

**Department of Behavioral Health  
Employee Educational Internship Program**

**PURPOSE**

The Department of Behavioral Health (DBH or Department) offers career opportunities for its staff who wish to advance into the role of service provider in the field of behavioral health. DBH has seen a decrease in the number of applicants for many of its licensed or credentialed service providers that render specialty mental health services and/or substance use disorder services to eligible Medi-Cal beneficiaries in San Bernardino County. To address the need for licensed or credentialed service providers, DBH has developed an Employee Educational Internship Program (EEIP) that offers Eligible Employees the ability to complete their clinical internship, which is required by their university or college, while employed as a San Bernardino County DBH employee.

The EEIP is designed to:

- Address DBH’s workforce development needs by assisting current staff members working in remote or hard-to-fill program areas to advance their education and professional qualifications.
- Promote internal career advancement opportunities.
- Improve employee retention across the Department.

**PROCEDURE**

DBH retains full discretion in determining the number of EEIP participants accepted each year. When evaluating capacity, DBH will consider, but is not limited to, the following factors:

- Availability of qualified clinical supervisors.
- Internship placement site capacity within DBH programs.
- Number of external interns that are not DBH employees.

**ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES**

**1. Employment Status**

**A. New County Employees**

- Must be in a Regular Position at DBH
- Must hold Regular Status in their current DBH position
- May apply for the EEIP while still on probation if they have successfully completed the 4<sup>th</sup> pay period probationary review with an overall “meets standards” rating and they do not have a “below standards” rating in any category.

**B. Existing DBH Employees**

- Must be in Regular Position at DBH
- Must hold Regular Status in their current DBH position

**C. Existing DBH Employees (Recently Promoted or Demoted)**

- Must be in a Regular Position at DBH
- Must have held Regular Status in their prior DBH position
- Must have successfully completed the 4<sup>th</sup> pay period probationary review with an overall “meets standards” rating and they do not have a “below standards” rating in any category.

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- May begin the EEIP before completing the current probationary period, with Manager and Deputy Director approval
- D. Existing County Employees (New to DBH)
  - Must be in a Regular Position at DBH.
  - Must have held Regular Status in their prior County position that they vacated to come to DBH.
  - If on probation, must have completed the 4<sup>th</sup> pay period probationary review with an overall “meets standards” rating and they do not have a “below standards” rating in any category.
  - May begin the EEIP before completing DBH probation, with Manager and Deputy Director approval.

**2. License/Credential Requirement**

Employees must be working on a license or credential that is a requirement for at least one of the following classifications:

- Alcohol and Other Drug Counselor
- Social Worker II
- Clinical Therapist I
- Psychologist I
- Licensed Vocational Nurse
- Mental Health Nurse II
- Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

**3. Employee Must Be In Good Standing**

Good Standing is defined as:

- Does not have a “below standards” rating in any category on the employee’s most recent Work Performance Evaluation (WPE).
- Must not have received a letter of reprimand (LOR) or other disciplinary action in the past 12 months.
- Is not currently on a Sick Leave Restriction Plan, and has not been on such a plan for at least one year prior to application for the EEIP.
- Is not currently on a Work Performance Improvement Plan (WPIP) and has not been on such a plan for at least one year prior to application for the EEIP.
- Must be attending a university/college that has a Non-Financial Affiliation Agreement with DBH and the behavioral health program of the university/college is accredited.

**PLACEMENT AND PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

- An employee may not serve as an intern in the same program in which they are employed. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis. For example, given the remoteness of the Needles Clinic, it is not reasonable for a Needles Clinic employee to travel to another

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clinic/program. In this case, the employee may work and intern in the same program upon recommendation of the Program Manager II, approval by the university/college and at the discretion of the DBH Director.

- An employee's internship hours are limited to 20 hours per week. If the university/college requires more hours, the employee will not be eligible for the EEIP.
- An applicant's first internship is limited to 12-months and applicants must commit to interning for that entire 12-month period. Interns may apply for additional internships of shorter or longer duration to meet the requirements of their university or school, e.g., school requires 18 months of experience. A new application is required for each subsequent internship.
- Employees will be compensated at their regular salary while participating in the EEIP.
- Application requires proof of acceptance and enrollment in a university or college program (see application and business process for details). Employee must maintain satisfactory work performance in both their DBH position and their internship position while attending school. DBH may terminate eligibility if the employee's work, internship, or academic performance is unsatisfactory.
- If the university/college determines that the employee should leave their academic program for any reasons, DBH may terminate eligibility.

**APPLICATION REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

- The application review and approval process is located within the EEIP Business Process found in the Department's Standard Practice Manual.
- The application is also included in the EEIP Business Process.

**LIABILITY**

While participating in the EEIP, employees will be covered under their university or college's liability coverage as outlined in the executed Non-Financial Affiliation Agreement between DBH and the educational entity.

**PROGRAM FISCAL LIMITATIONS**

1. The EEIP is approved on an annual basis. Participation in the EEIP does not guarantee continued acceptance beyond the first 12-months or less if the program is dissolved.
2. After the first 12-month internship, the employee acknowledges and agrees that they must submit a new application for each additional internship.
3. The availability of funding for the EEIP is subject to annual budgetary allocations, staffing, and available placements and is contingent upon the sole discretion of the Director of DBH.

**TERM AND TERMINATION**

1. This Agreement shall be effective Date of Execution through September 30, 2030.
2. The Director of DBH reserves the right to terminate the EEIP at any time, for any reason, including but not limited to lack of funding or administrative decision to discontinue the EEIP. In such event, employee-participants shall receive no less than thirty (30) calendar

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days' written notice prior to the commencement of the affected academic quarter or semester.

**AFFIRMATION**

In accepting assistance and placement in the Employee Educational Internship Program, I hereby verify that I currently meet all requirements and understand that I must remain in good standing. I further understand that the EEIP may be terminated by and in the sole discretion of the Director of DBH at any time without the right to review or appeal that decision.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date