DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
STUDENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

I. Introduction

The Student Intern Program operates under AS 39.25.110, the exempt law which was amended to include DNR's intern program effective June 15, 1984. Prior to this, the program operated under AS 39.25.195-200, the Nonpermanent Hire Law. The program is exempt from the provisions of the State Personnel Act and the rules adopted under AS 39.25.195-200. As a result, DNR has greater flexibility in such matters as pay levels, number of positions, eligibility requirements and approval for positions as they are handled "in-house" rather than through the Department of Administration, Division of Personnel.

Since January 1980, DNR has utilized well over 725 intern positions; currently we average 30 - 35 per year. Most of the student interns were undergraduates studying at Alaska campuses. A fair number have been graduate students and high school students. The majority of intern positions were hired in the Divisions of Forestry, Geological and Geophysical Surveys, Parks, Water, and Land. In the last several years most interns have been hired by the Divisions of Forestry, Geological and Geophysical Surveys and Support Services.

The student intern program offers unique opportunities to DNR, students, educational institutions and the State in general. The overall purpose of the program is to provide employment that contributes to a student's academic and career development while also accomplishing some necessary work for DNR. The program also:

1. Provides an applied educational experience for students;

2. Exposes students to the types of employment opportunities available in their prospective careers in hopes that they will discover their employment interests;

3. Leads students into the most active fields of government and private industry;

4. Provides an opportunity for students to become knowledgeable about state government and hopefully, influences the intern to return to state employment upon completing his or her education;

5. Provides DNR access to skilled students who need summer or school year employment;

6. Provides a rewarding source of income for college students;

7. Participates in Alaska's educational system by encouraging and exposing students to career fields related to resource management and development;

8. Increases diversity employment.

A DNR internship is not "just a job." It is a planned training program that enables the student to learn the policies, procedures and techniques of DNR professions while performing meaningful tasks which are valuable and necessary to DNR programs. **If a supervisor has an overriding need to get some temporary work done, then a <u>nonpermanent</u> position should be used.**

Internship work programs are designed by DNR. All potential interns must provide a "Statement of Eligibility" from a school to certify his/her student status.

II. Levels of Internship

There are three levels of internship:

<u>Student Intern I</u> - High school junior or senior (at least 16 years old): Often the student's first working experience. Simple tasks and basic exposure to the work environment are learned. The position typically performs routine clerical/administrative tasks, basic IT work, provides technical assistance, or participates in Forestry's learning program. Close supervision is required at this level.

<u>Student Intern II</u> - Undergraduate student: Typically has completed some advanced course work related to the internship. The intern receives training in technical areas such as drafting, cartography, field work, title search, accounting, computer work, customer service, but isn't limited to these areas.

<u>Student Intern III</u> - Graduate student: Typically in the area of their major field of study. Intern work is equivalent to professional job classes. Work plan exceeds technician or assistant jobs.

III. Salaries and Benefits

Salaries are based upon experience and education as it pertains to the internship.

High school	-	$ 8.50 to $12.50 hourly
Undergraduate	-	$12.50 to $16.50 hourly
Graduate	-	$16.50 to $20.50 hourly

Benefits

The interns are eligible for the following benefits:

1. Worker's Compensation Benefits

2. Supplemental Annuity Plan (SBS-AP, the State of Alaska 401(a) retirement plan)

3. Overtime at time and one half for time worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

IV. Eligibility

In order for to be eligible for a DNR internship, he/she must meet all of the following requirements:

1. Must be at least 16 years of age (if under 16, child labor laws must be adhered to and prior approval from Department of Administration, Division of Personnel must be received);

2. Must be currently enrolled as a full time student in a high school (or a recognized home school program at the high school level), college or graduate study program that is related to DNR work. Full time enrollment is a minimum of five classes and/or work study at the high school level. For college, the minimum is nine semester hours for undergraduates. This requirement can be adjusted if a student is enrolled in a college with a schedule differing from the standard semester system. At the graduate level, there is no required minimum number of credits, however, active enrollment in a degree program is required.

   For a summer internship, the applicant must have been a full time student during the immediately preceding spring semester and must have proof of acceptance/admission for full time studies in the upcoming fall term. Students who have graduated from high school or college during the preceding academic year and intend to begin pursuing a higher level degree the next term are considered eligible for the summer internship program.

3. Must be in good academic standing (as defined by the particular school).

V. Roles and Responsibilities

Several parties are involved in the internship. Each party assumes specific responsibilities associated with the benefits it will achieve from the internship. These are the critical roles.

A. The Supervisor

1. Will provide a training/work station and required materials for the student.

2. Will prepare a written training plan for the student. The plan will include an orientation and offer a wide variety of experiences. To maximize student learning, the plan will be updated each semester.

3. Will select the student to participate.

4. Will supervise the intern's work, help the intern with problems, and ensure school eligibility requirements are met.

5. Will prepare the performance evaluation of the student intern at the end of each semester and upon termination.

6. Will work with the department or division intern coordinator on administrative matters such as position establishment, recruitment, student status, intern approval. Payroll and other appointment paperwork will be sent to Department of Administration, Division of Personnel, Technical Services.

B. The Student

1. Will meet all eligibility requirements as outlined in Section IV.

2. Will provide transcripts, letters of recommendation or other documentation as requested to verify eligibility.

3. Will promptly notify the supervisor when the student fails to meet the eligibility requirements for a student internship. Failure to notify the supervisor of eligibility changes may result in termination of the internship with the Department. It is in the student's best interest to submit a copy of their transcripts and/or registration forms each semester.

4. Will fulfill the work plan and otherwise abide by the rules and conditions outlined by the employer, supervisor, or intern coordinator.

5. May seek academic credit for the internship. If the student is receiving academic credit it is the student's responsibility to ensure all school requirements are met.

6. Will provide his/her own room and board, unless the position requires field work. DNR will provide field accommodations. (DNR may provide meals and/or non-commercial per diem for student interns while the student is working away from their primary duty station. However, this provision is at the discretion of the supervisor.)

7. Will pay for initial travel to duty station.

C. The School

1. Will verify enrollment and academic standing of applicants and participating interns as requested by DNR.

2. Will help DNR recruit interested, responsible, and competent students (e.g. by announcing internship openings, handing out applications to qualified students, etc.).

3. Will provide assistance to help the student attain the technical and professional competencies needed in conjunction with the internship.

D. Division Intern Coordinator

Divisions are not required to have intern coordinators, however, a division coordinator is strongly recommended if the division has numerous and continual use of interns. The division coordinator may be anyone so designated, including administrative staff.

1. Will work with the department intern coordinator on final approvals of intern positions and student intern approvals.

2. Will work with division supervisors on planning and conducting the internship.

3. Will review and verify that division requests for intern positions and training plans are in compliance with DNR intern guidelines and that funding exists.

4. Will coordinate division positions and will process and maintain administrative files and intern personnel files.

5. Will work with the students to make sure they complete necessary application paperwork, appointment paperwork, help them with problems, and to make sure eligibility requirements

are met.

6. Will recruit eligible students and assist in student placement where requested in the division.

7. When requested to do so, will provide supervisors with names and applications of eligible students.

E. Department Intern Coordinator

1. Will work with supervisors and/or division intern coordinators on planning and conducting the internship and completing final approvals of positions and student interns.

2. Will review and verify that division requests for intern positions and training plans are in compliance with DNR intern guidelines and that funding exists.

3. Will coordinate positions and will process and maintain intern placement administrative files.

4. Will work with the students and division coordinators to make sure they complete necessary application paperwork.

5. Will recruit eligible students and assist in student placement where requested in DNR.

6. When requested to do so, will provide supervisors with names and applications of eligible students.

7. Will prepare and distribute forms and other guidelines that may be useful for the program. (Examples include student application and evaluation forms, student handouts, etc.)

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