

A PEATC

Do You Know....



Fact Sheet for Parents Transition Guide: Internships

What are Internships?

Internships are a great way for your child or young adult to **get work experience** and help them figure out the **kinds of jobs** in which they are interested and/or best suited.

Internships are **temporary job assignments**, usually for a school semester, over the summer, or sometimes a whole year. They can be **paid or unpaid**. The student may receive **high school or college credit**.

Starting when a transition plan is required to be part of the IEP, the student's team should be looking at community-based experiences, including internships to help **prepare the student** for future employment.

What are the Benefits of Internships?

- ✓ Research shows students who have internships during high school and college are **more likely** to get a job after school has ended.
- ✓ Internships can allow your child to **try out different types of jobs** so they can figure out what they are good at, develop new skills, and decide what type of job they like the most.
- ✓ Internships help your child develop and understand **the importance good work habits** such as dressing appropriately, good hygiene, getting to work on time, attending to work tasks, social skills in the workplace, working independently or as part of a team, and much more.
- ✓ Internships can help your child and their team figure out **the types of temporary or permanent supports** (accommodations) they may need to be successful in the workplace.
- ✓ Internships can build **self-advocacy skills** along with **self-confidence, self-esteem** and better-informed **decision-making** skills.
- ✓ Internships are great for building a **resume**.
- ✓ Internships can result in a good employment **reference**.
- ✓ Sometimes an internship will result in a **permanent job offer**.

How Can You Support Your Child in Their Internship?

Before your child starts an internship, help them learn about the company they will be working for.

- Help your child research the **dress code** so they know what to wear.
- Make sure they are **prepared with supplies** like a pad of paper and a pen on their first day (or technology they may be using such as a tablet.)
- Talk with them about the importance of **being on time** to work every day.
- Help them **set goals** and be sure they know they can **ask for help and support** if they don't understand something or are having problems on the job.
- If you hear of any **problems**, make sure you inform the school team if in high school or if appropriate the VR counselor.

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Fact Sheet for Parents

What Else Do I Need to Know About Internships?

- ✓ Make sure your child knows whether their internship is **paid or unpaid** so there is no confusion later.
- ✓ Students can have **multiple internships**. The more experience they get, the better. This will also help them narrow down the career field or job they are most interested in and where their strengths lie.
- ✓ If your child does not like their internship, encourage them to complete it anyway. Unless they are being mistreated, it's important for them to understand the **nature of a job commitment** and what that entails. In addition, it will help them get out of their **comfort zone** and be willing to take on new challenges.
- ✓ Often internships don't require previous **experience**. Your child can give the employer information about the classes they have taken, clubs they belong to, volunteer activities.



- ✓ Some internships do require **certain skills** so if your child's skills don't match up to a particular internship, they can try another.
- ✓ Sometime interns will be assigned a **mentor** who will help them improve their skills during the internship. This can be a valuable relationship during and after the internship. Internships can also help build **professional networks** that can serve as a long-term resource when your child/young adult is seeking permanent employment.

Internship Resources

Your child's **counselor** or **transition coordinator** can help them find an internship. If they are in college, career centers have job boards that post internships. If they are receiving vocational rehabilitation services, the **VR counselor** can help. There are also online sites that also list internships such as:

www.internships.com
www.indeed.com
www.simplyhired.com
www.Linkedin.com

If your child would like to intern somewhere specific, company websites will often list internships. Or they can call the human resource office of the company to see if they offer internships.

Hello
my name is

INTERN

PEATC's mission focuses on building positive futures for Virginia's children by working collaboratively with families, schools, and communities to improve opportunities for excellence in education and success in school and community life.



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