



## L.E.A.P. Academy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Spring 2016

*Eligibility requirements change depending on funding streams. Stay engaged with your American Job Center (AJC) Employment Specialist and/or your Department of Human Services Office of Work Opportunity. (DHS/OWO) Vocational Development Specialist and also visit [does.dc.gov](http://does.dc.gov) for updated information.*

- What is the L.E.A.P. Academy?
- How do I apply?
- Who is eligible?
- What does a complete application for L.E.A.P. Academy include?
- What is the process for selecting L.E.A.P. Academy trainees?
- What types of work do trainees perform?
- Do trainees get to select their placements?
- What agencies have trainees?
- Are trainees guaranteed a permanent job after completing the six or 12 month internship?
- How much are trainees paid?
- How many trainees are selected per cohort?
- When will the next cohort start?

### **What is the L.E.A.P. Academy?**

Launched in March 2015 by Mayor Muriel Bowser, **L.E.A.P.** (Learn, Earn, Advance, Prosper) **Academy** is a network of interconnected partners utilizing the “earn-and-learn” approach that will link the city’s unemployed residents with employment, education and training opportunities. The earn-and-learn approach applies the apprenticeship model to skill development, allowing individuals to earn a wage while participating in an on-the-job training experience and concurrently participating in related technical instruction. This framework allows individuals to earn wages and accumulate work experience thus bolstering their ability to advance along a career pathway and into the middle class.

### **How do I apply for the spring 2016 L.E.A.P. Academy cohort?**

To apply for the spring 2016 L.E.A.P. Academy cohort, applicants must be referred from the Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of Work Opportunity (OWO) caseload. **If you are a current customer of the Office of Work Opportunity, contact your case manager for more information on how to obtain the application.**

DHS/OWO helps heads of households applying for TANF benefits seek jobs while their applications are under review. DHS/OWO also assists customers in choosing cost-effective and appropriate training that will lead to employment. Customers are assessed and tested prior to being referred to training sites, TANF Job Clubs and Work First Programs. If you are not actively registered with OWO you will **NOT** be eligible to apply for the spring 2016 cohort.

Eligible candidates must complete the application, which includes but is not limited to: providing an unexpired District of Columbia state identification, an official high school diploma or GED certificate, an up-to-date resume, an unofficial undergraduate transcript (if applicable), completion of DC Networks registration, and completion of the required essay (essay topic will be announced with the application). **Incomplete applications will be disqualified.**

**DHS/TANF/OWO can be reached by calling (202) 698-1860 and or visiting their website at [dhs.owo@dc.gov](mailto:dhs.owo@dc.gov).**

### **Who is eligible?**

- **Must be referred from the Department of Human Services, Office of Work Opportunity Caseload**
- Must be a District of Columbia resident
- Must be 18 years or older
- Must have a high school diploma, GED Certificate or higher
- Must be registered with DCNetworks.org
- Must pass a drug screening (*if offered a training opportunity*)
- Must pass a background check (*for certain positions, if offered a training opportunity*)
- Must pass a basic computer skills test administered during the interview process

There is no specific age or degree requirement, although the Academy mainly attracts unemployed and underemployed candidates who need additional work experience and transferrable skills in order to become more marketable and competitive in today's 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. Applicants must demonstrate a positive attitude, an interest in public service, and a commitment to successfully completing the Academy.

### **What does a complete application for the L.E.A.P. Academy include?**

In addition to a completed application, eligible D.C. residents must also provide the following documents:

- **Copy of your valid state issued identification**
- **Copy of your high school diploma or GED certificate** (If you have received an Associate's/Bachelor's/Master's degree or higher, you may submit that in lieu of a HS diploma/GED)
- **Completed [DCNetworks.org](http://DCNetworks.org) online registration** (see application instructions)
- **Copy of your resume**
- **150 to 250-word essay, topic to be released with application** (Essays should be no longer than two pages, typed and double-spaced)
- **L.E.A.P. Application Completion Verification Form** (included in application packet)

### **What is the process for being accepted into the L.E.A.P. Academy?**

The L.E.A.P. recruitment team reviews all applications and invites superior applicants to pre-screening interview sessions. **No calls or emails will be returned regarding application status during the recruitment period. All applicants will be notified of their status once final selections have been made.**

After the pre-screening interview sessions, the recruitment team evaluates applicants based on an individual interview, computer literacy assessment, and overall suitability for the available positions and the L.E.A.P. Academy.

**What types of work do trainees perform?**

Each placement is unique and host agencies that have agreed to partner with the L.E.A.P. Academy have developed their own training curriculum, process, and projects for trainees to complete during their six or 12 month internship.

**Do trainees get to select their placements?**

Not directly. The Department of Employment Services (DOES) maintains the right to make all placements based on a combination of agency needs and the trainees' experience and skills. Trainees are given the opportunity to express their preferences for working in particular areas of the government during the application process and every effort is made to accommodate these preferences while also meeting agency needs.

**What agencies have partnered with the L.E.A.P. Academy?**

Current and past placements include: Executive Office of the Mayor, District Department of Transportation, DC Department of Human Resources, Department of Forensic Sciences, Department of Employment Services, Department of Human Services, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Works, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Department of General Services, Child and Family Services Administration, and District of Columbia Housing Authority, Department of Motor Vehicles, and the Office of the People's Counsel.

**Are trainees guaranteed a job after completing the six or 12 month internship?**

No. Assuming that the trainee completes their six or 12 month commitment, receives favorable performance evaluations, and wants to continue working for the city, every effort will be made to find appropriate positions at the end of the Internship. However, there is no guarantee that appropriate jobs will be available.

**How much are trainees paid?**

All trainees earn the same rate of \$13.80 per hour, the District's living wage, for the duration of the six or 12 month internship. The salary is non-negotiable.

**How many trainees are selected per cohort?**

The number of trainees selected per cohort depends on funding and how many District agencies are able to partner with the Academy. While there is no set number, it is estimated that about 25 trainees will be selected per cohort.

**When will the next cohort start?**

Information on additional cohorts and eligibility requirements will be released to the public as funding becomes available. Visit [does@dc.gov](mailto:does@dc.gov) for more information and stay connected with your Employment Specialist.

**Thank you for your interest in the L.E.A.P Academy!**

*These frequently asked questions (FAQ's) should address most of your questions about the L.E.AP Academy. If you have any other questions or concerns that are not listed in this FAQ's document, please contact us at (202) 442-4646 or e-mail [leap.does@dc.gov](mailto:leap.does@dc.gov).*