

Memorandum of Understanding
for
Virginia WIC Employee Participation in the
Virginia Department of Health/Maryland WIC Dietetic Internship

This agreement serves to outline the minimum terms and conditions required of the intern, the local agency coordinator, and program administrators as it relates to supporting an employee in the VA/MD WIC Dietetic Internship (“the Program”). A completed agreement is a required component in the application packet. All parties involved should seek guidance on any item they find unclear or unsuitable before signing.

I, _____ (“intern”), am applying to participate in the Virginia/Maryland WIC Dietetic Internship (“Program”). By initialing next to each item, I am acknowledging my understanding of the terms of participation and commitments upon completion.

I, _____ (“Local Agency Coordinator”), am aware of the intern’s application to the Program and by initialing next to each item I am acknowledging the various commitments required by the Program if the intern is accepted.

The applicant currently holds the position of _____ in the _____ (“Local Agency”).

Terms of Participation

Employment Requirement

- a. By date of application, the Local Agency will have employed the intern for a minimum of 6 months.
- b. By date of application, the intern is employed as full-time employee with the Virginia Department of Health.
- c. The intern will maintain employment with the Local Agency while enrolled in the Program.
- d. The intern will continue to work for the Local Agency for one year (52 weeks) after obtaining the Registered Dietitian credential.

Program Start and End Dates

The program begins on the first day of orientation; orientation is held on the third full week of September and attendance to all five days is mandatory.

The last day of the program occurs in the first two weeks of August, 45 calendar weeks after the first day of the program.

Program Activities: Supervised Practice, Classes, Webinars, Meetings, and Homework

The Program has organized associated learning activities (assignments, projects, classes, and webinars) and supervised practice experiences in order for interns to be able to obtain the breadth and depth of knowledge required for an entry-level dietitian as outlined by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). These supervised practice experiences and associated learning activities are broken into three primary rotations.

560 hours supervised practice in Public Health (“Public Health Rotation”)

The intern will accept part-time educational leave (please see *Estimated Financial Obligation* section below) for a period of 28 weeks, which may not be contiguous, during which time the intern will devote 20 business hours per week to the WIC clinic and a minimum of 20 business hours to the Program.

The time spent in the clinic and with the Program will be prearranged with preceptors, a clinic supervisor, and program administrators to suit the clinic, the intern’s, and the Program’s needs.

240 hours supervised practice in Foodservice Systems Management (“Foodservice Rotation”)

The intern will accept full-time educational leave for a period of 6 weeks, which should be contiguous, in order to complete the Foodservice Rotation as outlined by the Program.

The dates of this period of absence from the WIC clinic will be prearranged by the intern with the clinic administrator with enough notice as to not negatively affect WIC clinic operations.

400 hours supervised practice in Clinical Nutrition (“Clinical Rotation”)

The intern will accept full-time educational leave for a period of 10 weeks, which should be contiguous, in order to complete the Clinical Rotation as outlined by the Program.

The dates of this period of absence from the WIC clinic will be prearranged by the intern with the clinic administrator with enough notice as to not negatively affect WIC clinic operations.

The Program makes every effort to schedule group classes and meeting within normal business hours however, as is consistent with the academic nature of the program, the intern will encounter preparation and follow up work that requires time and attention outside of normal business hours.

The intern agrees to attend all required class days, which will include but is not limited to:

- Full day in-person meetings every other month with the location rotating between Virginia and Maryland
- Virtual meeting and classes (“Webinars”), 3 hours in duration, twice monthly
- A minimum of two full day joint program classes, dates to be determined during the program

Samples of rotation curriculums and program schedules are available prior to application on written request to a program administrator.

Preceptors

The intern’s Local Agency Coordinator will identify an appropriate individual to act as the primary preceptor to the intern during the 28-week Public Health Rotation. This individual must meet Program requirements and should expect to be in regular contact with Program administrators. If the Local Agency Coordinator or Supervisor is unwilling or unable to appoint a primary preceptor to the intern then a State Nutritionist will act as the intern’s primary preceptor.

The intern will have two additional primary preceptors during the Foodservice and Clinical supervised practice rotations; each will be responsible for hours, assignments, and evaluations during their respective rotations.

Progress Evaluations

The intern will be updated regularly on their progress towards demonstrating entry-level practice standards. This is to include but is not limited to written and oral progress reports, evaluations, and performance reviews. These reviews and reports will remain within the Program and will not be part of the intern’s personnel file within the Local Agency.

The Clinical and Foodservice preceptors will also evaluate the intern’s performance and progress. These evaluations will only be shared with the WIC preceptor on a need-to-know basis.

Scope of Program Administrators in Relation to Local Agencies

Program administrators hold no bearing on the continued employment or scope of responsibilities awarded to interns before, during, or after enrollment in the Program.

Program administrators will:

- a. Advise the intern on professional development
- b. Inform, on request, Local Agency Coordinators of an intern’s progress limited to minimum information needed (good standing, terminated, extension granted)
- c. Provide guidance, as requested, to Local Agency Coordinators on how to support an intern
- d. Seek feedback from interns and Local Agency staff as to the internship experience, both during and after program enrollment

Program administrators will not:

- a. Mediate disputes of use of accrued paid leave and educational leave
- b. Hear complaints related to specific performance of duties of employment
- c. Hear complaints of personnel or managerial issues within the Local Agency
- d. Act as a reference or provide written reference or recommendation if the intern is seeking a promotion or position change within the Virginia WIC program

It is the Program's belief that the program curriculum prepares interns to be capable of leadership roles within the public health sector. The Program routinely encourages interns to seek greater responsibilities and opportunities for professional development both during and after enrollment in the Program. Local Agency Coordinators are encouraged to award additional responsibilities to successful interns based on new or advanced skills gained or developed during enrollment in the Program and to seek guidance from program administrators for engaging interns post-credentialing in leadership and professional development opportunities.

Credentialing Deadlines

- a. First attempt of dietetics registration exam within 6 months of obtaining a verification statement
- b. Credentialing as a Registered Dietitian within one year (52 weeks) of obtaining a verification statement

Estimated Financial Obligation

In order to complete the Program the intern must be granted educational leave. A completed and signed HR-29 must be on file prior to the start of the internship program. The HR-29 form outlines the complete repayment agreement and the consequences of non-payment. The HR-29 form submitted with the application must include signatures from the employee, the employee's supervisor and the district's Director must approve or deny funds are available. The form may be submitted with the application packet without the Division Director and/or the Commissioner's approval signature, as this will be forwarded upon acceptance to the program. A sample HR-29 form with suggested language can be located on the internship's website in the *Application Process* section.

Interns and Local Agency Coordinators should be aware of the value of educational leave the intern plans to accept during enrollment in the Program. The sum of the educational leave value should be calculated following the steps outlined on the HR-29 form with total number of 150 workdays missed.

Terms and conditions of repayment can be located directly on the HR-29 form in section X and should be carefully reviewed by the employee prior to application to the internship program.

The sum of the educational leave value is \$_____.

By signing below you are acknowledging your awareness and understanding of the terms of participation in the VA/MD WIC Dietetic Internship program.

Applicant Date

Local Agency Coordinator Date

Virginia WIC Program Manager Date