



Massachusetts Clean Energy Internship Program Host Employer FAQs 2023 Spring Session: January 1, 2023 – May 14, 2023

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Note: This document is intended to provide general guidance and information regarding MassCEC's Clean Energy Internship Program (the "Program"). For detailed information regarding the operation and structure of the Program, please see the Terms and Conditions applicable to interns [here](#).

- 1) If a student is in the database, it does not necessarily mean that they are eligible to participate in the Internship Program (see **Question #11**). Eligibility checks are submitted through the database. Please request a check before making any official job offers to candidates. **Question #10** provides details on student eligibility.
- 2) All interns must be paid on a W-2 employee status to be eligible for reimbursement and you must notify MassCEC and submit a new W-9 if your address changes. You must be able to provide proof of wages/taxes paid if requested in the form of paycheck stubs and/or a payroll summary. All interns must be paid at least Fifteen Dollars per hour (\$15/hr.); MassCEC will reimburse up to Eighteen Dollars per hour (\$18/hr.)
- 3) MassCEC endeavors to make this program as inclusive and diverse as possible. The reservation of funding for students and employers located in Gateway Cities is intended to further support diverse populations who wish to participate in the clean technology sector. There are many eligible candidates listed in the student database from a variety of different backgrounds.

IMPORTANT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM DATES

November 9, 2022	Open enrollment and intern selection begin
January 1, 2023	Spring 2023 session start date
February 1, 2023	Deadline for signed offer letter submissions to MassCEC if funding has not been allocated before this date. <u>We will not accept any offer letters past this date.</u>
May 14, 2023	Spring 2023 session end date
June 15, 2023	Deadline for Spring 2023 session reimbursement packages. <u>We will not accept any reimbursement packages past this date.</u>

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM PARTICIPATION STEPS

- 1) **Register to participate by completing the [online employer application](#) as an Internship Sponsor.**
 - a. Approved employers are eligible to participate in the program for a full year from the date of their application.

- 2) **Access the student database to review candidates, or have external candidates submit their student applications, which can also be found on the <https://www.masscec.com/user> page. All candidates must be present in the student database.**
 - a. Post a description of your internship before performing an eligibility check.
 - b. Select candidates from the student database by selecting the 'Request' option next to their name for the required eligibility check. Please make yourself aware of the student eligibility criteria before selecting candidates (see **Question #10**).
 - c. MassCEC will respond to let you know if the student is eligible.

- 3) **If the student is confirmed as eligible, have the student sign an offer letter for the upcoming session. The offer letter should at least state the student's name, expected date range to be worked, and wage/hour. You must submit your signed offer letters no later than the session deadline of February 1, 2023. MassCEC will not place any additional interns past this date.**
 - a. Once you receive the signed offer letter back from the student you must countersign it and send it to internships@masscec.com before the submission deadline.
 - b. When MassCEC has received the fully countersigned offer letter for an eligible candidate, and all previous requirements in **steps #1 and #2** have been met, we will reserve funding for that intern for the session providing that funding is still available. We are not able to reserve your funding before we receive this signed document.
 - c. MassCEC may communicate to you at its discretion that your interns are approved to start working for you while your award letter is being drafted.

- 4) **Sign and return your Award Letter**
 - a. When you receive your award letter, check the address on the document is correct, sign the document, and return it to internships@masscec.com as soon as possible. This serves as your official agreement with MassCEC for the session. We will not provide reimbursement for interns without it.

- 5) **Submit your Reimbursement Package. You must submit your fully completed reimbursement packages before the session deadline of June 15, 2023. We will not provide any reimbursements for packages submitted past this date. MassCEC reserves the right to deny reimbursement funding for a Host Employer's session if a complete reimbursement package is not received by the session's reimbursement package submission deadline.**
 - a. MassCEC will provide you with reimbursement materials and instructions. Please fill these materials out and send back to MassCEC. Only send one (1) reimbursement package for all interns.
 - b. For MassCEC to reimburse you, we will need:
 - i. Your Award Letter, countersigned, and returned to us (**step #4 above**);
 - ii. MassCEC reimbursement sheet filled out for each intern;
 - iii. Mandatory survey (link found in reimbursement instructions) completed; and
 - iv. An up-to-date W-9 form.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FAQS

1. What is the Massachusetts Clean Energy Internship Program?

The Program is a workforce development initiative that facilitates the placement of students and recent graduates into paid internships with clean energy companies across the state. MassCEC will reimburse eligible employers for intern wages.

2. How does the Massachusetts Clean Energy Internship Program work?

Students seeking an internship will complete an online application including their resume, academic background, and preferred industry subsector. Employers will review these applications and select candidates to interview and hire. Internships are full or part-time during the twelve (12) week session. There are three (3) sessions per year. Employers will provide a meaningful internship opportunity and mentorship opportunities for each intern. Upon completion of the internship, employers will request reimbursement from MassCEC for the wages paid to the intern(s).

3. How does an employer register to participate?

Potential Host Employers should send a signed W-9 to finance@masscec.com and fill out the electronic application posted at <https://www.masscec.com/user>. Note you will need to create a profile on our website AND fill out the program application form (includes uploading a job description).

4. What are the eligibility requirements for organizations to participate in the program?

Completing the Participating Host Employer Application Form does not guarantee or entitle your organization to receive internship funds. In order for your organization to gain approval to participate, your organization must:

- Be an eligible clean energy employer. For the purposes of this program, MassCEC defines a clean energy employer as “an employer engaged in whole or in part in goods and services, or advanced and applied technologies that significantly reduce or eliminate the use of energy from non-renewable sources, including, but not limited to: energy efficiency; demand response; energy conservation and those technologies powered in whole or in part by the sun, wind, water, biomass, alcohol, wood, fuel cells, any renewable, non-depletable, or recyclable fuel.” MassCEC in its sole discretion makes the determination of whether an employer is a clean energy employer.
- Be registered to do business in Massachusetts. If you are unsure if your business is registered to do business in Massachusetts, please consult the Secretary of the Commonwealth’s [Corporations Division](#).
- Provide a meaningful internship (as defined in the General Terms and Conditions).
- Provide adequate proof that your organization is able to pay your intern(s) and all associated costs associated with employment.
- Successfully demonstrate that your organization has a physical presence in Massachusetts.
- Not be an academic or government entity.
- **Be in good standing with MassCEC. The Host Employer must have submitted all paperwork relating to any prior internship complete including the mandatory final survey, which has been received and approved by MassCEC.**

5. Does MassCEC offer priority funding for certain subsectors?

MassCEC offers funding carve outs for the following subsectors:

- Spring 2023: Thirty (30) reserved spots for students living in Gateway Cities and/or employers with an office in a Gateway City.
- The reserved funding will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis until the reserved spots are filled. Employers are still required to meet the other criteria listed above.
- Once the reserved funding is fully allocated, the remaining funding will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.
- If the reserved funding is not fully allocated by the program start date, then the remaining funding will be allocated to waitlisted employers.

6. Can Government or Academic Institutions Apply to the Internship Program?

Government and academic institutions cannot receive funding from MassCEC. However, they may use the database to identify potential interns. Contact internships@masscec.com for details.

7. How many interns may an organization employ?

Host Employers are allowed to select up to three (3) interns if one (1) of the three (3) interns attend a community college. Two (2) interns are permitted if neither attends a community college. Each intern must be approved individually. Funding for one (1) intern does not entitle you to funding for a second or third.

There is also a restriction on Related Party Organizations as defined below. If your organization owns other eligible organizations, or if your organization is owned by another, you are only allowed a maximum of three (3) subsidized interns for ALL Related Party Organizations.

Related Party Organizations are defined as organizations having common ownership and/or management personnel (including but not limited to the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, or Chief Operating Officer). Related Party Organizations are also considered to be related if at any time one (1) organization has the ability to Control (as defined below) the other organization or exercise influence over the other organization in making financial and/or operating decisions. Control is defined as:

1. Ownership, directly or indirectly, of more than one half of the voting power of an organization; or
2. Control of the composition of the board of directors, or other governing body of accompany organization; or
3. A substantial interest in voting power and the power to direct the financial and/or operating policies of the organization.

Please be aware that MassCEC will not accept any documents submitted by any entity that is not the primary participating Host Employer.

8. How long can an intern stay at my organization?

An intern will be subsidized for one (1) session of work, and not in consecutive sessions. An intern may stay on after the conclusion of a session but will not continue to be subsidized by MassCEC.

9. Can we hire an intern from a previous session and be eligible for MassCEC reimbursement?

MassCEC will not provide reimbursement if the intern is hired for a subsequent session. For example, an employer may take on the same individual once per year in the same session (i.e., Summer 2021 and Summer 2022) OR twice per year in nonconsecutive sessions (i.e., Spring 2022 and Fall 2022). Additionally, an individual will not be eligible to participate at the same Host Employer if they continue to work or volunteer for you in between sessions in an amount greater than five (5) hours/week on average.

Current or very recent employees are not eligible to participate with you as an intern under this program unless they have been working for the Host Employer less than six (6) weeks leading up to the session start date.

10. What are the eligibility requirements for prospective interns?

Students will be required to meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Must attend, or have attended:
 - (a) A college or university located in Massachusetts; or
 - (b) A college or university outside of Massachusetts, only if the student is a Massachusetts resident and is able to present proof of residency; and
2. Must meet one (1) of the following:
 - (a) Students must have completed or will complete at least their freshman year of college (24 credits), the semester before the internship, or have graduated within the past calendar year (ahead of the start date of the session they wish to attend);
 - (b) If a student attends or attended a community college (or 2-year associate program) the student must have completed at least twenty-four (24) credits;
 - (c) If a student has attended a training program, that program must have a certificate of completion date within the last year (ahead of the start date of the session they wish to attend); or
 - (d) Graduate students must be current students or have completed their program within the last calendar year.
3. All replacement interns must be approved by MassCEC.

Certain individuals are not eligible to participate in the program:

1. Law School students, Ph. D. candidates, or students who have been previously enrolled or matriculated in a Ph.D. program, are not eligible to participate in the program.
2. Full or part-time employees, both those who have received compensation as well as volunteers, are not eligible to participate in this program at their current employers.

3. Any full-time employee or existing intern that has been on payroll for greater than twelve (12) weeks at a Host Employer or has been continuously working at the Host Employer since their last participating session.

11. I've selected my student intern(s). Why do you need to conduct an eligibility check? I thought since they are in the database you had already been in touch with them.

MassCEC does not provide an eligibility check on interns before the check is specifically requested by a potential employer due to the large number of student applications we receive every session.

12. Can I hire a relative?

The Intern(s) cannot be the spouse, child, grandchild, sibling, niece, nephew, or spouse of a child, grandchild, sibling, niece, or nephew of the president, CEO, or other senior executive member of the Host Employer, or of any other employee of Host Employer who may have hiring authority on behalf of the Host Employer.

13. Is there a deadline for submitting signed offer letters to MassCEC?

All signed offer letters must be received by MassCEC **no later than February 1, 2023.**

14. What are a Host Employer's contractual obligations?

Host Employers will be required to accept the General Terms and Conditions of the program when applying. Host employers must also acknowledge the Award Letter with MassCEC. There is no explicit or implicit commitment on the part of any Host Employer to provide future employment for any intern.

By participating in the Internship Program, the Host Employer and MassCEC do not form a partnership, employment relationship, joint venture, or principal and agent relationship. At no time is any Intern deemed or otherwise considered to be an employee, intern, contractor, subcontractor, or agent of MassCEC for any purpose. The terms and conditions of the Internship shall be set by an intern and the Host Employer and MassCEC shall have no responsibility, liability or oversight authority whatsoever with respect to Intern or the Internship. The Host Employer and its agents, employees, and Interns may not hold themselves out as MassCEC employees and shall not be deemed an employee of MassCEC for any purpose.

15. The Cleantech Industry is really competitive. I'd like to have my intern sign a non-compete agreement. Is there a policy for non-compete agreements?

Host Employers are not permitted to require or request that an intern sign a non-compete agreement. Host Employers are permitted to use non-disclosure or confidentiality agreement to protect any sensitive information.

16. My intern left mid internship. Can I still hire someone?

If a hired intern terminates employment during the internship, the Host Employer has until **three (3) weeks** after the start date referenced in the initial offer letter to hire a new intern. After the three-week window has passed, the Host Employer's funding will be awarded to a company on the waitlist. New interns must be approved by MassCEC.

17. How much can I pay my intern?

The minimum wage for this program is \$15/hr. and MassCEC will reimburse up to \$18/hr. MassCEC will only reimburse a Host Employer up to the cap of \$4,320/intern in the fall or spring sessions and \$8,640/intern in the summer session. Failure to pay an intern \$15/hr. will result in your company being banned from the program.

18. Does my intern need to fill out a W2?

All interns must be paid on a W-2 employee status to be eligible for reimbursement and you must notify MassCEC and submit a new W-9 if your address changes. You must be able to provide proof of wages/taxes paid if requested in the form of paycheck stubs and/or a payroll summary. All interns must be paid at least Fifteen Dollars per hour (\$15/hr.); MassCEC will reimburse up to Eighteen Dollars per hour (\$18/hr.)

19. I'm a small organization and I don't have a payroll system. What should I do?

If you are a smaller-sized organization and need assistance with your payroll services, please review the resource list below. Please note, without **adequate proof of payment of the internship's wages and taxes, reimbursement will not be issued to your organization. MassCEC will not reimburse a Host Employer for the costs of using a payroll service. Below are some examples of payroll services that are acceptable:**

- [ADP](#)
- [Ceridian](#)
- [Paychex](#)
- [MassPay](#)

Please do not hesitate to email the Workforce Development team at internships@masscec.com with any questions not covered in this FAQ. Someone will respond to you as quickly as possible.