

LifeSkills

Internship program - guidelines & procedures

LifeSkills, Inc. – Internship program

I. INTRODUCTION

Program overview -- LifeSkills, Inc. routinely has interns and practicum students fulfill some functions within our agency. This packet is intended to provide guidelines for students and staff regarding the different types of internships, application procedures, travel requirements, and other pertinent information about the internship program. LifeSkills has operated in Bowling Green and the 10 surrounding counties since 1966. During this time LifeSkills has distinguished itself as a leader among Community Mental Health Centers in Kentucky for our consistent use of new and innovative approaches in the treatment of Behavioral Health disorders. In keeping with this leadership role LifeSkills strives to offer quality educational internship experiences to individuals seeking to further their expertise and advancement in a variety of mental health fields and settings.

Each of the freestanding clinics in our 10 county region is staffed with fully certified and/or licensed Psychologist, Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, and/or Professional Counselors. During the course of an internship, an individual may also come in contact with Psychiatrists, Psychiatric nurses, occupational therapists, speech therapists, school counselors, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and/or recreational therapists. Each of these professionals offers a unique perspective and approach to the identification, understanding, and treatment of individuals with behavioral health disorders from which the intern can gain insight and understanding.

Interns will receive exposure to a wide range of mental health problems and treatment approaches. Practical experience in working with children, adolescents, and adults may be offered. An integral part of any internship program is the clinical supervision. Interns will be assigned a primary clinical supervisor with whom they will be responsible to for all aspects of their clinical work. Each intern will also be assigned an administrative supervisor or mentor that may or may not be the clinical supervisor. This mentor will provide oversight and supervision to all aspects of the intern's duties and will work in consultation with the primary clinical supervisor when they are not the same person.

All interns will receive training in traditional mental health theory and practice as well as some new and innovative treatment options. Master's level training will include instruction and practice of individual, group, and family therapy. More specialized training may also be offered for interns in particular fields of study (e.g. Psychology interns will receive training in the performing of psychological testing and measurement). Other possible areas for specialized training include domestic violence, juvenile sexual abuse and offending, substance abuse, geriatric patients, etc.

Internships are educational experiences offered in conjunction with LifeSkills and a University as part of a student's overall educational program. As such interns are required to have University approval and supervision to be considered for an internship and must provide liability insurance through the university.

If after review of this information you still have questions, you may direct them to the Internship Coordinator (Robin Gregory) at LifeSkills office in Bowling Green KY. The phone number is (270) 901-5000 x 1005.

Primary objective – The Primary objective of the LifeSkills, internship program is to provide individuals seeking advanced education in a variety of mental health fields the opportunity to further their knowledge and skill toward the goal of preparing them for employment in a variety of mental health agencies and/or setting.

Objectives –

1. All interns will receive a closely supervised and monitored training experience in the behavioral health field.
2. Each intern will develop an understanding of the benefits and need for and interdisciplinary team approach to behavioral health treatment
3. Interns will develop knowledge and skills that will prepare them to enter the work force in a variety of capacities.
4. To develop specialized skills as the needs of the individual dictate.
5. To provide a variety of clinical experiences to allow the intern to compare different treatment settings and modalities

II. INTERNSHIP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Application for internship – Anyone interested in completing an internship with LifeSkills, should begin this process by completing an Internship application that are available on line at www.lifeskills.com or at our corporate office on 380 Suwannee Trail Street, Bowling Green KY, 42103. The completed application should be routed to Robin Gregory at rgregory@lifeskills.com or by fax to (270) 782-5927, or mailed to the address below. The application should include the following information:

- LifeSkills, Internship application
- If internship is graduate level clinical internship then you may also include, but is not required...
 - Resume (if applying for a clinical internship)
 - Personal statement that details the specific internship requirements, the individual's personal goals for the internship, theoretical orientation, areas of interest, and professional goals.
 - A letter of recommendation from a University professor familiar with the individual's clinical aptitude.

Once completed this application should be submitted to our Internship Coordinator. This may be done via fax (270 782-5927); email rgregory@lifeskills.com or at the address below:

LifeSkills, Inc
Attn. Robin Gregory
380 Suwannee Trail Street
P.O. Box 6499
Bowling Green KY 42103-6499

Applications should be submitted as soon as possible to allow for time to complete administrative functions such as interviews, reference checks, and orientations. Applications received less than 60 days prior to the scheduled beginning of the internship may not be considered for that internship rotation.

Orientation – Individuals who are accepted and offered internship placements will complete the standard orientation procedures as prescribed for all new employees in the LifeSkills employee handbook.

Types of internship/practicum experiences -- There are two types of internships offered at LifeSkills, paid and unpaid. For the purposes of this section no distinction is made between an internship and practicum. The majority of this packet refers to the handling of Paid interns.

Paid interns – A paid intern is hired through our regular employee hiring procedures following interview, reference checks, and approval of the President. Paid interns will generally fill an abbreviated staff role and will fulfill obligations similar to those of a regular employee with the support of their abbreviated workload, clinical supervision, and university support. The specific reimbursements for “paid interns” will be established by the LifeSkills approved pay scales. Paid interns will follow the same procedures to receive pay as regular employees as is described in the employee handbook.

Unpaid interns – An unpaid intern is one who receives no financial remuneration from LifeSkills for the services they provide. These individuals are allowed access to LifeSkills’ clients and facilities as a purely educational experience. They do not provide any direct services to LifeSkills clients without the direct assistance and observation of a clinical supervisor. Interns may be recruited by the individual center managers of a LifeSkills Clinic, but must apply for internship through the internship coordinator. The specific requirements for an unpaid internship will be determined by individual needs and the availability of supervisory staff to monitor.

III. INTERNSHIP EXPECTATIONS

Expectation for availability – Internships are educational experiences where the individual is exposed to a more realistic view of their chosen profession than classroom instruction is able to provide. LifeSkills recognizes the importance of this type of education and how it benefits both the student and the agency for whom the internship is completed. As such LifeSkills will strive to make the experience as true to life as possible while still respecting the primary educational objective. Interns will be expected to make themselves available at the times required by the program to which they are assigned. Accommodations to schedules for will be considered, but evening and weekend hours may be required. LifeSkills will respect and observe all university observed holidays and semester guidelines. Priority consideration will be given to arranging schedule around University class schedule.

Expectation for behavior – As a professional organization, LifeSkills, conducts its business in a professional manner and will expect all interns to do the same. This includes manner of dress, appearance, and behavior being consistent with the Agency expectations of all staff and the individual program to which the intern is assigned.

Expectation for travel – LifeSkills operates in a 10 county region. As such there may be times when the needs of our programming require services to be performed in counties outside Warren. These may be isolated incidents or an individual may be assigned to a county for the duration of their internship. Alterations in county and clinic assignment may also change during the course of the internship to provide more varied experiences and/or as the needs of the agency require. Individuals applying for internship positions may request specific county assignments, but LifeSkills reserves the right to assign interns to locations best suited to meet the educational needs of the intern and the needs of the agency.

IV. SUPERVISION

Supervision – Each intern will be assigned a primary clinical supervisor. This primary clinical supervisor will be responsible for all aspects of the interns practice. The intern and the supervisor will meet no less than one hour per week. Supervision may be in the form of individual or group as the needs of the intern and the university requirements demand. The primary clinical supervisor may require increased supervision time if he/she feels the intern is in need of additional monitoring. It is the responsibility of the intern to dutifully and comprehensively inform the clinical supervisor of all types of clinical intervention he/she is performing, problems encountered, and to obtain prior permission before attempting any treatment intervention not specifically given permission to perform by the clinical supervisor or which falls outside the normal and customary standards of care for that individual field of study.

V. ENDING AN INTERNSHIP

Voluntary termination – LifeSkills internships are offered on a voluntary basis. The agreement to fulfill the responsibilities of an internship lies with the intern and the university. An intern may terminate the relationship with LifeSkills at any time by notifying his/her primary supervisor in writing of his/her intent to terminate. When an internship is terminated prematurely, LifeSkills will consider this an unsuccessful internship and will communicate this to the university representative coordinating the program.

Involuntary termination – LifeSkills reserves the right to terminate any internship program at any time by notification of the intern verbally or in writing. In the event an internship is terminated involuntarily, notice will be sent to the University faculty supervisor coordinating the program along with the reason for the termination.

Employment after the internship – There is no guarantee for employment after the completion of an internship. The internship may often serve as an opportunity for an individual to decide whether LifeSkills may offer future employment opportunities as well as an opportunity for LifeSkills to do the same, however, once completed neither the individual nor LifeSkills maintains any further obligation to the other for employment.

Internship documentation – Upon completion of an internship the primary clinical supervisor will complete the evaluations forms and/or letters as requested by the university coordinating the internship.

For further information regarding LifeSkills internship program you may contact

Robin Gregory, MA
Internship Coordinator
LifeSkills, Inc.
380 Suwannee Trail Street
P.O. Box 6499
Bowling Green KY 42103
(270) 901-5729