

Student Internship Program

GUIDELINES



Orange County Sanitation District Student Internship Program

INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES

I. INTRODUCTION

The Orange County Sanitation District's (OC San) Student Internship Program (Program) offers a range of challenging opportunities for *undergraduate*, *graduate*, and *vocational* students.

An internship is designed to provide career-related work experience, workplace readiness skills, and an understanding of different career opportunities to supplement and enhance a student's academic and vocational studies.

OC San's Student Internship Program helps to develop and prepare the future workforce in our community. The program can be part of a student's educational plan to explore a given career path that integrates classroom study with planned, supervised work. It will enable the intern to experience the daily challenges and rewards of public service, and the ability to explore opportunities in a variety of disciplines, including Engineering; Wastewater Operations and Collections; Mechanical, Instrumentation and Electrical Maintenance; Information Technology; Laboratory and Ocean Monitoring; Public Affairs; and Human Resources.

II. GOALS

Listed below are several different goals that OC San expects to accomplish with the program. These goals reflect OC San's desire to help students give back to the community and provide a means to prepare the future workforce.

- Provide meaningful career-related knowledge and on-the-job experience to students, through a *paid* internship.
- Expose students to real-world challenges and trends in various occupations.
- Enable the student to establish effective working relationships and build a professional network with subject matter experts.
- Provide firsthand knowledge and understanding of government processes and OC San's Core Values.
- Help educate communities, universities, and colleges on environmental protection issues.

- Provide awareness of opportunities and requirements in a chosen career field in the public sector.
- Broaden the student's skills and competencies to meet the future workforce needs for OC San and other public agencies.
- Promote collaboration between public sector employers and educational institutions to support workforce development.
- Promote OC San as an employer of choice among students, universities, colleges, and the community.
- Integrate the student as a contributing member of OC San.

III. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Internship positions are requested and approved through OC San's budget process. The requesting division prepares and submits a decision package during the annual budget cycle. Internship opportunities may be announced on multiple job websites, including OC San, local colleges, universities, technical and vocational schools (as applicable). All interested students are encouraged to review OC San's internship guidelines (this document), and job announcement requirements to determine their eligibility to participate in the program. The intern application process is detailed later in this document.

Each student intern will report to a division manager (or designee), who will serve as the primary point of contact for the duration of the internship. The division manager (or designee) will provide meaningful tasks and responsibilities for the student intern to gain knowledge and skills to further their development.

IV. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

OC San, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to modify, revise or eliminate this program at any time. Participation in the program is contingent upon meeting the established eligibility requirements and may continue if OC San's workload dictates a need.

Interns are not considered regular employees and therefore are not eligible for organizational benefits including but not limited to retirement, insurance coverage, and accrued or paid time off; except for sick leave provided in accordance with California's Paid Sick Leave Law.

Student interns are considered at-will positions and are subject to the following terms and conditions:

- Students selected for an internship must successfully complete a pre-employment screening process, which may include background investigation, drug screening, and physical exam.

- Participation in the program does not constitute an employment contract nor does it guarantee employment with OC San upon completion of the program.
- Interns will receive an orientation and general safety training, as necessary. Intern work assignments will not be made until the orientation and all necessary safety training are completed.
- Interns are not authorized to attend any training outside of the required safety training.
- Upon successful completion of an internship, students may apply for an internship in a different division/department within OC San.
- Intern experience qualifies as professional experience to meet employment standards for OC San positions.
- If applicable, uniforms and/or personal protective equipment (PPE) such as safety boots, goggles, and hard hats must be worn in all specified areas.
- Undergraduate and graduate internships end when the student has worked the total number of hours requested by the division through the budget process or 12 months, whichever comes first.
- Department Heads may request to extend the duration of a student internship for an additional 12 months subject to budget approval. No internship shall exceed a total duration of 24 months.
- Vocational internships are 52 weeks and consist of a 1-week Orientation and 51 weeks of Rotation Assignments.

V. WORK HOURS

A. The following restrictions apply to work hours for student interns:

- Work hours will be established between the intern and division manager (or designee) and should be between core hours whenever possible.
- Interns are not authorized to work overtime or to perform unsupervised work under any circumstances.
- Interns are not authorized to work beyond the maximum hours in a work week, which is defined as:
 - A maximum of 20 hours per work week for undergraduate and graduate students; and
 - A maximum of 28 hours per work week for vocational interns.
- The schedule for vocational interns is Monday through Thursday. The hours are from 6:00AM to 1:30PM (may be

7:00AM to 2:30PM during training and some assignments) with a ½ hour uncompensated meal break.

VI. ELIGIBILITY

A. This section applies to all student interns:

- Students must be enrolled in a college, university, or vocational school to be eligible to participate in the program.
- Students must be in “good standing” at their school and maintain a GPA of 2.0 or better to remain in the internship program.
- Students must be at least 18 years of age and legally authorized to work in the United States.
- Students may be required to provide a letter of recommendation from a professor as part of their application process.
- Students must have satisfactory performance and attendance and will be evaluated throughout the internship to determine eligibility to continue in the program.
- Students must submit a “student verification” or verification of enrollment from the registrar’s office to establish a pay rate based on academic level, as applicable, and as proof of enrollment. Verifications are required each quarter/semester.
- Students are eligible to remain in the internship program throughout the year (including during school breaks) if they are enrolled as a fulltime student in fall and spring semester, or during the four quarters of the year, and if OC San’s workload dictates a need.

B. These additional sections apply to undergraduate / graduate student internships:

- Students must be enrolled full-time in a four-year undergraduate program or a graduate program that is in a field of study related to the internship for which they are applying.
- Students must have at least one (1) year remaining in school at the beginning of their internship.
- Students enrolled in an undergraduate program must be at junior level status or above, which is the timeframe when students undertake upper-division core courses.

C. These additional sections apply to vocational student internships:

- Students must have completed at least six (6) units within a college, university, or vocational school’s Water Utility

Science Program, or related field of study, to ensure that students being considered are interested and committed to working in the wastewater industry.

- Students must be enrolled in at least three (3) units in the Water Utility Science Program at Santiago Canyon College or comparable class at another educational institution for the duration of the internship.

VII. APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Recruiting

- Recruiting for internship positions differs in several respects from OC San's traditional recruitment process:
 - o Internships may be posted on local college, university, technical and vocational school (as applicable) websites.
 - o Internships may be posted to intern-specific job websites.
 - o OC San may work with college career centers and faculty to outreach to potential internship candidates.
 - o OC San may participate in college, university, and school campus events like job fairs and utilize bulletin boards and other communication methods for student and community outreach about internships and careers offered through OC San.

B. Selecting

- HR will pre-screen student applications to ensure that each candidate meets the requirements for the internship. The HR representative will coordinate with the hiring manager to select the best candidates, based on academic level and area of study, from the group of qualified individuals. HR may enlist the assistance of career centers at the local colleges, universities, and schools to identify and pre-screen students for available OC San internships.
- The interview panel will generally include an HR representative, and the person that will be supervising the work of the intern. It may include other persons, if necessary.
- The student that appears to be the best overall fit will be the person considered for the internship. The division manager (or designee) will make the final selection.

C. Hiring

- Upon receiving an official verification of enrollment from the educational institution indicating academic level and status, the selected student will be made an offer and will be compensated in accordance with the current intern pay scale. This pay scale is detailed later in this document. After the verbal offer has been made and accepted,

the student will be scheduled for the pre-employment screening process.

VIII. WORK ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION

- The nature of the work assignments given the student is one of the most important internship components, and it should include diverse responsibilities.
- The internship experience should provide the opportunity for the intern to learn new skills and perform work in a real-world setting, integrating the student as a contributing member of OC San.
- The work assigned should benefit the student and be a good investment of OC San time and resources. Providing meaningful work experiences is the focus of the program.

IX. COMPENSATION

Vocational student	= \$19 per hour
Undergraduate student	= \$21 per hour
Graduate student	= \$24 per hour

Student internships with OC San are on a paid basis and are offered as "at-will" employment. The rate of pay is based on the type of student and the intern's academic level in school, as listed below

X. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Human Resources Department

The HR Department will administer and manage the Student Internship Program. This includes assisting with personnel requisitions, postings, advertising, and applicant screening, as well as working with division management on scheduling interviews.

B. Finance Department

The Finance Department is responsible for tracking and reporting on the hours worked by interns based on timecard records. By running bi-weekly reports on the total hours an intern has worked to date, Finance identifies and notifies the appropriate division manager (or designee) of intern(s) who may be reaching the maximum total hours for the internship.

C. Divisional Management

Divisions needing an intern are responsible for preparing and submitting a decision package to the Financial Management Division for consideration during the annual budget cycle. Justification of the need, a description of the specific work that the intern will perform, and the total number of hours requested must be provided.

The division manager (or designee) is also responsible for scheduling, overseeing, and mentoring the intern during the period assigned. Interns should be supervised closely with regular, frequent contact occurring between the division manager (or designee) and the intern.

Additionally, the division manager (or designee) will: 1) provide meaningful tasks and responsibilities in order for the student intern to gain knowledge and skills to further their development; 2) conduct informal performance evaluations and feedback sessions for the intern; and 3) track the hours worked and adhere to the established maximums in accordance with this policy.

XI. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Participation in OC San's Student Internship Program does not imply and is not a guarantee of future employment. OC San is committed to hiring the best qualified individuals for its jobs through a competitive recruitment and selection process, in a manner that is fair, equitable and merit based.

ORANGE COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT

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To learn more visit
www.ocsan.gov/jobs

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