



# **Arborist Internship Program A.I.P. July 2022**

## **Background**

An internship in arboriculture is an investment that an organization can offer to a student that can shape one's experiences while enriching passion for the industry. This document provides guidelines necessary to become a *Texas Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture – Arborist Internship Program (AIP)* approved provider. Our goal is to create an internship platform for notable organizations within our membership to utilize the *Texas Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture* as a resource and aid in identifying potential candidates. A member that meets these requirements can apply to become AIP approved. We believe that an organization that has a well-developed internship program will be beneficial to everyone involved.

## **AIP Internship**

An AIP Internship is a working plan between an approved organization that has at least one Certified Arborist and a student. The plan should clearly describe work functions and a tentative duration of each function. Functions may be modified based on workflow. All areas offered in the internship should be followed as closely as possible. An AIP provider that fails to properly conduct a workplan and/or resist guidance will be removed from our list of approved organizations. All AIP providers are required to be members in good standing with the International Society of Arboriculture and the Texas Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture.

The "contract" between the employer and intern must be clear about what an internship is and is not. The company offering the internship must be clear on the internship description. The student will use your work description to decide if he or she would like to apply for the company's current opening. This allows the employer the opportunity to hold the intern accountable when it comes to evaluating performance. Clearly defining objectives also allows the student and faculty to hold the company accountable. The internship needs to include a tentative timeline as well as types of work to be expected. Students are less likely to apply for an internship with minimal description and understanding of work to be performed.

A company that offers a well-organized internship may expect to gain notoriety among students and recent graduates. Following a positive internship experience, it is likely the company will see increase applicants, reliable workforce, and long-term potential employment. A student can expect to gain knowledge and experience that employers seek.

## **Requirements**

The school may have requirements that supersede the AIP guidelines. A second internship between an organization and previous intern is typically more in-depth, selective in functionality and provides the intern a greater opportunity to develop skills within arboriculture.

The company that offers internships will be required to follow all state and federal mandates for employment. They must carry workers compensation insurance and conduct their business in a safe manner that follows industry guidelines, such as the ANSI Z 133.1 and ANSI A300 standards for arboriculture.

What are the company's requirements when offering an internship?

- Commitment of Time and a certified arborist on staff to ensure the internship follows the guidelines of AIP
- Patience
- Judgement
- Execution and Follow Up

The typical rate of pay for an internship is between \$10-15 per hour. However, internship compensation should be competitive with the company's market. The lower the compensation offered, the less applicants the company should expect. Some organizations have set goals for the student to complete and often reward those accomplishments by providing additional compensation or outings that are safe and enjoyable.

If you offer housing, or other compensation for travel, add these to your description. This may attract students outside of local universities and colleges. AIP will be required to provide all necessary tools, equipment and uniforms required by the company to perform a function agreed upon in the internship.

## **Workplan**

When developing a workplan, think about what they can reasonably accomplish within their time working for the company. Consider the student spending an equal amount of time in each area of the organization. If the student has an area of higher interest, you may consider allowing them to decide where to spend the rest of their internship.

This could be something they could research and present as an area for growth within your organization. Creative planning for purchasing equipment, pricing materials with vendors and developing spreadsheets are some functions that an intern may be able to provide. Be creative and set goals.

A defined duration of the program is a key component to the workplan. A typical internship is an 8 to 10-week program but can be a semester. An internship with several job functions will be more attractive than a single function (i.e., dragging brush). A job function is further described as an area of work that the interns are expected to perform.

## Common AIP Workplan Modules

- General Tree Work
  - Pruning, Removal, Stump Grinding, Other
  - Equipment Operations
  - Safety Inspections
  - Plant Identification
  - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Plant Healthcare
  - Plant Identification
  - Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
  - Plant Insect and Disease Diagnostics
  - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - Soil Aeration and Root Collar Excavation
  - Laws and Regulations
  - Pesticide Labels
  - Safety Data Sheets
  - Pesticide Storage and Disposal
  - Mixing, Loading and Handling Pesticides
  - Applications
  - TDA Pesticide Record Keeping
- Sales and Consulting
  - Estimating
  - Measuring properties
  - Face-to-face client interaction
  - Tree Risk Assessments (TRA)
  - Plant Health Assessments
  - Tree Appraisals
  - Tree Inventory – Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping
- Tree Farming and Planting
  - Planting and Transplanting Trees
  - Tree Inspections
  - Pruning and Management
  - Water Management and Irrigation Repair
  - Root Pruning
  - Upsizing Plant Material
  - Fertilization and Pesticide Applications
  - Purchasing
  - Liners
  - Sanitation
- Support Function
  - Business Administration
  - Scheduling
  - Production Management
  - Sales Flow Management – Lead Generation and Follow Up

*\*\*\*The above workplan modules are examples of modules within arboriculture. Not all modules may be relevant to the internship. For example, some companies do not offer plant healthcare or tree planting. For this reason, it would not be included in their workplan.*

## **AIP Mentoring Guidelines**

1. An intern may be assigned to an employee that has shown competency in their position and must exhibit genuine care for the task and others employed within the organization.
2. This employee who will supervise the internship should be an ISA Certified Arborist or have similar credentials. This employee should also be a model of your company culture.
3. Be intentional when working with an intern. Evaluate their skills and work together to set realistic goals. Have the intern focus on an area in your organization that is mutually beneficial.
4. Periodic meetings with the supervisor and intern throughout the program. Follow up with the student to see if they have any questions or concerns with the completed work. Set goals when reviewing upcoming work. If organized, these meetings can be effective in the intern's development.
5. All employees involved in the internship should be kind, professional, and generous. But most importantly, positive. AIP providers will be held accountable for maintaining a level of professionalism that reflects well on our industry.
6. Some internship providers have been successful by hosting company outings during their internships. An example would be a sporting event. A certain amount of money could be set aside for the student to spend at the event.

## **Summer Internship Program Timeline**

### **Apply to become a Texas ISA Arborist Internship Provider**

- Make the decision to offer an internship program
- Develop a workplan for the internship that you would like to offer
- Submit to Texas ISA Student & Scholarship Committee Chair.
- Identify key employees within your organization who will supervise the interns

### **Fall**

- Determine the number of interns positions the company will offer
- Attend career events and promote your company at schools to identify potential interns
- Review resumes of potential interns
- Send interns the company's internship application (set a deadline)
- Schedule interviews with potential candidate(s)
- Review qualifications and responsibilities with candidate(s)

### **Winter**

- Provide candidate(s) a preview of the job duties
- Extend an offer to candidate(s) with a deadline to accept
- If an offer is not extended, communicate reason(s) why

### **Late Winter/Early Spring**

- Follow up with intern(s) that have accepted your offer and let them know you are excited for their arrival to work
- Identify the candidates within your organization to oversee the intern

### **Spring**

- Finalize workplan schedule for the internship
- Meet with team who will supervise the internship to review workplan
- Narrow down special events (welcome party, outing with the team, farewell party, or dinner)
- Obtain uniform sizes for intern(s). Ensure they have all equipment required on the first day of employment
- Schedule drug and alcohol screening if required by the organization

### **Late Spring/Early Summer**

- Ensure intern(s) have housing accommodations in order and aid if necessary
- Orientation
- Issue personal protective equipment and uniforms
- If an intern will be required to drive company vehicles, contact the company's insurance carrier to provide guidance for adding new drivers to your coverage. Most interns will require training before operating equipment and vehicles. Equipment and vehicle operating test are advised.
- Welcome Party – Upon arrival, rally staff members to welcome interns to the company and introduce themselves.

### **Summer**

- Weekly reviews with intern(s) and supervisor
- 30-day evaluation with supervisor, manager, and intern
- Group outing event (baseball game, amusement park, etc.)

### **Late Summer**

- At completion of the internship, collect company equipment from the intern.
- Farewell party or dinner
- Review evaluations
- Exit interview – meet with the intern to review performance and provide feedback. Ask the intern for feedback on how the internship could improve.
- If required, complete and submit intern evaluation form to the designated faculty at the intern's school.

### INTERN EVALUATION FORM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK DATES \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

JOB DUTIES: \_\_\_\_\_

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Score
Attendance and Punctuality	1	2	3	4	
Appropriately dressed and groomed	1	2	3	4	
Dependability (thorough, organized)	1	2	3	4	
Initiative (resourceful, self-starter)	1	2	3	4	
Communication Skills (oral and written, if applicable)	1	2	3	4	
Ability to Learn (comprehension of new concepts)	1	2	3	4	
Quality of Work (accuracy, completeness, neatness)	1	2	3	4	
Attitude (enthusiasm, curiosity, desire to learn)	1	2	3	4	
Judgement (decision making)	1	2	3	4	
Interpersonal Relations (cooperative, courteous, friendly)	1	2	3	4	
	Total Score				

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_