



## Mental Health Associate (MHA) Internship

### What experiences does the Mental Health Associate (MHA) Internship provide?

The Mental Health Associate Internship provides experience related to the employment position of a Mental Health Associate (case manager). The interns will be involved in the following activities:

1. Learn supportive role in providing care for mental health clients.
  2. Provide case management services to mental health clients and their families.
  3. Participate as a co-leader in supportive counseling groups and psychoeducational groups.
  4. Develop understanding of collaborative work within a multidisciplinary treatment team.
  5. Acquire skills to document services and complete required paperwork.
  6. Assist clients in accessing community services.
  7. Act as a liaison with other community agencies.
  8. Serve as client advocate and assist clients in using community resources.
  9. Coach clients in daily living skills.
  10. Participate as a team member in client evaluations and treatment planning.
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### What are some of the details regarding the internship?

- The MHA Internship is a 9 month internship program (September – May/ 16 hours per week). Interns complete a minimum of 500 hours.
  - Completion of the internship with a bachelor's degree fulfills some of the minimum requirements for the Mental Health Associate job classification.
  - Interns are provided with experiences so they are prepared to apply for employment as a Mental Health Associate. The knowledge and skills can also be applied to other case manager positions or prepare one for graduate school.
  - Currently interns receive a \$6,000 stipend; stipends are confirmed on a yearly basis, dependent on department funding that is available for the internship program.
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### What are the eligibility requirements?

Applicants must meet one of the following requirements:

- a) Currently enrolled in an undergraduate degree program at the Junior or Senior level, majoring in Psychology, Sociology or other major related to behavioral health; completion of some upper division coursework in psychology related subjects is preferred; or
- b) Previously graduated with a bachelors' degree in either Psychology, Sociology or other relevant degree and have the ability to commit to a part time internship for the full 9 months; or
- c) Engaged as a VCBH full time employee with over 1 year of employment in VCBH, in good standing at their work site, and have the consent of Clinic Administrator or supervisor.

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## What support and supervision is provided?

All activities are supervised by a mental health professional employed by the department. The supervisor meets with the intern on a regular weekly basis. MHA Interns also attend a monthly 2-hour supervision/training session in addition to the supervision received at the clinic site. During these sessions, a variety of topics are covered such as case management skills, legal and ethical issues, self-care in working with mentally ill population, motivational interviewing concepts, confidentiality laws and basic CBT concepts.

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## Is there an orientation for the internship?

Orientation is provided during the first 3 weeks of the internship. This includes a general overview of the department and training is provided on a variety of topics such as cultural competency, confidentiality, documentation, working with mental health clients, safety protocols and legal/ethical guidelines.

All applicants complete a background clearance shortly after receiving preliminary acceptance into the program and a TB clearance is completed just prior to the start of the internship. If you have any questions about this or have any reason to think you might not clear a background check then you should contact the Internship and Workforce Development Manager in advance to discuss your situation. During flu seasons all staff and interns are required to get a flu shot. The background clearance, TB clearance and flu shot are provided at no cost to the intern.

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## Is there a required time commitment and when does the traineeship begin?

VCBH requires a 9 month (or 2 semester) commitment (September - May). Internships begin in September on the first Wednesday after Labor Day and students must be available for a minimum of 16 hours per week. Clinics are generally open Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 6:00 pm and internship hours are completed during that time. Your specific schedule is determined with the supervisor and is based on the clinic requirements and in consideration of your personal preferences when possible.

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## How do I apply for an internship?

Those interested in the internship program should submit a completed application form, a resume and one letter of recommendation. **The application deadline is March 31<sup>st</sup>.** Those selected for an interview will be contacted to schedule the interview. During the interview you will be asked questions related to your interest in the mental health field and your aptitude and general understanding of working with people. You are also encouraged to ask questions about the program to determine if the internship is a good fit. After the interviews are completed the internship pool is selected and interns are placed at the specific clinics or programs sites. Interns are typically notified by the beginning of May regarding the status of their application.

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### FOR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS YOU MAY CONTACT:

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