

CHESTER COUNTY ADULT PROBATION & PAROLE DEPARTMENT



CHESTER COUNTY JUSTICE CENTER
201 W. MARKET STREET - SUITE 2100
PO BOX 2746
WEST CHESTER, PA 19380-0989
610-344-6290 ■ 1-800-692-1100 ■ FAX: 610-344-6321

CHRISTOPHER J. MURPHY
CHIEF ADULT PROBATION OFFICER

JOSEPH CARLINI
DEPUTY CHIEF

JENNIFER LOPEZ
DEPUTY CHIEF

Student Intern Program

The Chester County Adult Probation & Parole Department believes internships can be a valuable asset to the agency while providing a practical education in probation and parole to students. The placement, by its nature, is not a highly structured experience: it is designed to be flexible to meet the needs of the Department, its clientele, and the student.

Student interns are regarded as professionals during the placement and are expected to conduct him/herself appropriately. This includes being able to identify his/her own developmental needs, and conduct him/herself within the realms of professional ethics.

Most placements with the Department are in the Supervision Units, working with Probation/Parole Officers as they perform their normal duties. While this is the most common placement, a limited number of internships are possible in special program or research related areas. Arrangements will be handled on an individual basis between the student and the Department. Any special interests, needs or limitations should be noted at the time formal application for placement is made.

Each assignment can be expected to vary. The following are various tasks that may be assigned:

- General travel and observation of Probation and Parole Officers
- Small caseload responsibility
- Initial interviewing
- Observation of hearings
- Assist with classification process
- Assist with pre-parole investigations
- Assist with special investigations
- Assist with pre-sentence investigations
- Completion of surveys, research, etc.
- Assist in other administrative duties

In all instances, the student will be responsible to a Probation/Parole Officer Mentor. This staff person will be responsible for providing necessary guidance and support during the placement, and also an orientation to the Department.

While the Department attempts to make a broad range of activities available to student interns, there are limitations imposed by law, regulation or potential danger. These may include restrictions on participation in arrests, use of client-related data for research, etc. Students shall not add or alter any conditions of supervision. Students are not permitted to make any case decisions without the approval of the officer to whom the case is assigned.

How to Apply for Employment or an Internship

All students requesting a placement are expected to complete, in its entirety, the Application for Student Internship. The supervising professor or designated placement coordinator from the college or university should screen and sign the application prior to submittal to assure timely coordination and support.

Applications should be submitted at least sixty (60) days before the placement or as soon as possible. This is necessary to allow time for processing and screening. The application must be sent directly to the Student Intern Coordinator, Chester County Adult Probation and Parole Department. Proper procedures for special types of internships may be secured by contacting the Student Intern Coordinator.

Once the completed application is received, it will be screened and a determination made if a placement is possible at the requested time. A personal interview will be required before any final commitments can be made.

What criteria are used in accepting a student for placement?

Besides adequate academic preparation, a high degree of maturity is an essential prerequisite to placement with a criminal justice agency such as the Chester County Adult Probation and Parole Department. The following criteria are taken into account when considering prospective interns:

- a. Students considered for placements should be pursuing a course of study related to the field of human service.
- b. Students should be in good academic standing at their respective college or university.
- c. Interest in the field, maturity, and initiative are characteristics necessary for placement.
- d. Logistical considerations should be given to transportation, potential interruptions in work schedules, lodging arrangements, etc.

The Department will select only those students prepared to accept the responsibility of internship in a serious and professional manner. Students will be promptly notified when a decision is made. When an internship will be provided, the original application shall be retained in Department files along with all appropriate correspondence. Arrangements will be made for the assignment and supervision of the student prior to reporting for placement.

What about part-time placements?

Part-time student placements are accepted. A weekly minimum of 8 hours is required. It is preferred for the student to complete the required hours in a single day. Each situation, however, is reviewed individually by the approval of the Department.

What about job shadowing?

The Department will allow a student to "job shadow" a Probation/Parole Officer as a one-time experience for a day. The Department will not conduct a student evaluation nor give a grade to the college or university in which the student is enrolled.

Will I be paid or receive compensation for my expenses?

The Department does not provide compensation or reimburse the student for any lodging or subsistence expenditures nor is it able to provide any stipends or reimbursements to either the student or school.

Insurance coverage

In view of the Department's commitment to the use of student interns, coupled with the potential risk associated with its mission, certain issues related to personal and/or Departmental liability requires clarification.

In situations where interns face risk of injury during their field placement, the County has no insurance nor is it empowered to seek such to cover such exposure. Liability exposure is part of the overall educational process for which the student intern is responsible.

If an act of negligence, committed by a student intern, resulted in a suit brought against an employee of the Department, the County would assume the employee's defense, unless it was determined that the employee had not acted in good faith or acted outside the scope of his/her duties. There would be no response, otherwise, to a claim or suit for negligence against the intern.

It is important that the student and the sponsoring college or university understand these provisions and limitations.