

Department of State Hospitals – Atascadero

PO Box 7001

Atascadero, CA 93423-7001



Dear Potential Intern,

Thank you for your interest in our internship program. DSH-Atascadero is a maximum-security correctional/forensic mental health facility. The majority-male population ranges in age from 20 years and older. Most of our patients have committed some type of felony, suffer from a major mental illness, some type of personality disorder, and often have substance abuse problems. Security is a top priority, and all interns receive security and safety related training before working with the patients. Some type of correctional mental health experience is strongly encouraged yet not required. Our goal is to prepare a Recreational Therapy Intern for employment as a Recreation Therapist in this type of facility.

To better prepare for intern's arrival, the internship committee has set up the following deadlines for the application process:

Deadline for the application submission will be posted on the CalCareers.ca.gov website. Applications may be sent via post mail or submitted online through the CalCareers.ca.gov website. If submitting via post mail, application packet must be received before the application submission deadline posted. Contact the Employment Office at (805) 468-3384 or ASHEmployment@dsh.ca.gov with any questions about using the CalCareers site, or to ensure all required materials are received. You can send your application packet to the following address:

Department of State Hospitals- Atascadero
Employment Office
P.O. Box 7005
Atascadero, CA 93423-7005

Entry Requirements

The applicant must:

1. Complete coursework towards a degree in Recreation Therapy with the anticipated completion of a bachelors or masters degree from an accredited college or university
2. Have basic functional leisure/recreation skills and be familiar with a variety of treatment interventions
3. Have good written and verbal communication skills
4. Be able to structure group sessions and formulate SMART objectives for groups and individuals
5. Be receptive to feedback
6. Demonstrate self-awareness and an ability to maintain strong interpersonal boundaries

Skills will be assessed by the Recreation Therapy Internship Committee through written application materials, reference checks, the interview.

If you decide to apply, you will need to do the following and return the completed packet to the Employment Office address listed above:

1. **Employment Application STD (678)** that can be accessed online at <https://jobs.ca.gov/pdf/std678.pdf> or mailed to the Employment office. In the Examination/Job Title Section please write Student Assistant- Recreation Therapy Internship. **Also, remember to sign the application where indicated as an unsigned application will be denied.**
2. **Official Transcript(s)** from the university you are attending (or have attended relating in Recreation Therapy course work).
3. **Resume.**
4. **Letter of Verification** from your academic advisor/director of Therapeutic Recreation at your school stating when you will be completing your coursework (this can be included in your recommendation letter if your advisor will be writing that).
5. **Signed Duty Statement.**
6. **Sample objectives OR a program design project** that you have completed for one of your classes (AI generated documents will not be accepted).
7. **Cover Letter** that includes a brief narrative describing any experience you feel contributed to your education as a Recreation Therapist.
8. **Two Letters of Recommendation;** one should be from a Recreation Therapy instructor.

Selection Process

After the final filing date, the Employment Office reviews applications for basic eligibility. The selection process may take 1-3 months from the final filing date with an anticipated September start date. The selection process will involve the following stages:

1. Eligible candidates will be offered an initial employment interview. You will be notified when your employment interview is scheduled.
2. The most competitive candidates will be scheduled for a follow up internship interview.
3. Once all interviews are complete, reference checks will be conducted on most competitive candidates. A tentative offer will be extended to the most competitive candidate(s).

4. **Important:** If given a tentative offer, you will be required to complete pre-employment checks, including a LiveScan fingerprinting, physical, TB/PPD skin test, and any other requirements for the classification.

The facility provides extensive orientation and training for all new employees. Therefore, the internship lasts a *minimum* of 19 weeks, regardless of the number of weeks required to complete the academic degree. Depending on your school, you might also need to have liability insurance and health insurance coverage.

The final step in completing this process will be to establish student placement objectives between the hospital and the university outlining the responsibilities of the parties involved in your training/education.

Internships generally start at the beginning of a month due to our 2–3 week New Employee Orientation. These 2-3 weeks are included in the hours required by NCTRC for certification. Our internship is extended to 19 weeks to allow for maximum clinical exposure for interns. It is important to note that this internship will require some assignments to be done outside of the 40-hour work week. This internship requires weekly journals, and a final presentation, all of which should be done outside of work hours. Details will be given if chosen.

Sincerely,

DSH- Atascadero Internship Committee