



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM GUIDE

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ABOUT IDPH

Assuring the quality of our food, setting the standards for hospital and nursing home care, checking the safety of recreation areas, maintaining the state's vital records, and screening newborns for genetic diseases are just some of the responsibilities of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). With the assistance of local public health agencies, these essential programs and services make up Illinois' public health network - a system that forms a frontline defense against disease through preventive measures and education.

IDPH's nearly 200 programs touch virtually every age, aspect, and cycle of life - benefiting each state resident and visitor, although it's daily activities of maintaining the public's health are rarely noticed unless a breakdown in the system occurs.

The Illinois Department of Public Health was created in 1877 to regulate medical practitioners and to promote sanitation with an annual budget of \$5,000. Today, IDPH has an annual budget exceeding \$500 million in state and federal funds, headquarters in Springfield and Chicago, seven regional offices located around the state, three laboratories, and over 1,100 employees.

Mission Statement

The mission of IDPH is to promote the health of the people of Illinois through the prevention and control of disease and injury. We, as a diverse public health workforce, care about the well-being of people and are guided by the following principles:

- Prevention of disease and injury
- Protection of food, water, air, and environment
- Promotion of safe and healthy communities
- Evidence-based approaches to analyzing and solving problems
- Partnership and collaboration to achieve coordinated response to community health issues
- Population-based strategies to address public health issues
- Individual responsibility as a tenet to achieving healthy lifestyles
- Advocacy for public health policies to improve the health of populations
- Recognition of the unique value and needs of diverse and underserved populations

- Preparing for and responding to public health emergencies
- Innovation as essential to the practice of public health

Ten Essential Public Health Services

The 10 Essential Public Health Services describe the public health activities that all communities should undertake and serve as the framework for the National Public Health Performance Standards instruments. Public health systems should:

- Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems
- Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community
- Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues
- Mobilize community partnerships and take action to identify and solve health problems
- Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts
- Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety
- Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable
- Assure competent public and personal health care workforce
- Evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services
- Research innovative solutions to health problems

Department Organization

IDPH is currently organized into 11 offices, each of which addresses a distinct area of public health. Each office operates and supports numerous ongoing divisions and is prepared to respond to extraordinary situations as they arise.

Office of the Director (DO): The oversight for IDPH comes from the Director, who is responsible for the management of IDPH and the administration of its programs and services. In addition to the administrative office, the DO also includes the Divisions of Administrative Hearing Review, Government Affairs, Internal Audit, and Legal Services.

Available Location(s): Chicago, Springfield, and a limited number in our regional offices in Bellwood, Champaign, Edwardsville, Marion, Peoria, Rockford, and West Chicago.

Center for Minority Health: Designed to assess the health concerns of minority populations in Illinois and to assist in the creation and maintenance of culturally sensitive programs. They work to improve the health and well-being of Illinois' racial

and ethnic minority populations through the development of health policies and culturally linguistically appropriate programs that work to eliminate health disparities.

Available Location(s): Chicago or Springfield

Office of Finance and Administrative Services (OFA): Involved in the overall preparation and execution of the IDPH's entire budget, including accounting, property control, agency payroll, travel, and business services.

Available Location(s): Springfield

Office of Health Care Regulation (OHCR): Responsible for state licensing and inspection, along with federal Medicare and Medicaid certification functions and complaint investigations for hospitals, home health agencies, surgery centers, long term care facilities, and a host of other health care facilities.

Available Location(s): Chicago or Springfield

Office of Health Promotion (OHPm): Dedicated to promoting healthier and safer lifestyles through education, information, and services. Across the lifespan, OHPm programs play important roles in assessing the health of Illinois residents, encouraging healthy lifestyles, and providing information, resources, and referrals to those seeking to improve their health or to battle a chronic disease.

Available Location(s): Springfield

Office of Health Protection (OHPt): Administers programs to prevent and control infectious diseases, reduce and eliminate exposure to environmental hazards, and ensure a safe food supply. Responsibilities include conducting surveillance and investigations of communicable, food, water, and vector borne diseases; reducing spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; and administering programs for the immunization of children and adults against vaccine preventable diseases. IDPH's three laboratories (Carbondale, Chicago, and Springfield) provide testing data in support of IDPH's mission.

Available Location(s): Carbondale, Chicago or Springfield

Office of Human Resources (OHR): Responsible for maintaining employee files and position descriptions, providing information to employees on insurance and benefits, handling the master timekeeping duties for IDPH, serving as the personnel liaison for

IDPH with the Department of Central Management Services, and serving as the labor liaison with the various bargaining unions.

Available Location(s): Springfield

Office of Information Technology (OIT): Responsible for the development, configuration, and support of all enterprise level applications used by IDPH programs. Maintains a Wide Area Network (WAN) that serves agency employees along with the 94 local health departments across the state, and the Health Alert Network (HAN), and intranet. The IT Security section administers the identification management and access to applications.

Available Location(s): Springfield

Office of Performance Management (OPM): Responsible for promoting operational effectiveness, accountability, and transparency by supporting IDPH planning, analysis, and quality assurance efforts, through grant management, performance management, and continuous quality improvement practices.

Available Location(s): Chicago

Office of Policy, Planning and Statistics (OPPS): Collects, analyzes, and evaluates information on the health status and health needs of, and disease occurrence in Illinois residents to conduct epidemiologic studies and support health assessments. It also focuses on identifying future needs for health care facilities, services, and personnel. Additionally, the Office includes the Division of Vital Records, which handles birth and death certificates, adoptions, name changes, and other vital documents maintained by the state on individuals from Illinois.

Available Location(s): Chicago or Springfield

Office of Preparedness and Response (OPR): Coordinates IDPH's response and recovery operations for statewide public health emergencies; develops emergency operating procedures for natural and man-made disaster response and recovery activities, serves as the agency's liaison in the State Emergency Operations Center during statewide emergency operations, ensures essential health and medical services are available when local resources are overwhelmed, and regulates emergency medical services and certain hospital programs.

Available Location(s): Chicago or Springfield

Office Women’s Health and Family Services (OWHFS): Oversees the health and services for women and girls throughout their lifespan as well as family services that address the health and well-being of pregnant women, infants, children, and adolescents through Child and Adolescent Health, Perinatal Health, and School Health Programs.

Available Location(s): Chicago or Springfield

ABOUT THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

IDPH’s internship program is considered an educational and practical learning opportunity for students - providing students with a professional experience to further their education while providing real world exposure to augment classroom instruction.

Eligibility Criteria

In order to qualify for the Department’s Internship Program, applicants must:

- Be currently enrolled in an undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, or another professional degree program;
- Have completed at least one full academic year at the undergraduate level;
- Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.8 on a 4.0 scale; and
- Be currently enrolled or returning to school in the fall to continue degree requirements (for summer internship applicants).

How to Apply

Those interested in applying for an internship must complete the [online application form](#) and attach a cover letter, resume, and unofficial transcripts.

In order to better match skills and interests with the needs of our program areas, be sure to fully complete the online application and refer to this guide - paying particular attention to the preferences section for brief descriptions of the offices that participate in the internship program and their operational locations.

Selection Process

There are multiple steps in the selection process; students should understand the following:

- **Completed Applications:** Once applications are submitted, they are reviewed to ensure all eligibility requirements are met. Upon verification, application packets are made available to the various offices for their consideration.
- **Office Selections:** Individual offices will contact the student directly to setup interviews, as internships are ongoing throughout the year. Please note that all intern placement offers are considered tentative until all paperwork is signed.

Frequently Asked Questions

When are internships offered and how do I apply?

Internship opportunities may be available year-round, and are dependent upon the availability within each Office. Those interested in applying for an internship must complete the [online application form](#) and attach a cover letter, resume, and unofficial transcript.

Is there a deadline for submission of applications?

No. There are no application submission deadlines as applications may be reviewed and selected year-round.

Can I mail a hard copy of my application?

No. We cannot accept hard copies of applications. Only applications submitted via our website will be reviewed.

If I do not have access to the Internet, how can I apply?

Visit your school's computer lab or a local library to access the online application form.

To whom should I address my cover letter?

Because your cover letter may be read by various IDPH staff, you may wish to use the salutation "Dear Sir/Madam" or "To Whom It May Concern".

What happens after I submit my application?

Once the application is submitted it will receive a completeness and eligibility review. Once approved, it will be made available for Offices to review. If/when an internship opportunity becomes available, the preceptor within the Office will contact you directly by phone, e-mail, or letter.

How soon can I expect to hear that I am selected?

There is no definite answer to this question. You will be selected only if/when a preceptor within an Office has an internship position available and selects your application. There is no central selection process for the IDPH Internship Program.

I have submitted my application. Can I make changes?

No. You cannot make changes after you have submitted your application. If your contact information has changed, use the [Contact Us Form](#) to update your information.

Do I need to have an academic and/or professional background in the area to which I apply?

No, not necessarily. Though some internship positions may require knowledge and skills related to a specific content area, IDPH welcomes students from a wide variety of majors and academic and professional backgrounds.

I have not declared my major. What should I enter for "Academic Program (Major)"?

Please enter "Undeclared", "Undecided", or "Not Applicable", respectively.

What are the start and end dates for the program?

Start and end dates are negotiated individually by the applicant and the IDPH preceptor who has selected him/her as an intern.

I have previously participated in an IDPH internship. Can I apply again?

As long as eligibility requirements are met, you may submit an application to be considered for future internship opportunities as long

Can I submit copies of awards, papers, or posters, to supplement my application?

No. You may only submit the required documents. You can list awards and published abstracts and papers on your resume.

May I participate in the internship program after I have graduated from my academic program?

No. Applicants must be currently enrolled in an undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, or another professional degree program.

Does IDPH offer paid internships?

Paid and unpaid opportunities are available. It is up to each IDPH office to negotiate compensation, if any, with the student.

What types of benefits do interns receive?

Interns are not employees of IDPH and do not receive any mandatory or discretionary benefits.

Contact Us

Questions about IDPH's Internship Program or the application process?

For any questions on the Internship Program or the application process, please submit your questions using the [Contact Us Form](#).