

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources DCNR Ranger Unpaid Law Enforcement Internship Program

Introduction

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Ranger Unpaid Law Enforcement Internship Program (Program) is a cooperative effort between various local college and university's criminal justice programs and DCNR. Volunteer Unpaid Interns can receive academic credit in the academic program of their school.

Students interested in law enforcement/public contact-related careers gain valuable experience and knowledge by working with commissioned DCNR Rangers while they perform their law enforcement duties. Students also participate in various other roles assisting the management, maintenance, and natural resource staff to develop a better understanding of DCNR's mission, philosophy and goals.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Program to educate and involve students in DCNR Ranger operations; to interest them in possible park ranger, law enforcement, and/or public contact careers; to build mutual understanding between the student population and the ranger team; and to develop unpaid interns as well-rounded, law-abiding individuals.

The education aspect provides knowledge of DCNR Ranger functions in a natural resource management setting, whether entering the field of law enforcement or not. This experience offers exposure and training to facilitate successful entry into a law enforcement/public-contact related profession; furthermore, this opportunity seeks to instill a desire in its participants to demonstrate law abiding habits, attitudes, and practices as contributing citizens of our community which understand and appreciate the environmental and recreational resources in which we work.

Entry into DCNR Ranger Unpaid Law Enforcement Internship Program

Individuals desiring entry into the Program will submit an official application and may be required to go through an interview process.

In order for a student to be admitted into the Program, they must be enrolled as a full-time student at a properly accredited University and must be able to maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA. Interns will, at all times, conduct themselves professionally and appropriately as representatives of the law enforcement community. They will practice good moral judgment and skills and will present themselves in a professional manner.

Students accepted into the program will be provided with an overview of the assigned state park or forest district which will include a tour and introduction to appropriate staff.

Duties

This intern is a college student assisting as a non-paid volunteer. Interns work with commissioned DCNR Rangers who provide supervision, training, and direction and perform their duties under the general authority of a manager or DCNR Ranger Supervisor.

Intern responsibility will normally be limited to observing and reporting and will not take enforcement action.

Although interns are not used in place of law enforcement personnel, they can supplement them. Unpaid interns can assist other employees on duty with paperwork, provide valuable radio communications, act as a point of public contact and interact with visitors and provide information.

Training

Interns receive a broad array of experience and training through the duration of their unpaid internship. This training and experience is meant to supplement and broaden the student's experience in the program and to benefit them in a public contact/law enforcement career. Below are lists of trainings which DCNR Rangers may review with the unpaid interns throughout their internships:

Core Training

- Radio Procedures
- Field Interviews
- Criminal Procedures
- Ethics
- Criminal Law
- Drug Identification
- Traffic Stops
- Emergency Response
- Mock Scenes
- Booking/ Fingerprinting
- Report Writing
- Traffic and Crowd Control
- Patrol Procedures
- Crime Scene Search/Preservation
- Handcuffing Procedures
- Defensive Tactics
- Overview of Duty Gear

Additional Training

- Computer Crime/Forensics
- Domestic Violence
- Collision Investigation
- Public Contacts/Tactical Communications
- DUI/Field Sobriety Training
- Interview Skills
- Building Searches
- High Risk Traffic Stops
- Note Taking and Report Writing
- Mock Scenes

Interns will also work with various staff from management, maintenance and natural resources to give them a more well-rounded experience of DCNR's mission, philosophy and goals. Interns may have opportunities in the following areas:

- Environmental Educational Programming
- General Maintenance
- GIS
- Environmental Surveys
- Invasive Species Management and Control
- Resource Management
- Park or Forest Management
- Research Projects

Safety

The safety of the Interns is of the utmost priority to all staff. To ensure this the following standards have been set:

- Interns will not drive a law enforcement vehicle at any time. They are only permitted to ride along in such a vehicle when accompanied by a DCNR Ranger.
- Interns will not be permitted to utilize weapons of any sort during their internship. They are not permitted to bring anything to the workplace that resembles a weapon.
- Interns will be dropped off at a nearby location in the event the intern is on a ride-a-long with a DCNR Ranger and notification has been received of a serious emergency which could endanger the safety of the student. The intern will be left to standby until another staff member can pick them up. That DCNR Ranger will notify staff that the intern has been dropped off and will give the location.
- Interns will work daylight-oriented shifts only. Schedules are coordinated with the manager or supervisor and will be posted on the DCNR Ranger Schedule so all ranger staff is notified.

Academic Credit

Interns can receive course credit for participation in this Program through the college or university they are attending. However, receiving credit is not mandatory to participate in the program.