



## Health Equity Student Stipend Program 2023-2024 Guidebook

*Serving Connecticut (CT), Maine (ME), Massachusetts (MA),  
New Hampshire (NH), Rhode Island (RI) and Vermont (VT).*

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## Introduction

### *The New England Public Health Training Center*

The New England Public Health Training Center delivers trainings, provides training services and places students to build public health workforce competency, particularly in New England's medically underserved areas. The Central Office of NEPHTC is housed at the Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH). NEPHTC state and academic partners supporting the Health Equity Stipend Program include Yale University (CT); University of New England (ME); BUSPH, and University of Massachusetts (UMASS) Amherst School of Public Health (MA); New Hampshire Public Health Association (NH), Rhode Island Department of Health and Rhode Island Public Health Institute (RIPHI) and Vermont Public Health Institute (VTI).

### *The Health Equity Stipend Program*

The Health Equity Stipend Program provides public health and other health professions students with practice opportunities working on health equity projects with public health or primary care agencies serving or working on behalf of underserved communities or populations. Internships take place across the six New England states. By supporting student field placements and faculty-student collaborative projects in public health agencies and organizations, NEPHTC seeks to increase student knowledge of, confidence with, and interest in public health careers.

NEPHTC's Health Equity Stipend Program is committed to increasing diversity and inclusion of the public health workforce through student field placements, especially placements serving rural or medically underserved communities. The program supports the SPH Diversity & Inclusion Oath of the Boston University School of Public Health (NEPHTC's host institution), including the shared mission to improve the health of the local populations, particularly the disadvantaged, underserved, and vulnerable. [Read more about on BUSPH's statement on diversity and inclusion.](#)

The objectives of the program are to provide students a meaningful public health practice experience that:

- encourages them to work in the public health field
- demonstrates the value of working in a medically underserved or rural area
- increases student knowledge of health equity and the role of social determinants of health
- improves their competency in one or more of the [Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals](#), as established by the Council on Linkages between Academia and Public Health Practices

The NEPHTC Health Equity Stipend awards are \$3,500 stipends to help to defray living expenses during the training experience. A total of 27 awards are given out each year, with four to six awards per New England state.

Participants are expected to work 200 total hours or the number of hours that fulfills the degree requirement for an internship/practicum at their academic institution if the placement will be used to meet academic requirements. Use of this project to meet an academic requirement is optional. However, students using the placement for an academic requirement are responsible for verifying those requirements and abiding by their university's policies.

## **Project Information**

### *What is a health equity project?*

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Health equity projects focus on removing or reducing barriers to health caused by race or ethnicity, education, income, location or other social factors. Proposed projects benefit medically underserved populations and may address any health or social problem, preferably in [medically underserved](#) or [rural areas](#).

See the [Student Stipend Page](#) on NEPHITC's website for examples of past health equity projects.

### *Types of Projects*

#### **Types of Health Equity Internships**

##### **1. Field Placements**

These placements are structured opportunities and/or experiences for students as they apply their acquired knowledge and skills working in a public health practice setting under the supervision of an experienced public health professional. Field placements contribute to the mastery of public health competencies with a focus on balancing the educational and practice needs of the students with the needs of the community.

##### **2. Faculty-Student Collaborative Projects**

These placements involve research projects or community interventions identified by a governmental public health agency or other public health service entity where students and faculty advisors collaborate with the agency to (1) enhance public health services to medically underserved communities (2) address specific public health issues among a specified target population.

### *Internship Timelines*

There are three “cohorts” for each fiscal year.

#### **Summer Cohort: June-August**

These take place during the summer (May-August) when students are generally not in class and range from 8-12 weeks in length and approximately 20-40 hours/week. Projects and deliverables will be completed and turned in by August 30, 2023.

#### **Academic Year (Fall/Spring) Cohorts: (September-December, January – May)**

Placements taking place during the academic year (September – May) are generally located in or near the area of the student's university enrollment. Academic year placements may range from 1-to 2 semesters. Note: students may be limited in the minimum or the maximum number of hours they can work per semester based on their university, school, or degree's policies. Projects should be completed, and deliverables received no later than June 1 of that academic year.

## Qualifications & Eligibility

### To be eligible for this stipend, a student must:

1. be a U.S. citizen or a non-citizen U.S. national or foreign national possessing a visa permitting permanent residence in the U.S.
2. be currently enrolled as a graduate/doctoral student, or a 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> year undergraduate in a health field
3. have a Health Equity placement or project planned for the New England region (see below for project requirements)

Note: Students may not be a prior recipient of a NEPHTC stipend. Only one award per student is allowed. Further, a student **cannot** use separate federal funding (for example, a separate stipend from another agency that is federally funded) for the same project. If you are unsure whether another funding source comes from federal money, please check with the other source. **If a project is later discovered to have received federal funding from two sources, they will be asked to return the funding.**

### Project requirements

1. Projects must address medically underserved communities or populations, [as defined by HRSA](#).
2. Students applying for the NEPHTC Health Equity Stipend must have their project approved and confirmed by their university (if applicable) and field placement site before submitting their application.
3. Interns are expected to work 200 total hours or the number of hours that fulfills the degree requirement for an internship/practicum at their academic institution.
4. All internships require a deliverable of 1) a photo, 2) an executive summary, and 3) a poster presentation or report that must include the following sections: abstract, introduction, methodology, findings, conclusions, and discussion. The report/poster will be shared with HRSA and all three deliverables may be shared publicly on the NEPHTC website. In addition, all interns must provide a signed work plan and complete a mid-point survey response during their internship to keep NEPHTC updated on the status of their project

## Student Application Process

1. Student, in collaboration with a host agency and their faculty, plans a health equity project.
2. Student [applies to the NEPHTC Stipend Program](#)
  - a. *This application is expected to take 1-2 hours, but students may take as long as they want. A PDF version is available to look over beforehand.*
3. Applications reviewed by NEPHTC and state partner organizations. *NEPHTC may contact the applicant if additional information is needed.*
4. NEPHTC Central Office announces awards
5. Student is accepted into program
  - a. Student attends an orientation call – *dates TBA*
  - b. Student develops a work plan with their supervisor.
6. Student completes a pre-internship survey
7. Student begins project. *Note: project work can begin before acceptance in the stipend program according to the student and agency's schedules.*

## **Health Equity Intern Obligations and Deliverables to NEPHTC**

Once selected, interns will participate in an orientation call/webinar and a work plan meeting with a NEPHTC mentor. In addition to agency deliverables and any academic requirements, students will be expected to complete the following items in conjunction with NEPHTC and agency/faculty mentors:

1. Student work plan, signed by the student and supervisor
2. Registration for the NEPHTC Health Stipend course site
3. Completion of two hours of health equity training
4. Financial Paperwork
5. Mid-point experience survey on project progress
6. End of Project deliverables
7. Exit survey: Student and field placement/faculty supervisor
8. One Year Follow Up Survey

If a student is using this field placement or faculty-student project to complete an internship, practicum, or graduation requirement for their school, it is the student's responsibility to confirm before the start of the internship if their school's deliverables, such as a work plan and executive summary, can be used to meet Health Equity Stipend commitments. Students are expected to abide by the policies and procedures of their agency, the institution where they are enrolled, including IRB requirements if applicable, as well as those of the Health Equity Stipend Program.

### **1. Work Plan**

Together with the supervisor, students will complete a competency-based work plan within the first weeks of the field placement. Your work plan must outline the activities and responsibilities associated with the field placement and project for all parties.

The work plan must be signed by the student and the field placement/faculty supervisor and submitted to the NEPHTC Health Equity Stipend Manager for approval.

If substantial changes are made to the work plan, including a change to the project end date, revised activities, or replacement of a supervisor, it is the student's responsibility to inform NEPHTC Health Equity Stipend Manager.

Students will complete a pre-internship survey before starting the program to assess core program competencies. Similar questions will be asked the end of the internship program to reassess their competency levels and reflect any improvements made due to their internship experience.

### **2. Stipend Course**

Students must register for the NEPHTC website then enroll in the Health Equity Stipend course site. On the course page, students will find resources and templates for deliverables and can upload deliverable files as assignments for the course.

### **3. Health Equity Training**

Students must complete two hours of training on health equity. Students are expected to take courses based on their needs and the expectations of their projects.

### **4. Financial Paperwork**

Students are responsible for completing a W-9 so that stipend payments can be made. They will submit their completed W-9s to a private, secure link.

*Note: Once all their work is completed, it may take up to six weeks for a check to be mailed. Students should ensure that Boston University has an up-to-date mailing address.*

## 5. Mid-Point Experience Survey

All student participants must complete a mid-point survey to assess how the field placement is progressing and if the target date for completion will be met.

This survey is an opportunity for students to inform NEPHTC if assistance is needed working with their agency or if the workplan needs to be modified.

## 6. End of Project Deliverables

At the end of their project, students must provide a several project deliverables which NEPHTC shares with HRSA. Deliverables may be shared publicly on the NEPHTC website and/or social media.

1. **Scientific Report** – This report includes the following sections: abstract, introduction, methodology, findings, conclusions, and discussion
2. **Executive Summary** - The Executive Summary provides a brief description of your internship. Students should use the template provided on the Health Equity Stipend course site.
3. **Photo or graphic** - At least one photo or image is required as a deliverable. It should represent your internship project, like an image on a book or report cover. The student is responsible for assuring that the image follows the agency's policies and guidelines. Examples include: the student conducting fieldwork, a poster that the student designed for an event, a group photo of students and their preceptor, or a data visualization used for a presentation.

*Templates for the report and executive summary are available on our course page.*

## 7. Student and Supervisor Exit Surveys

Interns must complete an exit survey and are also responsible for assuring that their supervisor completes an exit survey. NEPHTC will e-mail a survey link to the student and supervisor following receipt of the student deliverables.

## 8. One Year Follow Up Survey

One year following the internship, and students are required to complete a follow up survey. The survey assesses the impact of the internship experience on a student's career choices or further study. Data from this survey are reported to this program's federal funder, HRSA.

## **Program Commitments**

### *Student Rights and Responsibilities*

#### **A student has the right to:**

- a specific job description, including the supervisor's expectations and standards.
- a clearly defined work schedule and the average number of hours of work to expect per week.
- adequate training to perform assigned tasks.
- regular supervision and review of work performed.
- instructions on how to report an unexpected absence from a scheduled work shift.
- a procedure for stating concerns related to the job or supervisor.
- adequate training in relevant organization policies and procedures, including HIPAA policies.
- tools to adequately perform assigned tasks.

#### **Each student is responsible for:**

- adhering to policies of their school, such as IRB exemptions or limits to work hours during the semester.
- becoming familiar with information regarding the terms of the NEPHTC program and general policies.
- understanding their specific job responsibilities, including their supervisor's expectations.
- performing assigned tasks in an efficient and timely manner.
- arranging a mutually agreeable work schedule with the supervisor and working the assigned hours regularly.
- notifying the supervisor immediately if a scheduled work period must be missed.
- accurately documenting work hours.
- completing a work plan together with the organization and NEPHTC.
- completing a pre-program, mid-point, exit and 1-year follow-up survey.
- completing all agency deliverables and NEPHTC required materials.

### *Field Placement Agency/Faculty Supervisor Rights and Responsibilities*

#### **Each Field Placement Agency/Faculty Supervisor has the right to:**

- have assigned tasks completed efficiently and correctly by the student employee.
- have student employees record their time properly.
- expect student workers to adhere within reason to a regular work schedule.
- be notified immediately if a student must miss a scheduled work shift.

#### **Each Field Placement Agency/Faculty Supervisor has the responsibility for:**

- providing adequate orientation and on-the-job training to student employees. NEPHTC relies on the supervisor to communicate all policies and procedures, including IRB and HIPAA policies, to the student.
- clarifying the required hours of work and expected duration of job to students.
- setting expectations for the quality and quantity of work.
- notifying the NEPHTC of any issues with the student that may result in termination of the field placement.
- ensuring students do not begin working prior to receiving HR approval or continue working past the point of termination.
- discussing and documenting any performance issues with student employees and sharing, as appropriate, with NEPHTC staff.
- completing a work plan together with the organization and NEPHTC.
- completing a mid- and post-project evaluation.
- maintaining open communication with NEPHTC staff and student.
- responding to NEPHTC's request for permission if NEPHTC wishes to showcase the student's report or deliverables on the NEPHTC student webpage.



### *Terminations or Withdrawal*

Failure to meet the student responsibilities as outlined above may be grounds for termination. Should an agency/faculty mentor think that there may be grounds for termination, they should report the circumstances to NEPHTC immediately and together, the agency, the academic institution, and NEPHTC will decide regarding the student's status.

If the student is terminated, an evaluation should be completed at the time of termination and NEPHTC will consult with HRSA regarding any award due for time worked.

NEPHTC is not obligated to find alternative arrangements for the student, and organization-initiated termination may be grounds for the student's exclusion from further participation in the program.

Students who need to withdraw from the Health Equity Stipend program for personal or other reasons must notify NEPHTC immediately.

### *Tips for Professional Work Settings*

Health Equity Interns work in professional environments and should act accordingly. This program not only provides an opportunity to hone skills in public health, but also to enhance professionalism as well. Students are representatives of their home universities and NEPHTC sites and are expected to follow respective professional norms and rules.

Violating professional guidelines can result in termination of field placement and violating students may be banned from further participation in the program.

We hope that the Health Equity Student Stipend Program will be mutually beneficial for students, supervisors, faculty, and field placement agencies. Please continue to communicate with NEPHTC for additional resources.

## **Appendix 1: Contact Information**

For additional information, including state practice and academic partner organizations, please visit:

<http://sites.bu.edu/nephtc/students/>

Main NEPHTC Health Equity Stipend Program contact:

Maurine Crouch

Yale School of Public health

[Maurine.Crouch@yale.edu](mailto:Maurine.Crouch@yale.edu)

## Appendix 2: Timeline of Student Commitments

<p><i>Note: This timeline is a guide – projects can be flexible according to the student, faculty, and agency’s needs.</i></p>		Summer	Fall	Spring
<b>Student Application</b>	Student prepares project and applies to stipend program.	May 2023	August 2023	December 2023
<b>Applications Rewarded</b>		June 2023	August 2023	January 2024
<b>Entrance Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation</li> <li>• Workplan</li> <li>• Pre-Internship Survey</li> <li>• Health Equity Courses</li> </ul>	June 2023	September 2023	January 2024
<b>Project Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to workplan, student works with their faculty/host.</li> <li>• Student completes Mid-Point Survey</li> </ul>	Throughout Summer or Semester		
<b>End of Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student turns in deliverables</li> <li>• Student and host/faculty complete exit survey</li> <li>• Student shares W9</li> </ul>	August 2023	December 2023	May 2024
<b>Stipend is Awarded</b>		September 2023	January 2024	June 2024
<b>One-Year Follow-up</b>	A follow-up survey is requested during the next fiscal year	April 2025		

## Appendix 3: Checklists and Deliverables

Please use the checklist below to ensure that you have completed all requirements of the HRSA-sponsored New England Public Health Training Center (NEPHTC) Health Equity Stipend Program. The information listed below must be received by the NEPHTC Health Equity Stipend Manager, Maurine Crouch, at [Maurine.Crouch@yale.edu](mailto:Maurine.Crouch@yale.edu)

### **BEFORE or at the beginning of the project:**

Upon receiving notification of your selection for an internship, and once you have agreed to accept the placement, the following must be in place.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Registration for the NEPHTC Health Equity Stipend Moodle Course
- \_\_\_\_\_ Participation in an NEPHTC orientation meeting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completion of two background courses in the Health Equity Learning Bundle
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submission of a signed Internship Work Plan, to be approved by NEPHTC
- \_\_\_\_\_ NEPHTC financial forms required for award payment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete a pre-internship survey

### **DURING the project:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Completion of a mid-point experience survey on project progress

**Upon COMPLETION of the project,** submit the following to the NEPHTC Health Equity Stipend Manager.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Photo(s) or an image that depicts your internship experience
- \_\_\_\_\_ Executive summary of the project (using the template provided by NEPHTC)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Report or poster presentation that describes your project
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student's online exit survey
- \_\_\_\_\_ Field placement/faculty supervisor online exit survey
- \_\_\_\_\_ One year following completion of your project, respond to a year follow up survey

This handbook was adapted from the Region IV Public Health Training Center. (2017). Pathways to Practice Scholars: Student field placement guidebook. Retrieved from <http://www.sph.emory.edu/r4phtc>