



Schenectady County
Partnerships to Build Success for Tomorrow's Workforce
Academic Student Internship Program
Guidelines

PROGRAM MISSION: Schenectady County's mission is to provide internships that enhance students' educational objectives, promote public service, and strengthen interest in public sector careers for a diverse group of students.

TYPE OF INTERNSHIPS: The County has both paid and unpaid (academic) internships. Typically paid internships are for graduate level internships. The goal of the unpaid internship is to enhance the academic experience of the student and to expose students to public service and the career paths available in public services. As defined in New York State Human Rights Law, "intern" refers to an individual who performs work for an employer for the purpose of training under the following circumstances:

- A. The employer is not committed to hire the person performing the work at the conclusion of the training period;
- B. The employer and the person performing the work agree that the person performing the work is not entitled to wages for the work performed; and
- C. The work performed:
 1. Provides or supplements training that may enhance the employability of the intern;
 2. Provides relevant experience for the benefit of the student;
 3. Does not displace or replace regular County employees; and
 4. Work performed is under the close supervision and mentoring of existing County staff.

ACADEMIC INTERN CRITERIA: The intern candidate must be enrolled as a student as determined by their academic institution. The intern candidate must provide proof of enrollment in school. For summer internships, the student should provide proof of continuing enrollment in the upcoming fall term.

Candidates must have a solid academic standing, must possess background knowledge of the internship area, and should exhibit qualities that would indicate personal responsibility and dependability. Candidates will be screened by the Department Head or their designee and

criminal records will be considered during the interview process, although existence of such a record will not be an automatic bar to the internship.

FIELD INSTRUCTOR: The department will designate a Field Instructor/Supervisor to train and oversee the volunteer intern. The Field Instructors are responsible to:

- Introduce and orient the student to the Departments' procedures such as office hours, scheduled meetings and conferences, travel requirements, confidentiality, etc. The Field Instructor shall introduce the student to the staff of the unit.
- Coordinate a schedule with the intern for the semester, make certain the schedule is adhered to, maintain a written record of the intern's hours, and provide regularly scheduled meetings with the intern to enhance the student's learning experience and performance.
- Provide an organized schedule of activity throughout the semester.
- Allow the intern to become involved in certain assigned aspects of the job.
- Link the intern with other staff members and departments to give the intern exposure to other aspects of County government.
- Respond to intern inquiries and provide ongoing guidance and direction.

INTERN RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Interns shall adhere to the schedule developed with his/her assigned Field Instructor.
- The intern shall maintain the confidentiality of all case records and case work, and shall refer only in general terms to cases when reporting to their faculty advisors or discussing their internship with others.
- The intern shall abide by all rules, guidelines and procedures as promulgated by the County of Schenectady. The intern shall strictly follow the directions and instructions of the assigned Field Instructor.
- The intern shall conduct himself/herself professionally at all times and shall be constantly cognizant of the fact that they, at times, represent this Department and the County.
- The intern shall advise their Field Instructor or the Director or designee of any problems being experienced in relation to the internship.
- The Intern shall immediately inform Field Instructor of any known preexisting relationship with any staff or clients.
- The Intern shall refrain from engaging in any relationship or behavior that is disruptive to the departments functioning.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION: All student interns must complete the attached Student Intern Sheet which includes emergency contact information. The Student Intern Sheet should be kept with the Department hosting the intern. A copy must be sent along with the internship request form, the student resume, and Internship Partnership Agreement to the Assistant to the County Manager.

RESTRICTIONS:

- Interns shall not drive a county vehicle nor a personal vehicle to accomplish a county project.
- The transportation of interns by County vehicle must be authorized by the Department Head as necessary in the conduct of County business and necessary for the intern's training experience.
- The Interns may not represent Schenectady County at any time or under any circumstances unless in the direct company of the Field Instructor or their designee.
- Interns may not review department records, or case files unless expressly authorized to do so by the Field Instructor.

TERMINATION OF INTERN:

If an intern fails to abide by the responsibilities and duties as outlined above, or if the Director or designee deems the continued presence of an intern within the County Internship Program inappropriate, that intern may be terminated immediately and the academic institution so advised. The academic institution may take whatever action they deem necessary.

DISCRIMINATION AND HARRASSMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

All interns are protected by the County Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedure. It is the policy of Schenectady County to provide and maintain a work environment which is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment based on sex, race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, military status, marital status, predisposing genetic characteristic, domestic violence victim status, and any other protected class. Harassment based on these characteristics is a form of unlawful discrimination. Discrimination and discriminatory harassment are prohibited in every work environment and every situation which directly impacts the work environment. In addition to the County Discrimination & Harassment policy and procedures, the policies and procedures manual located on the intranet and in the Human Resources office also applies.

ACADEMIC INTERN PROCESS:

The process includes the following steps:

1. Department heads will submit an Intern Request Form to the County Manager's Office (Exhibit A). For Schenectady County Community College Internships, we have established a centralized recruitment and matching process. The SJTA Youth Development Coordinator

will be the SCCC Internship Coordinator. The Coordinator will work directly with Departments and the college to match interns with internships.

2. Intern will complete and submit the Student Intern Information Sheet along with his/her resume.
3. Departments will receive resumes, Student Intern Information Sheets (Exhibit B) and documentation that intern meets the Academic Internship criteria.
4. Complete an Internship Partnership Agreement (Exhibit C) signed by the department head and the intern.
5. Department heads will submit a copy of the full packet to the Assistant to the County Manager. For SCCC students, the packet should also be sent to the SJTA Youth Development Coordinator.
6. The Department must coordinate with IT to ensure that the intern's workstation, user account, email, and other resources are functional prior to the intern's start date. Department Heads must notify IT when an internship has been completed and the intern is no longer working for the County.
7. Interns will be provided with a brief orientation conducted by the Department's Field Instructor/intern supervisor. This will include an overview of County policies that he or she will be expected to conform to throughout their internship.
8. Throughout the duration of the internship, work to be performed will be assigned with a focus on enhancing the learning process, and preparing the intern for a career in public service.
9. Interns will be provided with relevant information regarding the careers in County government, an overview of the Civil Service process, examinations, and benefits of a career in public service.
10. Department Field Instructor/Supervisor will ultimately be responsible for meeting the reporting and evaluation requirements of the educational institution of the intern.
11. Upon completion of the internship, the Department will provide the intern with feedback based on their job performance, helping to further the learning process.