



WA State Department of Veterans Affairs
Counseling and Wellness Programs
Veterans Conservation Corps
Internship Program



*"In healing nature, you heal yourself."
-John Beal, Founder of the VCC*

VCC Program Mission

Serve those who served by providing veterans with self-directed connections to the lands, waters, and communities in WA State.

The VCC provides opportunities for veterans to do meaningful work in conserving and restoring natural ecosystems with our environmental conservation and agricultural community partner organizations. We support veterans in establishing and maintaining healthy reciprocal relationships with nature and their community so that through their own efforts they may increase their self-efficacy and resiliency and realize a positive shift in their mental, emotional, and physical well-being. To further support their efforts, VCC interns receive training and resources on veteran-related topics that empower them to address and overcome any challenges that they may experience in their transition from the military.

Desired Outcomes for VCC Interns

- Veterans take the initiative to create a self-directed internship experience
- Given the opportunity to do meaningful work in conserving and restoring natural ecosystems and seeing the results of their efforts, veterans acknowledge and understand their own self-efficacy, resiliency, and ability to overcome their own personal challenges
- Veterans establish and maintain healthy reciprocal relationships with nature and their community
- Veterans realize a positive shift in their mental, emotional, and physical well-being
- Veterans acquire skills and experiences that may help them in finding meaningful employment

VCC Program Responsibilities

- Prior to Internship Start:
 - Complete and submit all required documentation to WDVA Contracts Department to initiate and finalize internship program contract between WDVA and partner organization
 - Finalize internship position descriptions and advertise to VCC networks
 - Recruitment of internship applicants and selection of applicants for interviews
 - Coordinate and conduct first round of applicant interviews
 - Conduct background and reference checks on potential interns
 - Inform interns of acceptance into internship
 - Conduct VCC intern orientation
 - Ensure VCC administrative/hiring paperwork is complete prior to internship start date
 - Conduct veteran cultural competency training with partner organization staff

- During Internship:
 - Provide intern support and assistance in resolving any intern issues/concerns
 - Connect interns to veteran resources and benefits
 - Coordinate training and professional/personal development opportunities for interns
 - Conduct internship mid-term evaluation with intern and partner organization staff

- At Completion of Internship:
 - Conduct internship final evaluation with intern and partner organization staff
 - Conduct post-internship check-ins with intern

Partner Organization Responsibilities

- Prior to Internship Start:
 - Collaborate with VCC Program to draft up an internship position description
 - Collaborate with VCC Program to create and finalize a contract with WDVA
 - Advertise final internship position description to partner organization's networks
 - Coordinate with VCC Program to conduct second round of intern applicant interviews
 - Select intern applicant for internship after second interviews are complete and inform VCC Program of intern selection
 - Conduct internal organization orientation for the VCC intern as applicable
 - Ensure internal organization administration applicable to hiring the VCC intern is complete prior to internship start date
 - Ensure that all staff who will interact with the VCC intern will participate in the veteran cultural competency training led by the VCC

- During Internship:
 - Provide opportunities for meaningful work that encourages intern self-efficacy and motivates interns to learn and experience as much as possible about the partner organization's mission and work
 - Provide a flexible work schedule, within reason, that allows interns the time and space to address any personal issues if necessary
 - Assist in resolving any immediate intern issues/concerns within scope of daily work
 - Maintain communications with VCC Program regarding any intern issues that require WDVA and/or veteran resources
 - Ensure intern has proper equipment and gear to participate in internship duties

VCC Intern Responsibilities

- Prior to Internship Start:
 - Coordinate with VCC program, providing all required documentation and information to enroll in VCC internship

- During Internship:
 - Adhere to expectations/requirements of internship position description
 - Remain in direct communication with site supervisor and VCC Program
 - Attend and actively engage in all required VCC and host organization trainings
 - Be proactive in searching for employment and education opportunities, if applicable
 - Focus on personal growth and experiencing opportunities unique to the internship
 - Focus on personal connection with the lands, waters, and communities in WA State

- At Completion of Internship:
 - Be available for post-internship check-ins and program surveys
 - If willing, update VCC Program on progress in employment, education, and overall well-being

Intern Check-Ins with VCC Program

- Standard for All Interns:
 - VCC Orientation
 - Midterm Review
 - Final Review
 - Post-internship check-in and survey (1 month after completion of internship)

- Need-based:
 - When mediation is required beyond interactions between intern and partner organization staff for any issues that may arise during internship
 - To provide resources as requested by intern (professional/personal development, veterans benefits, etc.)
 - Check-ins requested by intern for accountability in achieving goals established at orientation

Training for Interns

- Required:
 - VCC orientation
 - Veterans Cultural Competency Training
 - Posttraumatic Growth Training
 - PTSD/TBI/Mental Health/Suicide Awareness & Prevention Training
 - WDVA Veteran Peer Corps Certification
 - VCC Annual Training (every August)

- Optional:
 - Financial Literacy
 - Resume/cover letter/job interviewing
 - Professional networking
 - Dependable Strengths
 - Environmental conservation conferences/symposiums/workshops
 - Growing your veteran-owned small business
 - Whole Farm Planning and Agricultural Entrepreneurship
 - Other trainings/certifications as available and desired by intern

Internship Stipend

A living allowance is provided for assistance with necessary living expenses incurred while participating in the internship program.

- Full-time internship (~40 hours/week): \$1800/month
- Part-time internship (~20 hours/week): \$900/month

Partner Site Participation Fee Guidelines

	Length of Internship Term			
	3 Months	4/5/6 Months	7/8/9 Months	10/11/12 Months
Full-time	\$250	\$500	\$750	\$1000
Part-time	\$125	\$250	\$375	\$500

Internship Term Limit

- A maximum of two internship terms may be completed per intern.
- Any extension of a current internship term will be considered as part of the original internship term and not a separate internship term.

Contracting & Intern Enrollment Timeline

Events/Deliverables	Responsible Personnel
Partnership contract template and intern position description template emailed to Partner Organization (PO) staff for review and edit	VCC Program
Internship position description emailed to VCC Program for review and edit	PO Staff
Contract documents and internship position description submitted to WDVA Contracts Department for review and processing	VCC Program
Contract emailed to PO Staff for review, edits as applicable, and approval	WDVA Contracts Department
Return via email the signed and approved contract to WDVA Contracts Department	PO Staff
Final approved contract emailed to VCC Program Manager and PO Staff for records keeping	WDVA Contracts Department
Advertise internship position description to internal/external networks, social media platforms, etc. for recruitment	VCC Program and PO Staff
Email correspondence with intern applicants to answer questions/address any issues regarding internship and internship application process	VCC Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and conduct first round of intern applicant interviews • Email each applicant's resume, cover letter, and 1st interview notes to PO Staff for review 	VCC Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review first round internship applications • Select intern applicants for second round interviews and inform VCC Program of selections 	PO Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and facilitate second round of interviews with PO Staff and selected intern applicants 	VCC Program
After interview process is complete, select intern applicant for enrollment into VCC Program and communicate selection to VCC Program	PO Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct background check for selected intern • Conduct reference check for selected intern • Consult with PO Staff regarding results of background and reference checks as applicable 	VCC Program
After successful completion of background and reference checks, intern will be notified of selection for enrollment into VCC Internship Program	VCC Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterans Cultural Competency training conducted for PO staff • VCC Orientation with intern (includes completion of HR/Payroll paperwork and initial VCC Program surveys) 	VCC Program
First Day of Internship	Intern and PO staff

VCC Staff

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VCC Websites

www.dva.wa.gov/benefits/internships

www.facebook.com/VeteransConservationCorps/

www.instagram.com/veteransconservationcorps/