

Did You Know? Internships for WTU Soldiers

Did you know that internships develop or reinforce skill sets transitioning WTU Soldiers need to prepare for civilian employment?

There are two approved internship programs for Soldiers in Warrior Transition Units (WTUs):

1. Department of Defense (DOD) Operation Warfighter (OWF) Non-Paid Federal Internship program
2. Veterans Affairs (VA) Coming Home to Work (CHTW) Non-Paid Work Experience (NPWE) Federal Internship Program

Why should wounded, ill and injured Soldiers participate in an internship?

The internship program supports the Soldier's rehabilitation and reintegration. Internships help the Soldier transition and build a meaningful work day. Once a Soldier is determined to be eligible, the Soldier may further their Comprehensive Transition Plan (CTP) track and career goals by participating in an internship.

How will the participating Soldier benefit from an internship?

An unexpected injury or illness may change the Soldier's life and career plans and leave them feeling lost. An internship may help the Soldier see past their injuries to new possibilities within a new military or civilian career and gain valuable civilian experience.

How does a WTU Soldier get started in arranging an internship?

The Soldier should express interest in completing an internship to their Transition Coordinator and continue to work with them directly throughout the process.

What results can a Soldier expect from participating in an internship?

The Soldier can expect:

- Meaningful activity that assists in wellness
- Exploring employment interests
- Developing civilian job skills
- Reintegrating into the civilian work force
- Gaining valuable federal government work experience
- Understanding of how military skills are transferable to civilian employment
- Building a résumé

How can the Soldier get the most out of his internship experience?

Establishing specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) career goals and maintaining motivation will lead to a productive internship. The Soldier must be active, aggressive and accountable in meeting goals outlined in their individual CTP.

Where is the place of duty for a Soldier participating in an internship?

The Soldier's place of duty would be the internship worksite, if not at a medical appointment. Medical care is always the first priority and will be considered when developing a work schedule.

How long should the Soldier be available for internship participation?

There is no standard length of internship participation. A Soldier should plan to dedicate a minimum of four weeks to the position as a courtesy to the federal agency host. Internships range in duration and hours per week. They typically last a few months with an average of 15-20 hours per week. Ultimately, the length of time and frequency depends upon the Soldier's medical appointments and the federal agency's requested participation timeline.

Warrior Transition Command (WTC) Career and Education Readiness Branch

Online: http://www.wtc.army.mil/about_us/eei_for_employers.html

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Does a Soldier participating in an internship stop collecting Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)?

No. If you are in an approved OWF internship and the appropriate paperwork is submitted to your Social Security Administration (SSA) Case Manager, your SSDI benefits will be protected while you progress in career readiness. The Soldier is responsible for providing the SSA Case Manager with a completed, signed OWF Placement form.

When doing an internship, how does the Soldier learn what full-time job options are available?

If the Soldier is interested in permanent employment with the internship agency, the Soldier should discuss the option of permanent employment with their worksite supervisor. He or she will have the most up to date information regarding the position and will be able to guide the Soldier through the process or receive assistance from the agency's Human Resources Division.

If the Soldier is interested in federal employment with a different agency, they should search USAJobs, the federal government's official jobs site, and apply through the website.

May the Soldier receive compensation for his internship duties?

No. The Soldier may not receive compensation or benefits from the agency, as he will continue to be paid by the Army.

What is required of the Soldier prior to internship participation?

The Soldier must be determined medically ready to participate, which depends on two factors:

1. A medical management clearance that concludes the Soldier is medically, physically and emotionally ready to participate in an internship while continuing medical treatment.
2. A command clearance that concludes the Soldier demonstrates the initiative and self-discipline required to participate in an internship.

The Soldier must also have a federal résumé and a completed and signed OWF Approval for Participation form.

WTC is a major subordinate command under the U.S. Army Medical Command (MEDCOM). WTC's mission is to develop, coordinate and integrate the Army's Warrior Care and Transition Program (WCTP) for wounded, ill and injured Soldiers, Veterans and their Families and Caregivers. For more information on WTC, visit the WTC website, www.WTC.army.mil, follow on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/armyWTC> or join Facebook at <http://facebook.com/armyWTC>.

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