

**2021
LeadingAge
Summer
Enrichment
Program
Intern Toolkit**



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Before you start your internship

Checklist

- Application Materials: Make sure you have submitted your application materials to your host site. Most organizations will require background checks, physicals, drugs tests, fingerprinting, etc.
- LeadingAge Summer Enrichment Program (SEP) Contact Information: Complete the LeadingAge SEP [intern contact questionnaire google form](#).
- Start and End Date: Contact your preceptor to finalize your start and end date.
- Travel: Plan your travel to your internship. How will you get back home or to school in August? How will you get around town while you are away at your internship? Where will you stay for your internship? Travel safely to your host site. Allow extra time for travel.
- Housing: If you need housing, check with your host site to see if housing options are available (corporate housing, temporary housing, apartments, guest housing). If not, look up local housing options on your own (local universities, Craig's List, corporate housing, etc.).
- School Credit: Check with your school to review if your internship qualifies for any educational credits and the requirements for applying. If you choose to pursue educational credits, share these requirements with your preceptor in advance of your internship start date, to ensure the host site can support your requirements.
- Research: Visit your host site's website to review all of their materials. Become familiar with their mission, vision, and core values. Understand their services and programs.
- Project: Begin to think about the project you would like to work on during your 10-week internship.
- First day: Find out where and when you should report to work. Ask what your attire should be.

Set goals

Think about what you want to gain out of your internship experience. Setting personal goals before you begin your internship will help you get the most from your experience. Ask yourself these questions to start setting goals.

- What skills would you like to develop?
- What types of projects would you like to complete?
- Are there particular people in the organization or in the field of aging you would like to meet?

During your internship

First day

Take ownership of your internship experience. While the SEP internships include a formal orientation, keep these questions in mind.

- Where do I go the first day?
- How should I dress?
- How will I get to know everyone? Will I get introduced or do I introduce myself?
- How can I be proactive?
- Where is my workstation?
- What is the best method for communication within the organization (email, phone, etc.)?
- How do I address leadership? (First or last names?)
- How do I address residents? (First or last names?)

Employer expectations

All employers have common expectations of interns. Below are some characteristics that employers consistently seek in interns:

- Initiative
- Receives and responds well to constructive feedback
- Utilizes critical thinking skills
- Works well in teams
- Communication skills (written and oral)
- Solid work ethic
- Attention to detail
- Reliability
- Interpersonal skills
- Organizational skills
- Planning skills (establishing priorities and following through on tasks)
- Honesty and integrity

Broaden your experience

Take the opportunity to explore all aspects of an aging services organization. For example, request the opportunity to shadow a nursing assistant. Ask to observe budgeting and finance meetings. Spend time serving meals and getting to know residents.

The LeadingAge Summer Enrichment Project

The LeadingAge Summer Enrichment Program requires that each host site identifies a summer project(s) that will benefit the organization and that culminates with a special project presentation to key leaders. Some organizations have identified needs and projects for their interns. Other organizations are waiting to discover what their intern is most interested in.

During the first week of your internship, discuss your project with your preceptor. Set a date for your final project presentation and develop a plan on how to accomplish your project.

Mentors/networking

Mentoring and networking is a key component of the LeadingAge SEP. You should work with your preceptor to access high-level executives and obtain insights on the decision-making process within the organization. This should include:

- A meeting with the President/CEO (virtual or otherwise).
- Attendance/participation in department, staff, and board meetings.
- Mentoring opportunities with key leaders within the organization.

It is also important to get to know other interns within your organization or field. As a member of the LeadingAge SEP, you will be connected to interns across the country. They will be able to understand your unique experience in the field of aging.

Journaling

Documenting your internship experience will help ensure that you will remember your experience months and years from now. You will want to reflect upon your work and experience as you include it in your resume or prepare for a job interview. It is also important to reflect upon what you are doing and the progress you are making during your internship. Journaling can be as simple as taking notes in a notebook. You could also create a blog, vlog, or social media story about your experience.

Weekly planner

To guide you and your preceptor throughout your 10-week experience, we have provided you a sample weekly planner. This is a general weekly planner and should be customized to your specific internship and organization. You can find this sample weekly planner in the resources section of this guide.

Remote internship resources

Some host sites will offer remote internship opportunities. These internships provide the benefit of interning for an organization outside of your geographic area. A successful remote internship requires time management and effective communication. Make sure you have the technology and resources to make this a successful experience. More tips can be found throughout the internet. Handshake has some great articles including:

<https://joinhandshake.com/blog/students/how-to-make-the-most-of-a-remote-internship/>

Concluding your internship

Final project presentation

At the conclusion of your internship, work with your preceptor to present your project progress and/or results. Discuss who you should invite to your presentation and how you will present your progress.

Telling your story

Your internship is experience that you will want to include on your resume and discuss at future job interviews. At the end of your internship, identify 4-5 experiences and skills you have learned. Develop statements you can add to your resume. Likewise, identify 2-3 learning experiences from your internship. Think about how you can use these experiences in a future job interview. This can be a topic of conversation with your preceptor or mentor.

Closure checklist

It is important to end your internship on the right foot. Some important tips include:

- Clean up - Clean up your physical working space.
- Complete and sum up - Complete and summarize any projects and activities. Identify locations of documents, files, and resources. Email this summary to your preceptor. This will be invaluable after you return to school.
- Final meetings - Set up final meetings with leaders and staff who have helped you during your internship. Ask your preceptor to arrange any meetings with leaders you have not met.
- Thank you - It is important to formally thank your preceptor and co-workers for the opportunity. A handwritten thank you note is a nice touch.
- Stay connected - Collect business cards from key individuals and ask them to connect with you on LinkedIn.
- Recommendations - Ask your preceptor or co-workers if they would be willing to write a recommendation for you in the future.

Resources

Sample 10-week Schedule

Week 1:

- Complete human resources paperwork, orientation, and mandatory training.
- Preceptor and intern one-on-one meeting to discuss organizational priorities, initiatives, and expectations for the internship.
- Intern attends general senior management and departmental meetings.
- Schedule introductory meetings with the management team and key staff members.
- Select a potential Special Project for your end-of-internship presentation. (Once the intern gets more acclimated to the needs of the organization, you may select a different project at a later time.)
- Review important events and meetings that the intern should put on their calendar.

Week 2:

- Second one-on-one meeting to review personal goals and align with Special Project opportunities.
- Review list of additional activities at host site and review upcoming scheduled events.
- Discuss any potential challenges and barriers.
- Review Special Project proposals, deliverables, key metrics, timeline, key resources, and potential challenges and barriers.
- Identify other aging services organizations in the area that the intern may visit and reach out to contacts to schedule site visits for the intern.

Week 3:

- Bi-weekly meetings with the intern to review projects and clarify deliverables, key metrics, timeline, key resources, and potential challenges and barriers.
- Schedule visit to other aging services systems in the area. Attend, if possible.
- Schedule and begin additional activities at the host site.
- Intern attends management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with key staff members and leaders.

Week 4:

- Continue with Special Project meetings to review progress.
- Continue with local visits at other aging services organizations.
- Continue bi-weekly meetings to discuss challenges and barriers.

- Continue attending management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with the management team and other key staff members.

Week 5:

- Continue with local visits at other aging services organizations.
- Continue Special Project meetings.
- Continue bi-weekly meeting between preceptor and intern.
- Intern attends management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with key staff members and leaders.

Week 6-9

- Mid-internship review with the intern to discuss performance-to-date and identify any additional opportunities for professional development.
- Continue Special Project meetings and begin wrap-up analysis and/or recommendations.
- Schedule final meetings and/or lunches between intern and members of the team.
- Schedule an open meeting for the intern to present their Special Project to the organization.
- Advise interns on post-internship job search by reviewing resume and identifying a goal and purpose in their career.

Week 10

- Continue with final meetings and/or lunches with members of the team to resolve any outstanding issues.
- Schedule final feedback meeting with team and intern.
- Intern presents a summary of the Special Project at an open meeting with staff.