



Alternate Workforce Policy

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear and consistent guidance to ensure a high standard of service delivery related to the alternate workforce for Buncombe County (County). An alternate workforce is a just-in-time workforce engaged or under the direction of the County Manager, aside from traditional full-time or part-time regular employees. This policy allows the County to find new ways to build an alternate workforce which may include the following positions: academic internship, apprenticeship, pro re nata (PRN), and short and long-term temporary. This policy does not include contract workers. Expectations outlined in this policy define specific roles and responsibilities, ensure equitable opportunities, and safeguard the security and liability of the county while preparing all parties for success.

2.0 Applicability

This policy applies to all Buncombe County departments and alternate workforce members. Where there is conflict with any department-specific policy, this document will supersede.

3.0 Policy

3.1 Usage and Types of Alternate Workforce Positions

To ensure that the fluctuating needs of Buncombe County and the community are met, the County recognizes the value of engaging an alternate workforce. Alternate workforce labor differs from regular full-time or part-time employees and is authorized as a resource when a short-term need or a special assignment is identified, a unique skill set is required or desired, or when there is a large-scale project. Alternate workforce positions may be paid through Buncombe County or they may be unpaid.

The following types of alternate workforce positions exist within Buncombe County and the guidelines for each follow in the subsequent sections of this policy:

- Academic Internship and Apprenticeship Positions
- Pro Re Nata (PRN) Positions
- Short and Long-Term Temporary Positions

3.2 Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.2.1 The Director of Human Resources (or their designee) will be responsible for:
 - 3.2.1.1 Coordination and assurance that the alternate workforce position is categorized appropriately.
 - 3.2.1.2 Ensuring alternate workforce members submit an application for the assignment.
 - 3.2.1.3 Ensuring alternate workforce members are provided written notice of their assignment type, benefit eligibility (if applicable), and conditions of assignment.
 - 3.2.1.4 Ensuring that, depending on the duties of the assignment, they will be required to have a background check if age 18 or older. Drug screens may be completed in accordance with the Drug-Free Workplace Policy prior to the worker's assignment start date.
- 3.2.2 The Department Director (or their designee) will be responsible for:
 - 3.2.2.1 Determining the type of work that needs to be completed and the length of time an alternate worker is needed.
 - 3.2.2.2 Confirming that there is available funding and/or a position for the alternate workforce position.
 - 3.2.2.3 Monitoring the alternate worker's assignment and completion of their duties.
 - 3.2.2.4 Entering and terminating the alternate workforce member in the Human Resources Information System (HRIS).
 - 3.2.2.5 Ensuring that Buncombe County employees do not report directly to an alternate workforce member.

3.3 Appointment of Alternate Workforce Members

Alternate workforce positions may be activated based on a departmental need or as part of an academic or apprenticeship program and must be approved by the department director (or designee). Assignment duration should be determined prior to appointment as defined by program or contract requirements.

Anyone filling an alternate workforce position will be held to the same behavior standards as County employees, and they must follow all County policies and participate in all required trainings. Upon appointment, all alternate workforce members will be required to attend County and departmental onboarding. Applicable County and departmental policies will be reviewed with each workforce member on the first day of assignment.

Buncombe County will abide by all applicable state and federal regulations, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, to remain compliant when using alternate workforce members. Alternate workforce positions may not be eligible for state or federal benefits in connection to providing services to Buncombe County and will not be eligible for covered status.

3.4 Internship Positions – Academic & Apprenticeship

An Academic Internship is a position filled by a current student (who is not currently a Buncombe County employee) that wants to receive educational or programmatic experience with Buncombe County for educational credit. This may include a fellowship. An apprenticeship is a position filled by an individual who wants to receive work experience through Buncombe County. These positions require an internship job application and selection process. The minimum age for an intern is 16 years old with parental or guardian consent.

- 3.4.1 The department overseeing the intern should consult with Human Resources to determine whether their internship position will be paid or unpaid. Departments must consult with the Budget Office to ensure there is budget sufficient to cover the position's cost.
- 3.4.2 Regardless of the pay status of the position, internships are not eligible for cost-of-living adjustments, longevity payments, or any other annual salary increase.
- 3.4.3 The maximum number of hours an individual in an internship position can perform work with Buncombe County cannot exceed 900 hours per calendar year.
- 3.4.4 No performance evaluations will be completed unless explicitly required as a component of program completion.
- 3.4.5 Incidences of performance issues may be directed to the contracted vendor or third-party contact, if applicable.
- 3.4.6 An individual in an internship position is not eligible for severance pay upon separation, paid holidays, sick leave, or any other employee-specified benefit per Buncombe County's Benefits and Leave Policies.
- 3.4.7 Fellowship requirements will be in alignment with the corresponding academic institution.

3.5 PRN Positions

PRN is an as-needed position filled by an individual whose duties and responsibilities are required on an annually-recurring, seasonal, or on-call basis. These positions require a job posting and recruiting process.

- 3.5.1 The hiring department should consult with Human Resources to confirm the appropriate salary for their PRN worker.
- 3.5.2 PRN workers are eligible for cost-of-living adjustments.
- 3.5.3 The maximum number of hours a PRN worker can perform work with Buncombe County cannot exceed 900 hours per year. PRN workers must work at least one shift in each calendar year to remain an active employee.
- 3.5.4 No performance evaluations will be completed for PRN workers.
- 3.5.5 A PRN worker is not eligible for severance pay upon separation, paid holidays, sick leave, or any other employee-specified benefit per Buncombe County's Benefits and Leave Policies.

3.6 Temporary Positions – Short-Term

A Short-Term Temporary, time-limited position is filled by an individual whose duties and responsibilities are required on a regular basis, either full or part time, for no longer

than 11 months. These positions require a job posting and recruiting process. The hiring department should consult with Human Resources and the Budget Office to confirm the appropriate salary for their short-term temporary worker.

- 3.6.1 Short-term temporary workers are not eligible for cost-of-living adjustments, longevity payments, or any other annual salary increase.
- 3.6.2 The maximum number of hours a short-term temporary worker can perform work with Buncombe County cannot exceed 900 hours per year.
- 3.6.3 No performance evaluations will be completed for short-term temporary workers.
- 3.6.4 A short-term temporary worker is not eligible for severance pay upon separation, paid holidays, sick leave, or any other employee-specified benefit per Buncombe County's Benefits and Leave Policies.

3.7 Temporary Positions – Long Term

A Long-Term Temporary, time-limited position is filled by an individual whose duties and responsibilities are required on a regular basis, either full or part time, for more than 11 months with a defined end date. These positions require a formal job posting and recruiting process. Long-term temporary positions can work for Buncombe County up to 36 months, with County Manager approval.

- 3.7.1 This policy does not apply to grant-funded positions, or any position not fully funded by the general fund. Please see the relevant policies for those guidelines.
- 3.7.2 The hiring department should consult with Human Resources to confirm the appropriate salary for their long-term temporary worker.
- 3.7.3 Long-term temporary workers may be eligible for cost-of-living adjustments, longevity payments, and other annual salary increases.
- 3.7.4 County performance evaluations will be completed for long-term temporary workers.
- 3.7.5 A long-term temporary worker may be eligible for certain Buncombe County benefits depending on the number of hours worked within a 12-month period.

3.8 Access

Alternate workforce members may receive technology to complete essential work functions. If assigned County-owned technology, they are required to complete all Information Technology training and comply with all relevant policies to ensure appropriate technology use. If facilities access is requested for the position, alternate workforce members will be assigned a badge with essential building access only. The alternate workforce member is required to return their badge and all County-owned technology at the end of their assignment to their supervisor. Alternate workforce members do not have spending authority and will not be assigned a procurement card.

3.9 Alternate Workforce Compensation During County Closure

Buncombe County does not pay for alternate workforce labor when the worksite is closed for any reason, including emergency conditions, unless they are required to

report to work to support emergency essential duties. Paid alternate workforce members are only paid for the time worked on their assignment.

4.0 Policy Non-Compliance

Employees or alternate workforce member willfully violating the terms and conditions of this policy, or any County policy may be subject to appropriate action, including the termination of Buncombe County’s contract or release from assignment.

5.0 Audit

All policies for Buncombe County may be subject to audit or review as outlined in the [Internal Auditor’s Statement](#).

6.0 Definitions

6.1 Apprenticeship: An employer-driven training opportunity where the trainee is learning by practical experience under a skilled worker. Typical apprentice positions reside within the trade fields.

6.2 Covered Status: Please refer to the Personnel Ordinance covered status definition.

6.3 Fellowship: A training opportunity for individuals who are completing a graduate program or graduate degree. Fellowship requirements will be in alignment with the corresponding academic institution.

6.4 Internship: Academic Internship is work experience that is integrated into a student's academic program where they must receive credit for the time the work is performed.

6.5 Pro Re Nata (PRN): As the situation demands.

7.0 Approval and Revision History

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