



Frequently Asked Questions for Operation Warfighter (OWF FAQ)

What is the OWF Program?

Operation Warfighter (OWF) is a Department of Defense sponsored, unpaid internship program that matches qualified wounded, ill, and injured service members with non-funded federal internships for them to gain valuable work experience during their recovery and rehabilitation. This process assists with the service members' reintegration to duty, or transition into the civilian work environment where they can employ their newly acquired skills in a non-military work setting.

Must the organization have a vacant Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to participate in the program?

No, an FTE position is not required. The Service member's pay and benefits remain provided by the military while they are detailed to the organization.

Who are the players in DLA's OWF program and what are their roles?

Supervisors are typically a hiring manager who may assign an intern to an OWF On-site Advisor or serve as the On-site Advisor themselves.

OWF On-site Advisors serve as the intern's "supervisor" during program participation and may or may not be a supervisor within the organization.

OWF Interns are a wounded or recovering Service member (WRSM) who has been both medically and command cleared to participate in the program.

OWF Regional Coordinators are non-DLA civilian representatives who work with the military branches, Federal agencies, and private sector companies in their regional military installations and communities to identify internship opportunities available to WRSMs.

WRSM Support Coordinators – personnel at major Service treatment facilities or units (Army Soldier Recovery Unit (SRU), Navy Wounded Warrior Program (WWP), Marine Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR), or Air Force/Space Force Warrior Transition Unit (WTU)) who provide personal support to wounded or recovering Service members (WRSM) who require at least six months of rehabilitative care and complex medical management.

Does an internship guarantee employment?

No, participation in the program does not guarantee employment with DLA. Of course, the goal is to place the OWF **if** they transition from the military **and** a position is available for which they qualify.



What is the process for requesting an intern?

The manager should contact the OWF Regional Coordinator to submit an Intern Request Form which details the responsibilities, requirements, and **desired** qualifications. The OWF Regional Coordinator will then review the request and match it to cleared OWF participants.

May the intern work nights, holidays, or overtime hours?

No, the intern's work schedule will be determined prior to coming onboard. Interns will not be authorized to work nights, holidays, or overtime hours.

Is the HR Specialist involved in bringing an OWF onboard?

The intern is not assigned to DLA, so no paperwork is processed. The DLA Human Resources Services office is involved only if a non-sensitive background investigation is required.

Must the OWF intern meet the OPM qualification requirements for the duties listed on the Intern Request Form?

No, there is no requirement for the intern to meet OPM qualification requirements. The internship is essentially a detail with the intent of allowing the intern to gain valuable experience while recuperating. However, if the organization wants to place the intern in a position **after** they transition from the military, OPM qualification requirements **MUST** be met.

Does submitting a request guarantee placement of an intern?

No. There are several reasons for this:

- The demand for OWF interns has increased as agencies suffer budget shortfalls, but the supply of Service members has stayed the same or slightly decreased.
- The majority of OWF participants are looking for non-administrative type positions.
- Once the Service member is medically cleared to participate in the program, the Service may decide to have them perform light duty work within the unit rather than interning.
- The Services are allowing Service members to recover close to home whenever possible which decreases the number of participants available near Service installations and other DLA manned areas.
- Some Service members elect to intern at agencies where there is a guarantee of permanent placement or an aligned position for the internship to transition into.

What should the on-site advisor or do if an OWF intern does not show up for a scheduled interview?

Contact the WRSM Support Coordinator or OWF Regional Coordinator, depending upon which office forwarded the resume, immediately.



What should the on-site advisor do if the intern is not reporting to work as scheduled?

First, they should address the issue with the intern. If the problem persists, they should then contact the WRSM Support Coordinator or OWF Regional Coordinator, whichever one signed the placement form.

Can an internship be terminated?

Yes, the internship can be terminated at any time by either the organization or the intern. However, the on-site advisor cannot terminate the internship without a written justification and prior discussion with the intern concerning their performance or other issues.

If the OWF intern has issues or problems with the assignment, what should they do?

The intern should immediately discuss the issue with the on-site advisor. If it is not resolved, they may then contact their WRSM Support Coordinator or OWF Regional Coordinator.

What should the intern do if they are unable to report to work as scheduled?

The intern should notify the on-site advisor as soon as possible, either through written (email or text) or verbal (phone call) means.

What are the intern's responsibilities?

The interns are responsible for:

- Performing the duties listed in Part D of the Operation Warfighter Placement Form.
- Observing all workplace rules, including those relating to conduct, safety, honesty, integrity, discrimination, and confidentiality of records.
- Discussing their career and/or educational goals and what they hope to gain from the internship with their on-site advisor.
- Treating the internship as if it were an actual job.

What should the on-site advisor do before the intern comes onboard?

The on-site advisor should:

- Work with their HR Servicing Team Supervisor to initiate the background investigation, if necessary.
- Coordinate with the appropriate offices to install phone and computer equipment as necessary.
- Request workplace accommodations if necessary.



What should the on-site advisor do after the intern comes onboard?

The on-site advisor should:

- Work with the intern to craft the Intern Development Plan (IDP) within the required timeframe.
- Clearly explain the duties, responsibilities, work assignments and all workplace rules, including those relating to conduct, safety, honesty, integrity, discrimination, and confidentiality of records.
- Ensure the work schedule does not interfere with the intern's treatment and rehabilitation schedule.
- Provide guidance and mentoring.
- Conduct periodic feedback and performance reviews.
- Work with the intern to address any issues, concerns, or questions related to the internship.
- Escalate issues that are not resolved, after talking with the intern, to the OWF Regional Coordinator or WRSM Support Coordinator, if necessary.
- Complete required program reports, forms, and evaluations.

What are the on-site advisors' responsibilities when the intern leaves?

The on-site advisor should:

- Determine the appropriate level of recognition for the intern based on the OWF Recognition Guidelines.
- Notify the organization OWF Regional Coordinator of the intern's departure.
- Complete the online Employer Exit Interview.

How do I contact the OWF Regional Coordinators?

The OWF Regional Coordinators are aligned with multiple states, and their contact map and other useful information can be found at: <https://warriorcare.dodlive.mil/Care-Coordination/operation-warfighter/>