

CHAPTER 75
STEM INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

[Prior to 11/1/23, see Economic Development Authority[261] Ch 110]
[Prior to 5/14/25, see Workforce Development Board, State[877] Ch 30]

Chapter rescission date pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.7: 10/22/30

871—75.1(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Authority. The authority for adopting rules establishing a STEM internship program is provided in Iowa Code sections 15.411(5) and 15.106A.

[ARC 9569C, IAB 9/17/25, effective 10/22/25]

871—75.2(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Purpose. The purpose of the STEM internship program is to assist in placing Iowa students studying in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics into internships that lead to permanent positions with Iowa employers.

[ARC 9569C, IAB 9/17/25, effective 10/22/25]

871—75.3(15) Definitions.

“Board” means the members of the department appointed by the governor and in whom the powers of the department are vested pursuant to Iowa Code section 84A.1.

“Committee” means the technology commercialization committee established by the board pursuant to 261—Chapter 1.

“Community college” means a community college established under Iowa Code chapter 260C.

“Department” means Iowa workforce development created in Iowa Code section 84A.1.

“Designated internship period” means the summer or semester during which a student is employed in an internship.

“Director” means the director of Iowa workforce development.

“Employer” means any enterprise located in this state that is operated for profit and under a single management.

“Internship” means temporary employment of a student that focuses on providing the student with work experience in the student’s field of study.

“Program” means the STEM internship program established in this chapter.

“STEM field” means a major course of study within the field of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics or a related field. For purposes of this chapter, “STEM field” includes all majors and academic or degree programs listed on the ACT-defined STEM majors and occupations by area list. The ACT-defined STEM majors and occupations by area list may be found at www.act.org. If a student has declared a major or is enrolled in an academic or degree program not listed on the ACT-defined STEM majors and occupations by area list, the student may still be found eligible for participation in the program if, in the department’s sole discretion, the student’s major is substantially similar to a major that is listed on the ACT-defined STEM majors and occupations by area list.

“Student” means a student of one of the Iowa community colleges, private colleges, or institutions of higher learning under the control of the state board of regents or a student who graduated from high school in Iowa but now attends an institution of higher learning outside the state of Iowa.

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871—75.4(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Program funding and disbursement.

75.4(1) The maximum amount that may be awarded to an employer for any one internship is \$5,000. The maximum amount that may be awarded to any one employer in any one fiscal year is \$50,000.

75.4(2) Funds are to be used for reimbursement of wages paid during the designated internship period. An employer will pay students hired as interns an hourly wage that is at least twice the minimum wage.

75.4(3) The department will award funds to an employer only after approval of a completed application and execution of a contract between the employer and the department. The department will have sole discretion in determining whether an application is fully complete.

75.4(4) An Iowa employer may qualify for financial assistance under the program on a matching basis for a portion of the wages paid to an intern during the designated internship period. If providing financial assistance, the department will provide the assistance on a reimbursement basis such that for every two dollars of wages earned by the student, one dollar paid by the employer is matched by one dollar from the department.

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871—75.5(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Eligible employers. Eligible employers may apply to the department for assistance under the program. The program is available to employers that meet all of the following criteria:

75.5(1) The employer is an Iowa-based business and has a significant portion of its employees located within the state of Iowa.

75.5(2) The employer employs students who have either declared a major in a STEM field or who are enrolled in a STEM-related academic or degree program at a community college. The students are employed as interns at a location in Iowa.

75.5(3) The employer offers the internship to students of Iowa community colleges, private colleges, or institutions of higher learning under the control of the state board of regents or to students who graduated from high school in Iowa but attend an institution of higher learning outside the state of Iowa.

75.5(4) The employer offers either summer- or semester-based internships. The summer internships have a minimum duration of 8 weeks (a minimum of 240 hours per internship), and the semester internships have a minimum duration of 14 weeks (a minimum of 140 hours per internship).

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871—75.6(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Ineligible employers. The following employers are not eligible for the program:

75.6(1) An employer that is a business engaged in retail sales.

75.6(2) An employer that closes or substantially reduces its workforce by more than 20 percent at existing operations in order to relocate substantially the same operations to another area of the state is ineligible for 36 consecutive months at any of its Iowa sites from the date the new establishment opens.

75.6(3) An employer that has applied or will apply during the same state fiscal year to the innovative businesses internship program under 871—Chapter 69 is ineligible to receive funding under the STEM internship program.

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871—75.7(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Eligible students. To be eligible, a person meets the requirements of a “student” as defined in rule 871—75.3(15) and is a person who is within one to two years of graduation, has declared a major in a STEM field or is enrolled in a STEM-related academic or degree program at a community college, and is hired for an internship at an Iowa employer during a designated internship period.

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871—75.8(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Ineligible students. Students who are more than two years from graduation are ineligible. Students who have not declared a major in a STEM field or are not enrolled in a STEM-related academic or degree program at a community college are ineligible. Students who are immediate family members of management employees or board members of the applicant employer are ineligible. Students who do not otherwise meet the eligibility requirements described in rule 871—75.7(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) are ineligible.

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871—75.9(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Application submittal and review process.

75.9(1) The department will develop a standardized application and make the application available to eligible employers. To apply for assistance under the program, an employer will submit an application to the department. Required forms and instructions are available by contacting the department or from the department’s website at www.workforce.iowa.gov.

75.9(2) Applications will be reviewed and scored by the staff of the department. The director of the department will make final funding decisions after considering the recommendations of staff. The director has final decision-making authority on requests for financial assistance for this program. The director may approve, defer or deny an application.

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871—75.10(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Application content and other requirements.

75.10(1) An employer seeking assistance under the program will submit a completed application to the department.

75.10(2) If an award is made, the employer will secure an intern or interns within the time period stated in the contract between the department and the employer.

75.10(3) The application will include but not be limited to all of the following:

- a. The dates and location of the internship.
- b. A statement of duties the student will perform at the internship site and how the duties correlate to a substantive experience in an area closely related to the student's STEM field. The application will also include information regarding the student's work space (e.g., access to telephone, computer, and other necessary items).
- c. The name of the employer's representative who will train and supervise the student.
- d. A statement of the anticipated workforce needs at the internship site and the student's potential for prospective employment with the employer following graduation.

75.10(4) In accepting applications from employers, the department may require additional information reasonably related to the program.

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871—75.11(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Award process. Applications will be reviewed in the order received by the department. The department will attempt to award as many eligible internships as funding allows. However, the department may deny applications for incompleteness or because of insufficient funds. The department will score applications according to the criteria specified in rule 871—75.12(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510). Applications that receive a minimum score of 65 out of a possible 100 points and meet all other eligibility criteria specified in these rules will be considered for funding.

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871—75.12(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Application scoring criteria. When applications for financial assistance under the program are reviewed, the following criteria will be considered and scored as described below:

75.12(1) The extent to which the student is involved in a substantive experience closely related to the student's STEM field of study. 30 points.

75.12(2) The quality and sufficiency of the explanation of the employer's anticipated workforce needs and of the student's potential for prospective employment with the employer or another Iowa employer following graduation. 30 points.

75.12(3) The extent to which the internship duties require independent judgment, creativity, and intelligence to complete and contribute to the employer's goals or processes. 10 points.

75.12(4) The extent to which the internship will have a positive impact on the student's skills, knowledge and abilities. 10 points.

75.12(5) Whether the internship pays more than twice the minimum wage. 10 points.

75.12(6) Whether applications will be accepted by the employer from more than one private college, university or community college. 5 points.

75.12(7) Whether the application establishes that all relevant internship considerations, including necessary funding, have been addressed by the employer in advance. 5 points.

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871—75.13(15,85GA,ch1132,86GA,SF510) Contract and reporting.

75.13(1) *Notice of award.* Successful applicants will be notified in writing of an award of assistance, including any conditions and terms of the approval.

75.13(2) *Contract required.* An employer receiving an award under the program will execute a standard contract prepared by the department. The contract may include but is not limited to a description of the internship to be completed, the conditions for disbursement, required reporting, the applicable events of default, the repayment requirements imposed in the event of default, and any other specific provisions that may be established from time to time on a case-by-case basis.

75.13(3) *Reporting.* An employer receiving assistance under the program will submit any information reasonably requested by the department in sufficient detail to permit the department to prepare any reports required by the department, the board, the general assembly or the governor's office.

75.13(4) *Contract amendments and terminations.* Contract amendments or termination may be approved by the director without board approval.

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These rules are intended to implement 2014 Iowa Acts, chapter 1132, section 12, and Iowa Code section 15.411(5).

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