

## Federal Highway Administration Pathways Internship Program

# FACTS and QUESTIONS

**What is the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Pathways Internship Program (PIP)?** The Pathways has three components; student internship, recent graduate and the Presidential Management Fellowship Program. The Internship Program provides students in a wide variety of educational institutions (undergraduate and graduate, vocational and technical) with paid opportunities to gain work experience with Federal Highway Administration related to the Intern's academic career goals or field of study.

The Internship program provides an opportunity for students to earn money, continue their education, train with professionals, and combine academic study with on-the-job experience. Students typically work during summer breaks.

**What are the age requirements for students to participate in the Pathways Internship Program?** Participation in this program must be in conformance with Federal, State, or local laws and standards governing the employment of minors.

**Can a son or daughter of an FHWA employee participate in that agency's Pathways Internship Program?** Yes. The only requirement is that the parent and student have no direct reporting relationship and that the relative not advocate the employment, promotion or advancement of the student.

**Does veteran's preference apply in the selection process for students?** Yes.

**Are students only paid minimum wage?** Students in the Pathways Program must be paid according to the classification of the job. Students are typically hired at the GS-3 or GS-4 level, depending upon how much experience and college education they have completed. Visit <http://www.opm.gov/oca/12tables/html/porh.asp> for complete information. Student employees receive their bi-weekly salary and bi-monthly per diem payments via direct deposit. The first payroll deposit does not reach new employees for 3 to 4 weeks after the first workday.

**Do students get within grade increases?** Yes, students are eligible for within grade increases as they complete more course work and gain additional experience.

**Are students eligible for health and life insurance benefits?** Some are, but it depends on the type of appointment.

**Are students eligible for annual (vacation) and sick leave?** Yes.

**Are students eligible for retirement benefits?** Some are, but it depends on the type of appointment.

**Must students work or attend school during the summer?** The intent of the Internship Program is that students are always either attending classes, working at the agency, or both. However, agencies may use their discretion to permit a "break in program" during which time a student is neither attending classes nor working.

**Must students be U.S. Citizens at the time they're appointed?** There is no requirement that students who wish to apply in the internship program be U.S. citizens. However, non-U.S. citizens cannot be converted to full time employment in the competitive service.



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**What project will I be assigned to?** Project assignments are not finalized until all official offers are made.

**What is a typical work schedule?** Students in general, work full time during the summer months. Workweek schedules may vary to match the contractor's operations, emergencies, or abnormal work situations. Overtime rates are paid for authorized work.

**What kind of equipment will I need?** All equipment necessary for the performance of duties will be furnished by the Government. Hard hats and safety vests are furnished to field employees by FHWA and must be worn on ALL field assignments. Interns will be responsible to provide their own basic clothing needs while on field assignments.

**Is travel from my college to the project office paid for?** FHWA PIP participants are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses within the Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD) region only: Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming and Northern California; or a maximum of 1,200 miles plus allowable in-transit travel incurred expenses.

**I have a weeklong trip planned for the middle of the summer, can I still go on the trip?** This needs to be approved by your supervisor so be sure to discuss with him/her early. Typically this can be worked into the schedule. Be aware, you will not receive per diem, lodging, or reimbursement for travel for this trip. Generally, students are expected work for the entire summer with a general commitment that they will be on project or in the office for a minimum of two full months.

**What kind of housing arrangements are available?** Temporary field offices are established near the project locations in the vicinity of small towns or communities where housing and other living accommodations are normally available. A per diem allowance is provided to cover the cost of meals and lodging if the project is located 35 or more miles from the WFLHD office located in Vancouver, WA also referred to as the Official Duty station. Generally, students rent apartments or hotel rooms located near the project site for the duration of the assignment. Employees are responsible for securing their own living accommodations when receiving per diem. On occasion government provided housing may be available.

**What will I be doing?** Typically, students perform duties in the following areas:

- Inspecting contractor's grading placement of surfacing, placement of paving materials & drainage structure installations
- Conducting or overseeing tests of the materials and soils incorporated into the work
- Highway construction surveying
- Assisting with field office work
- Making computations to plot field notes
- Plotting cross-sections and profile data
- Computing quantities to verify pay note quantities
- Checking field calculations
- Working in a materials lab

**How do I apply for the full time employment?** All full time jobs are advertised through the governments online job posting site [www.USAJOBS.gov](http://www.USAJOBS.gov).

**How do I find out more about Western Federal Lands Highway Division?** Visit our public website at [www.WFL.FHWA.DOT.gov](http://www.WFL.FHWA.DOT.gov).



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