

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM GUIDELINES



**LEARNING &
ORGANIZATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Purpose

The primary purpose of the Internship Program is to attract the best and brightest of today's university students and recent graduates so they will become interested in Riverside County for full-time employment. Students and recent graduates are encouraged to apply for internship positions which are related to their areas of study in school and are in the fields where they would work if employed as regular County employees.

B. Student Intern Positions

Student Interns may not be substituted for candidates who have qualified for a County position through examination and are awaiting appointment from an employment list.

The County offers a mixture of paid and unpaid internships depending on the position and budgetary constraints of each sponsoring department. All appointments are part-time hourly, and work in an at-will status at the discretion of the appointing authority. Student Interns only receive benefits offered to TAP employees as outlined in the TAP Handbook (see section VI).

- Unpaid Interns are employed by the Human Resources Department's Temporary Assignment Program and hold the following classification:
 - Temporary Assistant – Student Intern (Class Code: 13894)
- Paid Interns are employed by the Human Resources Department's Temporary Assignment Program and hold the following classification:
 - Temporary Assistant – Professional Student Intern (Class Code: 13896)
 - Effective December 2015, Engineering and IT Student Interns are included under this classification.

Interns may be employed until they no longer meet the program requirements, or the department determines that the work is no longer required.

Interns no longer meeting program requirements must be removed immediately and may not be reemployed as an Intern until program requirements have been achieved (see eligibility below). The Internship Program team reserves the right to review all re-applications to determine program eligibility and satisfactory compliance with program requirements.

C. Assembly Bill 2830 – Preference for Disadvantaged Groups

Background

In September of 2018, the California State Legislature passed into law Assembly Bill 2830 (“AB 2830”). This law states that each general law county shall develop a program that gives a preference to qualified applicants who are members of a disadvantaged group for the hiring of internship positions. Individuals who receive preference under this law include foster youth, homeless youth, formerly homeless youth, and formerly incarcerated youth. Under this new law, hiring preference is given to these individuals over similarly qualified applicants. AB 2830 also requires county welfare departments to notify dependent children, who are subject to termination of dependency proceedings, that they may be eligible for preference in hiring for student assistant or internship positions with general law counties.

Full text of the law is located here:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2830

AB 2830 added Government Code § 31000.11, which defines the following terms:

- “Disadvantaged groups”: includes, but is not limited to, foster youth, homeless youth, formerly homeless youth, and formerly incarcerated youth.
- “Foster Youth”: any individual who meets, or has ever met, either of the following criteria:
 - (A) A child who was the subject of a petition filed pursuant to Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code and was removed from his or her home by the juvenile court pursuant to Section 319 or 361 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.
 - (B) A child who was the subject of a petition filed pursuant to Section 602 of the Welfare and Institutions Code and was removed from his or her home by the juvenile court pursuant to Section 727 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.
- “Homeless Youth”: an applicant up to 26 years of age who has been verified as a homeless child or youth, as defined in subsection (2) of Section 725 of the federal McKinney–Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a(2)), by a homeless services provider, as defined in paragraph (3) of subdivision (d) of Section 103577 of the Health and Safety Code.
- “Formerly Homeless Youth”: an individual up to 26 years of age who was previously a homeless youth.
- “Formerly incarcerated youth”: an individual who has been sentenced to be incarcerated in, or in the custody of, the Division of Adult Operations in the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Division of Juvenile Justice in the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, or county jail and released from that incarceration or custody before the individual attained 21 years of age.
- “Preference”: priority over similarly qualified applicants for placement in the position.

D. Eligibility

To participate in the Internship Program, students and recent graduates must meet the eligibility criteria. Students and recent graduates failing to meet the criteria become ineligible and must be removed from the program. Any exceptions to the eligibility criteria must be approved by the Internship Program team. All participating students will be required to provide proof of eligibility by submitting current transcripts upon completion of each term. Students can email their transcripts to internship@rivco.org.

Student Intern Qualifications

• Paid Professional Student Interns

- Must either be high school students in their senior year or recently graduated (within 3 months) or currently enrolled as part-time or full-time students in a Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral program.
- Must be legal permanent residents, U.S. Citizens, or Green Card Holders (permit to work). International students are eligible as long as the department understands that the County does not sponsor international candidates for permanent employment and if an exception has been approved by the Human Resources Director in advance.

• Unpaid Student Interns

- Must be currently enrolled as part-time or full-time students at an accredited college or training program or be a current high school student.
- When internship assignments do not include driving on County time, unpaid interns are not required to present proof of legal permanent residence, U.S. Citizenship, or Green Card status but must be able to provide government (U.S. or other) documents that establish their identity. If unpaid internship assignments include driving, then the intern must present proof of legal permanent residence, U.S. Citizenship or Green Card Holder status.

• All Student Interns

- Recent undergraduate or graduate students may qualify for up to one year from their graduation date when the internship is paid. Recent graduates must be removed from the program once their one-year graduation anniversary comes to pass, regardless of when they began the internship.
- Students must have and maintain a 2.5 minimum GPA to be eligible to be employed as a Student Intern. Higher GPAs may be required by the hiring department.

- In addition to the minimum qualifications above, students must meet additional required and desired qualifications depending on the nature of the internship assignment and needs of the assignment department.

Exceptions to the above student status requirements, and/or qualification requirements must be reviewed and approved by the Internship Program team in advance.

E. Hours and Duration

The County's primary interest is to ensure that the student's education is a coequal priority. Work performed in the student's internship should not negatively impact the student's academic progress and academic qualifications by the assigned work hours.

- Student Interns may work a maximum of 20 hours per week during "regular academic sessions" (see definitions). Student Interns may work up to a maximum of 40 hours per week during school holidays if work is available and the Department approves the temporary work schedule.
- Recent graduates may work up to a maximum of 40 hours per week.
- There is no time limit for an internship. Interns may continue the internship as long as they meet the eligibility requirements. Departments are no longer required to submit TAP Extensions for student interns.

F. Supervision and Program Monitoring

Departments are to provide adequate supervision at all times. In addition, program monitoring can be accomplished with regular evaluations of the student's performance and progress toward the goals of the internship. Assessment is an ongoing process and an essential part of supervision. It is helpful for supervisors to reflect on "How is the intern doing?" while observing day-to-day work. This not only provides a sense of progress the intern is making but provides specific incidents for discussion. Depending upon the nature of the incident and its importance to the intern's overall development, these discussions may take place during the regular meetings between the supervisor and the intern. They may also be used to document growth and/or areas for continued improvement in the final evaluation conference.

Supervisors are encouraged to visit our [internship webpage](#) to download the "Supervisor/Mentor Guide" for detailed information on how to supervise and evaluate student interns.

The Internship Team has created an [intern performance evaluation survey](#) that supervisors may use to support interns' professional development.

II. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The following procedures are to be used by departments for the recruitment and selection of interns. Departments may participate in outreach events and/or refer a particular candidate(s) to the Internship Program for verification that they meet the internship qualifications, or they may request that the Internship Program advertise, recruit, and provide initial screening for all applicants.

A. Departments Referring a Particular Candidate(s)

1. If the department has already identified the candidate(s) they would like to hire, they are responsible for submitting a requisition in the NeoGov OHC system along with the resume(s) and contact information of the selected candidate(s) for processing.
2. The Internship team will then contact the candidate(s) for any required documentation (i.e., resume, unofficial transcripts, enrollment verification, diploma, etc.) to verify eligibility.
3. Once the documents have been received and eligibility has been established, the Internship team will contact the candidate(s) to begin the onboarding procedures (described below in section C).

B. Departments Requesting an Internship Recruitment

1. If the department has not already identified the candidate(s) and would like to request an active intern recruitment, they are responsible for submitting a requisition in the NeoGov OHC system along with an Internship Position Evaluation form. The form can be uploaded as an attachment when submitting the requisition or be emailed directly to internship@rivco.org.
2. The recruiter will review the requisition and Internship Position Evaluation form and reach out to the department for additional information if required.
3. The recruiter will market the position utilizing advertising methods, including college electronic job boards and the Riverside County Human Resources job announcement webpages. In addition, an email marketing campaign will be distributed to the established university program contacts. Postings are generally open for two weeks to allow students time to apply.
4. Once the posting has closed, the recruiter will review the resumes and identify top candidates depending on how many students the department would like to interview. The resume review process can take 3-5 business days.
5. Resumes will then be forwarded to the hiring department to schedule interviews and make a selection. If requested by the hiring department, the recruiter will interview the candidates and make a selection.

6. The recruiter will contact the selected candidate(s) for any required documentation (i.e., resume, unofficial transcripts, enrollment verification, diploma, etc.) to verify eligibility.

7. Once the documents have been received and eligibility has been established, the recruiter will contact the candidate(s) to begin the onboarding procedures (described below).

C. Onboarding Procedures

The candidate will be contacted by the Intern team to complete the following steps:

1. Schedule an appointment to conduct a Live Scan background check (fingerprinting) and complete hiring paperwork. Live Scan results from the Department of Justice and FBI are typically received in 48 hours but occasional delays can take up to 30 days.

2. Upon clearance of the background check, the Intern team will schedule a physical examination with the Occupational Health Office. The physical requirement can be waived for unpaid interns in a strictly clerical/administrative internship. Clearance for the physical exam can take anywhere from 1 day to 1-2 weeks depending on the student's availability.

3. Upon clearance from the background check and physical exam (if required), the Intern team will contact the department and student to determine a start date.

Note: All offers of employment for a student internship are contingent upon the results of the background check, which will include, at a minimum, a criminal record check through the California Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation. In addition, where required, the offer is contingent upon a satisfactory drug and alcohol screening test and physical examination to determine physical ability to perform the duties of the position offered. The background check and physical exam must be completed prior to employment commencing. Applicants who fail the drug test component of the physical examination, where required, will be ineligible for employment with Riverside County for one year, in accordance with Board Policy.

III. PAID INTERNS: PROFESSIONAL STUDENT INTERNS

A. Processing Appointments and Wage Increases

Intern appointments and wage adjustments for paid interns will be processed in accordance with the following guidelines.

Student Interns are responsible for submitting current transcripts upon the completion of each term to maintain their eligibility for employment and determine how many units they have earned. Wage increases are contingent upon academic unit completion and will be effective the pay period following the receipt of verification.

Any alterations to the transcripts will invalidate the form. It is the responsibility of the Professional Student Intern to keep the Internship Program informed regarding their cumulative units earned to authorize rate increases. Failure to keep the Intern Program informed could result in the loss of the higher wage until verification is provided.

B. Determination Of Wage Rates (as of January 2026)

- Undergraduate college students are paid based on cumulative units earned, not units proposed or in process.
- High school students or recent graduates (within 3 months) will be paid the minimum hourly wage rate of the PSI classification.
- Transfer units that are applicable towards a degree are accepted.
- Legislative Interns are paid based on grant restrictions regardless of class level.
- Exceptions to the below wage rates must be approved by the Internship Program.

Temporary Assistant - Professional Student Intern: Class Code 13896

Non-Engineering or IT Interns

Rate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hourly Wage	\$16.90	\$17.40	\$17.90	\$18.40	\$18.90	\$19.90	\$20.90
Semester Units Completed	0 – 29.5	30 – 59.5	60 – 89.5	90+	Recent Graduates from Bachelors Programs	Graduate Students	Recent Graduates from Masters Programs
Quarter Units Completed	0 – 44.5	45 – 89.5	90 – 134.5	135 +	Recent Graduates from Bachelors Programs	Graduate Students	Recent Graduates from Masters Programs

Engineering and Information Technology Student Interns

Rate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hourly Wage	\$18.00	\$18.50	\$19.00	\$19.50	\$20.50	\$21.50	\$21.73
Semester Units Completed	0 – 29.5	30 – 59.5	60 – 89.5	90+	Recent Graduates from Bachelors Programs	Graduate Students	Recent Graduates from Masters Programs
Quarter Units Completed	0 – 44.5	45 – 89.5	90 – 134.5	135 +	Recent Graduates from Bachelors Programs	Graduate Students	Recent Graduates from Masters Programs

Medical Professional Student Interns

Rate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hourly Wage	\$18.63	\$19.13	\$19.63	\$20.13	\$20.63	\$21.50	\$21.73
Semester Units Completed	0 – 29.5	30 – 59.5	60 – 89.5	90+	Recent Graduates from Bachelors Programs	Graduate Students	Recent Graduates from Masters Programs
Quarter Units Completed	0 – 44.5	45 – 89.5	90 – 134.5	135 +	Recent Graduates from Bachelors Programs	Graduate Students	Recent Graduates from Masters Programs

High School/Recent Graduates

Rate	1
Hourly Wage	\$ 16.90

Doctoral Candidates

Rate	1
Hourly Wage	\$ 22.63

For all other internships, please review the [job classification](#) on the Human Resources website for requirements and wage information.

IV. UNPAID INTERNS

An internship is meant to facilitate student learning opportunities outside the classroom and to provide the opportunity to apply classroom theory to "real world" situations, thus enhancing the students' academic and career goals. Although public sector employers are allowed to have unpaid interns that are willing to volunteer their time, it is important that County departments ensure that the student interns are first and foremost receiving an educational experience. This can include sending them to professional development workshops and trainings; inviting them to participate in meetings and networking opportunities; and teaching them skills they can use in multiple employment environments. For more suggestions and tips on how to create an educational internship program, visit the [Internship webpage](#) to download the "Supervisor/Mentor Guide".

A. Legal Issues: Staying in Compliance

From: [Fact Sheet #71: Internships Under The Fair Labor Standards Act](#)

Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, The Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division (WHD) has included rules "for-profit" employers must follow if they offer unpaid internships; however, there is an exception for nonprofit and public sector employers as described below:

"*The FLSA makes a special exception under certain circumstances for individuals who volunteer to perform services for a state or local government agency and for individuals who volunteer for humanitarian purposes for private non-profit food banks. WHD also recognizes an exception for individuals who volunteer their time, freely and without anticipation of compensation for religious, charitable, civic, or humanitarian purposes to non-profit organizations. Unpaid internships in the public sector and for non-profit charitable organizations, where the intern volunteers without expectation of compensation, are generally permissible. WHD is reviewing the need for additional guidance on internships in the public and non-profit sectors."

There are the 6 criteria the Federal government has provided for "for profit" employers to adhere to when implementing an unpaid internship program. It is recommended that departments be aware of these criteria and design their internship program to follow them as closely as possible. Although the FLSA does not specify any limitations or restrictions to the types of services unpaid interns may "volunteer" for in the public sector, it should be a learning experience that primarily benefits the student rather than the department.

"The Test for Unpaid Interns"

There are some circumstances under which individuals who participate in "for-profit" private sector internships or training programs may do so without compensation...

The following six criteria must be applied when making this determination:

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
3. The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern; and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded;
5. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
6. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship

For more information about some of the most commonly discussed factors "for-profit" private sector internship programs must consider, visit: <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>

V. TERMINATIONS AND SEPARATIONS

- Student Interns are at-will employees and may be terminated for any reason.
- Prior to separation, supervisors should conduct a final evaluation of the intern's performance. Assessment should be confined to the areas specified in the "Internship Position Evaluation" and the "Internship Program Agreement" signed by the intern and the supervisor. It should address the specific tasks agreed upon at that time. As far as possible, the assessment process should introduce the intern to the performance evaluation systems typical of the workplace. The evaluation should have both a written and an oral component.
- Please see the Internship webpage to download the "Internship Position Evaluation", "Internship Program Agreement" and "Supervisor/Mentor Guide" for details on evaluating the student intern during and upon completion of the internship.
- Email the date of the student intern's last day of work for reporting purposes and employment termination to internship@rivco.org.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Student Interns are TAP employees and are provided with an overview of the TAP Handbook during orientation. Interns are not eligible to opt in for medical benefits as they are excluded. Click [here](#) for the TAP benefits information. For detailed information about TAP, visit their webpage at <https://www.rc-hr.com/Find-A-Job/Job-Searching/Temporary-Medical-Assignment-Program>. Below are explanations to frequently asked questions.

A. Timesheets

Paid Interns must submit a TAP timesheet at the end of each pay period. TAP publishes a timesheet template on their [website](#). Student Interns must use this timesheet and submit it to their supervisors for approval. Supervisors submit timesheets to the department payroll representatives. Temporary Assistants with questions on their paycheck should contact the department payroll representative in the department where they were/are assigned.

Unpaid Interns must submit an hours worked timesheet to internship@rivco.org. Students are provided a template of this timesheet via email when they receive their start date information. Students can also request this timesheet by emailing internship@rivco.org.

B. Workers' Compensation

Student Interns are covered under the County's Workers' Compensation Program. In the event a Professional Student Intern is injured on the job, the student's immediate supervisor must submit a claim/report to the Department of Human Resources, Attention Workers' Compensation, Mail Stop # 2180 or call (888) 826-7835 within one workday.

C. Mileage

Student Interns not receiving regular hourly wages will be reimbursed in accordance with the prevailing IRS Standard Mileage Rate.

D. Retroactive Pay

Any requests for retroactive pay must be supported by explained extenuating circumstances and must be submitted in writing to the Department of Human Resources, Learning & Organizational Development, c/o Internship Program Team, mail stop # 1081.

E. Overtime Pay

Overtime pay will not be authorized for any Professional Student Intern. Overtime, for the purposes of calculation, is paid in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). All student interns are considered "non-exempt" for the purposes of overtime calculation.

F. Bilingual Pay

Professional Student Interns are not eligible to receive premium bilingual pay.

G. Paid Sick Leave

Professional Student Interns (paid) are eligible for sick leave pay. Eligible employees are provided with a sick bank of 60 hours, per calendar year, upon completion of their 90th day of employment. However, employees may only use five (5) days of paid sick leave per calendar year, depending on their normal work day. For example:

Schedule Breakdown

- 5/40 = 40 paid sick hours
- 9/80 = 45 paid sick hours
- 4/10 = 50 paid sick hours
- 3/12 = 60 paid sick hours

Professional Student Interns are entitled to use sick time by either oral or written request for any of the following:

- To serve on a jury
- To appear in court to comply with a subpoena or other court order as a witness in a judicial proceeding.
- For an intern who is a victim of a qualifying act of violence to obtain relief, including a restraining order, to help ensure the health, safety or welfare of the victim or their child.

Bereavement Leave

Professional Student Interns can take bereavement leave for the death of a spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or domestic partner. Paid interns are entitled to use up to three (3) days of sick time and two (2) days of unpaid time off.

H. Retirement Plans

Deductions/contributions for Social Security, the Temporary/Part-Time Employees' Retirement Plan, and the California Public Employee Retirement System (CalPERS) generally depend on the number of hours a Temporary Assistant works in the fiscal year. For the first 1,000 hours of work in a fiscal year, the employee is enrolled in and contributes to the County Temporary/Part-Time Employees' Retirement Plan, which is a 401(a) defined benefit pension plan. The County also contributes to the 401(a) on behalf of the employee. During this time neither the employee nor the County pays into Social Security, and the employee is not enrolled in CalPERS. After 1,000 hours of work in any fiscal year, the employee and County stop contributing to the 401(a) and begin to pay into Social Security. The employee is also enrolled in CalPERS and begins to make contributions. The CalPERS percentage is subject to change based on the CalPERS actuarial valuation for the PEPR employee contribution rate.

H. Retirement Plans

For the percentage of pay contributed/deducted, see the table below:

Retirement Contributions/Deductions (Percentage of Pay)		
	1000 Hours or Less Worked	More Than 1000 Hours Worked
401 (a)	3.75%	N/A
Cal PERS	N/ A	7.75%
Social Security	N/ A	6.2%
Medicare	1.45%	1.45%
Total	5.2%	15.65%

*These deductions are in addition to State and Federal withholding (per your W-4 and DE-4).

Employees who previously became members of CalPERS – whether through previous employment with TAP, the County, or another CalPERS agency – pay into CalPERS and Social Security from the first day of their employment. Employees filling an assignment that is planned to exceed 1,000 hours also pay into CalPERS and Social Security from the first day of employment. Employees who are retired with CalPERS and drawing a pension do not pay into Social Security, CalPERS, or the 401(a), but these retirees cannot work more than 960 hours in a fiscal year.

VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Are unofficial transcripts acceptable?

Yes, a recent (1 month old or less), unofficial transcript will be accepted as proof of enrollment units accumulated. Transcripts must include the current term classes designated as “in-progress”.

Do students from technical/ vocational schools qualify for this program?

Only for internships that require education solely offered through technical/vocational schools. These situations will be reviewed and approved by the Internship team in advance.

Are on-line course credits acceptable units of study?

Yes, as long as they are from an accredited institution and the credits are towards the completion of an academic degree.

Can out-of-County students be employed?

There are generally no Riverside County residency requirements, however, the Legislative Internship requires interns to reside in or near the supervisorial district where the internship is located.

Can international students participate in this program?

Paid Interns (Professional Student Interns) must be legal permanent residents, U.S. Citizens, or Green Card Holders (permit to work).

Unpaid Interns may include international and/or undocumented students. International students must have a valid F-1 Visa to be eligible for an unpaid internship opportunity.

Please contact the Internship Program team at internship@rivco.org for more information.

VIII. DEFINITIONS

Good Standing

Enrolled students maintaining a 2.5 GPA or better cumulatively. Some departments may require a higher GPA.

Accredited

Listed by the US Department of Education as a regionally accredited institute.

Units Acceptable (For Pay Rate Placement)

Regular units, community college units, Advanced Placement (AP) (if accepted by University Registrar's Office), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and transfer units. Units must be shown on transcript to be accepted.