

rutherford
works



High School
Internship

JUNE 2019

EMPLOYER MENTOR HANDBOOK

Overview

The Rutherford Works High School Internship Program provides students enrolled in Rutherford County Schools the opportunity to gain paid work experience while being placed with Rutherford County employers. Throughout the month of June, students gain exposure to a career field of interest and begin to develop skills and competencies to be successful in the workplace. The program is quite competitive, as more than 260 students applied for 45 positions in 2018.

Students will gain paid work experience with a Rutherford County employer. This internship will last a total of 4 weeks (64 work hours). In addition to gaining work experience, students will also receive 8 hours of pre-employment training and 16 hours of work based learning that will cover employability skills that employers are eagerly seeking from today's job seekers.

The Rutherford Works High School Internship Program benefits employers and the community by training a diverse group of young people to work in a business environment and supplying employers with talented young workers. Most importantly, this program helps our young adults to understand the link between their academic studies and the world of work, to be challenged professionally and to make a positive impact within their community.

The program is made possible through a partnership of the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce/Rutherford Works, Rutherford County Schools, and YouthCAN, a Mid-Cumberland Human Resources Agency.

Key Components

- **Orientation** – Prior to beginning work, students will participate in 8 hours of pre-employment training. They will become familiar with the payroll process and how to complete time sheets, learn the basics of work place safety, be exposed to federal laws regarding harassment in the work place and understand the expectations of a group project. Prior to beginning work, students will also meet with their respective employers on May 31, 2019.
- **Work-Based Learning Seminars:** A unique feature to the internship program is the Work-Based Learning Seminars. Every week, students meet to discuss their work and to participate in relevant seminars. Among the topics covered are personality styles, communications/feedback, behavioral interviewing, financial literacy, preparing for college and personal strengths assessment.

This handbook provides program information and tips for success during your internship. It is important to develop effective communication and etiquette skills and it is a process that all professionals should continually improve. The following tips are excerpted from various professional etiquette books and websites. Credits have been provided with references for further reading.

Program Information

Length of Program

4 weeks for all interns (June 3 – June 28) plus one day of pre-employment training on May 31, 2019. A Celebration for the conclusion of the program will be held on June 28.

Work Schedules

Interns will work a maximum of 20 hours per week (**16 hours at work, 4 hours at Friday Work-Based Learning Workshops**).

All interns will participate in the four-hour Work-Based Learning Workshop each Friday. These four hours will be included in the hours worked each week. Total hours worked, including the seminar time, must not exceed your 20 hours per week maximum. **Work schedules may be arranged between the intern and the supervisor prior to the program start date.** Interns will be paid for pre-employment, actual worked hours and the internship learning workshops held each Friday.

Payroll

Rutherford Works is partnering with YouthCAN to coordinate all interns' payroll. Prior to starting the internship, interns will complete employment paperwork through YouthCAN. Once interns begin their internship, interns must keep track of hours worked through the time sheet process that YouthCAN will cover during pre-employment training. **Timesheets must be submitted weekly by Friday at 5:00PM.** Failure in properly submitting your timesheets will result in delayed arrival of your biweekly payroll check.

Absences

Interns are not paid for scheduled hours not worked.

In the event there is an illness or emergency, the student **must call Ms. Penny Kell** 30 minutes prior to his/her assigned start time. **No Texting - must communicate by a phone call.** Students are encouraged to work with their employer to make up the hours missed should an illness or other extraordinary circumstance occur. If an intern misses more than 4 hours of work, the employer will notify YouthCAN and employment may be terminated. Students may not miss 4 hours on Orientation or Friday trainings, as these cannot be made up.

Excused Absences consist of extraordinary events, such as illness (with doctor's note) or loss/death.

Unexcused Absences consist of, but are not limited to, examples such as the following: team sport related activities, college visit, youth trip, or family vacation.

Appropriate Dress

The way you present yourself is important. Dress in clothes that are neat, clean, and appropriate to the workplace. Pay attention to grooming and personal hygiene. Avoid wearing these:

- Tight fitting and revealing clothes - no short skirts, low-cut shirts or tank tops
- Extreme hairstyles
- Excessive make-up or perfume
- Face and body jewelry
- Inappropriate display of undergarments (including bralettes, leggings, boxer shorts)

The intern will communicate with the employer mentor at Orientation to determine appropriate dress at the job site.

Business casual or professional is appropriate for Orientation, Friday sessions, and the Celebration.

- Appropriate **business casual** dress typically includes slacks or khakis, dress shirt or blouse, open-collar or polo shirt, optional tie or seasonal sport coat, a dress or skirt at knee-length or below, a tailored blazer, knit shirt or sweater, and loafers or dress shoes that cover all or most of the foot (Chacos, flip flops, tennis shoes, etc. are not appropriate).
- Appropriate **business professional** dress almost always means: Suits (with tie) for men, paired with a solid-colored dress shirt. Suits, pants suits or dresses with jacket for women. Neutral colors and conservative footwear for all.

Work Site Visits

The Work Based Learning Coordinator (Ms. Penny Kell) and/or Director of Education & Workforce Development (Regina Ward) will visit your worksite at least once during the month of June. The purpose of these visits will be to evaluate performance and to address any issues or concerns that either the intern or employer have.

Contact Information and Internship Schedule

Rutherford Works Staff

Regina Ward, Director of Education & Workforce Development

Work Phone: 615-278-2392

Cell Phone: 615-594-2002

Work Email: rward@rutherfordchamber.org

Penny Kell, Work Based Learning Coordinator

Work Phone: 615-969-8936

Work Email: kellp@rcschools.net

Rutherford County Schools

Tyra Pilgrim, Director, Career & Technical Education

Work Phone: 615-893-5815

Work Email: pilgrimt@rcschools.net

Brian Lewis, Career & Technical Education Specialist

Work Phone: 615-893-5815

Work Email: pilgrimt@rcschools.net

YouthCAN

Logan LaFevers

Work Phone: 615-850-3921

Work Email: LLaFevers@mchra.com

Intern Contact Information

Intern Name	
Intern Phone Number	
Intern Email	

Intern Emergency Contact Information

Intern's Emergency Contact Name and Relationship	
Intern's Emergency Contact Phone Number	
Intern's Emergency Contact Email	

Unacceptable Conduct

Three Strikes Policy

We expect that each intern will read their handbooks and follow the outlined guidelines. Each intern will be held responsible for all materials and policies found in the handbook. In the event that an intern fails to meet these guidelines, a strike will be issued. **Three strikes will result in termination from the internship.**

Tardy and Absence Policy

If you are going to be late or absent, you must notify your Intern Manager/Employer Mentor and Work-Based Learning Coordinator (Penny Kell) at least 30 minutes prior to the assigned start time. Failure of advanced notification will result in a strike.

Excused Absences consist of extraordinary events, such as illness (with doctor's note) or loss/death.

Unexcused Absences consist of, but are not limited to, examples such as the following: baseball practice, college visit, youth trip, or family vacation.

Grounds for Immediate Termination

Rutherford Works High School Interns will be immediately terminated from the program under any of the following circumstances:

- Failure to report regularly and promptly to the worksite and Rutherford Works Work-Based Learning Seminars
- Using or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Fighting on the premises
- Vandalizing or destruction of any Rutherford Co. Chamber or outside agency property
- Possession of firearms, explosives, weapons or any other hazardous devices or using any item as a weapon
- Theft and/or fraudulent report of internship hours worked
- Inability or refusal to follow directions from authority
- Use of mobile phones while at work, other than in the case of an emergency. If you have them, please turn them off and put them away.
- Physical, or verbal or continued harassment to an employee, visitor, fellow intern or other business professional

- Behaving in a disruptive manner and disrespectful manner at a seminar or at any other Rutherford Works High School Internship function

In the event of a conflict between interns in the program, all interns involved in the conflict will be asked to meet with the YouthCAN Manager and Work Based Learning Coordinator to try to resolve the conflict. Refusal to fully participate in a conflict management process may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Your Role as a Host Site for a Rutherford Works Intern

As a host site and mentor for an intern, you will be responsible for the following:

- Mentor should assign tasks that not only help improve the intern's existing skills but help them develop new skills
- Mentor should assign projects or tasks that can be completed by a young person with little or no experience (but the right skill set!) Ideally, the intern would not be responsible for any large projects or whole jobs (i.e. fully responsible for Accounts Receivable)
- Mentor should provide regular feedback, constructive criticism and praise for good work
- Mentor should try to provide learning experiences for their intern such as "lunch and learns" or informational interviews with staff, colleagues, etc to learn more about the company and the field
- **Timesheets**- Intern Mentors will be responsible for approving the intern's timesheets through YouthCAN. Intern Mentors will approve Intern's weekly timesheet on Thursdays. At the beginning of the internship, YouthCAN will provide each Intern Mentor with instructions on the timesheet process.

If you have any questions about payroll or timesheets, contact YouthCAN.

- Mentor is invited to attend the end of program celebration on June 28 from 9:00 – 10:00 AM at the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce.
- Mentor is asked to write and present student intern with a letter of recommendation (if eligible) at the end of program celebration.

Tasks to Assign an Intern

What Should an Intern Do?

Interns are eager to try new things, learn new skills, and they can be an extremely valuable asset to your business. Here are some examples of things interns have done in previous years:

1. Assistance with projects:
 - Mass marketing – creating materials, mailings, contact lists, etc.
 - Online research – prospecting, gathering data, compiling info for reports
 - Property research and analysis
 - Processing rental payments and assemble tenant agreement packets

2. Administrative tasks:
 - Filing of documents, reorganizing filing systems
 - Data entry – Excel, Access, updating of records, etc.
 - Phone calls – answering company phone, taking messages, making scripted calls

3. Other:
 - Taking notes at site visits for company staff, typing up meeting minutes, etc.
 - Messenger duties – delivering documents/packages on foot to other offices
 - Researching the viability of a new program or campaign
 - Compiling and presenting statistics
 - Evaluating potential social media platforms
 - Proposing a social media strategy
 - Building a company sales database
 - Cleaning up an existing database
 - Critiquing the company's website from a user perspective
 - Brainstorming ideas for boosting site usability
 - Evaluating some area of IT functionality
 - Generating cost-cutting ideas
 - Preparing budgets, reports, plans, or proposals
 - Creating materials (marketing, collateral, etc.)
 - Sourcing lower-cost supplies
 - Developing process directions for tasks with high employee turnover
 - Competitive analysis / product comparisons

What should an intern NOT be doing?

While the range of things that an intern can be doing is very large, there are few things that you should make sure your intern is not doing:

1. Job Shadow – this is a paid internship. It's reasonable to allow time for tours and observation opportunities, but the bulk of their time with you should be in work activities.
2. An intern should not be a replacement for a full time position.
3. For example an intern should not be solely responsible for processing all incoming payments during their shift. They can assist someone who has this primary responsibility.
4. It is very important that an intern not work beyond their allotted 16 hours per week.
5. An intern should not be left unsupervised for long periods of time. Try to schedule the intern times when the Mentor will be available to answer questions and provide feedback.
6. While interns will usually take initiative on their own and ask for more work when they need to, please be sure that they have tasks assigned to them for each shift.
7. An intern should not travel in a car with any adult associated with the internship worksite unless the Intern Mentor has discussed this with YouthCAN and has written permission from the students' parents.

How to Work with an Intern

Hosting an intern should be enjoyable for you as well as your intern, however working with a youth person may turn out to be a very different experience than working with a more experienced employee. Here is a list of tips for working with your intern:

‘Yes’ may not always mean ‘yes’

Interns are eager to show that they are capable of doing anything you assign to them, so much so, that they may agree to tasks for which they are not fully prepared. When an intern says, “Yes, I understand,” please be mindful that they may actually need more assistance. Although we encourage interns to ask questions, they may be too shy or embarrassed to come back to you for more clarification when they really need it. Please check in with them frequently as they are completing tasks for you.

Give constructive feedback

The Rutherford Works High School Internship should be a positive learning experience for YouthCAN members. When an intern does not complete their task adequately, please let them know, as well as explain how they could have done the assignment better. One great way to do this, without causing the interns to feel badly about themselves, is by “wrapping” your criticism in a compliment. Start out with something they are doing well, then state your criticism, but end with a compliment or on a positive note.

Problems?

If ever there is a problem that you need assistance with, please contact YouthCAN and Penny Kell immediately so that we may remedy situation before it escalates.

Provide learning experiences

Although the interns are encouraged to ask questions and see how they can learn more about the real estate industry, you can help them facilitate their career exploration. Here are some examples of things you might consider doing to expand your intern’s knowledge:

- Have a “lunch and learn” where you might talk about a component of your real estate business
- Make an appointment with your intern to talk about their career goals and ambitions
- Help them set up informational interviews with various people at your firm to expose them to career paths within the your industry and company.