

# Cooperative (Co-op) Program for High School Seniors

## SCHOOL TO EMPLOYMENT AT PENNDOT (STEP)

*(formal title under commonwealth's job classification is Secondary School Intern)*

7/21/2022

The STEP program is for eligible high school students who have completed junior year. STEP introduces seniors to the operations of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and provides meaningful work assignments. The goal is for participating students to seek regular employment with PennDOT upon completing their desired education.

High school seniors in any area of study may be hired to support a variety of PennDOT functions. This includes skilled trades, professional/technical/business, and administrative/clerical. Positions in trades and related areas require schools to have a certified co-op program to ensure formal student knowledge of procedures and safety. Applicants that meet existing job needs and requirements will be invited for an interview.

Opportunities will be determined by the number of agency Work Plans and student Job Applications received. This paid co-op/diversified occupations program runs up to nine months, and possibly longer in some cases. Students divide their school day between school and work. When school is in session, students age 17 may work up to 28 hours per week. Students age 18 and older may work up to 30 hours per week. During week-long holiday/seasonal breaks, seniors may potentially work up to 37.5 hours per week, regardless of age. Students should be offered at least three hours of work on each day in attendance.

### REQUIREMENTS

Students must meet each of the following to be eligible:

- Complete the junior year of high school
- Be at least 17 years old
- Possess a grade point average of at least a B
- Have satisfactory attendance per school guidelines
- Be permitted to work in the United States
- Attend a school that offers a cooperative (co-op), diversified occupations, or closely related career program
- For trades and similar skilled positions, schools are required to have a certified co-op program.

### Notes

Seniors are eligible to work when the school co-op, diversified occupations, or related coordinator is in active work status to oversee student employees.

For PennDOT to maintain legal consistency across all schools commonwealth wide, students and school staff need to sign PennDOT's Training Plan (Work Plan) and Agreement (Statement of Understanding). PennDOT staff **cannot** sign or use schools' Training Plan or Agreement forms.

### How to Apply

Student application packages **will be accepted only from the student's school co-op/diversified occupations coordinator**. Applications submitted directly from students or parents/guardians cannot be considered. If the student is age 17, a copy of the student's work permit also needs to be included. To determine if there may be positions available in your area for students to apply, please e-mail [step@pa.gov](mailto:step@pa.gov).

The type and number of job opportunities vary by geographic location each school year. Individual school co-op/diversified occupation coordinators will be notified of STEP job opportunities that exist in the school's geographic area.

### Hiring Periods

Applications accepted upon announcement of the program's opening. Student employment for seniors has a potential maximum range of July 1 through June 30, or anywhere in between this range. Maximum date range is dependent upon both: PennDOT work unit's operational availabilities **and** the school's ability to provide oversight of students via the co-op or related school coordinator. **NOTE:** Some schools do **not** permit seniors to work during summer break prior to start of classes in August/September, or after seniors' last day of classes.

Wage Rate: \$15.00 per hour (effective 1/31/2022)

For information or questions, go to [www.penndot.pa.gov/jobs](http://www.penndot.pa.gov/jobs). Or, on the site, type "[Student Opportunities](#)" into search box, via magnifying glass icon. Questions can be e-mailed to [step@pa.gov](mailto:step@pa.gov).