



Applicant Qualifications and Process

In regard to the application, should we name a specific site(s) we want to work at?

Katherine Dixon, Director of Operations NPTC

You will have the option to select any (or all) sites in each regional application. This is important so that your application gets filtered to the right people. You will also mention all sites in your one cover letter for each application regarding your interest and fit for the programs.

Read more about the application process for all regions here: https://psychologyinterns.org/internship-application/

For the application/interview process, will there be any flexibility in terms of required intervention/assessment hours due to the impacts of COVID-19? And should we include the impacts that COVID-19 had on our intervention/assessment hours in our cover letters?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

Feel free to reach out to Katherine Dixon (kdixon@psychologyinterns.org) on hours. We do have a flexibility, but we do ask that you provide context. If the hours you have completed are less than some threshold we have put out there, reach out to us rather than assuming that they will or won't count, because we know that there's been lost opportunity over the last year, year and a half. We're flexible that way, but we are also going to be quick to work with you behind the scenes on whether you could still utilize your hours in a way that makes you eligible to apply.

What are some of the most important experiences/attributes/qualifications that graduate students can obtain before an internship position with NPTC that will really allow for success while in the internship program?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

We are here for the same reason you are here, and that is to become great providers of care to those in a variety of settings. The experiences you have, whether they are in depth in one area, or multi-faceted will all be of interest to us. If you've had experience with any sort of leadership or supervision, that's always nice, but not required. Some of you, your first career may not be launched into psychology, so some of you may be coming with other background experiences, and that's always welcome. But, also if this is your first opportunity, we look forward to that as well.

It really is about flexibility. Everyone will be working on making the internship everything you want it to be, but as with life—and so it is this year—the picture in our head can sometimes be the thing that prevents us from enjoying or appreciating the flip side. Of course, this last year and half has showed us that there is always going to be that tension between what we planned and what we experience. That quality of helping our clients transition and adapt is sometimes harder to apply to ourselves. I would say most of our interns get what they thought would, but flexibility is the first thing I would mention and is just a great life skill.

Dr. Gonzalez with Aspire in the Great Lakes Region

Experience in treating individuals with trauma or substance abuse disorders since you will be working with that population and exposure to working with trauma.

Dr. Sklar with Centerstone in the Great Lakes Region

At Centerstone, we are looking for broad experience as well, either in your practicum or a real world positions. Also, having an open mind towards learning new things-- being motivated to try working with children even if that prospect might terrify you!

Dr. Kulkarni with Valley Oaks Health in the Great Lakes Region

At Valley Oaks, we also look for well-rounded clinical experiences and prior experience in a Community Mental Health Center is a plus, though not required.

Dr. Logue with Little Star ABA in the Great Lakes Region

Experiences with autism and assessment (particularly the ADOS) would allow the intern to hit the ground running. More importantly, a successful intern would display an openness to new experiences, a team player mentality, and enthusiasm for working with patients with autism and their families.

Dr. Hunter with Bowen Center in the Great Lakes Region

At Bowen Center, we're looking for well-rounded interns with experience and desire to learn and use evidence based practices for assessment and therapy. We want someone who is willing to be trauma-informed, wants to be an advocate for diverse and underserved populations, and who strives to be respectful, so we can have a healthy workspace for all stakeholders. We see folks across the lifespan with great variety in presenting problems in our outpatient services (therapy, case management, psychiatric, medication management), adult inpatient unit, adult transitional living programs, integrated healthcare clinics, and methadone clinic. We want interns who have a passion to learn, grow, and be flexible to help meet the patient needs while also learning practice management strategies for your own self-care and longevity in the field.

Dr. Pratt with Burrell Behavioral Health in the Central Region

We are looking for well-rounded people or those who want to be well-rounded by the end of their internship. We understand that with COVID, maybe you really wanted to have that child experience, you really wanted to have that older adult experience, you missed out on groups, we get that—but are you hungry to learn those things? Are you interested and available to try some things maybe you weren't really wanting to try before? That's what we're looking for. As much as we are looking for your general experience at this point—are you hungry for more—that's sometimes even more important.

Dr. Brewer with Clark Center in the Central Region

Clark Center is interested in applicants who wish to join a community of colleagues, willingness to learn and grow, and willingness/interest to invest in the mental health of individuals with various needs and challenges, and with the knowledge that all of your previous experiences have potential therapeutic value. It is important to have a philosophy that we are all fellow pilgrims along the road of life. Others learn from us. We learn from others.

Dr. McDaniel with Truman Medical Centers in the Central Region

Truman Medical Centers is a teaching hospital in conjunction with University of Missouri-Kansas City. Consequently, we value critical thinking and expect a large number of questions by interns in order to enhance the value of their training. We also place a strong emphasis on empirically-supported assessment and treatment approaches. Familiarity with supervision models is also helpful since our interns generally provide secondary supervision to practicum students. The development of a solid professional identity is important over the course of the year. Our teams are highly collaborative with a lot of other professions.

Dr. Johnson with Burrell in the Central Region

Intellectual humility, coming in with a high level of wanting to learn, and being open to learning. Also, being able to ask for what you need and tell us what you want. Having some emotional awareness and being aware of what it is like to be sitting across from you and to interact with you.

Dr. Webb with Compass Health in the Central Region

At Compass Health, exposure to or experience with severe and persistent mental illness and/or rural populations is a real plus!

Dr. Lowman with Royal Oaks in the Central Region

Being a well-rounded person. Being familiar not only with current treatments in mental health, but also current events.

Dr. Bauman in the Cascades Region

This changes every year as we learn and develop. I would say training or background in primary care or in medical clinics, working on teams, having exposure to a variety of different ages and conditions, behaviorism, and functional contextualist approach. A willingness to be uncomfortable and to have your assumptions challenged about what behavioral health is.

Dr. Hawley with Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic in the Cascades Region

I think having a general set of basic skills is more important than being great at any one thing: clinical interviewing, case conceptualization, diagnoses, CBT/ACT/DBT/Behavioral skills, awareness of screeners and some assessment knowledge to read interpret results, and most importantly a self-reflection and awareness of what your strengths and weaknesses are.

Dr. Noll with Four County in the Cascades Region

At Four County, we are looking for a well-rounded individual, who is curious, willing to take risks for growth, those who are interested in clients with severe and chronic mental illness with complexities (substance use, trauma, lower SES, medical issues, personality traits/issues), interest in helping the underserved, passion, and curiosity.

HealthPoint in the Cascades Region

At HealthPoint, we are looking for applicants who have experience working with diverse patient populations (since we work with 60 different languages), interested in PCBH, and are mission driven.

Would you mind speaking directly to the qualifications/experiences of successful school psychology applicants?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

As long as you are able to take new things in, you're going to be fine. A lot of our sites do school-based services, so if you're interested in applying your skills in schools, we definitely have some opportunities for you. I supervised an intern a number of years ago who was a graduate of a school psychology program and to tell you the truth, there were no downsides and all sorts of upsides. He was among the most empirically based and research-minded people I've ever interviewed. I think some of that was his program and some of that was his approach. We actually brought him back for a number of years to present—he may still be in the rotation to present.

Dr. Kulkarni with Valley Oaks Health in the Great Lakes Region

We've also had success with school-based students for our child track position at Valley Oaks Health.

Dr. Brewer with Clark Center in the Central Region

Clark Center has a good relationship with multiple school districts in our three counties. As a matter of fact, just this week, Monett requested a full-time psychologist to be available for the various levels of school. We've continued to refine that and to develop that, so if you're interested, that can very well happen here.

Dr. Bauman in the Cascades Region

Cascades has had GREAT success with school psych... there appears to be a congruence with PCBH and school psych... our SBHC BHC comes from a school based program and has done INCREDIBLE within our program!

While I have school and community mental health experience, I do not have primary care/medical setting experience. However, I am wanting a placement in a primary care environment. Would this lack of experience put me at a disadvantage?

Dr. Bauman in the Cascades Region

Not at all. I think this is where the fact that you've just said "I want to have this experience in primary care," is largely what internship is about.

Are there any sites that have a need for bilingual speakers?

Dr. Pratt with Burrell Behavioral Health in the Central Region

We serve Spanish-speaking populations at Burrell Behavioral Health in Springfield, Missouri. We primarily use interpreters for those services and are working on expanding services with bilingual clinicians.

HealthPoint in the Cascades Region

At HealthPoint, 30-35% of our medical/dental visits require an interpreter. 40% of are Spanish speakers. Depending on location, we have large patient populations of Somali, Arabic, Nepalese, Vietnamese, Chinese, Russian, Ukranian, and others.

Dr. Bauman in the Cascades Region

All locations—HealthPoint, CHCW, and YVFWC—will have opportunities with multiple languages—including Spanish. At CHCW, about 20% of patients are mono-lingual Spanish speaking.

Dr. Hawley with Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic in the Great Lakes Region

Yakima Valley Farm Workers clinics typically see around 40-50% Spanish speaking patients. Some variation clinic to clinic.

Dr. Hunter with Bowen Center in the Great Lakes Region

With regard to Spanish speaking populations, yes; we have patients and patient family members who speak Spanish as their primary or only language. We employ two in-house Spanish language interpreters as well as one in-house Burmese language interpreter.

Dr. Kulkarni with Valley Oaks Health in the Great Lakes Region

We also have opportunities to work with clients/families who have Spanish as their first language at Valley Oaks. You are most likely to come across this opportunity with our generalist track.

Dr. Sklar with Centerstone in the Great Lakes Region

We have a number of Spanish speaking clients and very few Spanish speaking clinicians. We have access to a translation service.

If you are bilingual (Spanish) which site should you apply for?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

All of them!

Do your integrated health rotations tend to be the more competitive? Are there certain experiences that make an applicant a better fit for these experiences other than genuine interest?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

We have offered integrated rotation for a long time in the central region, and I would say it is not more or less competitive than other positions. If you are interested in integration, there is a pretty good chance you are going to find an opportunity that matches that.

Our Cascades Region that is exclusively PCBH (and people love Seattle), is very very competitive.

Life as an Intern

What does a typical day look like for interns?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

Consortium-wide, work-life balance is very important to us. In general, your days will be 8ish to 5ish, unless explicitly stated. For example, some sites may require weekend hours or on-call hours. Those details will be stated for each site.

Each site page contains an example schedule on our website:

https://psychologyinterns.org/applicants/

Intern at HealthPoint in the Cascades Region

There is no standard day in the life as an intern. Flexibility is extremely important—we will have patient visits but we also have flexibility with warm handoffs. That is where our internships pull us—to be there in the moment and to be accessible for our patient population so that in the moment we become routine care.

Dr. Hunter with Bowen Center in the Great Lakes Region

I don't know that there really is a typical day for an intern because we really take the "choose your own adventure" approach to internship. Each of our intern schedules look very different.

Where are sites located?

Each site page has a map showing locations where you may travel to including distance to the didactic site: https://psychologyinterns.org/applicants/

What is something that was surprising or unexpected as you started your internship year at HealthPoint and CHCW?

Intern at CHCW in the Cascades Region

How warm, welcoming, and supportive all the staff are here. I am constantly floored by how kind our providers are to us interns. I just had a provider who I only worked with virtually who just came up and introduced himself out of the blue just out of appreciation.

Intern at HealthPoint in the Cascades Region

The level of integration is just profound and I think that's one thing that has really excited me about this whole internship. I came from primary care as well and it did not feel like it does here. I really feel like part of the care team and a true asset to the care team. I speak to providers throughout the day. There's never a dull moment and there's always a moment to consult briefly. There's always moments to be integrated and work as a team so that we can all look at the patient from multiple angles to see how we can best serve them in that moment.

As you begin to expand clinics [in the Cascades Region] - are interns part of this process? How many interns stay to continue on with these sites?

Dr. Bauman in the Cascades Region

Our main goal is to train future psychologists within PCBH and provide that robust training. At the same time, a secondary goal is to keep providers in our communities. Without question, as these clinics expand we are always considering and discussing about additional slots, trainees, and fellowships. We always want to know how we keep the people we train who want to stay here.

HealthPoint in the Cascades Region

11 of our 18 full time Behavioral Health Consultants were trainees with HealthPoint. We prioritize our trainees in new full time positions.

As someone with a young family, what does the Missouri region have to offer for us as a growing family?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

All of our sites are within 45 minutes of a good-sized town and all of them have a Wal-Mart, a gas station, and a grocery store and then more within a short drive.

Dr. Pratt with Burrell Behavioral Health in the Central Region

We try to keep our schedule 8 am – 5pm as much as possible. We also have flexibility so that you can pick your kids up from school and be able to make up time with an evening shift. We have excellent daycares. Dog parks if you're a dog mom or dog dad. I think that we are very family friendly.

Royal Oaks and Compass Health in the Central Region

Family is first. If you can't take care of your family, you can't be in a good place to take care of the patients. This area is also extremely inexpensive to live and it's very easy to live in this area. It kind of seems like a geographical odyssey, it seems like Sedalia is about an hour to an hour and half from everything.

Opportunities to Learn

Are there opportunities for interns who have goals of becoming supervisors to develop their supervisory skills in this program?

Dr. Hunter with Bowen Center in the Great Lakes Region

We don't tend to have many opportunities for formal vertical supervision; however, we do provide a lot of training in supervision, including didactic trainings and mock supervision, mock supervision during group supervision, journal article assignments about supervision, and required trainings on providing supervision. We also have a lot of opportunities for consultation with interdisciplinary teams, including our skills-based staff, psychiatrists, and medical providers.

Dr. Gonzalez with Aspire in the Great Lakes Region

Aspire has a relationship with multiple local universities where we train their Bachelors and Masters level students., Interns have the opportunity to be involved in this training/consultation/development.

Dr. Sklar with Centerstone in the Great Lakes Region

At Centerstone, we have a new department to oversee the training and supervision of Bachelor and Master's students. I am pushing to have our predoc interns involved formally.

Dr. Kulkarni with Valley Oaks Health in the Great Lakes Region

We work with interns throughout the year to find opportunities for them to grow/practice their supervision skills, either through secondary supervision or co-supervision of practicum students or supervision of bachelor's level staff.

Dr. Pratt with Burrell Behavioral Health in the Central Region

At Burrell Behavioral Health we have a developmental model of supervision, including opportunities for supervision-of-supervision and allowing trainees from multiple disciplines to shadow with interns.

Dr. McDaniel with Truman Medical Centers in the Central Region

Truman Medical Centers partners with 4 local universities that provide master's and doctoral level practicum students who are generally assigned to doctoral interns to provide secondary supervision in addition to extra group supervision time provided to discuss supervision of supervision.

Dr. Webb with Compass Health in the Central Region

Compass Health as a system continually has trainees of various levels within our system, so we definitely utilize vertical supervision models to have interns providing supervision to practicum students or MA-level trainees.

Which sites specifically have a health psychology basis?

Dr. Brown in the Central Region

What we try to do with integrated healthcare in the central region is a mix of high fidelity primary care behavioral health models in each location. We round that out with some outpatient assessment experience in most cases to make sure we get some testing ability for our interns and to round out some of the education that goes into it. We know from research that integrated healthcare professionals are much more successful when they have a generalist background and the information to be able to act as a liaison from outpatient traditional mental health and behavioral health and the medical realm. We try to give an experience in both for our dedicated IHC rounds as well as those that kind of switch between our dual track health psychology and outpatient teams. At a lot of our locations as well, we have so many referral ties and close relationships with health care systems that even if you are in an inpatient setting, you will get some experience in what it's like to communicate with other health professionals or work very closely with them across our entire region.

Those that are in the IHC grant rotations specific for integrated health care will also have a different educational experience, or an additional educational experience, where we have more didactic trainings geared specifically towards health psychology and learning how to work with interdisciplinary teams.

Dr. Hunter with Bowen in the Great Lakes Region

We currently have two integrated healthcare clinics and are in the processes of adding one more.

Dr. Sklar with Centerstone in the Great Lakes Region

We have two new FQHC clinics and we offer one integrated health internship position who will work there full time while our other three positions will have some integrated health opportunity as well.

Are there opportunities [in the Central Region] to utilize EMDR therapy for individuals trained in it?

CoxHealth in the Central Region

We offer EMDR on the inpatient side.

Compass Health in the Central Region

We have a supervisor in Columbia who can do EMDR.

Burrell Behavioral Health in the Central Region

We have about 20-30 EMDR providers in our system. That number should double in the next calendar year.

Truman Center in the Central Region

We focus on the four strongly recommended PTSD treatments from APA and in inpatient we usually focus more on a presence-centered approach while they are there for their acute hospitalization.

If I'm interested in couples therapy, are there sites that can offer that experience?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

I think everyone offers couples therapy especially if it's a more traditional outpatient.

Will there be opportunities to provide assessment? And is this a part of your case conceptualizations and treatment plans?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

We love traditional testing—it is just not a focus of the PCBH model. We do have a lot more variety in both our Great Lakes and Central Region, where if you want to do more testing, there's some great experiences where you might be able to do more of that "traditional" or larger batteries and get some integrated care experiences. The distinctive thing about our Cascades Region is that everything about your experience is pretty focused on training you more in a PCBH setting. You'll do a lot of screening and assessing needs in the moment, but you'll see more assessment and evaluations in Central and Great Lakes.

In the Cascades Region sites, what training opportunities are there with a pediatric and/or family focus?

Dr. Bauman in the Cascades Region

We are primary care, so at the very basic level, you're going to get exposures to working with kids, adolescents, and families just from working in full spectrum family medicine clinics—which all of our organizations have. At all of our sites (YVFWC, CHCW, and Healthpoint), we have pediatric clinics, pediatric rotations, and a school-based health clinic at CHCW and HealthPoint. You will definitely get that exposure to working with pediatric and families, but you'll also get exposure to the whole lifespan.

If an intern [in the Central Region] were interested in working more with one age group (children/adolescents, for example), is it possible to fill their caseload with more child-related experiences while still working with adults as well? Are there certain sites that this is more common/feasible than others?

Dr. Pratt with Burrell Behavioral Health in the Central Region

There is some customization that's available in terms of how we will route referrals to you for individual therapy, group therapy, evaluations, or even those specialty interest areas. We have a number of specialty interest areas, whether it's the autism clinic, youth focus, or ADHD clinic that are very youth focused.

Dr. Webb with Compass in the Central Region

There are not that many youth-focused tracks, but we do certainly have enough client base at just about all of our clinics that you can just about build your caseload the way that you prefer it.

Royal Oaks in the Central Region

We have lots of kids and adolescent experience right now due to our adult unit being used as the COVID unit. We are hoping to get the adult unit back up and going soon.

Dr. McDaniel with Truman Medical Centers in the Central Region

Customization is not really something just because our inpatient psychiatric facility only has 18 and up and our two new outpatient rotations have their specific populations. You will definitely have exposure across the lifespan, but it would be determined by which setting you were in. We do have outpatient adult and outpatient child and adolescent.

Life at NPTC

How does working within a rural setting inform access to care, resources, and treatment?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

Rural and underserved can be the same thing but aren't always the same thing. Every year we have interns come and in a few months, they say they just completely underestimated how different the questions of access and different resources are answered. For example, if you were in an urban or suburban area, the issue may not be that there isn't a resource or multiple other agencies or entities to connect people to—the issue might be there's a waiting list or it's really hard to manage and get connected or transportation is the issue. If you're in a rural and underserved area, it could really be a question of the nearest resource is a hundred miles away. How you become a generalist who does everything you can for someone, tries to connect them with resources, but knows that some of those resources are not always available—it really does change the complexion of how you function as a psychologist. Especially in terms of how you connect people to resources versus trying to do your best to meet their need.

Among other things, you'll have an opportunity to explore a lot with your supervisor the preconceived notions you may have about the limits of your competency compared to how you consult and expand your competency range to meet the need in areas—all of which the APA ethics code speaks to. You'll experience the reality of those questions. For example, when if you're working in a very rural area, normally you would say, "you don't psychologically test your therapy clients," but if you're looking at someone that you're working with—and you're working with 14-year-old who needs testing and there is nowhere within an hour or more—you've got to really sort through and consult with your supervisors and your colleagues and with ethics codes to say "what is the right thing to do here?" You don't want to skew the data, but this may be this individual's only opportunity to get more clarification, and then how do you know you're fully objective. All of those things in a rural setting effect access questions much differently than if you are in Springfield, St. Louis, or Kansas City and you just walk down the hallway and refer the case to another psychologist.

Dr. Gonzalez with Aspire in the Great Lakes Region

We probably are one of the least rural sites, but we absolutely serve an underserved population. We look at all of the social determinants of health. We look at housing and employment—all of the things that could be affecting their mental well-being. The virtual environment has really allowed us to connect with individuals in a way that we may have not been able to previously. We were able to obtain a grant and provide cell phones to a lot of our underserved individuals so we could have virtual services with them. These individuals may have not had transportation or gas money to make it into our office.

Dr. McDaniel with Truman Medical Centers in the Central Region

In the urban core, the complexity of other issues impact access to care in other ways. We do have many providers in the Kansas City metro area, but many of them only take certain insurances or they won't take people without self-pay sometimes. Also, the degree of homelessness and other issues impact ability to maintain consistent care.

Dr. Pratt with Burrell Behavioral Health in the Central Region

Regarding rural access to care, we have clients that don't have consistent internet access (or any internet access), don't have reliable phone service, etc. That is why we were proud to find creative ways to see clients in-person or on-site throughout the pandemic.

I would like more information about how the consortium sites are operating during COVID. Are most sites in-person or will they be virtual/telehealth?

Dr. Andreassen, President/CEO NPTC

I think all of our sites consider interns essential staff. What that means, is that some internship programs do not classify interns as essential. That certainly changes some of the fabric of how care is provided. All of our sites are essential staff, but that doesn't mean caution goes to the wind. Some of our sites are in person as able, but in a masked and mitigated scenario, others are somewhat virtual. For example, at Truman's inpatient psychiatric facility and most of the care is by necessity in person. At Compass, most outpatient care was virtual, but has become more hybrid—with interns being in the office and communicating with patients virtually.

The number of COVID cases go up and down that we have to prioritize safety in different ways at different times. While we all have some range of in-person vs. virtual, what I can say is that our interns have had few, if any, positive COVID tests over the last few years. Each site has its own set of safety precautions.

There's been an order signed that any system that receives Medicaid or Medicare will have vaccinations required. That of course, is going to go through a number of legal and other challenges, and so most community mental health centers, not just here, but nationwide, are taking a bit of "wait and see" approach on that. Roughly speaking, even in agencies where vaccination is not yet required, probably 70% plus of the workforce in most cases is already vaccinated. So, there's a pretty good vaccination number from my non-scientific perception talking to various sites. There is a bit of a "wait and see" on what the federal guidance is going to be, and so we will do our best to answer questions now, but they may also be site specific.

Please see the website for more specific information regarding COVID-19 response for each site: https://psychologyinterns.org/applicants/

I'd love to hear what exciting advancements [the Cascades Region] sees happening in the field right now, especially as folks who are doing this work each and every day! I.e. further integration, new programs in the area, growing local/national support, etc.

Dr. Bauman in the Cascades Region

We are always trying to think of how we can reach our community in a more efficient and effective manner. BHCs are right in the middle of those conversations. Something that HealthPoint and YVFWC have been doing is mobile units—going out and meeting the patient—and CHCW has just purchased a mobile unit to do the same thing.

You will do a quality improvement project of some kind which will challenge you to come up with a plan to study act process to improve a system that you see that there could be an iteration to.

HealthPoint in the Cascades Region

Preventative care is a large focus at HealthPoint. The BH team is often involved in Well Child Check visits or included in discussions of health education for patients with diabetes, hypertension, etc. I'd say our model of care helps decrease stigma innately by making BH services part of routine care.

How many behavioral health providers are at each location [in the Cascades Region]?

HealthPoint in the Cascades Region

We have 18 Behavioral Health Consultants on staff, 5 Post-Doctoral Residents, 7 Interns, and 1 Practicum Student. As an Intern, you will not be the only Behavioral Health at the site.

CHCW in the Cascades Region

You will have three to four other BHCs on with you at Central Washington Family Medicine, two with you at Yakima Pediatrics, and then at the rural clinic, you will be solo!

Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic in the Cascades Region

We have 4 staff BHCs in the region that we will have interns and this region also has 3-5 practicum students as well. So we are looking to have 1-2 at the 2 smaller clinics and 3-4 at the larger sites daily based on rotations/schedules.