



**Directors of University
School Psychology
Programs (DUSPP)**

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Dear Incoming Intern, Intern Supervisor, and District Personnel Administrator:

The Directors of University School Psychology Programs (DUSPP) would like to thank all internship sites and intern supervisors for their dedication to the training of future school psychologists. The purpose of this letter is to remind internship supervisors and district administrators of a policy regarding offering internship positions to applicants. This policy has been reviewed and updated by a committee including university educators and field supervisors. This policy is stated in the current internship manual and reads as follows:

"The university training directors and governing board of ISPA has set a policy on accepting school psychology internships. This policy allows districts to offer a position to an intern at any time prior to the March acceptance date. However, prospective interns may not respond (accept) until the March acceptance date. Interns may reject an offer at any time if they decide they will not be able or willing to go to that district. Students are encouraged to notify districts as early as possible if they do not intend to accept an offer and to respond to all offers in a timely fashion. Internship applicants cannot accept a district offer prior to the March acceptance date for the following academic school year. Students may visit internship sites and interview prior to the acceptance date but cannot officially accept an internship offer prior to the March acceptance date."

Also, please note that districts may offer an internship prior to the March acceptance date, but interns may not accept such an offer prior to the March acceptance date. **Note that this year the March acceptance date is March 18, 2024.**

This policy was implemented for a number of reasons, with the goal of ensuring the best match for both interns as well as intern sites. The search for interns and internships is one we know districts and students enter into with the best of intentions. This is an opportunity for interns to practice professional behavior throughout the interview process.

Our shared expectation is that students engage in this process in an honest, professional and ethical manner. We need your help to support our students through this process. While you may make your intentions to offer an internship clear to the applicant please respect the prospective intern's obligation to complete the internship search without added pressure to offer assurances that the internship will be accepted. We ask that prospective interns contact you as early as possible on the statewide acceptance date indicated above. We recognize there may be circumstances that contribute to your sites need for a timely decision making process. If you have any special considerations (e.g., budgetary timelines, personnel decisions) that require more immediate communication regarding acceptance please contact the prospective intern's director of their university school psychology program.

The policy has been adopted by the Directors of University School Psychology Programs (DUSPP) and was endorsed by the ISPA Governing Board during their summer 2006 meeting, and has been in place since that time. If students or intern supervisors have any questions regarding the policy itself, or the application of the policy, please contact us at dkoonce@govst.edu. For your convenience, several scenarios illustrating proper and improper intern and internship site conduct are on the next page.

Sincerely,

Dan Koonce, Ph.D.
Chair, Directors of University School Psychology Programs (DUSPP)

To help guide you in the process, here are some examples of what is an appropriate and inappropriate way of following the match day process. Contact your appropriate university supervisor if you need any more clarification.

1. Student Example of Appropriate Behavior

Great news- you have received two offers from districts that you really like. You received the offers several weeks before match day. You are having a tough time deciding because you really like aspects of both of them, and you don't make a decision for a few weeks. As it is getting closer to match day, you start leaning toward one district and decide that you will accept their offer. You want to make sure that the district has enough time to give an offer to their second choice so you tell them 2 days before match day that you are declining their offer. You politely decline and say that you had a really tough time deciding because you were very interested in the position. **You wait until the morning of match day to accept the offer from the district of your choice.**

2. Student Example of Inappropriate Behavior

In the same scenario above (#1), you do not tell the district that you are declining until 10:00 am the day of match day. They have already called you two times that morning to ask of your decision. The district personnel is now scrambling that day to call their next choices, all of whom already accepted another offer. The district ends up with no intern by the end of the day.

3. Another Student Example of Inappropriate Behavior

In the same scenario above (#1), you want to make sure that the district of your first choice knows before match date that you are going to accept them. So while talking with the district administrator you say "I'm sure that you'll be seeing me here as an intern next year!" and give them a wink, meaning that you will accept their offer on match day.

4. District Example of Appropriate Behavior

You interview 8 applicants for one internship position that you will have available next academic year and you rank order them from most to least preferable. Four weeks prior to the match date you make an official offer to your top candidate and you make it clear to them that they do not need to respond to your offer until match day. Two days before match day, you receive an email from the top candidate that they are rejecting your offer. Given this, you contact your second choice on the list of preferred candidates and make them an offer, again making sure they understand that they do not need to respond to your offer until match day. On match day you call that candidate and they accept your offer.

5. District Example of Inappropriate Behavior

You interview 8 applicants for one internship position that you will have available next academic year and you rank order them from most to least preferable. Four weeks prior to the match date you make an official offer to your top candidate and you tell them you really need to have some indication whether they will accept or not right away so that you can make sure to get an intern for next school year because you are short-staffed.

6. A Tip on Generally Good Behavior for Students and Districts

Districts should inform all applicants of the time they will call and or text in the morning of Match Day and the amount of time they are willing to wait a return call. For example, they may inform the applicant that they will call them at 7am and will wait for a final answer for one hour. Applicants will then be more likely to understand the process and respect the time frame set out by the district.