

Hiring Manager Federal Internship Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Military Spouse Internship Program?

The military spouse internship program is a Department of Defense initiative designed to acquaint Federal Agencies with the skills and talents military spouses possess, by providing first year salary, benefits and training costs for eligible military spouses hired into permanent Federal positions with career advancement. The program is authorized under Public Law 111-84.

2. Why was this initiative undertaken?

The country is protected by an “All Volunteer” military force. Quality of Life issues, including the ability to maintain dual incomes, contribute to military retention. The Federal Government employs large numbers of workers in occupations that can be found across the country. This large employment base, together with its portable benefits, makes the Federal Government an ideal employer for military spouses.

3. What Government positions qualify for reimbursement under this program?

Positions must be permanent, offer career advancement, and be in Professional, Analytic or Administrative occupations. They should be in occupations that are common across the Federal Government, e.g., Information Technology, Financial Management, Human Resources, or in agencies that have occupations throughout the country.

4. My Agency does have a formal internship program. May we participate in the program?

Yes. The Department of Defense will offer reimbursement, until funding is depleted, for placement of eligible spouses into permanent positions with career advancement. The Agency must agree to provide the spouse with a formal individual development plan that prepares the spouse for career advancement.

5. I have a permanent Administrative Support position available that is a GS-4 with a full performance level of a GS-7. Will this position qualify for reimbursement?

Yes, the position would qualify if there is a formal training plan that prepares the spouse for career advancement to the full performance level.

6. Will all placements into permanent intern programs be reimbursed?

No. This is a pilot program and funding is limited to approximately 90 positions in FY10.

7. How can I find spouses for my jobs?

Spouses can be found through the normal recruitment process using USAJOBS. Additionally, the Department of Defense may also be able to assist you in locating qualified spouses for your positions.

8. What recruitment process must I follow?

The key to recruiting a military spouse is to note on your “Request for Personnel Action” (RPA) that you want to consider eligible military spouses as part of your applicant pool. That notation will trigger certain actions by your human resource staff. Once you get a selection referral list, you then select the best candidate for the job. Military spouses are educated, knowledgeable and mature; they will compete well for your vacancies!

9. Why would I hire a military spouse when I know they may have to move when the military member gets orders?

Military spouses bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to a workplace. They are adaptable and well organized, and have a deep sense of duty and commitment to public service. They will contribute greatly to your mission accomplishment, regardless of how long they remain in your employ. The goal of this pilot is to place spouses in occupations that are common across the government; thus, if the spouse has to leave your employ, their skills can be used elsewhere in the Federal Government. Finally, telework is also an option for those positions where telework is appropriate.

10. Are all military spouses eligible to participate in this program?

No. Only spouses who are married to active duty members of the Armed Forces are eligible to participate in this program and have their salaries reimbursed. However, the following spouses are not eligible for salary reimbursement if they are selected:

- spouses who are legally separated from a member of the Armed Forces under court order or statute of any State, the District of Columbia, or possession of the United States when the person begins the internship,
- spouses who are also members of the Armed Forces on active duty, or
- spouses who are retired members of the Armed Forces.

11. Are military spouses skilled?

Yes. 86% of military spouses have more than a high school education and 49% have an associates, bachelors, or advanced degree. Spouses selected under this program also must meet the Office of Personnel Management qualifications requirements, so you know they will bring to the position the skills necessary for successful performance.

12. How do I get reimbursed?

Once the military spouse is selected, the selecting Agency will request, through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), a transfer of funds. This MOA will require a description of the position into which the spouse will be placed (title, series, grade, career progression under the internship), and a description of the funds required for the first year of employment, by category, i.e., salary, training costs, benefits. The MOA must also be signed by an official of the Agency who is delegated the responsibility to make the request by the head of the Agency.

13. What happens if the spouse leaves before a year?

The reimbursement will be pro-rated based on the time the spouse was employed. The remaining funds will be transferred back to the Department of Defense.

14. What happens if the spouse must relocate after a year?

Federal Agencies should try their best to place the spouse in a comparable position in the new location to which the spouse relocates, or allow the spouse to telework. If after trying, no position is available, and telework is not an option, the spouse will most likely request Leave Without Pay (LWOP) for a limited amount of time so as to continue his/her job search without incurring a break in service. If after this period of LWOP, the spouse cannot find another federal position, he/she will resign.

15. Is there any additional reporting requirement associated with this program?

The Department of Defense is required to report to Congress on the success of the Pilot program and make a recommendation as to its continuation. To this end, the Department will be contacting the hiring agency to gather information from both the military spouse and the hiring manager about the success of the program.