



**Alameda County Behavioral Health Department (ACBHD)
Workforce Development, Education & Training
Graduate Intern Stipend Program (GISP)**

**Program Overview, Stipend Eligibility and Application Submission Procedures
FY 2025 – 2026**

Application Now Open – Deadline Monday, October 13, 2025

Program Overview:

The Graduate Intern Stipend Program (GISP), funded by the Behavioral Health Services Act, which replaces the 2004 Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), reforms behavioral health care funding to focus on individuals with the most significant mental health needs. It expands coverage to include substance use disorder (SUD) treatment, increases housing interventions, and strengthens the behavioral health workforce.

As part of the Workforce, Education & Training Plan, the Graduate Intern Stipend Program (GISP) is a financial incentive program designed to attract and prepare students for careers in county-operated programs and contracted community-based mental health or integrated health care organizations—building a strong pipeline for the public behavioral health workforce.

Who Should Apply:

Second – year graduate students pursuing:

- **Master’s Degrees** in:
 - Social Work (MSW)
 - Clinical or Counseling Psychology - Marriage and Family Therapy Track
 - Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing

Also, students pursuing:

- **Doctoral Degrees** in:
 - Clinical Psychology

Stipend Objectives:

Recruit students who:

- Have linguistic capacity to provide services in one of the **ACBHD threshold languages** which are: **Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Farsi.**
- Reflect the diverse ethnic and cultural communities served by ACBHD and demonstrate knowledge and/or understanding of the cultural beliefs, practices, and language needs of the populations considered un-served, underserved, or inappropriately served. (See Glossary for listing of groups considered by ACBHD to be un-served, underserved, or inappropriately served).
- Demonstrate experience and/or understanding of the needs of clients in one or more of the following critical program areas: Older Adult (60 plus), Children & Transitional Age Youth, Co-occurring Conditions (mental health and substance use disorders), Criminal Justice Mental Health, or Integrated Health Care Programs (which provide both physical and mental/behavioral healthcare services).



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Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible for the stipend program, all applicants must:

1. Be enrolled in a qualifying school & maintain **good academic standing**.
2. Be in the second year of their master's program or enrolled in an eligible doctoral program.
3. Serve as an intern at an **ACBHD-operated** or **contracted community-based mental health, co-occurring conditions, or integrated care organization** for the 2025–26 academic year.
4. Have no other service obligations to another academic stipend program, such as CalSWEC.
5. Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident and otherwise eligible for employment.

Preferred but NOT required qualifications:

- Reside within the County of Alameda.
- Demonstrate capacity to provide services to consumers in one of the ACBHD threshold languages: **Spanish, Chinese, Farsi, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese** (proficiency must be verified by supervisor).
- Reflect the **diverse communities served** by ACBHD. Are multicultural and who's cultural and/or ethnic background or experience is similar to the clients/consumers served by ACBHD such as: **Black American, African American, Asian, Pacific Islander (PI), Hispanic or Latino, Native American, Emerging Immigrant Populations, and Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Questioning, 2-Spirit (LGBTIQQ2-S)**.
- Have lived experience as a mental health consumer or family member.
- Working with and/or understanding the needs of the diverse ethnic and cultural communities served by ACBHD and demonstrate knowledge and/or understanding of the cultural beliefs, practices, and language needs of the populations considered un-served, underserved, or inappropriately served. (See Glossary for listing of groups considered by ACBHD to be un-served, underserved, or inappropriately served).

Application Process:

1. Download:
 - Application Form (FY 2025–26)
[Available here](#)
2. Prepare:
 - Completed application (with original or electronic signature)
 - Typed essay responses (max 350 words each, separate page per question)
3. Submit:
 - Combine application & essays into **one PDF document**
 - Email to: ACBHInterns@acgov.org
 - **Deadline: Monday, October 13, 2025 (no late applications)**

Please take the time to thoroughly review the entire application and fully understand the instructions & requirements to significantly increase your chances of approval.



Behavioral Health Department

Alameda County Health

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Selection and Award:

- **The Graduate Stipend Review Committee** will review, score applications, and provide recommendations for the final award decision to the ACBHD Director for final approval.
- Please keep in mind that your writing, grammar, clarity, and organizational skills will be assessed during the review process by the committee.
- Stipend payments will depend on verification of completed internship hours approved by the intern's direct supervisor and satisfactory performance.
- Selected interns can earn up to \$6,000 for completing 720 internship hours during the 2025–26 academic year.
- Part-time interns are eligible, and stipends payments will be prorated based on number of hours worked.
- Awards will be announced no later than **December 2025**.
- Payments will be issued in two installments (**Jan–Feb & Jun–Jul**).

Application Deadline:

All sections of the application must be completed and emailed no later than:

Monday, October 13, 2025

Applications will not be accepted after Monday, October 13, 2025

Awards will be announced by December 2025

Please email all completed applications to the following email address: acbhinterns@acgov.org

If you experience any technical issues, please contact us at: (510)567-8093.

For Office Use Only

Applicant ID Number:



**Alameda County Behavioral Health Department (ACBHD)
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PART I: PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Personal Information
 - Personal identifying, contact and demographic information.
- Applicant Signature:
 - Applicants are required to sign and date the application. The applicant's signature affirms that the applicant has reviewed all information on the FY 2025-2026 Graduate Intern Stipend Program (GISP), is eligible for employment in California, and has accurately completed the entire application and essays.

PART II: APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- School and Degree Program Information
 - Provide name of school, degree and full program name. Please include **FULL NAME OF PROGRAM and DEGREE TYPE** you are seeking, or application will NOT be accepted.
 - Enrollment Date and Expected Degree Conferral Date. It is sufficient that the school's Internship/Field Placement Coordinator verify these dates with his/her signature. The school's Internship/Field Placement Coordinator's signature on the application form implies that the applicant is in good academic standing.
- ACBHD County or Contracted Mental Health Organization Internship Site:
 - An applicant's internship/field placement training must be located within an ACBHD county-operated program or a contracted, community-based mental health or co-occurring conditions, or integrated care organization. Applicants can confirm this information with their internship site.

PART III: CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

- Alameda County has six (6) threshold languages which are determined by the State and based on population data: **Spanish, Chinese, Farsi, Korean, Tagalog and Vietnamese**. Applicants who are proficient in one of these threshold languages must complete the Language Proficiency verification. Internship Site Supervisors will need to confirm an applicant's language proficiency.
- Applicants are asked to self-identify if they consider themselves part of an underserved, unserved or inappropriately served population/community or from an economically disadvantaged background and if so, how this has influenced their professional goals.

PART IV: APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION – ESSAY PROMPTS

Applicants are asked to respond to three (3) questions on separate pages in an essay format and attach typed responses as part of the application.

Instructions:

- Each essay must be **typed** and placed on a **separate page**.
- Each essay response should be brief (limited to **350 words** per question).
- Responses should clearly convey the strengths you bring to the public mental health practice and demonstrate how you meet the **Graduate Intern Stipend Program objectives**.
- Each question is worth up to **5 points** toward your total score.



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Glossary:

- A **Consumer** or person with **Lived Experience** is a person who has experienced mental health issues that have disrupted his or her education, employment, housing, social connections and/or quality of life. He or she has utilized mental health services and has personal experience of stigma, discrimination, or social exclusion.
- A **Family Member** is a person who now or was in the past, either the primary caregiver or a concerned and involved person who provides a significant level of support to a person who is living with a Severe Mental Illness (SMI), Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) or other mental health issue.
- **Underserved, Unserved and inappropriately served** populations could include consumers of any age who have been diagnosed with a severe mental illness and/or serious emotional disturbance and are receiving some services but are not provided the necessary or appropriate opportunities to support their recovery, wellness and/or resilience. These consumers include but are not limited to those who are so poorly served that they are at risk of homelessness, institutionalization, incarceration, or other serious consequences; members of ethnic/racial, cultural, and linguistic populations that do not have access to mental health programs due to barriers such as poor engagement and outreach, limited language access and lack of culturally competent services. In Alameda County the following populations have been identified as unserved, underserved and/or inappropriately served: Black American, African American, Asian, Pacific Islander (PI), Hispanic or Latino, Native American, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Intersex Queer, Questioning, 2-Spirit (LGBTIQ2-S), Transitional Age Youth (TAY) and Older Adult.

PLEASE NOTE: Implementation of the Graduate Intern Stipend program (GISP) is dependent upon available funding and ACBHD reserves the right to cancel this program if funding becomes unavailable.



FY 2025 - 2026 Application Form
***Electronic submissions ONLY**

PART I: APPLICANT PERSONAL INFORMATION (Please type)

Full Name: _____
Last First Middle

Address: _____
Street Address Apartment/Unit #
_____ City Zip Code

Email Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Social Security #: _____ Driver's License #: _____

Gender Identity: _____

Which best describes your ethnic background? (Optional) This information will be utilized for statistical purposes only.

- Black American
- African American
- White/Caucasian
- Asian
- Hispanic/Latino

- Pacific Islander
- Native American
- Other - Please specify: _____
- Prefer not to reply.

Do you currently receive an academic stipend from other program(s), such as CalSWEC, MHIP?
 Yes No

APPLICANT SIGNATURE

I have read and understand the Information on the FY 2025-2026 Graduate Intern Stipend Program (GISP) application. I affirm that the information provided on this application is accurate and that I can legally work in California. I understand that all responses are subject to verification, and any incorrect information may result in my application being disqualified.

Signature

Date



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PART II: APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION (Please type)

SCHOOL INFORMATION

School Name: _____ Degree Program & Type: _____

Enrollment Date: _____ Expected Degree Conferral Date: _____
(mm/dd/yyyy) (mm/dd/yyyy)

School Internship/Field Placement Coordinator's Name and Title:

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

The School Internship/Field Placement Coordinator's signature below implies that the applicant is in good academic standing:

SIGNATURE: _____ Date: _____

INTERNSHIP SITE

Check the box that applies:

- ACBHD County Operated Program Internship/Field Placement Site (**Internal ACBHD site**)
- ACBHD Contracted, Community-Based Mental Health Organization Internship/Field Placement Site (CBO) (**Partnering site**)

Organization: _____ Program Name: _____

Address: _____

Dates of internship/field placement training from _____ to _____

Compared to other interns/trainees you have worked with at a similar stage in training, where would you rank this student? (Scale: 1 = Needs Improvement, 3 = Average, 5 = Excellent)

Circle, check or highlight one: 1 2 3 4 5

Intern Supervisor's Name: _____ Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Office Use Only

Applicant ID Number:



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PART III: CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

In Alameda County the following populations have been identified as underserved, unserved or inappropriately served: Black American, African American, Asian, Pacific Islander (PI), Hispanic or Latino, Native American, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Questioning 2-Spirit (LGBTIQQ2-S), Transitional Age Youth (TAY) and Older Adults.

Do you identify yourself with one or more of these populations/communities or from an economically disadvantaged background? *(0-3 possible points)*

Yes No

If yes, please describe how this has influenced your professional goals in mental health:

Alameda County has six (6) threshold languages, which are listed below. Preference will be given to applicants that speak one or more of these languages. Check the appropriate box(es), then have your Internship Site Supervisor verify your language proficiency by signing below. *(0-2 possible points)*

- Spanish
- Chinese
- Farsi
- Vietnamese
- Korean
- Tagalog
- Other: _____

Professional Working Proficiency: Can participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Can discuss specialized work areas with reasonable ease using general vocabulary which is broad enough to rarely be at a loss for words. **Intern’s supervisor certification:** *I certify the intern’s ability to provide comprehensive professional services to clients in the language indicated above.*

Intern Supervisor’s Name: _____ Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Supervisor’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Office Use Only

Applicant ID Number: _____



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PART IV: APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION – ESSAY PROMPTS

Each essay response should be on separate pages, no more than **350** words per essay. **Your responses should also support the graduate stipend program objectives.**

Essay 1 – Career Interest & Goals (0–5 points)

Prompt:

What interests you about working in the **Alameda County Behavioral Health Care system** and how does this opportunity align with your **long-term career goals**?

Essay 2 – Cultural & Linguistic Competence (0–5 points)

Prompt:

Alameda County’s population represents diverse cultures, ethnicities, sexual orientations, age groups, physical abilities, and religions. Describe how your **background, lived experience, education, internships, and/or work experience** have prepared you to serve communities that ACBHD considers **linguistically or culturally unserved, underserved, or inappropriately served**.

Essay 3 – Special Populations & Program Areas (0–5 points)

Prompt:

Describe your experience and interest in serving any of the following **populations or program areas**:

- Child & Young Adult
- Older Adults (60+)
- Co-occurring Conditions (mental health and substance use)
- Integrated Health Care
- Criminal Justice Mental Health

If you have experience in more than one area, please **elaborate on each**.

Tip for Applicants: Use specific examples and measurable outcomes when possible. This will strengthen your application and make your responses more competitive.