VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION
WATERMEN'S INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Informational Document

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Intern Application Process

Applications periods may be opened at the discretion of the Program Director. Applications will be received by the Program Specialist, scanned, and sent to the Program Director and Advisory Panel for review, approval or denial. Applications shall not collect any demographic information, except for birthday to verify age of applicant meets minimum programmatic requirements. Requests for additional documentation or for in-person interviews may be required.

- Any Intern or Mentor applicant that has been convicted of a criminal offense may be subject to denial to participate in the Intern Program at the discretion of the Program Director or Commissioner.
- Any Intern or Mentor applicant that has failed to provide timely reports to the Mandatory Harvest Reporting Program may be subject to denial to participate in the Internship Program at the discretion of the Program Director or Commissioner.
- Any Intern applicant that has been eligible for any limited entry permit, license or user fee in the past (e.g. Oyster User Fee, Crab Pot Permit) may be subject to denial to participate in the Internship Program, or limited to participate only in fisheries that are not regulated through limited entry, at the discretion of the Program Director or Commissioner.
- Any Intern who is under the age of 16 at application may only apply if at least one of their requested mentors is a family member.
- Applications will be scored on both applicant and mentor information and history.

Upon approval of entry into the Internship Program, the Intern, Mentor, and any parent/guardian (if under the age of 18) will be required to meet with the Program Director, or their designee, to review the program, rules, and to acquire any additional information for the issuance of Internship Program permits.

Internship Program permits include issuance of an Educational Permit designed specifically for the commercial fisheries the Intern may participate in, and a Waterman's Internship Permit (Gear Code 505), even if the Intern already has their own Commercial Fishing Registration License (Gear Code 500).

Intern Training and Support

- The Internship Program shall aid with the issuance of safety and wet gear for each Intern if requested. The program shall maintain a stock of safety and wet gear for issuance as needed.
- The Internship Program shall subsidize costs when able and provide opportunities for industry-related training classes (e.g., First Aid/CPR, Captains License, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), Fisheries Management and Regulations, boat maintenance and repair).
- The Internship Program shall explore opportunities to either subsidize or provide initial commercial fishing gear purchases (e.g. crab pots).
- The Internship Program shall explore and develop industry partnerships to make available additional on-the-job training and employment opportunities for each Intern.
- The Internship Program shall offer a reimbursement scholarship process and procedures for Interns pursuing industry related training and courses at Virginia colleges, universities and maritime schools and academies (see Attachments 4 and 5).

Mentor Training and Support

- The Internship Program shall aid with the issuance of safety and wet gear for each Mentor if requested.
- The Internship Program shall provide Mentors the opportunity to participate with Interns in specific classes as designated by program staff (e.g. First Aid/CPR).

Internship Program Participant Expectations

- Interns shall comply with all state and federal laws and regulations.
- Interns shall register for online mandatory harvest reporting and provide mandatory harvest activity reports monthly, by the 5th day of each month, regardless of harvest.
- Interns shall complete the VMRC shellfish harvester safety training within 30 days of receipt of an Internship Program permit that includes the ability to harvest oysters.
- Interns shall record on documentation provided by the Internship Program all hours worked (e.g. gear prep/repair, boat prep/repair, mandatory harvest reporting, hours harvesting).
- Interns and Mentors shall be respectful and polite in the conduct of business, to include interactions with the general public, law enforcement officers and representatives, and staff of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission.
- Interns and Mentors shall practice safe work habits to ensure their safety and welfare.
- Interns and Mentors shall maintain open communication with the Program Director and Program Specialist, whether by phone, e-mail, or U.S. Mail.

- Interns without a Commercial Fishing Registration License (Gear Code 500) shall only be authorized to harvest in accordance with the specific requirements provided through a current Educational Permit issued through the Internship Program.
- Interns with a Commercial Fishing Registration License (Gear Code 500) shall adhere to all rules and regulations pertaining to the commercial harvest of public oysters except when specified through a current Educational Permit issued through the Internship Program.
- Interns with a Commercial Fishing Registration License (Gear Code 500) who are also permitted to participate in a limited entry commercial fishery (e.g. crab pot) shall adhere to all rules and regulations pertaining to the specific fishery except when specified through a current Education Permit issued through the Internship Program.
- Interns must submit a final report at the conclusion of each internship year using the provided form to be considered for subsequent program years.

Internship Program Grounds for Dismissal

- Any Intern or Mentor that fails to abide by the Internship Program Participant Expectations may be subject to removal from the Internship Program at the discretion of the Program Director or Commissioner.
- Any Intern or Mentor that is convicted of a criminal offense may be subject to removal from the Internship Program at the discretion of the Program Director or Commissioner.
- Any Intern or Mentor that fails to provide timely reports to the Mandatory Harvest Reporting Program or the Internship Program may be subject to removal from the Internship Program at the discretion of the Program Director or Commissioner.
- Any Intern or Mentor that fails to provide updated contact information, to include home and mailing information, in a timely manner, may be subject to removal from the Internship Program at the discretion of the Program Director or Commissioner.

Internship Program Tiers

Tier 1 Education Permit Criteria (Years 1 and 2)

1) All federal, state, and local laws and regulations pertaining to the commercial harvest of any fishery shall be adhered to, unless otherwise specified in this Educational Permit. A copy of this Educational Permit must be available for presentation to any police officer upon request.

2) If any violations occur while operating under this permit, this permit may be revoked immediately.

3) This permit does not provide the Intern or mentor the authority to harvest or possess any species that is currently listed as endangered, threatened, or prohibited to possess by moratorium.

4) **The Intern** shall report all of their individual daily commercial harvest pursuant to Chapter 610 "Pertaining to Commercial Fishing and Mandatory Harvest Reporting" through the Online Mandatory Harvest Reporting Program Web Application, to be submitted no later than the fifth day of the following month.
5) **The Intern** and either the **Primary** or **Secondary Mentor** shall be onboard the vessel, at all times, while any fishing activity that is provided by this Educational Permit is taking place.
6) ***(IF IN MIDDLE OR HIGH SCHOOL)*** When school is in session, the lawful hours for this permit are from 12 pm (noon) to sundown, Monday through Friday, pertaining to the harvest of blue crabs only. When school is not in session, the lawful hours for this permit are the daily time limits for commercial harvest as described in 4VAC20-270-30 for the harvest of blue crabs.
7) ***(IF MENTOR HAS CRAB POT PERMIT ALSO)*** The Intern may lawfully place, set, or fish up to 40 hard crab pots, and harvest no greater than 4 bushels per day of blue crabs, pursuant to Chapter 270 "Pertaining to Blue Crab Fishery". Crab pots shall display "**«MRC_ID»**" on each floating buoy or stake attached to each crab pot, in a legible and visible manner pursuant to Chapter 140 "Pertaining to Identification of Crab Pots, Peeler Pots, and Fish Pots".
8) ***(IF MENTOR HAS PEELER POT PERMIT ALSO)*** The Intern may lawfully place, set, or fish up to 40 peeler pots, and harvest no greater than 4 bushels per day of peeler crabs, pursuant to Chapter 270 "Pertaining to Blue Crab Fishery". Peeler Pots shall display "**«MRC_ID»**" on each floating buoy or stake attached to each peeler pot, in a legible and visible manner pursuant to Chapter 140 "Pertaining to Identification of Crab Pots, Peeter Pots, and Fish Pots".
9) The Intern may lawfully place, set, or fish up to 10 fish pots. Fish pots shall display "**«MRC_ID»**" on each floating buoy or stake attached to each fish pot, in a legible and visible manner pursuant to Chapter 140 "Pertaining to Identification of Crab Pots, Peeler Pots and Fish Pots".
10) The Intern may lawfully place, set, or fish up to 4 ordinary trot lines.
11) ***(IF MENTOR HAS OYSTER USER FEE AND GEAR LICENSE ALSO)*** The Intern may lawfully harvest 4 bushels of public oysters per day, during the lawful public oyster season, pursuant to Chapter 720 "Pertaining to Restrictions on Oyster Harvest" if, and only if the **Mentor** is lawfully licensed and permitted for same oyster harvest activity, the **Mentor** is onboard vessel with the **Intern**, and the **Intern** has successfully completed the online Shellfish Harvester Safety Training.
12) For Private Aquaculture Operations, the Intern must remain onboard the same vessel, or within the designated working area, as their Mentor, who must hold all required license and permits to lawfully conduct aquaculture activities in that area.

Tier 2 Education Permit Criteria (Year 3)

All permit criteria for Tier 1 Education Permits in effect, with the following modifications:

FOR CRAB POTS (IF MENTOR HAS CRAB POT PERMIT ALSO) The Intern may lawfully place, set, or fish up to 80 hard crab pots, and harvest no greater than 8 bushels per day of blue crabs, pursuant to Chapter 270 "Pertaining to Blue Crab Fishery". Crab pots shall display "**«MRC_ID»**" on each floating buoy or stake attached to each crab pot, in a legible and visible manner pursuant to Chapter 140 "Pertaining to Identification of Crab Pots, Peeler Pots, and Fish Pots".

FOR PEELER POTS (IF MENTOR HAS PEELER POT PERMIT ALSO). The Intern may lawfully place, set, or fish up to 80 peeler pots, and harvest no greater than 8 bushels per day of peeler crabs, pursuant to Chapter 270 "Pertaining to Blue Crab Fishery". Peeler Pots shall display "**«MRC_ID»**" on each floating buoy or stake attached to each peeler pot, in a legible and visible manner pursuant to Chapter 140 "Pertaining to Identification of Crab Pots, Peeter Pots, and Fish Pots".

FOR PUBLIC OYSTER HARVEST (IF MENTOR HAS OYSTER USER FEE AND GEAR LICENSE ALSO) The Intern may lawfully harvest 6 bushels of public oysters per day, during the lawful public oyster season, pursuant to Chapter 720 "Pertaining to Restrictions on Oyster Harvest" if, and only if the **Mentor** is lawfully licensed and permitted for same oyster harvest activity, the **Mentor** is onboard vessel with the **Intern**, and the **Intern** has successfully completed the online Shellfish Harvester Safety Training.

Program Completion: after completing three successful years. (Under development)

Interns are limited to three complete years of internship if they are over the age of 16. The Waterman's Internship Program is limited to four intern-years total, regardless of completion age.

Waterman's Internship Program Advisory Board

Advisory Panel

1) An advisory panel will be selected by the Commissioner to provide recommendations and review applications to the Waterman's Internship Program.
2) The panel will meet as-needed
3) Panel will score applications using a scoring rubric
4) Initial makeup – associate commission members, staff, and a former Intern

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Intern Change in Status Form.pdf

Attachment 7: Shellfish Harvester Training

webapps.mrc.virginia.gov/public/ training/register.php