

2.8 – Child Welfare Internship Program

Chapter – Administrative



	Countywide		Department: Human Services	X	Division: Child Welfare
Supersedes: Prior Versions (CW Internship Program, 2016)			Effective Date: April 1, 2020		
Authority: HR Policy 1500-Wake County General Rules of Employment, Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace; NC Child Welfare Education Collaborative					
Originating Department/Division/Section: Human Services/Child Welfare/Continuous Quality Improvement)					

I. Purpose:

To provide high quality learning experiences for students in Master's Programs from various educational institutions in North Carolina.

II. Description of Standard:

It is the policy of Wake County Human Services, Child Welfare Division, to provide relevant learning opportunities for identified students through the process of student internships. All students interested in obtaining an internship with Wake County Human Services, Child Welfare Division shall follow the process outlined in this protocol. Students referred from higher educational institutions will be interviewed prior to being accepted.

The internship is intended to develop direct understanding and experience in the child welfare field, exposing the student to organizational cultures, management systems, operations and resources, programs, services and target populations. Such knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences will continue to develop and grow as each student graduates and becomes a life-long learner.

The following is a list of Child Welfare program areas an intern could be assigned to:

- CPS Intake Services
- CPS Investigations/Assessments
- CPS In-Home Services
- Permanency Planning Services
- Adoptions
- Prevention Services
- LINKS Program
- 18 – 21 Program

Eligibility for Internships:

Wake County Human Services, Child Welfare Division (WCHS-CW), only accepts students who are in a Graduate (Master's) program within the state of North Carolina. Students will be required to complete Pre-Service training through the NC Division of Social Services (in collaboration with the NC Educational Child Welfare Collaborative) as well as the New Hire Orientation offered by Wake County Child Welfare Trainers. The WCHS-CW Intern Coordinator (CQI Manager or designee) will email the contact for the NC Educational Child Welfare Collaborative in early Spring to solicit for potential interns.

Deadlines for Requesting and Accepting Interns (may change if needed):

Internship Semester	Placement Request Deadline	WCHS will confirm by	Student document submission due	Expected Start of Internship
Fall	April 15	May 15	July 25	Last full week of August

Assignments:

Interns will be selected based upon the needs of WCHS and the skills each student brings to the table. It is the goal of WCHS to ensure all our interns get the best possible experience. After the selection, all work duties and location assignment will be communicated by WHCS-CW Intern Coordinator to each school coordinator. Interns are assigned to units (Supervisor Teams) in the following manner:

1. Program Managers will collaborate with Supervisors in their work group to determine Supervisors and social workers who are available for field instruction of interns and provides this information to the WCHS-CW Intern Coordinator who serves as the liaison with higher educational institutions interested in placing student for internships. Supervisors and social workers are encouraged to partner as Task Supervisors and Field Instructors for each intern.
2. Supervisors interested should demonstrate ethical and professional behavior (see below), should not be not under a written warning or disciplinary action, and should be meeting all expectations of their Supervisor.

One of the nine competencies for social workers includes demonstrating ethical and professional behavior (Council on Social Work Education, 2015-see attachment). Competency #1 states that social workers:

- “make ethical decisions”
 - “use reflection and self-regulation to...maintain professionalism in practice situations”
 - “demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication”
 - “use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior”
3. Approved Supervisors and field instructors will receive resumes of interested students and select students for interviews.
 4. Students will be invited to interviews with WCHS-CW Intern Coordinator and Supervisors/Field Instructors.
 5. After interviews are conducted, Supervisors/Field Instructors will meet as a group to select interns. Availability of space at Supervisor locations must be considered. Decisions (including interns selected and not selected, units assigned, and location of work assignments) will be communicated by WCHS-CW Intern Coordinator to each school coordinator.

Background Checks:

Interns must complete all required background checks and be approved through the WCHS Volunteer Office (Denise Kissel) prior to beginning an internship. This includes being approved to drive and carry the required insurance. If an intern chooses not to drive or carry the required insurance, then he/she will not be allowed to transport clients.

Assignment of Space:

The logistics of locating and providing needed resources for Interns will be handled by the CQI Administrative Specialist. Each Intern will be assigned to a computer and landline, connected to the Wake

Gov email system, given access to Office 365, requested access to the OnBase and Lotus Notes systems, and requested assignment of identified cubicle (through submission of move pack) at least two weeks prior to the Intern's start date. Supervisors must demonstrate a business need for access to additional IT applications.

Onboarding:

All approved Interns are expected to complete Pre-Service prior to starting their internship, preferably in the Summer, or the Pre-Service requirements set forth by the Child Welfare Education Collaborative. Additionally, Interns are expected to attend the New Hire Orientation offered in Wake County. Topics to cover during Orientation include:

- Demographics of Wake County
- Overview of Wake County Human Services, including the main building, satellite offices and regional centers
- Where to find Wake County protocols and other important information
- Professional expectations (timely leave notification/approval, sick leave, communication, conflict resolution, dress code, use of county equipment)
- IBM Client Application/Lotus Notes
- OnBase
- IT applications that Interns have access to compared to employees and how they are used within Child Welfare (i.e. SharePoint, how to sign up for trainings, trainings available, etc.)
- Car seat training – how to properly install car seats, provided by Transportation Supervisor
- What trainings are recommended for interns (All PDP trainings, Darkness to Light, Protective Factors Overview...)
- Troubleshooting - Who to go to if you need assistance and cannot talk to your field instructor or if you have ethical concerns (Answer: WCHS-CW Intern Coordinator)
- Filing records
- Setting up computer
- Mileage reimbursement - setting up a vendor account and submitting mileage (what form to use and who to submit it to; bring a voided check)

Preparing Students for Contact with Clients:

The field instructor and the task supervisor are sometimes the same person, although the preference is for each intern to have both staff supporting them. In cases where that is not true, the person who has the best opportunity to observe the intern's readiness for contact with clients should make the decision about what contact the intern is allowed to make. When there is both a field instructor and unit supervisor, ideally there is collaboration about the intern's progress and readiness for additional responsibilities. The process for making the determination is as follows:

1. Internships should begin with an observation period to allow students to note how our agency engages with clients as well as what type of tasks we manage.
2. A process that is helpful to interns when they begin is for the student to:
 - a. Read all information about a case in OnBase and in Lotus Notes;
 - b. Observe a social worker interview the client and document the contact;
 - c. Discuss with the field instructor how they would have intervened, then the student intern practice interviewing with a social worker while the field instructor observes and provides feedback;
 - d. Discuss with field instructor safety protocol for particular situations (Home visit, office visit, school visit, talking with client in the community, who to call, what to do, when to

- try to de-escalate the client and when to call for help, how to manage emotions in difficult situations, etc.); and
- e. Discuss customer service 101, phone etiquette and nonverbal communication.
3. Prior to any alone contact with client, field instructors or unit supervisors should observe intern's interaction with clients to ensure they can appropriately interview and engage clients.

Parameters for Case Assignments:

1. When considering assignment for interns, the field instructor and/or task supervisor should consider the following:
 - a. The student's level of professionalism;
 - b. The liability and/or risk involved in the assignments;
 - c. Student's competency level and ability to communicate; and
 - d. Student's readiness to do the work, awareness of limitations, comfort with asking for help, and ability to set appropriate boundaries.
2. The Supervisor(s) should take into consideration a lower caseload size for their interns?
3. If asking the Intern to transport children, the field instructor and/or task supervisor should take into consideration the number of children who will need to be transported and the capacity of the Intern's vehicle.

Transportation/Travel Reimbursement:

- Interns may not drive county cars (only Wake County employees may drive vehicles).
- In order to request mileage reimbursement, interns must:
 - Complete Appendix C-Driver's License Check and Automobile Insurance Agreement; and
 - Submit a photocopy of their NC Driver's License; and
 - Submit copies of auto insurance documents (student interns must carry the required level of insurance as stated on the form).
 - Additionally, if the intern has an out of state driver's license, then they must submit an additional form called Telematics authorizing Wake County to perform a driving background check in their home state.
- In order to request mileage reimbursement, interns must register as a vendor with Wake County. The county prefers that you complete the information online (<http://www.wakegov.com/finance/business/vendors/Pages/default.aspx>). However, interns can also complete it on a form (see attachments) and email to: APVendorSetup@wakegov.com. The form (and online system) also includes instructions. Below are a few tips that may be helpful:
 - Vendor Legal Name – Enter intern first and last names
 - Payment Address – Enter intern current address
 - Procurement/1099 Address – Enter only if the intern's permanent address is different than his/her current address. 1099 address is the location Wake County will send the 1099 next year for tax purposes
 - Classification – Intern is considered an individual, enter social security number
 - EIN – Enter social security number
 - Business Type – Indicate if current address is in Wake County or Outside of Wake (interns are not tax exempt)
- Interns must follow Wake County policy [Travel & Transportation policy] regarding appropriate submission of mileage (i.e. interns may submit reimbursement for mileage only if they are the only person making the trip and forms must be completed within 30 days of trip).
- Interns must complete mileage using the paper mileage form (they cannot submit mileage using the Forms in Motion system).
- Interns may transport clients in their personal vehicles, if they have been approved to do so and

have the required vehicle insurance.

- Interns are encouraged to seek the assistance of the CQI Administrative Specialist to complete and submit mileage on time and accurately.

Performance or Behavior Concerns with Interns:

One of the nine competencies for social workers includes demonstrating ethical and professional behavior (Council on Social Work Education, 2015-see attachment). Competency #1 states that social workers:

- “make ethical decisions”
- “use reflection and self-regulation to...maintain professionalism in practice situations”
- “demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication”
- “use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior”

WCHS-CW expects all interns to adhere to this standard. If an intern behaves in a manner incongruent with this standard, then the field instructor and/or unit supervisor will immediately, or as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so, talk privately with the intern to gather more information and address the concerning behaviors. The field instructor and/or unit supervisor will also inform the WCHS-CW Intern Coordinator, the intern’s school coordinator, and Program Manager about situation and corrective actions. Depending on the situation, the intern may be asked to suspend their internship. If the behavior continues and/or the field instructor and/or unit supervisor is recommending suspension, then a conference call involving the WCHS-CW Intern Coordinator, school coordinator, and Program Manager must take place to determine next steps.

WCHS-CW expects all interns to adhere to the Wake County policy regarding an Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace [HR Policy 1500-Wake County General Rules of Employment, Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace]. The policy states that “[t]he unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, sale, possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol, or the consumption of alcohol in the workplace, and/or during the work time is strictly prohibited on County premises.” An intern who appears to be impaired by illegal drugs, alcohol, or prescription medications while working will be immediately removed from work to talk privately with field instructor and/or unit supervisor to gather more information and address the concerning behaviors. The field instructor and/or unit supervisor will also inform the WCHS-CW Intern Coordinator, the intern’s school coordinator, and Program Manager about situation and corrective actions. Depending on the situation, the intern may be asked to suspend their internship. If the behavior continues and/or the field instructor and/or unit supervisor is recommending suspension, then a conference call involving the WCHS-CW Intern Coordinator, school coordinator, and Program Manager must take place to determine next steps.

Expected Outcomes:

Data on the Internship Program will be collected and reported to CQI Manager (and Child Welfare Leadership Team) at the end of every school year. Data and outcomes to be collected are:

- Number of interns participating in program
- Length of each intern’s participation
- Evaluation for each intern
- Results from surveys from interns, field instructors, and unit supervisors on overall experience, strengths, and opportunities for improvement
- Goals and improvements for the next school year

Off-Boarding:

At the end of the school year or as soon as field instructor or unit supervisor is made aware that an intern is leaving early, the CQI Administrative Specialist will follow the process below for off-boarding interns:

- Confirm with field instructor or unit supervisor in an email the last day that the intern will work;
- Complete a move pack for each intern and submit to GSA at HS Moves Request Center email, copy Wake County Intern Coordinator, and the Human Service HR representatives;
- Send an email to Peter Bailey, GSA, to deactivate each intern's badge;
- Send an email to IS Help Desk to notify them of intern departure and collection of any IT equipment.

Field instructors or unit supervisors are responsible for collecting laptops or other Wake County property from interns before they leave and returning them to the appropriate department.

Location: S:\Protocols-WCHS Official Approved\Child Welfare

III. Definitions:

- A. OnBase – Wake County's document management system
- B. GSA – Wake County General Services Administration

IV. Applicability/Exceptions:

This protocol is applicable to all interns and potential interns of the Wake County Human Services, Division of Child Welfare.

V. Fiscal/Resource Impact

There are several costs associated with operating an Intern program, such as time for Supervisors/Field Instructors to supervise the intern, desk space, and use of computer or laptop. Wake County is not devoting additional resources to the program. This program offers hands-on learning for students and increases interest in the field of child welfare.

VI. Data Description

Intern Coordinator will collect data on number of students who applied for internships, number accepted, number who completed two semesters and feedback from student interns. Data will be used to improve intern experience and division management of program.

VII. Protocol Responsibility and Management:

- A. This protocol is reviewed annually by the Division of Child Welfare, Continuous Quality Improvement Section.

VIII. Subject Matter Consultants:

- A. Tina M. Howard, Child Welfare CQI Manager
- B. Jamonica Holmes, Child Welfare Training Supervisor
- C. Denise Kissel, Wake County Resource Development Specialist
- D. Jessica Jones, Child Welfare Intern
- E. Kitty Hart, Child Welfare Senior Human Services Practitioner, Field Instructor
- F. Tiffany Price, Trainer (including Lead for Intern Training)
- G. Sweetly Sanders, Child Welfare Supervisor
- H. Susan DeKarske, CPS Social Worker

IX. References:

- A. Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), 2015. *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards*. Available online at: <https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS/2015EPASandGlossary.pdf.aspx>
- B. Child Welfare Services, Division of Social Services, Department of Health & Human Services (2018). List of Training Courses and Training Requirements, *The North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative*. Available online at

X. Related Documents:[N/A](#)**XI. Appendix/Form:**

- A. [Student Intern Forms – Appendix A \(Confidentiality Statement\), B \(Release and Indemnity Agreement\), and C \(Driver’s License Check and Automobile Insurance Agreement\)](#)
- B. [MVR Form with Telematics](#)
- C. [Social Work Competencies, Council on Social Work Education \(2015\)](#)

XII. History

Effective Date	Version	Section(s) Revised	Author/Reviewer
3/8/20	3.0	Placed protocol on new template; added on-boarding, off-boarding, and performance/behavioral concerns with interns; and revised the rest of the protocol	Tina M. Howard, CQI Manager
9/15/16	2.0	Updated protocol (unknown sections)	Myca Jeter
8/1/16	1.0	New	Myca Jeter