

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 9027

**Introduced by REPRESENTATIVES LANI MERCADO-REVILLA,
BRYAN B. REVILLA AND RAMON JOLO REVILLA III**

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS IN
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

For many students, an internship is their introduction to the professional world as it offers an opportunity to apply classroom theories, build confidence, and gain practical skills that will shape their future careers. Done well, internships can open doors to lifelong opportunities.

However, this is not always the case in the Philippines. Many students report being assigned tasks that have little to do with their course, receiving minimal supervision, or working full-time without any allowance, even when they contribute meaningful work to the host institution.¹ With no clear national standards, students become vulnerable to unfair treatment and prevent institutions from maximizing the full learning potential of these programs.

Current laws and policies meant to support youth employment also leave a major gap.

¹ Nicolas, Honeylet J., Helen G. Manalastas & Robert A. Capalad. "Feedback of Students on Internship Program in an Agricultural Course." *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, vol. 11, no. 2 (June 2022): 573-579. DOI 10.11591/ijere.v11i2.21936. Available at <https://ijere.iaescore.com/index.php/IJERE/article/viewFile/21936/13314>; Kurt Derhen B. Navales, "Unprotected and Uncompensated Internships: On-the-Job Trainings in the Philippines as a Form of Disguised and Modern-Day Labor Exploitation," (2020), available at <https://www.scribd.com/document/421042756/Navales-Unprotected-and-Uncompensated-Internships-On-The-Job-Trainings-in-the-Philippines-a-Form-of-Disguised-and-Modern-Day-Labor-Exploitation>

1. Republic Act No. 10869 (JobStart Philippines Act) requires allowances equal to at least 75% of the minimum wage, but it does not apply to college students because the law defines Job Start Trainee as one that has “at least reached high school level; not be employed, studying, or undergoing training at the time of registration”;²
2. Republic Act No. 12063 (Enterprise-Based Education and Training Framework Act) merely provides an avenue for students to undergo technical-vocational internships; and
3. CHED Memorandum Order No. 104, s. 2017 (Student Internship Program in the Philippines) does not require host institutions to provide allowances.

These gaps have led to two pressing problems: (1) Students are required to render uncompensated work without proper safeguards; and (2) Pre-licensure internships lack clear protections and standards, even though they are performing essential professional duties.

This Bill, the “National Higher Education Internship Act”, responds to the State’s duty to support the development of the youth. It introduces uniform standards that protect students, elevate the quality of training, and strengthen partnerships between HEIs and host institutions. When students are required to perform productive work as part of their education or as a condition for professional licensure, they deserve fair compensation, appropriate supervision, and a safe and supportive learning environment. This is especially crucial for students from low-income families, for whom unpaid internships can be a significant financial burden and a barrier to completing their degree.

We believe internships should truly serve their purpose: meaningful learning, real industry exposure, and better employment outcomes for Filipino graduates.

In light of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this Bill is respectfully requested.



REP. LANI MERCADO-REVILLA

2nd District of Cavite



REP. BRYAN B. REVILLA

AGIMAT Partylist



REP. RAMON JOLO REVILLA III

1st District of Cavite

² Section 5, Qualifications of a JobStart Trainee

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9027

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVES LANI MERCADO-REVILLA,
BRYAN B. REVILLA AND RAMON JOLO REVILLA III

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS IN
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “National Higher Education Internship Framework Act”.

SEC 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the declared policy of the State to recognize the vital role of the youth in nation-building and to promote their holistic development through meaningful experiential learning opportunities. Towards this end, the State shall ensure that all internship programs in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), including those required for professional licensure, are implemented through a collaborative partnership between the HEIs and Host Institutions to ensure a fair, structured, and safe environment that enhances learning while preventing exploitation.

The State shall establish a national framework that sets minimum standards and safeguards for all HEI internship programs, balancing the educational and developmental needs of students with the operational realities of participating host institutions.

SEC 3. *Definitions.* – For purposes of this Act:

a) *Intern* refers to a student enrolled in an accredited higher educational institution (HEI) who undergoes a structured and supervised practical training

program in a host institution as part of the academic requirements of their course or as a prerequisite for a professional licensure.

b) *Host Institution* refers to any government agency, local government unit, government-owned or-controlled corporation, or duly-authorized private enterprise or organization that accepts interns for purposes of training and exposure.

c) *Program Plan* refers to a written schedule or document detailing the educational objectives, specific key learning tasks, duration of engagement, and the name and contact information of the designated Internship Supervisor.

d) *Internship Coordinator* refers to the duly designated school representative responsible for coordinating with the Host Institution, monitoring the Intern's progress, and ensuring the protection of the Intern's welfare during the internship period.

e) *Work-Required Internship* a mandatory requirement for graduation, including those required for professional licensure, and where the Intern performs tasks that are directly related to the Host Institution's operations or services;

f) *National Training Directory* refers to a government-endorsed platform that lists accredited internship opportunities available to students, parents, and schools.

g) *Certificate of Program Compliance* refers to the official document issued by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) certifying that a Host Institutions' internship program meets all minimum standards under this Act.

SEC 4. Minimum Standards for Internship Programs. – All Host Institutions shall comply with the following minimum standards in the conduct of internship programs:

a) *Formal Agreement and Program Plan.* – Prior to commencement, the Host Institution shall execute a written Internship Agreement with the Intern and the Educational Institution, specifying the start and end dates, expected hours of engagement, any agreed-upon stipend or benefits; and the approved Program Plan.

b) *Compensation for Work-Required Internships.* – An Intern undergoing a Work-Required Internship shall receive a stipend or allowance equivalent to not less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the prevailing minimum wage, for the region where the internship is conducted, computed based on actual attendance and hours worked. This requirement shall not apply to internships designed purely for observation, shadowing, or where the primary benefit is demonstrably to the student, provided that such nature is clearly stated in the Agreement and approved by the HEI.

c) *Access to Resources.* – The Host Institution shall provide the Intern with access to the tools, facilities, and resources necessary to accomplish the tasks stated in the Program Plan.

d) *Safety and Liability Coverage.* – The Host Institution shall provide adequate coverage against liability for accidents, injuries, or illness sustained by the Intern in

the performance of approved internship activities, including authorized travel between official work sites.

e) *Grievance and Protection Mechanism.* – The Host Institution, in coordination with the Educational Institution, shall establish a confidential, accessible, and non-retaliatory grievance mechanism through which interns may report mistreatment, harassment, unsafe working conditions, or violations of this Act.

SEC 5. Duties and Responsibilities of Educational Institutions. – Educational institutions shall:

- a) Designate a qualified Internship Coordinator;
- b) Conduct a mandatory pre-deployment seminar, in coordination with the Host Institutions, to prepare students for the training environment and clarify work expectations, workplace rules, and supervision arrangements;
- c) Ensure that internships remain aligned with the educational objectives and academic requirements of the course;
- d) Be prohibited from collecting any fees unrelated to the internship program, requiring interns to shoulder the cost of accompanying school personnel, or pay school fees for facilities or services they will not use while on internship.

SEC 6. Incentives for Compliance. – To encourage compliance, Host Institutions shall be granted monetary and non-monetary incentives by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and the Civil Service Commission (CSC). Such incentives may include, which may include:

- a) Tax deductions on stipends paid to interns, upon presentation of a Certificate of Program Compliance;
- b) Access to government-subsidized technical assistance to improve program quality and compliance readiness;
- c) Awards and recognitions for exemplary internship programs;
- d) Inclusion in the National Training Directory; and
- e) Priority invitation to job fairs and recruitment events.

SEC 7. Oversight and Accountability. – The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall exercise oversight over internship programs involving currently enrolled students. For internships conducted in private host institutions, CHED shall coordinate with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), while for internships conducted in public host institutions, CHED shall coordinate with the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

For post-graduate or pre-licensure internships involving graduates, oversight and regulatory authority shall rest with the appropriate Professional Regulatory

Board under the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), in coordination with DOLE or CSC, as applicable.

Host Institutions found to have violated the provisions of this Act or its implementing rules may be blacklisted or suspended from participating in internship programs, subject to the administrative action, as appropriate.

SEC 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the CHED, DOLE, CSC, PRC, and DTI shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision or part not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC 10. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC 11. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,