



**Internship
Policy and Procedure
Manual**

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For more information about internships and careers at South Carolina Department of Social Services, visit www.dss.sc.gov/about/careers

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SCDSS Human Resources
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Our Purpose

The South Carolina Department of Social Services provides a work atmosphere that encourages active participation on the part of students. Our mission is to ensure the safety and health of children and vulnerable adults. As an extension of the classroom, DSS provides mentoring from credentialed staff, such that the intern is the primary beneficiary of the experiential learning. The goal for each student is to conclude their internship experience, “career-ready”. We are committed to providing interesting and challenging work opportunities in a pleasant, helpful environment.

Mission Statement

Serve South Carolina by promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and vulnerable adults, helping individuals achieve stability and strengthening families. This mission is accomplished through the core principles of competence, courage, and compassion.

The Intern Defined

An intern is one who works in a temporary position with an emphasis on education rather than merely employment, making it similar in some respects to an apprenticeship. Interns are often college or university students just beginning their careers or current employees seeking growth and advancement. An intern voluntarily provides services to/for the agency without monetary or material compensation, except for reimbursement of actual costs incurred in carrying out assigned intern duties. These actual costs may include transportation, meals, lodging and incidental out-of-pocket expenses. Student internships provide valuable opportunities for students to gain experience in their field of study, determine if they really have an interest in a particular career path, create a network of contacts, gain high school or college credit, and enable current employees to advance their level of practice.

Internship Liaison

The Internship Liaison are DSS county/office staff who serves as a point of contact for the DSS Workforce Developer based in the State Office of Human Resources, who is responsible for finalizing all internship approvals.. Each county/office should have a representative that would be responsible for:

- Collecting internship applications from the internship supervisors
- Maintaining copies of all internship information
- Submitting necessary paperwork to Internship Coordinator
- Facilitating or coordinating prescribed training
- Serving as a mentor for the intern

Expectations of Interns

The Department of Social Services expects interns to support the mission of the agency through the following statements.

- All information concerning clients is to be treated as confidential.
- Clients and staff members depend on your help. If you cannot complete assigned duties, please contact your DSS supervisor as soon as possible.
- Attendance of job/program specific training is required for all interns. DSS supervisors will instruct individual interns of training dates and registration information.
- You must attend any additional meetings required by your program in order to provide quality services to our clients.
- Each client is respected by providing services in a non-judgmental manner, without regard to gender, race, religion, physical capabilities, sexual orientation, educational level, political opinion, or income.

Intern Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

DSS interns have the right...

- To a suitable assignment based on agency capacity with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, other education, and career goals;
- To relevant training, which is both carefully planned and effectively presented;
- To know as much about the agency as possible, including policies, staff members, etc.
- To continued education as a volunteer, including information about new development, and training for greater responsibilities;

- To sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced, well-informed, patient, and thoughtful
- To a space to work, which is orderly conducive to work, and appropriate for the job to be done; and
- To be heard, to make suggestions, and to be given respect for an honest opinion.

DSS Intern Responsibilities

- Obey agency rules, policies, and regulations.
- Speak up and offer suggestions.
- Be a team player and help where needed
- Be an avid learner - Ask questions when you don't understand.
- Be open to different perspectives.
- Actively participate in supervision. Listen to feedback about your performance and brainstorm strategies for growth.
- Engage in mutually respectful feedback with leadership and peers.
- Be dependable.

Intern Policies and Procedures

While an intern of the South Carolina Department of Social Services, all individuals are expected to abide by the following policies and procedures. Please read and review all sections of this document carefully. Failure to comply with these policies and procedures will result in immediate dismissal. By signing the Intern Agreement Form, individuals state their willingness to follow the policies and procedures in this handbook.

Should an issue arise regarding any specific policy or procedure, contact your immediate supervisor or the State Office of Human Resources Intern Coordinator at (803)898-7371

Here is a list of DSS policies you are required to follow:

- Equal Opportunity
- Anti-Harassment Policy
- Confidentiality
- Public Relations
- Dress Code
- Identification Cards
- Use of Governmental Property
- Email and the Internet
- HIPPA Privacy Regulations
- Tort Liability Insurance
- State Auto Liability Insurance
- Safety
- Sexual Harassment
- Controlled Substances
- Workplace Violence
- Confidentiality Agreement

Training

All interns shall participate in staff training prior to working with children, driving state vehicles, and transporting children under six years of age. Signed records (DSS Form 2100) must be kept of all completed training. In addition to training mandated by DSS, other training may be assigned by individual intern supervisors. Current employees must remain up-to-date with all required trainings.

Prescribed Training

- AAA Defensive Driving 8-Hour Course
- Child Passenger Safety, if transporting children under 13 years old
- HIPPA Training Video/CD
- Civil Rights Video
- Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Training
- GREAT Customer Service
- Sexual Harassment Training
- Code of Conduct – Governing Ethics Issues in SC State Government
- Creating Equal Service: DSS and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)