

MADERA COUNTY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Internship Program is designed to provide opportunities for career development to students or recent graduates, from high school to graduate level, who are interested in serving the community while learning about and working in local government.

Interns will have the opportunity to learn about County operations, explore various careers available in government, and gain hands on learning experiences in a professional work setting.

Benefits of Participation

Madera County Internships are designed to provide students and participating departments with many benefits.

Benefits to Students:

The benefits of an internship include the opportunity to:

- Develop career-related skills and abilities
- Gain practical knowledge
- Obtain experience for their resumes
- Work with a mentor
- Work with the community
- Explore the possibility of earning academic credit through their school
- Make a difference!

Benefits to Departments:

The benefits that may be realized by participating departments will likely vary depending on the nature of the assignment and the department itself, but all are likely to experience:

- New ideas and viewpoints from students
- Positive relations with the community and educational institutions
- Enhanced recruitment outreach
- Opportunity to mentor and prepare our future workforce
- No salary and benefit costs!

Program Administration

- Participation by Departments is voluntary, but is highly encouraged.
- Each participating Department will be responsible for administering the Madera County Internship Program within the guidelines established by this policy, as adopted by the Board of Supervisors.
- Internships shall be unpaid.
 - **Note:** Should a department wish to offer a paid opportunity of a similar nature, provisions are already in existence to do so by hiring a qualified applicant as a Student Assistant- High School, Undergraduate, or Graduate Level, consistent with the established Extra Help hiring process.

Eligibility

1. Current students enrolled in high school, college (including community college and 4-year college/university); professional, technical, vocational and trade school; advanced degree programs; or other qualifying educational institutions pursuing a qualifying degree or certificate.
2. Recent graduates of a qualifying institution as stated in #1 above.

Intern Responsibilities, Expectations and Requirements

Prospective Interns shall be enrolled in or completed course work that is related to the internship in which they are applying.

Interns are expected to:

- Commit to an internship for a minimum of three (3) months.
 - Note: The anticipated length of the internship shall be established by the department, and can have a timeframe of less than three (3) months.
- Follow Madera County, as well as department policies, procedures and rules governing computer/electronic device usage, appropriate behavior toward co-workers and members of the public, and dress/attire that is appropriate for the particular workplace.
- Be punctual, and work the required number of hours and times as agreed to in advance by the Intern and their supervisor.
- Notify their supervisor if they are unable to attend as planned.
- Respect the confidentiality of the workplace, clients and employees.
- Discuss any problems with their supervisor and, if necessary, with the department's internship program contact person.

Department Responsibilities and Requirements

Interns appreciate opportunities to learn new skills and increase their knowledge. Developing a plan for training throughout the internship will help to keep students interested in the position and to have a positive experience.

Departments participating in the County's Internship Program can enhance a student's experience and provide a positive impact on the department, staff and community. To increase the success of the internship experience for both the intern and the department, participating departments are expected to:

- Identify a primary point of contact within the department to administer the Internship Program. This person should also be an intern's contact in the event their designated supervisor is not available or if they have any problems or concerns.

- Designate a supervisor for each intern to oversee and assign their work. The supervisor should provide regular feedback to the intern. The supervisor should serve as a teacher and mentor.
- Establish the length of an internship (minimum of three months is strongly recommended) and communicate it to the intern. It is recommended that the internship have a clearly stated end date that is identified before the internship begins.
 - Please note that the number of hours worked by an Intern must be monitored closely and shall not exceed eight (8) hours in a day or forty (40) hours in a week; however, if the Intern is a high school student, please contact the Human Resources/Operations Division to obtain special guidance on the maximum number of hours the Intern can work in a week.
- Determine the scope of work or project/assignments the intern will be working on.
 - It is **imperative** that the scope of work or project/assignments given to interns not interfere with the work or infringe on the rights of employees in permanent positions.
- Provide interns with an orientation/introduction to the workplace, staff and structure of the unit/division/department; provide them with a clear understanding of what is expected, and include information about their work assignment and duties.
- Try to make the internship experience valuable and rewarding for the student. Remember, they are a good resource for “spreading the word” about Madera County; let’s help to make the message a good one.

Advertising Internship Opportunities

- Each respective Department shall have the responsibility of advertising for internship prospects. The Human Resources/Operations Division will provide guidance to departments on how to advertise for the internship opportunity (e.g. assist with the appropriate announcement language) and will post the opportunity on the County’s recruitment webpage.
- Prospective interns shall submit a comprehensive resume for each advertised internship directly to the applicable Department.

Selection of Internship Candidates

- Subsequent to the advertising period of the internship opportunity, the ‘hiring’ Department shall review the submitted resumes and develop a process by which to select an intern. This process will most commonly consist of an oral interview whereby pre-determined, job related questions will be asked of the applicants to assist the Department in selecting the best intern for the available opportunity.

- Should the selection process consist of an assessment tool other than an oral interview, it is highly recommended that the Department seek the guidance of the Human Resources/Operations Division before proceeding with the selection process.
- Once an intern is selected, the individual will be required to sign the applicable computer usage agreement, the attached internship agreement and any Workers' Compensation paperwork required of the County's Risk Manager.

Today's intern may be tomorrow's Madera County employee!