must also work 1,040 hours before advancing to the next salary step). Step increases from Step 2 to Step 3 will occur after a total of 2,080 hours have been worked.

Duration of participation in the Intern Program is proposed:

The amount of hours per fiscal year that a student enrolled in the Intern Program may work shall be limited to 1,040 per fiscal year (July 1-June 30). Work or services provided by the student may be performed full-time during the summer or in between semesters, and/or part-time during the school year. Students in the category of Trainee I may be limited to the number of hours they may work during the school year, per State requirements. The work pattern or work schedule will be approved by the Agency/Department.

Student Eligibility

In order to qualify to participate in the Intern Program, a student must:

- Be a United States citizen, a lawful permanent resident alien, or a non-citizen with proof of eligibility to work in the United States. Students under age 18 must obtain a work permit.
- Be enrolled in an accredited institution or a school licensed by a State agency and have attended that institution for at least one year. The accredited institution or licensed school must be physically located within California. Students enrolled in an Internet-based or correspondence school do not qualify for this program.
- Maintain an overall institutional grade point average of at least 2.0 on a four-point scale.

- Submit a completed application for employment.
- Pass an alcohol/drug screen exam.

Prior to hiring a student or recent graduate in one of the four Categories, departments will be required to verify both the student's status with the school and enrollment in a defined program of study that is aligned with the intern position that the student will fill. Departmental use of these Categories of Interns will be subject to review by the Human Resources and Development Department to ensure they are being used appropriately. Defined usage of students will be for the purpose of introducing students to the County as a potential employer and providing practical work experience and professional opportunities to local students. The Category of Apprentice shall be monitored to ensure that no one is working longer than six months (equivalent to 1,040 hours) following graduation.

Transition Plan

To facilitate the ongoing professional development of the Intern, to acknowledge that on-the-job learning occurred and the demonstration of skills and abilities while in the program, and to foster the "Grow Our Own" concept, the County will assist in *transitioning* the Intern to regular employment by providing an incentive, known as "**Transition Points/Preference**".

When students successfully complete an Internship with the County of Tulare, they may apply for regular full-time or part-time employment. Transition Points/Preference may be awarded to students who:

- Meet the minimum requirements for specific job classifications,
- Served an Internship in the Categories of Trainee I, Trainee II, Intern, or Apprentice,
- Compete for a regular job within the field of study for which they interned.
- Points or Preference shall be added to final testing score when placed on the employment list
- A total of three (3) percent will be added to final score at certification upon initial entry to County employment.

"Transition" points or preference expires after 12 months from the last date of employment of the student in the Internship program. Transition points also expire once the Intern has been hired into a part-time or full-time regular position.

It is the responsibility of the student to request that "Transition" points or preference be applied.

Mentors

The success of any Internship program relies on effective supervision and nurturing of the student. Ongoing communication with, and stimulation of, the student needs to occur throughout the internship. Managers, supervisors, and lead workers will require training and support in order to help students achieve personal learning goals and career readiness skills. The Human Resources and Development Department, through the County Training Officer and other staff trainers, will promote and coordinate a "**Mentor-An-Intern**" program to aide County employees in this venture. A Mentorship program will assist in developing skills and providing the tools necessary to "sow the seeds of success" by departmental staff and managers in the process of cultivating the student.

To encourage managers, supervisors, and lead workers to participate in the "**Mentor-An-Intern**" program, a "Stipend" or monetary compensation is proposed. County employees will be required to qualify for this "Stipend" by attending mandatory training. The Human Resources & Development Department will offer "Mentorship" workshops and additional support materials to managers and supervisors. Initially, a 4-hour workshop will be offered to those selected to participate in the "Mentor-An-Intern" program. In addition to the Stipend, the employee will be "certified" as a Mentor, which aids the employee's career development and personal growth.

County Retirees will also be identified by the Agencies/Departments and invited to serve as Mentors to Interns and to current County employees as part of this program. Retirees may participate as Mentors under a paid Extra Help status or may serve as unpaid volunteers. To be a Mentor, the employee or retiree:

- Must complete a Mentor Application (obtain at HRD)
- Must be approved by the department head to participate in the program
- Must have a willingness to actively participate in the development of Interns
- Must have worked for Tulare County for at least two years
- Must be able to commit to the entire period of time the Intern is in the program

Developing Internship Opportunities

A successful Internship Program will assure that students are placed in meaningful assignments that provide career development, opportunities for professional and personal growth, and are challenging and stimulating work experiences. For County departments, an Intern must be able to assist with fulfilling work-related needs. This symbiotic relationship takes time to develop and nurture but is predicated from the start as being a "good match".

The Human Resources & Development Department will offer "Developer" assistance to Agencies/Departments in match-making job classes to departmental needs, identifying programs, academic institutions and schools, locating and maintaining an inventory of internship opportunities, facilitating access and linkages to educational and vocational schools, communicating updates and changes in County policies or practices, and sharing "best practices" among Agencies/Departments by coordinating an ***Internship Development Exchange Alliance (IDEA)***.

All County Agencies/Departments will be encouraged to participate in ***IDEA*** meetings. While initially the group will involve County representatives, in time the alliance may be expanded to include representatives from educational, vocational, training and other areas of career and employment interest. Each Department will be invited to designate a "Developer" who will be the central point of contact for Internship-related activities for the Agency/Department.

Departmental "Developers", along with support and technical assistance from the HR&D Developer, will be responsible for recruiting students for internships. HR&D will track and log student applications and give final approval on the placement. Departmental staff, Developers or Mentors, will be responsible for establishing educational and career objectives, completing progress reports, and maintaining records in the Intern's file.