



**EL PASO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT**  
**PILOT PAID INTERNSHIP PROGRAM POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**Adopted Date: 8/14/2023**

**I. Purpose**

El Paso County strongly believes that paid internships are an important tool for recruiting and introducing innovative people to public service and preparing the workforce of the future. This pilot program is being initiated for a two-year period in a limited capacity to determine its efficacy before expanding further. Commissioners Court, County Administration and Human Resources Department will be the departments piloting the program. This policy and program procedures is applicable to *paid* interns.

It is the practice of the County to attract and retain employees on the basis of their skills, aptitudes, experience, development, performance, potential, and education and training as prescribed in the job description of each job classification. In order to attract future employees and assist in their development, the County is implementing a pilot paid internship program for high school, trade school, college and university students. This exposure illustrates how El Paso County's system of government relates across various County Departments and Offices and into the El Paso County community at large.

The Human Resources Department will facilitate the offering of paid internship opportunities for individuals who are current students or who have graduated in the past 24 months.

**II. Procedures**

**a. Requirements**

- i. The County may employ interns to perform work which will not:
  1. Result in the displacement of regular employees.
  2. Be primarily clerical in nature.
- ii. Work performed by a paid intern bears a relationship to their formal academic program or career interest.
- iii. Paid interns are temporary County employees
- iv. Paid interns are exempt from the civil service system and are at-will employees. The hiring Department or the paid intern may terminate the employment relationship without cause or prior notice.
- v. Paid Interns will be paid no less than \$15.00 per hour for all hours worked. Requests for higher rates will require Human Resources approval or an intern exceed 40 hours worked in a week.
- vi. Internship assignments/placements will not exceed 12 months.
- vii. All hours worked must be tracked in UKG to ensure proper and timely payment of wages.
- viii. All individuals must complete an application for a paid intern position.
- ix. The amount of hours will vary dependent upon the hourly rate. The hours and rates must not exceed the budgeted amount allocated each fiscal year.

**b. Human Resources Responsibilities**

- i. Obtain information from the Departments or Offices desiring to offer a paid internship opportunity to an individual.
- ii. Facilitate onboarding for individuals selected by the referring department.
- iii. Complete criminal background check and driver's license check, if relevant to the position.

**c. Intern's Responsibilities**

- i. Complete an application for the paid intern position through the El Paso County Employment Opportunities website.
- ii. Participate in an interview with the County Department offering the paid internship opportunity, if requested.
- iii. Complete paperless onboarding and required trainings on NeoGov OnBoard.
- iv. Complete orientation sessions and attend on-boarding sessions with the Human Resources Department, as necessary.
- v. Uphold the El Paso County Code of Ethics throughout the entirety of the internship.
- vi. Shall agree to and abide by all applicable policies and procedures set forth by El Paso County and of the assigned Department.
- vii. Shall agree to complete all assigned tasks, within the deadline and with appropriate supervision.
- viii. Complete and submit feedback form(s) quarterly and at conclusion of the internship.

**d. County Departments/Offices Responsibilities**

- i. Contact the Human Resources Department to seek a paid internship opportunity for an individual.
- ii. Determine which members of the Department will participate in the internship experience and provide direct supervision of the intern.
- iii. May interview applicants.
- iv. Shall be responsible for submitting Security Access Forms to ITD prior to the interns' start date.
- v. Shall be responsible for tracking hours for the paid interns to ensure that the hours allocated for the year are not exceeded.
- vi. Shall be responsible for adjusting a paid intern's schedule when there are County holidays.
- vii. After acceptance of the intern, the Department Designee will set up an initial meeting with the individual and arrange for subsequent student orientation, workplace assignment and appropriate training to accomplish the assignment. Orientation should include:
  1. Tour of the Department and introduction to staff the intern will be working with;
  2. Information on the history, vision and services of the Department;
  3. The Department's policies and procedures;
  4. A clear list of expectations, project duties and goals; and
  5. A list of the resources available to the intern. This should include a workstation that has been set up for the Intern as well as the items needed by the Intern to be successful in the performance of their project.
- viii. Ensure that the intern is offered a meaningful experience during their time with the Department and escalate issues that arise to the attention of the Human Resources Department.
- ix. Upon completion of the intern assignment, the Department will complete a feedback form with the intern, capturing their experience and submit it to the Human Resources Department.
- x. Feedback forms will be reviewed by the Department and the Human Resources Department.

**e. Conclusion of Pilot Program**

Before the conclusion of the pilot period, an internal assessment of the program will be conducted. Feedback and data from the pilot Departments and the participating paid interns will be gathered and analyzed. This is to analyze the program's effectiveness and recommend changes to determine the continuation and expansion of the program.