

State of Arkansas
93rd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2021

A Bill

SENATE BILL 118

By: Senator D. Wallace
By: Representative Wooten

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS PUBLIC SERVICE
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM; TO ESTABLISH EXTRA HELP POSITIONS
FOR THE ARKANSAS PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM;
TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
AND ADMINISTRATION INTERNSHIP PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS PUBLIC SERVICE
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM; AND TO ESTABLISH
EXTRA HELP POSITIONS FOR THE ARKANSAS
PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 21-3-601 is amended to read as follows:

21-3-601. ~~Internship program~~ Arkansas State Government Internship Program.

(a) ~~The Legislative Council and the Department of Finance and Administration are authorized to establish, for their respective agencies, agreements with institutions of higher education to utilize highly qualified graduate level students who are seeking a Master of Arts or Master of Public Administration degree in the departments of political science of such institutions to perform duties for their respective agencies~~ Department of Transformation and Shared Services shall establish an internship program to be known as the "Arkansas Public Service Internship Program".



~~(b) The program shall an “internship program” through which graduate level students can obtain practical experience in state government~~ utilize graduate students and undergraduate students to perform duties for the cabinet-level departments of the state through which the students can obtain practical experience in state government responsibilities and operations.

~~(c)(1) Students preparing for careers in government shall be given priority in employment under this program~~ The Office of Personnel Management shall:

(1) Issue a policy establishing the program;

~~(2) Only qualified graduate level students who are citizens of the State of Arkansas shall be eligible to receive the benefits of the provisions of this section.~~ Assist cabinet-level departments in recruitment of graduate students and undergraduate students; and

~~(3) In addition, internship agreements shall be based on the anticipated benefits and services to be rendered to the Legislative Council or the Department of Finance and Administration under the agreement with the institution of higher education~~ Develop a curriculum and activities to introduce graduate students and undergraduate students participating in the program to the responsibilities and operations of all cabinet-level departments and branches of state government.

~~(d) All internship agreements entered into under the provisions of this section shall be at such rates as agreed to between the contracting institution of higher education and the Legislative Council or the Department of Finance and Administration, but shall not exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) per month per student for the time required for the student to complete his or her degree requirements, including the internship work obligations under agreements entered into under the provisions of this section.~~

~~(e) No such internship agreement shall be for more than twenty-one (21) months per student.~~

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 21-5-225(d) and (e), concerning state employee position pools, are amended to read as follows:

(d)(1) The Office of Personnel Management shall establish and maintain a pool of two hundred (200) extra help positions, as defined under § 21-5-224, to be used for the Arkansas State Government Internship Program.

(2) The Office of Personnel Management shall issue a policy for a state agency's use of a pool position authorized by subdivision (d)(1) of this section .

(e) A pool position received under this section is subject to the state agency's ability to certify funding.

~~(e)(1)~~(f)(1) The Office of Personnel Management shall establish and maintain a growth pool of ten (10) positions to be used to establish additional positions by:

- (A) Elected constitutional officers of this state;
- (B) The General Assembly, including employees of the Bureau of Legislative Research and Arkansas Legislative Audit;
- (C) Members of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, circuit courts, prosecuting attorneys, and the Administrative Office of the Courts;
- (D) The Arkansas Department of Transportation;
- (E) Federal military technicians, military training support personnel, federally funded personnel of the Arkansas National Guard, and other military personnel who are paid directly by the federal government; and
- (F) The Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission.

(2)(A) If one of the entities provided in subdivision ~~(e)(1)~~(f)(1) of this section does not have sufficient positions available with the appropriate classification and grade to meet an agency's mandated responsibilities and the positions were not anticipated at the time of the passage of the agency's operating appropriation act, the positions may be used, after review by the Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee.

(B) The entities provided in subdivision ~~(e)(1)~~(f)(1) of this section shall provide justification for the request to allocate a position from the growth pool to the Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee.

(C) If a new classification is necessary for an additional position, the Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee, may assign the appropriate title and grade.

(3) If an agency requests an approved growth pool position to be continued during the subsequent fiscal year, the position shall be requested

as a new position in the agency's subsequent fiscal year budget request.

SECTION 3. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the Arkansas State Internship Program will benefit state agencies by attracting quality students and encourage careers in civil service; that the Office of Personnel Management requires sufficient time to develop a policy and assist the state agencies in recruiting these students; and that this act is immediately necessary because the implementation of this program will allow state agencies flexibility in recruitment and work provided by interns to assist with the increased burden on state programs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

(1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

(2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or

(3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

APPROVED: 3/17/21