



State of Oregon Intern Guide

Internships with State Government

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Welcome

Welcome to the State of Oregon Intern Guide! We are excited to share an overview of internships throughout State government. This guide is designed to help familiarize you with our intern programs and provide some insight into what you might expect from an internship experience. Individual agencies may have more specific information on their unique program offerings, but we hope this helps give you a general idea and provides you with some resources to get started.



Intro to the State of Oregon

Overview

The State of Oregon is committed to serving its residents by providing essential services that promote wellbeing, independence, and community engagement. As an intern, you will be part of a diverse and dynamic team dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of Oregonians.

Oregon's state government is comprised of various agencies, each with its own unique mission and responsibilities. These agencies work collaboratively to ensure the safety, health, and prosperity of all residents. By participating in an internship program, you will gain valuable insights into the workings of state government and contribute to meaningful projects that benefit the community.

Key Takeaway

As an intern, you will be part of a diverse and dynamic team dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of Oregonians.

The State of Oregon

State government is comprised of over 160 agencies, boards, and commissions with more than 45,000 employees in the workforce. Explore the [Oregon Blue Book](#) to learn about the different branches of Oregon State Government, including a [list of agencies listed A-Z](#). Here is a high-level overview of how state government is organized:

Mission, Vision, Values and Goals

Mission: To serve the people of Oregon by providing essential services that promote wellbeing, independence, and community engagement.

Vision: Safety, health and prosperity for all Oregonians.

Values: Inclusivity, equity, service, and well-being.

Goals: A State of Oregon Internship Program aims to provide a meaningful and enriching experience for interns while supporting the mission and objective of state agencies. The primary goals of the program are:

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1. Enhance Professional Development

- Provide interns with opportunities to develop professional skills, gain practical experience, and build a foundation for future careers in public service.

2. Promote Public Service

- Encourage a commitment to public service by exposing interns to the impactful work of state agencies and the positive difference they can make in their communities.

3. Foster Inclusivity and Diversity

- Create an inclusive and diverse environment where interns from various backgrounds feel valued and supported. Promote equity and cultural competence within the internship program.

4. Support Agency Missions

- Align internship projects and activities with specific missions and goals of participating in state agencies, ensuring that interns contribute to meaningful and impactful work.

5. Facilitate Networking and Mentorship

- Provide opportunities for interns to network with professionals, mentors, and peers within the state government. Encourage the development of lasting professional relationships.

6. Encourage Innovation and Creativity

- Empower interns to bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to their projects. Encourage creative problem-solving and the exploration of new approaches to public service challenges.

7. Promote Wellbeing and Work Life Balance

- Support the overall wellbeing of interns by promoting a healthy work-life balance, providing resources for personal and professional growth, and fostering a supportive work environment.

Program Overview

Timeline

The State of Oregon offers full time and part time internships throughout the year. Because each agency structures its program differently, the timing, duration, and format of internships may vary. With so many offerings, you are bound to find an opportunity that is just right for you!

Scheduling May Include

- Summer internships
- Ad-hoc (start dates vary and are project-dependent)

Work Setting Options

- Hybrid setting (mix of in-office and remote work)
- In-person only

Internship Duration Options

- 8-12 weeks
- Up to 6 months (max of 1,040 hours)
- Short-term (under 8 weeks)

Responsibilities and Expectations

Having clearly set expectations of what you will be doing during your internship can help create a smooth and cohesive experience. At the beginning of your internship, your supervisor and/or mentor will set clear expectations and responsibilities for the program and your project(s). General expectations can include:

- Attending check-in meetings
- Attending team meetings and networking opportunities
- Working on projects and day-to-day work with a team and independently
- Learning how to succeed in a professional work environment
- Managing your employee records such as entering hours worked and tracking workload
- Letting your manager know what areas you are interested in learning about
- Asking questions!

Onboarding / Orientation

During the onboarding process, you'll learn about the department procedures, agency policies, setting up equipment, access resources and so much more. Onboarding will be an ongoing process as you settle into your position but will start with in-office tours, department overview, and introductions to your new teammates!

An internship coordinator or mentor can help you navigate all the basics such as setting up email signatures, using agency software, where to find resources, entering your hours, etc.

Your supervisor and/or mentor will go over any specifics on the agency, what work you will be assigned, and any goals and expectations of your internship assignment. They will also assign various training courses that include both mandatory and optional courses.

SMART Goals

Making effective goals is an essential part of creating a meaningful internship experience. You should create goals for yourself at the start of your program to share with your supervisors and use these goals throughout your time in the internship. SMART goals are a strategic way to set goals and achieve them! SMART stands for **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Oriented**.

You can use these SMART goals worksheets as a guide to create your goals and refer to.

These goals will guide your personal and professional growth as well as your progress in the internship program and the project(s) you will be assigned.

SMART Goals

S – Specific
M – Measurable
A – Achievable
R – Relevant
T – Time-Oriented

Tips for Making the Most of Your Internship

Here you'll find general advice, as well as tips from past interns.

- Seek out learning opportunities
- Document projects you work on
- Ask to job shadow and don't hesitate to reach outside of your agency (i.e., other State Agencies, Community Partners, etc.)
- Don't be afraid to ask to join a meeting or a group
- Set networking goals
- Check your calendar every day
- Prepare for all your meetings (write down questions or updates)
- Always ask questions or for clarification
- Follow up with people in an appropriate amount of time
- Find the best mode of communication with different folks
- Set up informational interviews and ask who would be good to interview
- Take notes

Check-Ins and Evaluations

As an intern at the State of Oregon, you will have regular check-ins with your supervisor, internship coordinator, and/or mentor. These check-ins will cover general updates and questions you have as well as any feedback there may be. Your leadership team may provide an evaluation at the end of the

program to measure the successes and gaps of the program on both the intern's side and the agency's side. These evaluations, also known as exit interviews, may include a review of your SMART goals, as well as give you an opportunity to provide feedback on your experience in the program.

Supervising Manager

Supervisors will support and oversee interns throughout the entire program and provide meaningful work and projects. Responsibilities of the supervisor include:

- Designs a project-based internship with a meaningful body of work
- Schedules regular check-ins
- Plans and implements onboarding, along with the intern coordinator, typically held on the first day of employment
- Communicates clearly and clarifies goals and expectations
- Requests all tech equipment needed (hardware, software, etc.)
- Provides the necessary online and physical resources you'll need throughout the program
- Introduces you to colleagues and departments/agency units
- Provides regular feedback on performance
- Completes an evaluation at the end of the internship
- Conducts exit interview with you
- Offers to serve as a professional reference

Internship Coordinator

The intern coordinator handles the logistics of the program and makes sure that the intern is getting the most out of their experience. They will serve as a resource to you and provide any information on the internship program needed. Responsibilities for the Intern Coordinator include:

- Oversees the planning development, implementation and assessment of the internship program
- Connects with local colleges and universities to promote the program
- Prepares internship materials and distributes necessary resources to interns and supervisors
- Aids the supervisor in planning and implementing onboarding as well as trainings
- Conducts regular check-ins with interns and aids in tracking goals for the program
- Communicates with agency programs to hold informational workshops for the interns
- Plans and holds career building workshops throughout the program
- Orients intern with office procedures, processes, and programs
- If you are a student, they will coordinate with your school to ensure completeness of educational program requirements
- Distribute exit survey upon conclusion of the internship



Mentor

Supervisors can choose a mentor for interns to act as an additional point of contact and support throughout the program. Mentors may be a team member or someone from another team who can provide an outside perspective. Typically, mentors are permanent employees with adequate experience and expertise at the agency. Responsibilities for Mentors include:

- Regular check-ins to:
 - Answer any workplace or agency related questions
 - Talk about department culture and what typical practices are within a team
 - Reflect on the work/life balance that both Mentor and Intern are experiencing
- Provide networking opportunities by connecting staff with the intern(s) or setting up informational interviews

Resources & Conclusion

Helpful Websites

- State of Oregon, state government: <https://www.oregon.gov/Pages/index.aspx>
- Chief Human Resources Office: <https://www.oregon.gov/das/hr/pages/index.aspx>
- Job applicant information and resources:
<https://www.oregon.gov/jobs/Pages/index.aspx>
- Commuter resources: <https://getthereoregon.org/>
- Oregon Tourism: <https://traveloregon.com/>

Conclusion

We hope you have found this guide insightful, and we encourage you to apply for an internship program with the State of Oregon! If you have any questions, please contact the Chief HR Office at chro.hr@das.oregon.gov or reach out to the specific agency you're interested in working with.